

Southeastern Association of Legal Assistants - S.E.A.L.A.

# ParaLink

## New Officers Installed

The new officers for 2010-2012 were installed by the Honorable John E. Morse, Jr., Judge of the Superior Court of Chatham County at Skyler's Restaurant on January 28, 2010. The officers for 2010-2012 are as follows:

Mary Jo Stottlemire - President  
(Lasky Law Group)

Crystal Nichols, CP - Vice President  
(Oliver Maner LLP)

Lisa M. Shinaberry, CP - Secretary  
(Harris Penn & Lowry, LLP)

Donna Gilliland, CP - Treasurer  
(Oliver Maner LLP)

Eunice Bolen - NALA Liason  
(Bart, Meyer & Company, LLC)



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## Community Service Opportunities

### Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure

Team SEALA will be walking for the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure on April 17th. Mary Jo Stottlemire is Team Captain. If you are interested in joining our team, please email Mary Jo at [msstottlemire@laskylaw.com](mailto:msstottlemire@laskylaw.com).



### 2nd Annual SEALA Picnic

Once again SEALA will host a family picnic with food and games for everyone in the family. Please make plans to attend on May 1, 2010 and bring your family. Details will be announced shortly.

## President's Message – Mary Jo Stottlemire



*"Together, this is our organization..."*

*I hope all of you had a wonderful St. Patrick's Day and that you are enjoying the wonderful spring weather.*

*For all of you that missed our January meeting that was held at Skyler's Restaurant, we inducted our 2010-2011 officers and Judge John J. Morse conducted the swearing in of the officers. His assistant Tammy Mosley was also present. The officers for the 2010-2011 terms are: Mary Jo Stottlemire, President, Crystal Nichols, CP, Vice President, Donna Gilliland, CP, Treasurer, Lisa Shinaberry, CP, Secretary and Eunice Bolen, NALA Liaison.*

*Many of our members will be participating in the Susan G. Komen, Race for the Cure walk held in Savannah on April 17. SEALA is also*

*gearing up for the annual picnic that will be held on May 1.*

*Our Vice President and Educational Program Chairman, Crystal Nichols, CP, is hard at work planning SEALA's fall seminar, tentative dates and speakers are now being discussed and if the membership have any ideas on topics please let Crystal know.*

*The Executive Committee held a meeting in February to discuss how SEALA can become more active in the community and ways to solicit more members.*

*Our March meeting was held at the offices of Hunter Maclean. Discussion was held concerning the annual picnic and SEALA purchasing new shirts for the membership.*

*Mark your calendar for SEALA's next meeting to be held on Thursday, April 15. Location will be announced later.*

*In the meantime, if you have any concerns or want to become more involved in our association, please do not hesitate to call me.*

*See you on April 15*

*Mary Jo Stottlemire  
2010-2011 President*

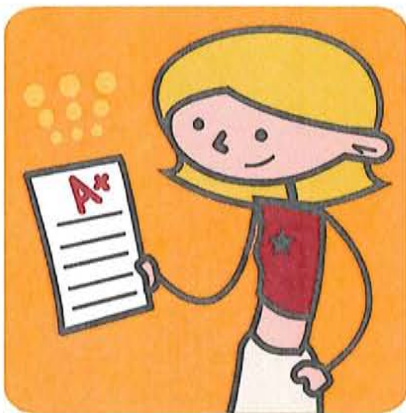
### Notice of Meeting—Thursday— April 15, 2010—12:30 p.m.

**Location: Oliver Maner LLP, 218 West State Street, Savannah, Georgia**

### CLE Opportunities

SEALA's Annual Seminar—  
Time and Date to be announced.

If anyone has a suggestions for speakers or vendors for this year's seminar or if you are interested in assisting with the planning of the seminar, please contact Crystal Nichols.



BIRTHDAYS	
<u>April:</u> Holly Ayala	04/09
<u>May:</u> Theresa Hylan Crystal Nichols Alesha Stanley	05/19 05/01 05/16
<u>June</u> Mary Jo Stottlemire	06/14





He that would live in peace  
and at ease, must not speak all  
he knows nor judge all he sees.

-Benjamin Franklin



### Basket Brigade 2009

SEALA held its annual Thanksgiving Basket Brigade in November 2009. SEALA members donate food for families in need and distribute the food to those families. Thank you to all SEALA members who donated food. Pictured L-R: Jacob Stottlemire, Katelyn Stottlemire, Mary Jo Stottlemire, Jennifer Frischen, Jerry May, Joyce Batterson, Donna Gilliland, Eunice Bolen, Lisa Shinaberry and Morgan Shinaberry.

## S.E.A.L.A. JOB BANK -

**No listings at this time.**

### DATES TO REMEMBER:

April:	May	JUNE
4 Easter Sunday	1 Annual SEALA Picnic	17 SEALA Meeting
15 SEALA Meeting	9 Mother's Day	20 Father's Day
17 Susan G. Koman, Race for the Cure	20 SEALA Meeting	
21 Administrative Professionals Day	31 Memorial Day (Observed)	

**We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, therefore, is not an act but a habit.**

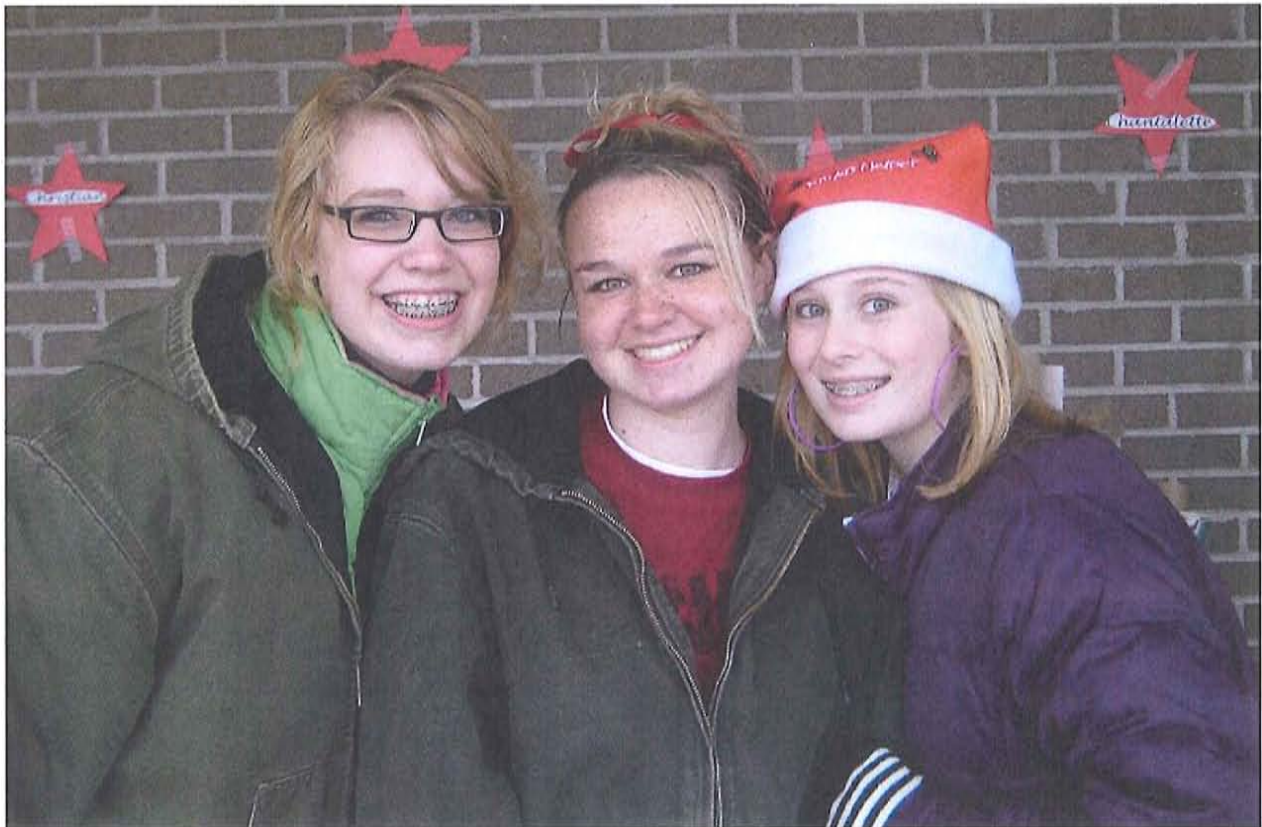
**-Aristotle**

## PHOTOGRAPHS FROM SEALA'S 2009 CHRISTMAS WISH

**Mary Jo Stottlemire  
And Eunice Bolen**



**Jingle (Jami Kea), Jangle (Libby Robertson) and Jolly (Morgan Shinaberry).  
Elves named by Mary Jo Stottlemire.**



**Jerry May**



**THANK YOU TO  
SEALA MEMBERS  
AND FRIENDS WHO  
ATTENDED THE  
CHRISTMAS WRAP.**

**Pictured L-R: Lisa  
Shinaberry, Jami Kea,  
Libby Robertson,  
Morgan Shinaberry,  
Eunice Bolen, Mary  
Jo Stottlemire, Sherry  
Oliver, Joyce Batter-  
son and Jerry May.**

## The Paralegal's Responsibility at Trial

The paralegal has many responsibilities at trial. When I first started working as a paralegal, I didn't understand the full range of my responsibilities at trial.

When I sat down on that bench in the courtroom for my first auto products trial, I was so excited to "watch" my attorneys present our case. What I didn't realize was that I wasn't going to be able to watch anything.

I soon realized that the three attorneys sitting at the table wanted me to gather exhibits for the next witness, take notes on the witness that was presently on the stand, pull a deposition, etc. The list went on and on and never seemed to stop. It was obvious I was not going to be able "watch" my client's story unfold in the courtroom.

I can't tell you how many times one of those three attorneys turned around and whispered the need for an exhibit, a legal pad, a pen and a highlighter. Thank goodness for that "trial box" I brought with me. Filled with every goody from the supply closet I could think of along with band aids, Tylenol, Motrin and TUMS. In all my years of going to trial, no one has asked me for the TUMS, but I've chewed through several packs by myself.

When the Judge recessed for lunch, I soon found out that I was responsible for taking the client to lunch or just being sure that the client was not alone during lunch. I don't usually eat lunch when I'm at trial (other than those TUMS) but I found myself taking the client to lunch and keeping her calm at every break and watching over her while she was in the hallway, and even going to the restroom with her. It was my responsibility to let her know that she shouldn't ride the elevator with a juror and she shouldn't talk to anyone (you never know who is in the Ladies Room when the client wants to rant about testimony from a witness).

During lunch break, the attorneys are going over what happened in the morning session and who will be taking the stand in the afternoon and discussing the presentation of evidence. So when the lunch break is over, there is yet more work to be done, witnesses to contact and documents to file. I am always in contact with my back-up person (who is at the office) with what needs to be brought to the courthouse and the schedule of witnesses. She is the one working directly with the couriers, witnesses and experts to be sure they are at the courthouse when they are needed. She assists me with ensuring that everything runs smoothly and gives me words of encouragement when I'm exhausted or frustrated over the happenings at trial.

Not only does the paralegal need to work with the attorneys at the table, but many times other attorneys from your firm or your co-counsel's firm will show up at trial to "watch". My experience has been that not many of them "watch" either, they are usually assisting in some fashion with the case being presented and I'm there to assist him or her with whatever is needed.

Always be sure that you (or your tech person) have scanners, printers, etc., at trial (in the courtroom and/or in our meeting room). You never know when you will need a document scanned, printed or copied at the last minute. If you don't have this equipment to bring with you, bring plenty of change to use the copier at the courthouse.

When my firm attends trial, we always "reserve" a meeting room somewhere around the courtroom. Most courtrooms have small rooms which they use for attorney conferences with clients. Our firm likes to put a claim on one of those rooms, where we can keep our demonstrative evidence, cases of bottled water, snacks and have a place close to the courtroom where the team can meet and brainstorm.

Another winning bit of advice for trial is to bring **snacks**. Oh yes, the day before trial starts, I'm at the nearest grocery store buying snack bars, power bars, trail mix, nuts, mints and cases and cases of bottled water. Now my attorneys come into our meeting room just to peruse the *Shinaberry Snack Bar*.

Over the years, I've discovered that the more organized I am, the more at ease my attorneys are and the more free time I have to sit back and "watch" the case come to life in front of the jury. Organization is key. The paralegal must be in control of the exhibits, the witnesses and the file. You may not be able to control everything that happens in the courtroom, but when your attorney knows that you are in control of the exhibits and the witnesses, trial will go much smoother for your attorney, your client and most of all YOU.

Paralegals are the Boy Scouts of the courtroom. The Boy Scout motto is "Be Prepared". So just remember that you are your firm's Boy Scout.

*Submitted by:*  
Lisa M. Shinaberry, CP  
Harris Penn & Lowry, LLP  
Savannah, GA

If you would like to submit an article for the *Paralink*, please contact Lisa Shinaberry [lisa@hpllegal.com](mailto:lisa@hpllegal.com). Thank you.

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Southeastern Association of Legal Assistants—  
S.E.A.L.A.

The Southeastern Association of Legal Assistants (SEALA) is a non-profit organization of legal assistants and other law-related professionals which provides activities on local, regional, and state-wide levels. PARALINK, published bi-monthly, is the official publication of SEALA.

SEALA also promotes the advancement of the legal assistant profession in the State of Georgia through encouragement of high ethical and professional standards and provides access to information and education for legal assistants, other legal professionals and especially for members of SEALA.

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The trouble with the rat race is that even if you win, you're still a rat.

- Lily Tomlin

**Wanted:**

Articles written by SEALA members or an attorney in your firm.

When submitting articles, please include a brief bio on the author.

Please submit all articles and bios to Lisa Shinaberry at [lisa@hpllegal.com](mailto:lisa@hpllegal.com)

The Paralink wants to promote your firm. If you would be interested in a feature celebrating your firm, please email Lisa at [lisa@hpllegal.com](mailto:lisa@hpllegal.com)

Please submit any "news" that you would like to share about yourself, your family or your firm to the Paralink. We welcome news of births, marriages, engagements, straight A's from your kids or grandkids, promotions at work, etc.

A new feature in the Paralink will be **SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERS**. If you would like to promote the charity that you are passionate about, please email Lisa. Also, if you know of a SEALA member who volunteers and want that person featured in the volunteer section, please email Lisa at [lisa@hpllegal.com](mailto:lisa@hpllegal.com)

**ALL SUBMISSIONS APPRECIATED**

