

**GULF COAST ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL SUPPORT  
PROFESSIONALS  
FEBRUARY 2008 NEWSLETTER**

**President's Message**

There was no speaker at the January meeting due to revisions to the Bylaws, Standing Rules, and Manual of Policy and Procedure. Jeannie has been working very hard, and the new Bylaws, SR, and MPP are available for any member wishing to receive a copy.

Henrietta has been working hard on the new Legal Directories, and they are ready to be sold. Please call Henri at 864-7663, or email her at [carannah@bellsouth.net](mailto:carannah@bellsouth.net). Theresa Wilson, PP, PLS also has directories in her office - Aultman Tyner.

Even though we have lost members, we are still holding an 86% retention rate as of January 31, 2008. Now, we have a new member sponsored by Laura Green, PP, PLS. Please welcome Melissa Townsley to the Association. Melissa works at Bryant, Dukes and Blakeslee.

We also have two new student members, Amy Rogers and Wendy Rouse sponsored by Julia Verchinski, ALS, as well as several prospective members. I wish to thank Laura Green, PP, PLS, and Julia Verchinski, ALS, for sponsoring the new members. Please welcome Amy and Wendy. Keep up the good work!

Rita F. Smith, PLS, President

"Listening is a magnetic and strange thing, a creative force. When we really listen to people there is an alternating current, and this recharges us so that we never get tired of each other. We are constantly being re-created." --  
*Brenda Ueland*

The following members were present at the January 2008, meeting:

Sherry Clark  
Karen Kuhn, PP, PLS  
Rita Smith, PLS  
Juanita Hathorn  
Jeannie Shaw, PP, PLS  
Theresa Wilson, PP, PLS  
Nancy Gates, PP, PLS  
Henrietta Caranna  
Billie Ruddick, PP, PLS  
Julia Verchinski, ALS  
Karen Pyle, ALS

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**



As far as our records show, there are no birthdays in February. However, if your birthday is in February, please contact Rita Smith at [MSPLSLeeGal@cableone.net](mailto:MSPLSLeeGal@cableone.net) or Laura Green at [lgreen@bryantdukes.com](mailto:lgreen@bryantdukes.com).

**HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY**

## The History of Valentine

Every February, across the country, candy, flowers, and gifts are exchanged between loved ones, all in the name of St. Valentine. But who is this mysterious saint and why do we celebrate this holiday? The history of Valentine's Day -- and its patron saint -- is shrouded in mystery. But we do know that February has long been a month of romance. St. Valentine's Day, as we know it today, contains vestiges of both Christian and ancient Roman tradition. So, who was Saint Valentine and how did he become associated with this ancient rite? Today, the Catholic Church recognizes at least three different saints named Valentine or Valentinus, all of whom were martyred.

One legend contends that Valentine was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. When Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families, he outlawed marriage for young men -- his crop of potential soldiers. Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentine's actions were discovered, Claudius ordered that he be put to death.

Other stories suggest that Valentine may have been killed for attempting to help Christians escape harsh Roman prisons where they were often beaten and tortured. According to one legend, Valentine actually sent the first 'valentine' greeting himself. While in prison, it is believed that Valentine fell in love with a young girl -- who may have been his jailor's daughter --

who visited him during his confinement. Before his death, it is alleged that he wrote her a letter, which he signed 'From your Valentine,' an expression that is still in use today. Although the truth behind the Valentine legends is murky, the stories certainly emphasize his appeal as a sympathetic, heroic, and, most importantly, romantic figure. It's no surprise that by the Middle Ages, Valentine was one of the most popular saints in England and France.

While some believe that Valentine's Day is celebrated in the middle of February to commemorate the anniversary of Valentine's death or burial -- which probably occurred around 270 A.D -- others claim that the Christian church may have decided to celebrate Valentine's feast day in the middle of February in an effort to 'christianize' celebrations of the pagan Lupercalia festival. In ancient Rome, February was the official beginning of spring and was considered a time for purification. Houses were ritually cleansed by sweeping them out and then sprinkling salt early 1700s. In the 1840s, Esther A. Howland began to sell the first mass-produced valentines in America.

According to the Greeting Card Association, an estimated one billion valentine cards are sent each year, making Valentine's Day the second largest card-sending holiday of the year. (An estimated 2.6 billion cards are sent for Christmas.)

“Tell them you love them before it is too late.”

Approximately 85 percent of all valentines are purchased by women. In addition to the United States, Valentine's Day is celebrated in Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom, France, and Australia.

Valentine greetings were popular as far back as the Middle Ages (written Valentine's didn't begin to appear until after 1400), and the oldest known Valentine card is on display at the British Museum. The first commercial Valentine's Day greeting cards produced in the U.S. were created in the 1840s by Esther A. Howland. Howland, known as the Mother of the Valentine, made elaborate creations with real lace, ribbons and colorful pictures known as "scrap".

Special thanks to [American Greetings](#).

#### February Meeting

Our speaker for February 14, 2008, will be Jon Thornburg regarding new bankruptcy laws.

We will also receive a report from Karen Kuhn, PP, PLS, on the February meeting. Our reports of what we learned from the CLE at the state meeting will occur at the March meeting. The Board meeting will continue on March 15, 2008, at the home of Misty Lewis, PP, PLS.

#### BOSSSES NIGHT

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR BOSSSES NIGHT. IT WILL BE HELD MARCH 27, 2008, AT SALUTE ON HIGHWAY 90.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

NALS Professional Conference in Tulsa, OK March 6-11, 2008. NALS Annual Education Conference will be held in Norfolk, VA, September 11-14, 2008, at Norfolk Marriott Waterside.

#### CODE OF ETHICS

Members of NALS are bound by the objectives of this Association, and the standards of conduct required of the legal profession. Every member shall:

Encourage respect for the law and the administration of justice.

Observe privileged communications and confidential information

Promote and exemplify high standards of loyalty, cooperation and courtesy,

Perform all duties of the profession with integrity and competence; and

Pursue a high order of professional attainment.

Early sunset is coming right now,  
And no one but God knows why  
and how.

And as the moon jumps through  
the sky,

To make the sunlight become  
nigh,

No one but God truly knows  
Where the early sunset is and  
where it goes.

By Brooke Trochesset