

newsCAPsule

CLEVELAND ASSOCIATION
of PARALEGALS, INC.

An affiliate member of the
Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association

Member National Federation
of Paralegal Associations

www.capohio.org

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greetings CAP!

by Aaron Stratman, CAP President

Well, spring is around the corner, hopefully anyway, I mean, this is Cleveland after all. The question is will spring be a time of new beginnings for CAP, or will things continue like those famous spring rainstorms we sometimes get that just never seem to stop. I am optimistic that, at least for CAP, the spring brings hope that things will change.



Over the winter it was announced that we had appointed a new Board Secretary. I am sad to say that she has since resigned. The exact specifics do not matter, but it was due to a disagreement in how CAP is being run. I have absolutely no problem with such disagreements, I only wish she had stuck around to voice more of those opinions, and that anyone else who has something to say will stand up and do so. Those currently on the Board, and anyone who ever has been will know that the only way for us to truly effectively run this group is to know what the group as a whole truly wants.

I have been saying all year that I wanted to hear more from all of you, to see more of you get into CAP on a deeper level. I am ecstatic to report, that from where I sit, it seems that the spark has been ignited and more and more are becoming involved in CAP on this deeper level. This is awesome. It gives me hope that all the effort that has gone into the Affiliations committee report and the meetings that have started to be held, have not been in vain. CAP will emerge stronger for having had the experience.

It has been, to this point, an incredible experience to be President of this organization. However, not wanting to be one to hog the spot light, I do not intend to seek a second year and am putting out the challenge now, to give you time to think about it. Who will step up and fill this role come the annual meeting in June? And if not this role, that of any other Board member or coordinator? I have seen more and more of you as the year has gone on, so who is ready to take that next step? ■

*Aaron Stratman is a Paralegal at Morris|Hardwick|Schneider
in Willoughby. He can be reached at astratman@oh.rr.com.*

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ALSP meeting

I'm going to have to echo Aaron's comments about differences in opinion and increasing levels of member participation. Both are important for the growth of CAP: differences in opinion foster good change and participation inspires. I have been impressed by the number of people at meetings and events at a time when it seems like competition with attorneys for legal work means a downturn in paralegal positions.

This month's issue of the NewsCAPsule contains pieces borne of previous CAP presidents Dennis Foster (founder of Major Legal Services, whose recruiter, Shari Paglia, has written an article) and Gayle Absi (founder of ABSI Legal Technology, Ltd. and who has written an article). Dennis and Gayle remind me that we have a rich legacy of paralegal activism in Cleveland—CAP began with a few people who wanted to promote paralegal utilization in the delivery of legal services. They recognized that paralegals bring a different skill set to the fore than law school-trained attorneys. Dennis and Gayle are examples of paralegals who reached for goals most think are beyond their reach. They ventured out through their paralegal background after claiming the paralegal profession as their own. We are our own profession, and we are more than the limited encapsulated jobs given to us by attorneys.

by Claudia Taller

Claudia J. Taller is the Senior Corporate Paralegal at Squire, Sanders and Dempsey L.L.P.'s Cleveland office.

While we've become adept at marketing our skills to our firms and legal departments, we need to reach out to the world and our ultimate bosses—clients and government agencies and business groups—to make sure they are aware that paralegals can do many of the tasks lawyers do at a lesser cost. This evangelism, if you will, will increase the job market and insure the future of the profession.

I hear law school enrollment is reaching record highs as the unemployed go back to school. Let's work on this. To that end, the next issue of the newsletter will include short 250-word articles about what you do better than attorneys. Please send your first-person narratives to me at ctaller@ssd.com. ■

GRAMMAR LESSON – 2009-I

We sometimes use words without understanding their connotation. Connotation is everything. In legalese, we use the words “shall,” “must,” and “may,” but do we understand that these words require different situations? To create a duty, use “shall,” as in “You shall have a piece of cake after lunch.” Create a condition precedent by using “must” as in, “To get an outside office, one must be a Vice President.” “Shall” can be used in places where “may” is not used, because “shall” connotes a command, while “may” is permissive; observe the difference between “You may have a piece of cake after lunch” and “You shall have a piece of cake after lunch.” We could look at any number of words and discover differences in how they can be used. As a writer, the first step in the process of writing well is to pay attention to each individual word. ■

Submitted by the Editor

Save the Date!

The Cleveland Chapter of the Association of Litigation Support Professionals (“ALSP”) will meet from noon until 1:30 on Wednesday, March 11, 2009, at the law firm of Squire, Sanders & Dempsey, 4900 Key Tower, 127 Public Square, downtown Cleveland. Magistrate Judge Vecchiarelli of the U.S. District Court, Northern District of Ohio, will discuss the Courts' perspective on e-discovery. Please register on-line at www.alsponline.org. Lunch will be provided by Kroll Ontrack. ■

An Interview with Christine Buddner, Director of Membership and Marketing Coordinator

How long have you been a paralegal?

I have been a paralegal for over 20 years (yikes!)

What areas do you specialize in?

I am presently a Business Restructuring & Commercial Paralegal at Calfee, Halter & Griswold LLP. I began my career representing creditors in consumer chapter 13's and 7's; did some time working for debtor's counsel and now do corporate bankruptcies (business restructuring). When needed I also assist our commercial law department with UCC/lien searches, filings and closings.

What's your educational background?

I have a paralegal certificate from the American Institute of Paralegals and a BS in Psychology from Cleveland State University.

Why did you decide to go into this profession?

I thought I would try it as a stepping stone to becoming an attorney and as it turned out, being a Paralegal, is in its own right, is a rewarding career.

What made you decide to become active in CAP?

I met some very influential women who shared the same ideas as to what we can do with this organization and where we can take it. Karen Santagata has been the best mentor and continues to be a great inspiration to me. I (we) are true believers that CAP can be a powerhouse for the legal community in Northeast Ohio.

Are you from Cleveland, and if not, where are you from?

I am a Cleveland girl through and through. I have lived on both the West and East sides and have become and will stay an Eastsider.

What do you do when you're not working?

When I'm not working (and after my chores are done) I play. I play volleyball, I play with my pets and I play with my friends. I have an eclectic group of friends so I can be doing anything from playing sports, visiting the museums or just talking over dinner/cocktails. Life is good!!!!

If you could have a perfect day, what would it be like?

The weather would be about 75 degrees (no humidity) and I would be hanging out in the park with all my favorite people.

Are you married, have children? Tell us about them.

No, I am not married. My children are the 4 legged kind: a dog (Rowan) and 2 cats (Akasha & Merrick).

continued on next page

Did you vacation last year, and if so, where'd you go?

I have a tendency to take “mini-vacations” (long weekends). Last summer my brother got an audition for Who Wants to be a Millionaire, so we spent the weekend in New York, which was absolutely fabulous. I love, love, love NY.

Where do you want to go this year?

I hope to spend some time in Sedona, Arizona, and back to New York for Christmas.

What are your goals for this coming year?

To continue helping CAP increase its membership, get involved in the community, oh, and get those CAPpy hours back!

What do you consider the major issue paralegals face today and how do you think it can be tackled?

The major issue paralegals face today is obtaining and maintaining paralegal positions in the legal community. If you are a paralegal, make yourself indispensable, become the go-to person. Do this by making sure your work is exemplary, volunteer to do things (even if it's not your job and/ or area of expertise) and always remember to be professional. If you are looking for a paralegal position, in today's market, it will take more than filling out an application and appearing at the interview. Who you know is a key element in obtaining the job you want. Networking is an ideal way to meet people and everyone who is a member of CAP has taken that first step in networking. The next step would be getting involved with CAP and/or the CMBA. There are a lot of opportunities/events that will connect you with attorneys and other paralegals. Not to get to hokey but everybody knows somebody.

Where are you working now, and what are your responsibilities?

Since I have become active in CAP it has become part of my life. I'm doing this for CAP, I'm doing that for CAP, I have to go here or there for CAP. So essentially it is CAP CAP CAP. One day one of the attorneys I work asked me what kind of hats we wear (he was being cute). I replied that as paralegals, we wear many different hats, that it all depended on what job we were doing. In essence, that is how my job as a Bankruptcy (Business Restructuring) Paralegal is. If we are filing a Chapter 11 bankruptcy, then I am gathering the information for the petition and first day motions, I'm assisting in the drafting of certain motions, and keeping everything organized. If we are pursuing an Unsecured Creditors Committee, I'm monitoring the docket and assisting the attorneys in getting an invitation to the “Beauty Contest.” I am very fortunate to work with a group of attorneys who have absolutely no problem in giving and trusting me with challenging and rewarding work. ■

Submitted by Claudia Teller

Inaction breeds doubt and fear. Action breeds confidence and courage. If you want to conquer fear, do not sit home

Inaction breeds doubt and fear. Action breeds confidence and courage. If you want to conquer fear, do not sit home and think about it. Go out and get busy.

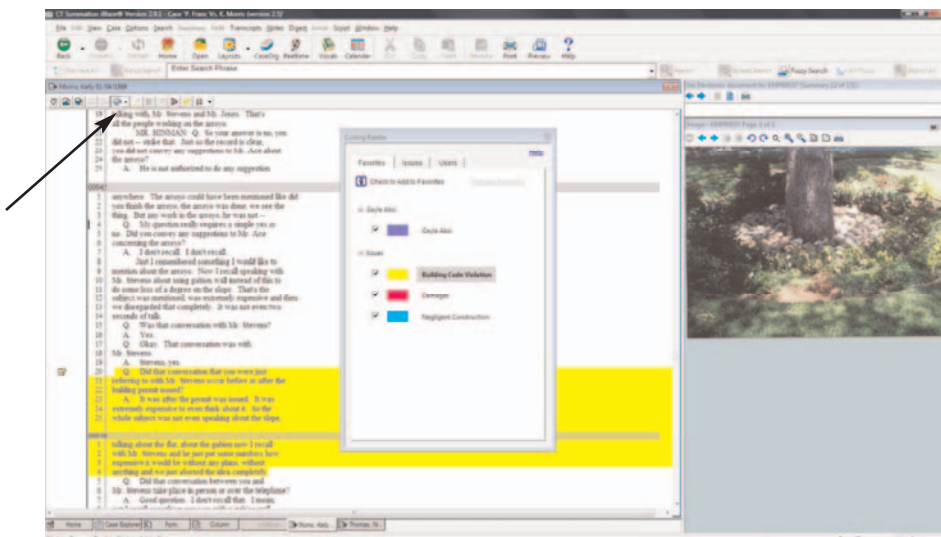
~Dale Carnegie

~Dale Carnegie

Online Highlighting of Transcripts Using CT Summation

One of the more recent new features in CT Summation is the highlighting feature in transcripts. Users of CT Summation have enjoyed the feature rich transcript module that includes robust searching a single transcript, groups or all transcripts, the ability to organize transcripts in folders (or groups), creating notes and deposition digests, and creating evidence links to various other case items such as images from within the database.

Highlighting in transcripts can be organized by user or by issue.

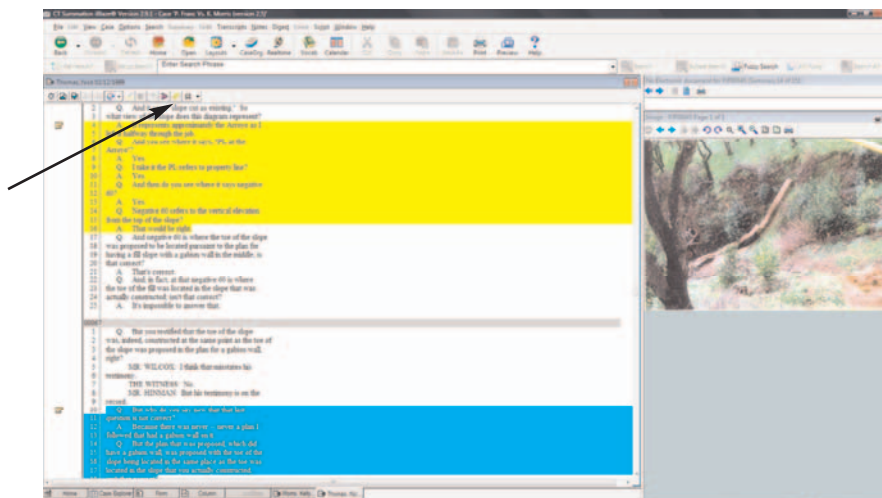


By right clicking on the *color palette* in the transcript window, a user can assign highlighted colors to users and/or legal issues. Once identified, users can review testimony, then highlight it with the color assigned. The highlighting appears on the transcripts for all users with access to the case.

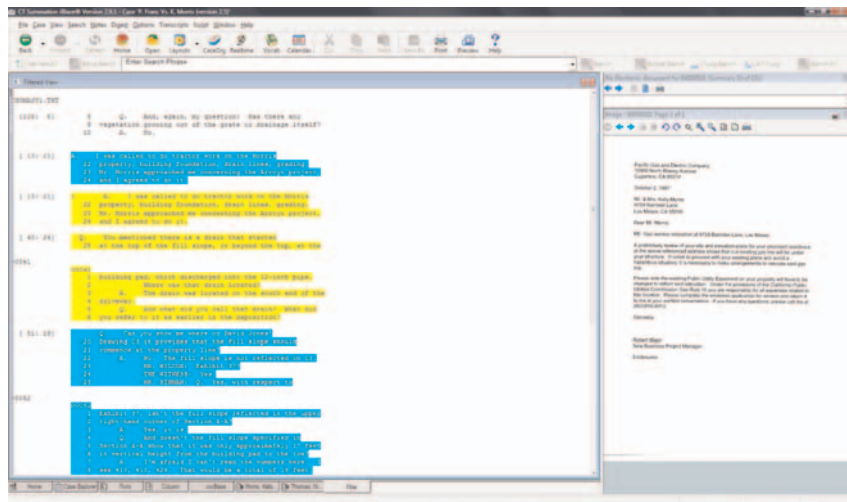
by Gayle Absi

Gayle Absi, the President of ABSI Legal Technology, Ltd. is a Cleveland based consultant that advises attorneys on using technology in the practice of law. She is a Summation Certified Trainer and has extensive experience in producing electronic records in litigation and designing and managing databases. Gayle has overseen complex software implementation including case management and multi-location software projects. She has managed large volume document-review teams using both Summation and web based tools. Gayle is the founder of the Cleveland Chapter of ASLP (Association of Litigation Support Professionals) and is currently serving as its President. Prior to starting ABSI Legal Technology, LTD., in 1999, she worked for seventeen years in the law department of British Petroleum p.l.c.

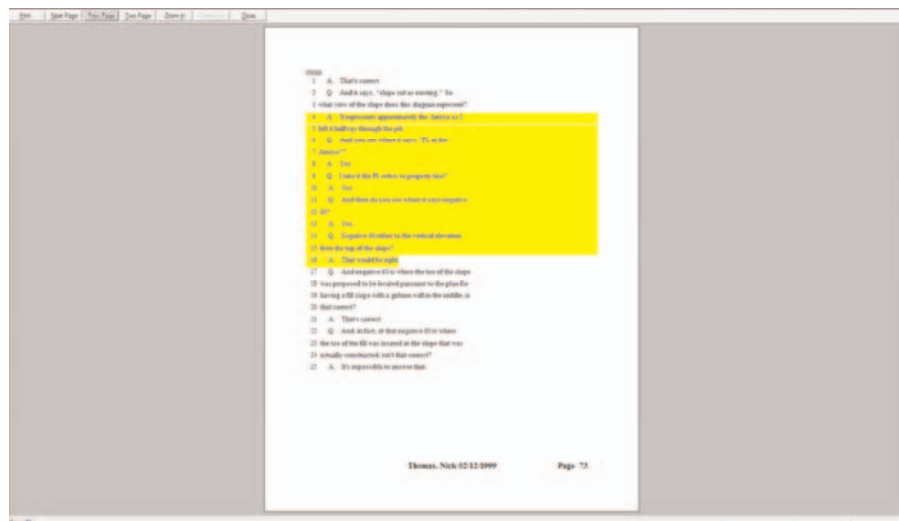
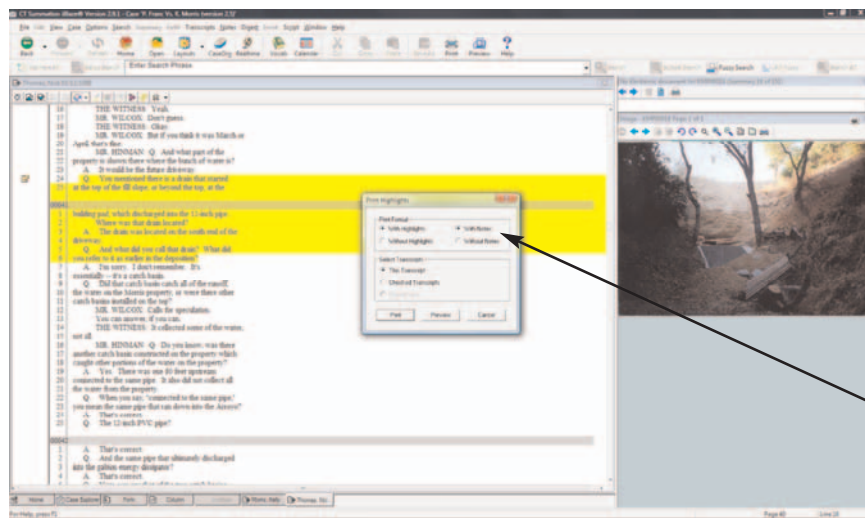
The legal team now has another online method available for transcript analysis. Benefits to online highlighting are that highlights are saved and available for all members of the team to see and use. Because highlighting can be color coded by issue or user, flexible current and future reporting is available as the case develops. Transcripts can be printed with or without the highlights and filtered reports showing only the highlighted testimony can also be printed.



Filtering reports can be generated using the highlighted work product. Filters can be run against a single transcript, a group or transcripts, or all transcripts. The filters can be for all identified issues or a subset as defined by the user.



Transcripts can be *printed with or without the transcripts highlights.*



Highlighting is another great tool to add to CT Summation’s list of features that help lawyers manage their cases. You’ll love the ability to easily assign colors to legal issues, but more importantly the flexible reporting (filters) that you have available using the highlighting as your case develops.

ABS Legal Technology, Ltd. is certified through the Women’s Business Enterprise Council (WBENC), the largest third-party certifier of businesses owned by women in the U. S. Visit us on the web at www.absilt.com. ■

Take Control of Your Career: How to Make the Recruiting Process Work for You

Every January, we are flooded with calls from legal professionals seeking new career opportunities. For many – especially those who have not been in the job market for some time – the stormy waters of the legal profession can be frustrating.

If this sounds familiar, do not panic. Now is not the time to blindly submit your résumé to every available opening. Why cede control of your career path to the whims of unfamiliar and often disinterested employers? Or worse, to opportunistic and unethical recruiting agencies that frequently place their own interests ahead of yours?

Instead, take a moment to carefully consider your options – and your objectives. Manage your career path as you would your money, or your health: understand the issue and the potential solutions, pay attention to the details, and contact a trusted and ethical professional for focused support.

A reputable legal recruiter will not submit your résumé for a position without your prior approval. Professional legal recruiters work around the clock to find the perfect match between a candidate and an employer. Our single mission is to help our clients meet their legal hiring needs.

Trusted legal recruiters forge mutually beneficial, lasting relationships with job seekers. We listen, because your objectives become our objectives. Our success is tied directly to yours. So we value and respect communication and commitment.

Moreover, a recruiter with specific legal expertise can present you for job openings in the best light, because she understands the intricacies of the profession and the substantive needs of law firms and corporate legal departments. The best legal recruiting agencies employ professionals with legal backgrounds to ensure your proper representation to a firm or corporation. As such, we vigilantly adhere to our code of recruiting ethics.

I compiled the following checklist for job seekers to reference before applying to any advertised job openings. You should carefully review this list before registering with any recruiting agency. Keep it handy, as it will be an invaluable resource in your job search.

1) **The best and brightest candidates want to work only with professional, discreet, ethical and reputable legal recruiting firms.** Be sure to check out the legal recruiting firm thoroughly before investing in a relationship. Look for recruiters who are respected, trusted, and well-connected in their field. A good place to start is the National Association of Legal Search Consultants (NALSC). If the recruiter you are considering is not a member, think twice. NALSC is a national association of professional legal recruiters with an established code of ethics that all members must honor.

2) **Make sure you contact an agency that specializes in legal recruiting.** There are many staffing agencies that claim to have legal openings, but really do not know the profession, or how to market you to a potential employer. Only a recruiter that specializes in the legal profession can properly understand the complexities of the position and how your skills match up. This enables them to present you to their clients in the best possible light. Most legal recruiting agencies employ recruiters that are attorneys or paralegals, so they can speak and act from experience.

3) **Do not blindly submit your résumé to job postings that do not identify the legal recruiting agency.** Many of these positions do not even exist. These fake positions are unethically posted so fly-by-night recruiters can hi-jack your résumé and recklessly distribute it. This makes you look desperate to potential employers. After receiving your résumé for the umpteenth time, most firms will simply ignore it. If you see a position that interests you, contact a reputable legal recruiter before blindly emailing your résumé. This is your career – take control.

4) **Make sure you tell the legal recruiter that you do not want your résumé submitted for a position without your prior approval.** This eliminates the chaos and confusion that was described above in #3. This is a very simple, but very important point to remember. The last thing you want is to invest hours of time working with a legal recruiter, only to learn that your target employer already has your résumé on file. If that happens, you will lose all the benefits of a powerful recruiter presentation.

by Shari Paglia

Shari Paglia is a Legal Recruiter with Major Legal Services. She can be reached at shari@majorlegalservices.com.

5) **Ask your recruiter what their résumé submission practices are.** A reputable recruiter will want to know where you wish your résumé to be submitted and follow your submission requirements. She will help you with directions, but will surely let you drive your car. So we put the horse before the cart: you tell us where and how. In the end, it benefits you and our clients to focus our collective efforts on those firms and positions you are actually interested in.

6) **Beware the “we can’t tell you” excuse.** Many legal recruiters will, quite properly, not identify a job in the initial call or job posting because they want to keep the information confidential until they determine if you are qualified and interested in the position. However, some less reputable agencies will tell you that they cannot reveal where your résumé is going – not because they’re being circumspect about interest and qualifications, but because they are using you to get themselves in front of more potential sources of income for themselves. By contrast, I may call you and say that I have a fantastic opening for a corporate paralegal at a local firm. Once we talk and I determine whether you are a fit, I would then reveal the firm’s name. After that, I obtain your permission to submit you for consideration. If a recruiter does not follow this process, you should not work with them! And NEVER blindly submit your résumé to job advertisements without speaking to the recruiter and finding out the name of the hiring firm or corporation.

7) **Get organized.** Make a list of all firms/corporations where your résumé has been submitted. In today’s tight job market, law firms and corporations are seeking professionals that are focused, organized and efficient. By having a list of where your résumé has been submitted, you can eliminate any multi-résumé-submission fiascos noted above. More importantly, you come across as being attentive to detail, a critical job requirement. Ethical legal recruiters will help you keep track and avoid embarrassing situations.

8) **Be patient and keep lines of communication open with your legal recruiter.** Easy to say, but hard to do. Remain patient, that is. Especially when you really want a new job. However, you must remain calm and trust that your legal recruiter is doing everything she can do to find you a perfect fit. We want to satisfy our clients with the best possible candidates, not the most candidates. Life is not about finding the most partners – friends, spouses, advisors – just the best ones. If a recruiter blindly sends your résumé to positions that you are not qualified for, your résumé will be frowned upon by the hiring personnel. Fortunately, you can control this: Remain in contact with your legal recruiter, and demand details. We are not interested in one-off placements; we prefer to develop lasting relationships that span entire legal careers. We work hard to find you the perfect job, whether it is your next one, or your last one. Steady, clear communication is the key to a satisfying relationship.

9) **Ensure that your recruiting firm employs a team approach.** Reputable legal recruiting firms have a team atmosphere to facilitate an effective hiring process sensitive to your needs. They are not collections of individual headhunters, but rather cohesive teams of like-minded professionals, united in the service of your career goals. In our case, you do not pay for our legal recruiting services. So no individual recruiter has a selfish income motivation. Instead, we work as a team to make sure our clients’ objectives are met. Internal, commission-based turf wars do not serve your interests. A team-oriented approach is your best bet.

10) **Take a strong ownership interest in your job search.** More important than any single item above, you must affirmatively manage the recruiting process. Empower yourself by outlining your objectives before the first call, and sticking to your game plan throughout the process. You will be surprised how easy it becomes once you proactively approach the job search and diligently navigate the journey with your recruiter. She will listen and learn, and ultimately you will benefit from the attention to details that you demand and she delivers.

You will find that once you make the initial step towards managing your career through a legal recruiter, the benefits are rewarding. The recruiter determines the best fit based on your direction, résumé and credentials, as well as your personality and other intangibles. She sees first-hand what type of asset you would be to a company, and is then able to present you in the best light to the firm or corporate legal department optimally suited for you. As a result, your objectives are met and your career is set in motion on your terms, not someone else’s.

As always, do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or would like to discuss any of the foregoing thoughts at greater length. We are here to help you. ■



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Next sessions start

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A SPAing Success

CAP's first event of 2009 was a "SPAing" success. Stacey Stuckert (Paralegal at Tucker Ellis & West, LLP by day, BeautiControl Spa Diva by night) had everyone melting after their pampering session and that melting continued with chocolate melted over potato chips, strawberries, cake and the other decadent delights. If you missed this Choco event (or are looking for your next Choco fix) keep an eye out for your invitation to Cady's Champagne & Chocolate Event scheduled for March 4, 2009 at the CMBA. Also, if you would like to schedule your own at-home or at-work relaxing Spa Escape, to pamper you and your family/friends/neighbors/colleagues, please contact Stacey at BeautiLicious@oh.rr.com!

•••••
by Christine Buddner

Christine Buddner is the Director of Membership and Marketing Coordinator.

Many, many thanks to following vendors for their contributions and support of this event: Major Legal Services, Inventus, Tackla & Associates, Record Express, LLC, C-Dox, Mehler & Hagestrom, Mariposa Publishing, and Fitch Reporting, Inc.! Remember, there is no better way to thank our supportive vendors then to call on them when you are in need of a service they offer! And as always, thanks to Ursuline College for continued support of CAP, their delicious chocolate treats and their hospitality which provided a beautiful and relaxing location. ■

FIVE HOT FITNESS CLASSES TO TRY

Looking for a good workout? Do you want to look good in a swimsuit for your spring break vacation? Or are you just trying to de-stress from the office? Here's some ideas:

SPINNING: Aerobic exercise on a spinning bike with motivating music and outdoor visualization. This exercise burns 450 calories in 45 minutes, tone legs and core, decrease body fat, and increase endurance and strength.

ZUMBA: Latin-based cardio dance class with emphasis on abdominals and hips. Burn 300 calories an hour and tone and decrease fat ratio.

CLASSICAL PILATES: Exercise with machines like the reformer, the barrel, and half barrel improves body tone, balance, posture, strength, and flexibility with movements that start from core to strengthen every part of the body.

•••••
by Claudia Taller

Claudia J. Taller is the Senior Corporate Paralegal at Squire, Sanders and Dempsey L.L.P.'s Cleveland office.

ALL BALL: Tones all parts of the body with large physioball to strengthen and sculpt and burn 300-500 calories an hour.

BELLY DANCING: The art of Middle Eastern belly dancing for fun and fitness tones legs, stomach, and buttocks and increase strength and flexibility in thighs and calves. Burn from 250-300 calories an hour. ■



CAP leadership

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cap newsletter

All newsletter submissions, ideas, and comments should be sent to: Claudia J. Taller at ctaller@ssd.com.

This is your monthly newsletter. We want to know what you, the members, would like to see each month. Do you want more "how to" information? More personal interviews? More details on programs that have already taken place? More news from the National Federation of Paralegal Associates and their policy? More news of what Cleveland-area paralegals are doing on a daily basis? Please call or email Claudia Taller with your suggestions or new items.

The deadline to submit materials for the April issue of the NewsCAPsule is March 16.

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*Board Position

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