

# TEXAS ROUNDUP

March 2009

A Message from the President  
**Leslie Stokes, PP, PLS, TSC**

The Competition is Always Right Behind You

Calendar

Dates to Remember and Happy Anniversary

2009 Annual Meeting  
**Brenda Atteberry**

Destination Success: From Sea  
to Shining Sea

Certification  
**Tina Hurley, PP, PLS**

Coming Soon – The Texas ALP  
Certification Tool Kit

Credentials  
**Jane Harrison, PLS**

Once Upon a Time

Education  
**Sylvia Vela, PLS, TSC**

CLE Live from the Capital of Texas

Finance  
**Kathie Keys, PP, PLS and  
Sheryl A. Mann, PP, PLS**

Come One, Come All

Membership  
**Elizabeth G. Wells, PP, PLS, TSC**

Meet Attorney Edward M. Lavin,  
aka “Legal Ed”

Nominations and Elections  
**Amelda Perritt, PLS**

2009-10 Elected Officers

President-elect  
**Mary Smith, PP, PLS**

It’s Not Too Late  
(Preference Sheet)

Professional Development  
**Samantha Tandy, ALS**

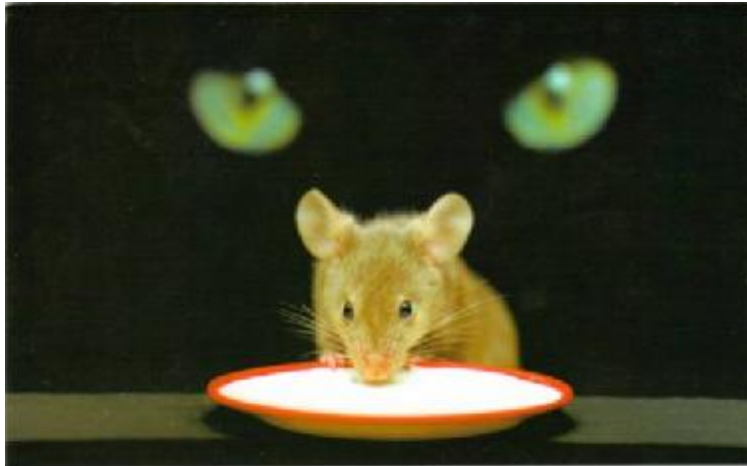
A Touch of Experience

Read and Ride  
**Elizabeth G. Wells, PP, PLS, TSC**

And the Answer Is...

# The Competition is Always Right Behind You

Leslie Stokes, PP, PLS, TSC



The competition is always right behind you!

Competition can be a good thing. You compete to the best that you can be, in whatever endeavor you choose. Most of us don't start out thinking, "Well, if I am the fifth best, that's okay." Of course you want to be the best. It's just our nature to want that. So, since you have decided to become a member of Texas ALP, your decision shows you are on your way to becoming the best you can be in our legal community.

By joining Texas ALP, you have set yourself apart from others in your community who are not a member. Why is that? Because by joining Texas ALP you demonstrate your desire to continue to learn, your aspiration to be one of the first to know the up-and-coming legal issues, your willingness to expand your professional network, and your motivation to be one of the best and go-to legal professionals in your firm.

Texas ALP offers you many opportunities to educate yourself in various areas of the law and to develop new skills while raising your workplace value. In today's tough economy, taking advantage of your Texas ALP membership can set you apart from the competition. But whatever reason you decide to become more active in Texas ALP, the important point is that you become involved.

Your next opportunity to become involved is right around the corner. Make your plans now to attend the 2009 Annual Meeting to be held in Waco. Great education, professional development, and **fun** networking with your peers and friends are just the way to kick off the 2009-10 year!

*I want to personally thank each and every member of Texas ALP for allowing me to serve as your 2008-09 President. It has truly been an honor and a privilege for me this past year to continue the wonderful legacy that is Texas ALP.*

*Leslie*

# Dates to Remember



## TEXAS ALP

- March 18      Deadline to submit items to Secretary for Annual Conference Call
- April 7        Deadline to register for the Annual Conference – May 1-2, 2009, Waco, Texas
- April 17      Officer and Chairman Reports for Annual Conference due to Secretary
- April 20      Deadline to submit article for May issue of the *Texas Roundup* to Betty Wells

## NALS

- March 12-14      NALS Professional Development and Educational Conference  
Tulsa, Oklahoma

\*\*Check out [www.nals.org](http://www.nals.org) for dates and times for the Online Learning Center and Online Study Group Sessions\*\*

# HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

- March 20      Congratulations to East Texas Area ALP on your 32<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary
- March 30      Congratulations to NALS of Amarillo on your 52<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary

## Destination Success: From Sea to Shining Sea

Brenda Atteberry



Waco LPA is working hard to make the 2009 Annual Educational Conference a meeting that everyone will enjoy. All committee chairmen and members are working diligently and plans are coming together for this exciting meeting in May.

Be sure to bring your Hawaiian clothes for the Saturday evening and why not bring your Mardi Gras masks for the dinner on Friday as well. It's going to be a great time for everyone!



## Coming Soon!

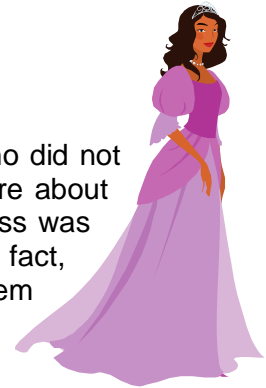
Tina Hurley, PP, PLS

Coming soon and available free to all chapters: the Texas ALP Certification Tool Kit. This is a handy tool kit containing information on all three NALS exams from exam descriptions to study tips to how to hold a NALS Basic Legal Training Course and administer the ALS exam. The tool kit will be full of useful information, articles on certification, and tips to provide encouragement to those who have accepted the challenge to obtain certification.

## ONCE UPON A TIME

Jane Harrison, PLS

Once upon a time in a land far, far away, there were “new” princesses who did not have a “sibling” in the land of TALP. But each had a desire to learn more about TALP. So, the call went out throughout the land of TALP and each princess was matched with a stepsister. Now, these were not “wicked” stepsisters – in fact, they were so likeable and good, that everyone in the land of TALP called them a PAL. But for some reason, not everyone in the land of TALP wanted to be a PAL.



Sounds sort of like a fairy tale, doesn't it? Well, needless to say, in this instance, it is not. TALP has been very fortunate in that it has had several people step up to be a PAL and I have not had to twist very many arms.

Please take time to consider being a PAL in Waco – I do not think you'll regret it.



## CLE Live from the Capital of Texas

Sylvia Vela, PLS, TSC

Saturday, February 21, 2009, was Texas ALP's first CLE only event. The weather was beautiful in Austin and there were forty-two registered attendees. The CLE sessions were videotaped for sale at a later date to members who missed the opportunity to attend.

The day began with a presentation by Mr. Charles Herring, Jr. of Herring & Irwin, LLP. Mr. Herring presented Ethics as it relates to civil litigation, witness preparation and testimony. Mr. Herring discussed the fine line between preparing a witness and suborning perjury

The next speaker, Mr. Gene Albert, co-founder of Lexbe.com, presented information regarding on-line repositories, its uses and benefits in organizing evidence and preparing for trial.

Our lunch speaker was Jan Soifer, a shareholder with Baron & Budd, P.C. who explained to everyone what a 501(c)(3) is, and the differences between nonprofits, charities and other

entities established under the 501(c) statute. We also received information regarding who can hold raffles and how they must be conducted.

Our next speakers, Tiffany Hildreth and Mellissa Villarreal Garza, tag teamed to present aspects of Labor and Employment law, which, in this economy, held the audience captive and had everyone wanting to know more about current labor and employment practices.

Next, we heard from Geoffrey Ferguson on the pitfalls and assumptions of real estate. Mr. Ferguson gave us information on how to anticipate and avoid problems before you get to the closing table and shared some very interesting experiences he has had during his career in real estate.

With our last speaker falling ill, our day ended early and participants were able to spend a little time visiting Austin before heading home.

Overall, I feel that Texas ALP's first CLE only event was a huge success and gave members the CLE they requested.

## **Come One, Come All**

Kathie Keys, PP, PLS, and  
Sheryl A. Mann, PP, PLS



Come one, come all, to the Texas ALP 54th Annual Educational Conference--May 1-2, 2009--Waco, Texas. This will be your last opportunity to purchase Texas ALP logo items from your current finance co-chairs. A new T-shirt color was unveiled in Austin---don't be left out---get your kiwi or royal blue shirt while they are available. Other logo items available are lapel pins, picture frames, bookmarks, padfolios, and CDs for the 2008 Annual Meeting. And---it's not too late to be thinking of Christmas 2009---we have coasters for those hard to buy for friends and relatives.

We look forward to seeing everyone in May---come prepared to spend some money and support Texas ALP!



## **Meet Attorney Edward M. Lavin, aka "Legal Ed"**

Elizabeth G. Wells, PP, PLS, TSC

The year was 1965-66, the Vietnam War was heating up, and there was a draft. A freshman in college, Ed majored in beer drinking and chasing girls. With a GPA of 0.59 at the end of his first year of college, he enlisted in the United States Air Force. While serving in the Air Force he knew he wanted more than he was getting. Math and science were not his strong suits, but he read and wrote well, and had persuasive speaking skills. He wanted a career where he could put those skills to use, make good money and, most important, enjoy his work. He ventured into law, became a lawyer, and has never regretted that career decision.

Now fast forward to the early 1990's when Legal Ed joined the San Antonio Legal Secretaries Association. His former legal assistant, Jackie Flores, was his sponsoring member. As an employer of legal support staff, he believes membership and active participation in local chapters and Texas ALP are great indicators of a true professional, not just someone looking for good working hours and a good paycheck. He believes membership is a golden opportunity to learn from fellow members.

All of the current staff in his office, as well as past employees, are members of our tri-level organization – he wouldn't have it any other way. Through membership, participation in SALSA and TALP, and SALSA training sessions, he has seen dramatic improvement in every member of his staff. A shining example is his current legal assistant, Michele Harmon. Michele began working with Mr. Lavin as a clerk/receptionist. Michele was promoted to secretary, and when Jackie moved to a large firm, Michele stepped up to fill those very big shoes. Michele has blossomed in her new position, as if she has been doing it for 20 years rather than only two or three. Ed attributes her rapid growth to her active participation in SALSA.

Today, Ed has gotten more "senior" and is slowing down, downsizing along the way. With Michele as his full time "partner" and just two part-timers, he knows how critical she is to the success of "their" firm. Ed says, "I couldn't make it without her" and routinely finds himself bouncing problems and ideas off her for her quality input.

When asked why there were not more attorneys like him – you know the ones who truly see the value of membership in a professional legal support association – he shared this insight:

"Many lawyers may just not realize the benefits of having their staff be association members and of hiring staff who are participating members. Association leadership should push harder to educate lawyers, especially young lawyers, about the benefits of hiring TALP/NALS chapter members and of ensuring their current staff join and participate. Lawyers need to know how staff membership is going to benefit the lawyer. Many may think just about the cost of dues, training sessions, and absences from the office for meetings. Lawyers need to know that what they are getting in return is well worth their investment."

## TALP 2009-10 Elected Officers

Amelda Perritt, PLS

The ballots were mailed, returned, and counted, and THE RESULTS ARE IN! Your newly elected officers for 2009-2010 are:

Elizabeth G. Wells, PP, PLS, TSC-RE Austin LSA, Inc.	President-Elect
---	-----------------

Kristy Turner, PP, PLS, CLA, TSC-CL, TSC-RE Waco LPA	Treasurer
---	-----------

Jorie Licking, PP, PLS El Paso County, LSA	Secretary
---	-----------

**Congratulations to Betty, Kristy, and Jorie!**



# It's Not Too Late

Mary Smith, PP, PLS



As you may have heard, the Marines are looking for a few good men; I, however, am still looking for a few good women.

We are an all-volunteer association. Without you, we can do nothing.

If you have ideas for any of the committees or would like to see changes made within the association, please consider joining the 2009-10 leadership team. The more volunteers – the more we can accomplish.

So, don't wait!! I'd love to visit with you – call me at 254-755-4100 or e-mail me at [mary@nahanhowell.com](mailto:mary@nahanhowell.com). I encourage you to complete and return the committee preference sheet attached to this newsletter or click on *Leadership Opportunities* on [www.texasalp.org](http://www.texasalp.org) to join your fellow members on the journey to Destination Success.

## A Touch of Experience

**Part 2 of 2**  
**Samantha Tandy, ALS**

TALP Past Presidents are a unique group of individuals who have led our great Association through good times and bad. At the Fall Board Meeting in Wichita Falls, the Professional Development committee had the privilege of hosting a dinner with a panel of Past Presidents consisting of Julie Abernathy, PP, PLS, Kathie Jean Keys, PP, PLS, and Meri Nelson, PP, PLS, TSC, who answered questions before the membership. This is the second installment of the questions and answers from the panel and feedback from the members who attended the dinner.

**Question: How does a leader, whose responsibility it is to motivate others, stay motivated?**

Attend local, state, region and national meetings. Seek out those who you know are first-timers and take the time to get to know them and be a mentor. By being a mentor you give others an opportunity to talk about life experiences that are frustrating in the workplace and re-energize them to have the “take on the world” approach when they return to their offices.

**Question: Are all problems solvable?**  
**And if not, what does a leader do about the insolvable ones?**

No. Try everything, exhaust all resources, accept it, move on and minimize the impact of the problem. If nothing works, accept defeat and understand that it does not mean failure. Seek advice from your mentors and construct a plan.

### **Question: How do you keep your members active?**

Everyone is different. Give a variety of choices at meetings and show people what the advantages are to grow both professionally and personally. Recognize them privately and publically. Do little things that reach out to them and make them feel special. If you do those little things they are more likely to come back.

## **Read and Ride**

All members who read this issue of the *Texas Roundup*, answer the following six questions, and submit **the correct answers to all six questions** to Betty Wells, Vice President/Membership Chair at [bettywe11s@austin.rr.com](mailto:bettywe11s@austin.rr.com) and Mary Smith, President-elect at [mary@namanhowell.com](mailto:mary@namanhowell.com) will receive a punch on their virtual ticket to The Texas ALP Train 2008-09 to Tomorrow. The member accumulating the most virtual ticket punches will be announced at the 2009 Annual Meeting. All members, including officers and chairmen, are eligible to participate.

The questions for this issue are:

1. Ed Lavin believes \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are “great indicators of a true professional.”
2. Name the newly elected officers for 2009-10.
3. What information will the Certification Tool Kit contain?
4. According to the panel of past presidents who spoke at the FBM in Wichita Falls, how does a leader stay motivated?
5. What challenge does President Leslie present to you in her article?
6. What is the deadline for registering for the 2009 Annual Conference in Waco?



## Top 4 Reasons to Join the Texas ALP 2009-10 Leadership Team

- Strong commitment to education
- Professional certifications
- Exceptional networking connections
- Growth in professionalism

YES! I want to participate in the Journey to Success!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (Work) \_\_\_\_\_ (Home) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Cell) \_\_\_\_\_ (Fax) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: (Work) \_\_\_\_\_ (Home) \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to serve on the following committee(s) and/or subcommittee(s) and have designated my first, second and third choice.

<b>Committee</b>	<b>1, 2 or 3</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>1, 2 or 3</b>
Awards		Marketing	
Bylaws/Standing Rules		Membership	
Certification		Nominations and Elections	
Mock Exam		Credentials	
Education		Roster	
Professional Development		Strategic Planning	
Finance		<i>The Texas Docket</i>	
Financial Review			

Please return to:

**Mary Smith, PP, PLS**  Texas ALP President-elect  
P. O. Box 1470, Waco, Texas 76703-1470  
254-755-4100  
[mary@namahowell.com](mailto:mary@namahowell.com)