



**CALSS**

Colorado Association  
of  
Legal Support Staff

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**SOTA/DeNovo**

State of the Association and DeNovo

Your News Bulletin for  
Colorado Association of Legal Support Staff

2009-2010, Volume 6

August/September, 2010

*Message from the President*

***Ginny Schermerhorn***  
**CALSS President**

As I have served as President this past year I have learned several things I would like to pass on to you. The most important lesson is that I can and will make time to accomplish those tasks that are important to me, whether that task is personal or business-related in nature. Granted, I have needed reminding of deadlines related to some of these tasks on occasion. However, I enjoyed a sense of pride and accomplishment when I completed the task.

A second lesson I learned is that I do not need to be afraid to ask for assistance or advice in completing tasks. More often than not, the task is completed more efficiently and/or in less amount of time when I have asked for help. It pays to take advantage of all available resources. There is a saying which fits this lesson: "A problem shared is a problem halved".

Lastly (not the last of many lessons learned but the last I will share here) I learned that the bigger the task, the more important it is to take one step at a time. When you have a seemingly insurmountable task in front of you, break it down into sections and work on one at a time, asking for assistance as necessary. Before you know it, the task is completed

I would like to thank all of the CALSS Officers and Committee Chairs for helping accomplish the tasks of CALSS this year. I can hardly believe that my year as CALSS President is winding to a close. It has been my pleasure and honor to serve all of you. I thank each and every one of you for your support, patience and understanding. As the reins are turned over to Mark Donovan for 2010 - 2011, I trust you will give him the same support you have given me. I also trust you will continue to support CALSS. As you know by now, the theme for the Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the Colorado Association of Legal Support Staff is "Aim High". With each of our abilities, experience, knowledge, etc. there is no limit to what we together can accomplish!



## ANNUAL MEETING NEWS

The CALSS 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and Educational Conference will be held on Saturday, September 18, 2010, at the Holiday Inn Denver East-Stapleton. An informal reception in Martini's Bar in the hotel, followed by dinner out at a local restaurant, are Friday night's activities. Here is an opportunity to catch up with the doings of your CALSS friends!

If your summer has been stressful, plan to come to the annual meeting, chill out, relax and have fun. Come early so that you can take the time to do some shopping in the area, or visit the spa in the hotel for a massage or facial.

Whether your idea of a getaway is Grand Lake or Grand Junction, Breckenridge or Boston, you might be the lucky person to take along the High Sierra backpack which will be given away at 5 p.m., right after the last seminar. Every person who is registered for the seminars is automatically entered in the drawing to win the backpack, which contains a number of travel goodies, such as a cap, a travel diary, a paperback mystery novel involving an attorney for dogs, sun screen, protein bars, and other useful items. Don't miss out on the opportunity to win this prize!

Saturday will be a very full day, with meetings in the morning and seminars in the afternoon. Our speakers Saturday afternoon will be attorneys Troy Rackham, speaking on appellate litigation, and April McMurrey, who will be talking to us about the fine line we have to tread so as not to engage in the unauthorized practice of law. Both presentations should be very informative.

Be sure to visit the vendors during the morning breaks or at lunchtime, because when the seminars start at 1 p.m., the vendors will be leaving. The hotel staff will be using the time between the vendor fair and 6 p.m. to set up the room for our evening reception and banquet.

Saturday evening's reception will start at 6 p.m., with dinner to follow. This year we have intentionally not scheduled any entertainment during the banquet, to give you more time to visit and enjoy the company of your dinner companions. The hotel staff wants to wow us with their food, and the committee has chosen three fabulous entrees, Wild Mushroom Ravioli, Herb Crusted Salmon, and Chicken Oscar. There will be a few giveaways at the end of the banquet. The winners' names will be drawn from all those attending the banquet. We have planned what we hope is an educational and fun weekend for all of you. If you have never attended an annual meeting, then commit yourself to this one day event and see what the talk is all about. We are "aiming high" with this event, so let's have 100% attendance. See you all there.

Ann Salek  
Chair, CALSS 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and Educational Conference

### *Treasurer's Report*

*Carol Donahue*

Greetings CALSS Members ~ As I look at the calendar, it's hard to believe my two-year term as Treasurer is nearing its end. I owe great thanks to this Executive Committee as well as last year's for their constant commitment to making this journey a rewarding one for me. I also owe thanks to each member I've interacted with, you all are truly top-notch professionals. I can't express enough thanks to everyone who offered suggestions on ways the CALSS EC could improve communications and better serve our membership.



**Colorado Association of Legal Support Staff**  
**Fourteenth Annual Meeting and Educational Conference**  
**Friday, September 17, 2010**  
**Saturday, September 18, 2010**

*Holiday Inn Denver East-Stapleton*

***“AIM HIGH”***

*\*CLE Credits Applied for\**

<b>Friday, September 17, 2010</b>	
6 P.M.	Informal reception in Martini’s Bar located on the main floor of the hotel
7 P.M. - ?	Dinner and chat at local restaurant
<b>Saturday, September 18, 2010</b>	<b>BALLROOM</b> – on the lower level between stairs and elevators
8 a.m. - 9 a.m.	Registration
8 a.m. - 9 a.m.	Continental breakfast
8:45 a.m.	DELEGATE ORIENTATION in ballroom
8 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Hours when vendor exhibits are open
9 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	Annual Meeting
10:15 a.m. – 11 a.m.	Refreshment break / Executive Committee meeting
11:00 a.m. – 12 noon	First Board Meeting
12 noon – 1 p.m.	Lunch: Front Range BBQ
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Seminar – Troy R. Rackham, Esq., of McConnell Fleischner Houghtaling & Craigmile, LLC, “Appellate Litigation”
3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Refreshment break
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Seminar – April M. McMurrey, Esq., of the Colorado Supreme Court Office of Attorney Regulation Counsel, “The Fine Line Between Legitimate Support Staff Activities and the Unauthorized Practice of Law”
6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	Social hour with cash bar
7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.	Banquet and presentations

Come early, stay longer, to enjoy shopping at The Shops at Northfield Stapleton, Quebec Square at Stapleton, and East 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue Town Center.

## Registration Information

The registration fee covers all events on Saturday, September 18, 2010, from breakfast through the banquet, or any portion thereof which you may choose to attend. The registration fee for CALSS members is \$65.00. Non-members may attend all of the activities for \$95.00. Please mail registration form and fee, along with additional payment for any guests (check payable to **CALSS Annual Meeting Fund**) to:

Sherry McWethy  
323 West Drake Road, Suite 200  
Fort Collins, Colorado 80526

Deadline for registration is **August 31, 2010**.  
(Please note that the hotel guest room reservation deadline is **August 18, 2010**.)

If you have questions, please contact Sherry at (970) 498-9229 or [colocode3@frii.com](mailto:colocode3@frii.com).

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### REGISTRATION FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter/Member at Large \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: (w) \_\_\_\_\_ (h) \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership status (check all that apply)

- CALSS Member
- CALSS Officer
- CALSS Chairman
- Advisory Group Member
- Annual Meeting Delegate
- Annual Meeting Alternate Delegate
- I am attending my first Annual Meeting!***

Certification

- Certified Professional Legal Secretary
- Accredited Legal Secretary
- Certified Professional Secretary
- Certified Legal Assistant
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please check all that apply:

- I plan to attend Friday night's activities. I will attend:
- Saturday breakfast
- Annual Meeting
- First Board Meeting
- Front Range BBQ buffet lunch
- Seminar: "Appellate Litigation"
- Seminar: "The Fine Line Between Legitimate Support Staff Activities and the Unauthorized Practice of Law"
- Banquet (Please choose one entrée)

- Wild Mushroom Ravioli
- Herb Crusted Salmon (with vegetable rice pilaf)
- Chicken Oscar (with crabmeat and asparagus)

Saturday Night Banquet Guests @ \$40/each

\_\_\_\_\_ Wild Mushroom Ravioli  
\_\_\_\_\_ Herb Crusted Salmon  
\_\_\_\_\_ Chicken Oscar

My check in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

## NOMINATIONS REPORT

*Joyce Beach, Certified PLS,  
Nominating Committee Chair*

The following is the slate of nominees for CALSS officers for the fiscal year 2010-2011:

<b>President</b>	Mark Donovan, Mile High ALSS
<b>President-Elect</b>	Vacant
<b>Vice President</b>	Sherry McWethy, Larimer-Weld ALSS
<b>Secretary</b>	Virginia (Ginny) Schermerhorn, Mile High ALSS Cathy Vlasak, PLS, Larimer-Weld ALSS
<b>Treasurer</b>	Lisa Ritter, PLS, Larimer-Weld ALSS
<b>Parliamentarian</b>	Pauli Ingwersen, PLS, Member at Large

Mark Donovan as President-Elect automatically succeeds to the office of President. The Parliamentarian is appointed by the President. Therefore, no vote will be taken on these two offices. Additionally, the Bylaws allow any CALSS member to nominate, from the floor, a fellow CALSS member to any of the other positions on the Board prior to any vote.

### OFFICER NOMINEE BIOS

**LISA RITTER, PLS:** I was a member of the tri-level organization back in the mid-80s when it was NALS, CALS and the local chapters. I continued my membership when the organization changed to CALSS and local chapters. I have served on the local level for the Larimer County Association of Legal Support Staff as President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and CALS Representative. I held the office of Treasurer for CALSS from 1996 to 1998. I took a few years off and rejoined the Association last fall.

I am an analytical person and enjoy dealing with the duties involved in the Treasurer position. My goals are to keep the financial affairs of the Association in order and to assist the other board members in furthering communication and education of our members and others employed in the legal field.

On a personal note, I have lived in Fort Collins since 1975 and have three "kids" - Chewy, a 16-year-old pug; Kiddie, a 10-year-old American Eskimo; and Forest, a seven-inch Red Ear Slider turtle.

**SHERRY MCWETHY** is a native, born in Denver and raised in Loveland. She graduated *cum laude* from Adams State College in Alamosa, with three majors - Office Management (with an emphasis in legal secretary), French and German and a minor in English Literature. She has been in the legal field for most of the years following graduation and is currently the co-owner of Colorado Code Publishing Company (publishing municipal codes for municipalities) in Fort Collins. Sherry has been a member of CALSS since its inception in 1996. She served as Parliamentarian when Cathy Vlasak, PLS, presided as President, and is currently serving as Vice President of CALSS. She has also chaired, co-chaired and served on various CALSS committees throughout the years, including Annual Meeting, Guidelines and Ways & Means. Sherry has been a member of the Larimer-Weld Association of Legal Support staff and has been active at the local level as President, Secretary, CALSS Representative and Parliamentarian, along with being on various committees. Hoping to again serve on the EC this year, she plans to continue supporting legal education throughout the State.

*Continued on Next Page*

***Biographies of Officer Nominees***  
*(continued from previous page)*

**VIRGINIA L. (GINNY) SCHERMERHORN:** Born in Angola, Indiana on January 1, 1959. Education: Roberts Wesleyan College (B.S.W. 1980); Community College of Denver at Auraria (Paralegal Certificate 2000). I have been in the legal field since 1993. I have worked in Construction Defect Litigation for the past 5 years. I have been a member of Mile High Association of Legal Support Staff for at least 10 years. I have served as Treasurer for MHALSS. I have served as Secretary for CALSS in the past. Most recently, I served as the 2009-2010 President of CALSS. My goal is to continue to participate in and/or serve both MHALSS and CALSS as much as possible. I want to see the State organization and local chapters thrive as much as possible. I will support all officers and committee members to the best of my ability.

***A Report From the Mile High Chapter***

**Janet Price**

**Mile High ALSS Representative**

[jprice@familyatty.com](mailto:jprice@familyatty.com)

MHALSS held its annual meeting on Monday, August 9, 2010, and elected new officers to serve during 2010-2011:

President – Sherill Mullins

President-elect – Mark Donovan

Vice President – Ginny Lee

Treasurer – Ann Salek

Secretary – Jane Sprague

State Representative – Janet Price

Executive Advisor – Carol Donahue

Upcoming Programs:

September 13 – Marcia Keppy, Asset Awareness, “Keeping Track of Assets, Finding Unclaimed Wealth”

October 11 – Chad Gentry, Consumer Credit Counseling Services, Credit Counseling & You”

November 8 – Doug Cash, MBA, CFE, CFI, CFCI, Fraud Forensic Investigator

All CALSS members and their guests are welcome to attend the MHALSS monthly dinner meetings held the second Monday of every month at the Lakewood Elks Club, 1455 Newland Street, Lakewood, CO. Cost is \$17 for members; \$20 for non-member guests. Contact Janet Price at 720-879-3376 to make reservations.

**CATHY VLASAK, PLS:** I am a graduate of Aims Community College in Greeley with an associate’s degree in the legal secretary field. I have been a legal secretary/legal assistant for 20 plus years.

I have served as a president, vice president, secretary and treasurer (more than once on some of the positions) on the local level. On the state level, I was vice president, president-elect and president. I am now the current secretary.

I would like to retain the members that we have, get more of the newer members involved in committees and continue with CLEs and recruiting members.

***A Report from the Larimer-Weld Chapter***

***Sherry McWethy***

Congratulations to these newly elected officers of the Larimer-Weld Association of Legal Support Staff:

President—Sherri Meadors

Vice President—Paul Carstensen

Secretary—Kate Miller, PLS

Treasurer—Jan Knoll, PLS

CALSS Rep—Cheryl Elmann.

We’re looking forward to a great year with these people—a mix of experienced and novice people—for the Board.

***From Website Chair***

***Carol Donahue***

Once again, thank you for continuing to let me know when you encounter problems with the website. I apologize for any inconveniences you may have experienced and hope that you are finding our website a useful tool/resource. And, because I do appreciate that almost everything in life could benefit from improvements, please keep passing on suggestions concerning how the website could better serve you.

## ***President-Elect's Report***

**Mark Donovan,**  
President Elect

### Leading in a Really Interesting Time

Dear Fellow Leaders:

Its getting more interesting out there, isn't it? After 2+ years of a roller-coaster economy, myriad lay offs, restructuring and shifts in responsibilities, more and more is being asked of us. Raise your hands if you have fewer responsibilities than you had three years ago. I didn't think so.

Why am I even mentioning something so obvious to all of us? I have two points: take care of ourselves and take care of each other. Many places we work have become more rigid, less inviting, very focused on bottom lines and increasingly challenging. Given numerous layoffs, they have also become more lonely. Instead of having colleagues to bounce ideas with, the cubicle next door may be empty, or your co-worker may be so consumed with completing everything there is to do, they may not have time to talk like they used to.

One way we can help take care of ourselves is to be sure we have a safe outlet. Our chapter meetings and periodic CALSS meetings are one such safe outlet. We provide time for reality checks like: is anyone else swamped; are you struggling with an overloaded court docket; are the demands made on you getting worse while the pay stays the same? We also provide those friendships that are extra-important right now so you can get away, can have a meal together and can share frustrations in a safe place. Some may feel like you just can't get away to attend the Annual Meeting at Stapleton this year—too much to do, too many bills, etc. Help yourself by remembering that the boost you get from the Annual Meeting may be the perfect remedy for being overwhelmed. Getting away, taking a

We also have the responsibility to watch out for others. I've always wanted to see CALSS and our chapters and at-large memberships grow but I've never really asked myself why. Why should we want to grow? The answer is painfully simple for me: BECAUSE COLLEAGUES NEED US. Let's remember to watch out for each other and take care of each other. Take the time to return a phone call or, if someone looks a bit bewildered, be sure to reach out. As you visit the vendors and take breaks during the meeting be sure to connect with friends old and new. Remember, they are in the same boat we are.

As leaders we are all called on to watch for those who need us. CALSS and our individual chapters are our safe place. Let's be sure to create that safe place for our co-workers as well. See you at the Annual Meeting—you deserve it!!!



### ***Vice President's Report***

***Sherry McWethy***

It has been an exciting and very interesting year serving as Vice President. There is so much energy and so many resources within CALSS to draw upon. I believe that we, as an organization, can deal with any problems and issues and continue to reach our goals. Thank you for the opportunity to serve on the E.C.

I look forward to seeing everyone in Denver on September 17 and 18 for education, business, and, of course, fun.

***Some Helpful Reminders to Share with Your  
HR Department or Hiring Director***

*-excerpted from the "Denver  
Staffing and Employment News,  
June 2010"*

*Thanks to Connie Rossi, Mile High*

Signs are indicating that our sluggish economy is showing life. A survey by the Society for Human Resource Management reveals a potential problem waiting in the wings if the economy does return. According to the survey, a majority of human resources professionals believe that employee turnover will rise significantly once the job market improves. So, will your business be able to retain top employees once the economy returns?

**Turnover Rate**

The Bureau of National Affairs puts the average employee turnover at 14.4 percent. However, most human resources experts agree that number has dropped since the latest recession began. The weakened economy and job market have discouraged employees across nearly every industry and region of the country from pursuing other job opportunities.

**High Price of Turnover**

Most experts say the replacement cost for a departing employee is at least one-third of the employee's salary. Even at the current federal minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour, the cost to replace an employee would be \$4,976. If you had a staff of 20 employees all making minimum wage with a yearly 50 percent turnover, the replacement cost of your employee turnover would be \$49,764 annually. Plus, there's no simple way to measure how much it would cost you in sales lost, customer satisfaction and employee morale. If you could reduce your turnover rate to 25 percent, you would save \$24,882 a year over the old turnover rate. Think of how far those savings dollars could go toward implementing programs to retain your current employees.



**Employee Retention Tips**

Reducing employee turnover can have a significant and positive impact on your bottom line. Retaining crucial employees is critical to the long-term health and success of just about every business regardless of industry or size. So, here are 10 tips to retaining your best employees:

- 1. Create a positive work environment**-Have a workplace where conflict is the exception and not the rule. Positive environments always begin at the top and work their way down. Most people are more likely to leave bad managers before they do bad jobs.
- 2. Be Respectful**-Be respectful of employees at every turn. Treating each employee with kindness and dignity will bring forth loyalty to both their supervisors and the organization.
- 3. Clearly Explain Expectations**-Employees must know what is expected of them to succeed.
- 4. Allow For Honest Feedback**-Make sure you are constantly seeking feedback from your employees on what you could be doing better as an employer. Solicit and incorporate their ideas to improve company morale.
- 5. Provide Continuous Feedback**-Don't wait until performance evaluations to provide employee feedback. Make it a point of emphasis to provide positive comments every time you see or hear employees do something good.
- 6. Provide Ongoing Training**-Without proper training and tools to be successful, employees will leave. Offer to help further their career with continuing education classes and training seminars to develop skills and reinforce loyalty.
- 7. Encourage Team Building**-Encourage employees to make friends with coworkers by providing them team building opportunities both in and out of the office.
- 8. Shatter The Glass Ceiling**-Be sure that there is room for employees to experience professional growth within your organization.
- 9. Recognize Good Work**-Whether it's a financial bonus or just a small symbol of your appreciation, every employee desires to be acknowledged for a job well done.
- 10. Offer Valuable Perks**-In addition to offering a competitive salary, try to offer health coverage, retirement plans, disability coverage and stock options.

## COLORADO ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL SUPPORT STAFF

Membership Enrollment  
Fiscal Year: 2010 – 2011

New: \_\_\_\_\_  
Renewal: \_\_\_\_\_ Member since \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_ ALSS  
Member at Large \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_  
Certification: ALS \_\_\_\_\_ PLS \_\_\_\_\_ CLA \_\_\_\_\_ CPS \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Work: Employer: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Home: Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred mailing address: Work \_\_\_\_\_ Home \_\_\_\_\_  
Preferred e-mail address: Work \_\_\_\_\_ Home \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_ How long in legal profession: \_\_\_\_\_  
Specialty/Area of Expertise: \_\_\_\_\_

	State Association Dues	Local Chapter Dues	Total Dues
<p><u>Active</u>: Individuals licensed to practice law, or engaged as secretaries, legal assistants, paralegals, administrators, or clerks in any law office; or employed in the trust department of a bank or trust company or any public or private entity directly engaged in work of a legal nature.</p>	\$40.00	\$ _____	\$ _____
<p><u>Active Life</u>: Individuals who have been Active members of this Association or any other professional association for legal support staff for a minimum of twenty (20) consecutive years, Active Life Members retain the same rights and privileges as Active Members.</p>	\$25.00	\$ _____	\$ _____
<p><u>Associate</u>: Students or other interested individuals not directly employed in the legal field. Associate Members may not hold office or vote.</p>	\$25.00	\$ _____	\$ _____
<p><u>Secondary</u>: Individuals who are members in good standing of any other CALSS-affiliated chapter or members-at-large. Secondary members may only vote, hold office, or serve as a delegate or alternate to any State meeting as a member of their primary chapter.</p>	N/A	\$ _____	\$ _____

I have completed the foregoing Membership Enrollment and wish to become a member of/renew my membership in the COLORADO ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL SUPPORT STAFF and the local affiliate chapter indicated above. Enclosed are my combined state and local dues in the total amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (see page 2 for amount of local chapter dues).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

PLEASE MAIL COMPLETED FORM, ALONG WITH YOUR DUES CHECK PAYABLE  
TO YOUR LOCAL CHAPTER, TO THE APPROPRIATE ADDRESS (SEE PAGE 2).  
MEMBERS-AT-LARGE SUBMIT DUES DIRECTLY TO  
CALSS, P.O. BOX 2835, DENVER, CO 80201-2835.

**Local Chapter Dues Information**

**NOTE: Please make checks payable to your local chapter  
and submit to the appropriate chapter treasurer listed below.**

**Larimer-Weld ALSS**

**Dues: \$10 (Active)**  
\$5 (Active Life/Associate)  
Remit to: Janet Knoll  
2025 Harmony Dr.  
Fort Collins, CO 80525  
970.223.2827 (home)  
wdmknoll@msn.com

**Members-at-Large**

**No local chapter dues;**  
dues are remitted directly to CALSS  
Remit to: CALSS  
P. O. Box 2835  
Denver, CO 80201-2835

**Mile High ALSS**

**Dues: \$25 (Active)**  
**\$15 (Active Life/Associate)**  
Remit to: Lynn Loner  
MHALSS Treasurer  
P.O. Box 2835  
Denver, CO 80201-2835

*Outstanding Member Committee Report*

*Sherill Mullins and Carol Donahue, Co-Chairs*

It will be our distinct pleasure to present this year's Outstanding Member of the Year Award at the annual meeting banquet. It's not too soon to start looking around and making mental notes about who YOU would like to nominate next year. Thanks for a great year and we'll let you know more at the banquet.

***HAPPY BIRTHDAY—Some, very belatedly--TO OUR FRIENDS:***

**Connie Rossi**, June 4; **Cathy Hansen**, June 20; **Paula Phillips**, June 26; **Debbie Heglin**, July 16; **Jodi Morse**, July 20; **Ruth Rogge**, July 20; **Tava Davis**, July 22; **Carol Donahue**, July 22; **Karen Smith**, July 24; **Sherry McWethy**, July 28; **Teresa Chamberlain**, July 31; **Shawna Tennyson**, August 9; **Vicki Lee**, September 16; **Jeanette Snider**, September 17; **Joyce Beach**, September 20; and **Meg Jeffrey**, September 27.