



JACKSON LEGAL PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION



Newsletter

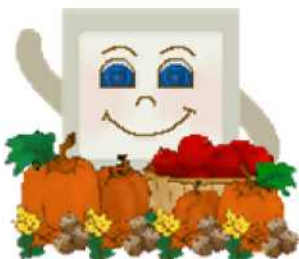
Volume 17 November 2005

Message from the President



It is August 29, 2005. The entire southeast has been keeping a watch on the monster storm named Katrina. We've watched it grow from a numbered storm of interest into one of the largest, strongest storms in this country's recorded history. The Gulf Coast is under mandatory evacuation from parts of Florida to New Orleans, Louisiana. We are being told that hurricane force winds will be coming as far north as Jackson, Mississippi, maybe further. Before this day, when people spoke of killer hurricanes, the first name out of their mouths was Camille. This day, Camille was replaced by the storm named Katrina.

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Monthly Meeting..

Our meetings usually fall on the 4th Wednesday of the month; however, because of the holidays, our November and December luncheons will be on a different date. The **November meeting is rescheduled for Wednesday, November 16, 2005**, at noon at Mardi Gras Restaurant.



Wedding Anniversaries...

- 24 Carolyn & Jerry Barrett
- 28 Lisa May & Bobby Jones
- 30 Kim & Ross Hartford



November Birthdays...

- 2 Sandra Inman, PLS
- 3 Pam Clark
- 4 Reba Peden, PP, PLS
- 7 Lynn J. Gibbs
- 9 Dunal M. McCurdy
- 10 Emily Kamber
- 12 Brenda Bryant
- 18 Cheryl H. Rushton
- 25 Dorothy Aldridge
Rebecca Usry
- 30 Marilyn Mills
Nancy J. Vosika

Welcome New Members...

Tina Richardson, Temp Staff, is our new student member; and **Lindsay Woodrow** and **Angela Coassar** with Henjum Goucher Reporting Services, L.P. are new members. We are glad to welcome all of you. If you would like to serve on a committee, Reba Peden, PP, PLS, will be glad to send you a committee preference sheet.



Board Meeting...

The Board Meeting will be held on **Tuesday, November 15, 2005**, at the **Mississippi Court of Appeals located at 656 North State Street** at 12:00 noon. Parking for the court is behind the building on the Northwest Corner of North and George Streets. You will need to enter the court at the back door and let the security guard know you have a meeting in the conference room on the first floor.



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Katrina roared onto the Gulf Coast of Mississippi and Louisiana with such force and such high surges that it destroyed everything in its path. Many lives were lost that day and in the days following due to the storm. Many homes and businesses that were on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and in the New Orleans, Louisiana, area aren't there anymore. The storm was felt all over Mississippi. We learned all about primitive camping and getting to know your neighbors. We learned about standing in line for ice and water and a lot of us discovered MREs (Meals Ready to Eat). There was no power, no water, no phones.

Even the cell phones were down for several days (and this was in the Jackson area).

Thousands of citizens were displaced. Many families were separated from their loved ones and some are still trying to be reunited. One little girl in particular I know about because I have received calls from the Centers for Missing and Exploited Children and several individuals from all over the country who were hoping that she was my niece who was listed on the missing list for a while. She is believed to be a two-year-old, mixed race child whose name is Taylor and she is believed to be from New Orleans.

This storm broke homes, businesses and bodies, but it never broke the spirit of our people. As soon as the electricity and phones were back on in Jackson and I was able to go into the office, I checked my email and the first email I opened was from Tammy Shatwell Mullins at NALS wanting any information I had on our members in the path of Katrina. Our Region 6 Director, Julie Abernathy, PP, PLS, also contacted me requesting information. Next was Betty Wells, PP, PLS, in Austin, Texas, wanting to know any news I had on any of our Gulf Coast ladies and what she could do to help. Betty and Bruce Wells sent eight \$25 Wal-Mart Cards to me right away to be distributed to those in need. The next one was from Verne Aiyela, PP, PLS, from Detroit, Michigan, a Mississippi secondary member, wanting to

know what she and her chapter could do to help. Verne got a call from Julie Abernathy telling her of a need for pull-ups for one of Metro's members who was caring for her two-year-old grandchild and Julie and Verne each sent a huge box of pull-ups by Federal Express to that member who, due to the storm, could not get to a store to buy them for her grandchild whom she was caring for. Then came Helene Woods, PP, PLS, from Houston, Texas, saying what can we do to help. Metro received Wal-Mart cards from the El Paso, Texas, chapter of NALS, and the list goes on and on and on. I spent the first week at work crying most of the time because of the generosity of our Sisters-in-Law around the country.

I received calls wanting me to set up a fund at a bank or administer a fund through the association for funds to be donated to our NALS family members in need. We discovered, however, that this could not be done due to IRS regulations. That is when NALS stepped up to the plate and formed the NALS Katrina Fund, a tax deductible fund for our members who are in need. NALS also set up the Katrina Information Center on the NALS Community Bulletin Board which helped us keep up with where and how our members were.

During the time we were collecting clothing and stuff for our Gulf Coast ladies, I got a call from Diane Roark, PLS, at Wise Carter Child & Caraway in Jackson and she said one of



her attorneys had heard about our upcoming trip to the coast and wanted to know if we would like to take along some new athletic wear from Prince Athletic. We said sure, send it on. She said no, you will have to pick it up and you will need an SUV or something similar to hold it all. Of course, we said, hey, no problem. I just called Cheryl Wadsworth, PP, PLS, and said, Cheryl, can you go by the Courthouse Raquet Club and pick up some sportswear for our trip to the coast this weekend and she said, sure. Then I told her how much. Cheryl had to keep the athletic wear in her SUV for the rest of the week because the bedroom I was using to store all of the items collected from JLPA and MLPA members as well as others from several of the law firms in Jackson, had already spilled into the hallway.

I spoke with several of the members from the Gulf Coast Association of Legal Support Professionals, but my main contact on the Mississippi Gulf Coast through all of this was Misty Lewis, PP, PLS, and during one of our nightly talks on the cell phone, I asked, what do you guys really need the most, other than cash and clothing? Misty's reply was fresh meat, eggs, cheese, books, cards, and board games. Well, we weren't able to funnel cash through our association treasury because of those pesky IRS regulations so we had to come up with another plan. There was no regulation that says an individual cannot buy groceries and give them to another individual, so, a bunch of

individuals got together and over about a two-week period, gathered clothing, books, games, cleaning supplies, and pooled their "grocery money" and then on Friday night, Anita Campbell, PP, PLS, an individual who happens to be a member of Metro LPA, and I, on behalf of the individuals of JLPA, went shopping for groceries. First we hit Wal-Mart and mounded up two buggies full of ground beef, chicken, steaks, sausage, ham steaks, hot dogs, and cheese. Thinking we had probably spent close to our almost \$800 that was collected for "groceries", we headed to the check out stand. The poor cashier almost had a stroke. When she finished ringing up the order, we had only spent just under \$400. We then headed over to Kroger where we again filled two buggies with meat, eggs, and cheese, spending the remainder of the "grocery money." AND, we saved over \$119 by using my Kroger Card so we actually got about \$500 worth of groceries at Kroger. It was a good thing my freezer was empty from being spoiled by the storm.

My husband was so good about all this, of course, he knows some of the ladies from the coast and wanted to help as well. He took his 16 foot trailer, added 4 foot sides all around it and helped to load everything up that he had helped to tote into the house for the last two weeks. We plastered signs on the truck, trailer, and Anita's car that said, "NALS Katrina Relief, Sisters-in-Law helping Sisters-in-Law

and left the house Saturday morning, October 1, 2005, headed south with a full trailer and stuff in Anita's trunk. When we arrived at Karen Kuhn, PP, PLS's office (which her boss, Mr. Pringle, was gracious enough to allow us to use as a distribution center), we were met with smiles and tears by the members of GCALSP. Everyone was so grateful for everything we brought down. They were especially grateful for the thoughtfulness of their NALS Sisters (and brothers) from around the country who had expressed their concerns and sent items and gift cards for them. All items that were not taken by the members present, were re-loaded onto the trailer and taken to Misty's house where they were to stay for about a week to give other members a chance to come by and "shop" and then any leftovers were to be delivered to a homeless shelter for others in need. It was a wonderful experience that I hope we never have to repeat.

Reba Peden, PP, PLS
JLPA President



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