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FROM OUR PRESIDENT SANDY J. LAVENDER, CHRS

“My Greatest Challenge”

Like many of the other members of the Executive Committee, I had to think for a very long time on what my greatest challenge is or was, and I have to admit, I started this article many times over. Each day brought new challenges at work, home, NALS, trying to help a friend who lost her husband suddenly, even my father's recent illness and how to help him and his wife cope with the challenges they were facing. I'd start a thought, think about what I wanted to say, and then hit the backspace key to remove. Over this past weekend, though, my biggest challenge thus far became very clear to me.

I have always been the kind of person who was a “pleaser”. I never wanted to have conflict, I wanted everyone happy. I always thought it was up to me to make that happen. As a small child, and even as a teenager, I rarely went against the grain. I was the “good girl”. I was fearful of disappointing others, especially those closest to me. I stayed to myself, I did what I was supposed to do (well, most of the time), and went through life at a very even pace.

I went to school, came home, did my chores, did my homework, and rarely questioned any direction that my parents or other adults gave me. After I entered into adulthood, I remained the same way. For some, that path works. For me, for a while, it did.

Until I started raising teenagers.

Yes, teenagers....4 of them. All with different personalities, different goals, different opinions and definitely different tactics in how they navigate through life.

Opposition? Yes, there's plenty. It's very foreign to me because I remember my childhood and how different things were for me at

their age. I did what I was told and there was no discussion. Sometimes I wish they were more like me, and then at the same time, I am so thankful that they aren't. They are strong, independent individuals who know what they want. Do they always want what's best? Absolutely not. Do my husband and I try to get them to choose a different path if we think they are headed in the wrong direction? Absolutely. There are many nights in the Lavender household where discussions are heated and tension is high. However, at the end of the day, after we all say goodnight to one another, Jim and I sit back and are thankful that our children are strong enough to know what they want out of life as they chart their own course. When they were younger and following everyone else's lead, we used to challenge them by asking them if they were "wolves" or "sheep". Wolves lead the pack, and sheep just follow. Over the last few years, I have worked very hard at trying to lead by example by taking on leadership roles at work and with NALS. Admittedly, it has been very difficult to do because most of the time, I am still that awkward girl who still wants to please everyone.

Most recently I learned that this is impossible. I can't please everyone, I can only do my best at any given task. I can lead by example, but no matter how hard I try, there will still be some who are not pleased with the outcome. Now, at 47 years old, I think I finally get it. Maybe I can be a "wolf". My children are teaching ME something. (Don't tell them I said that, though.)



PRESIDENT-ELECT JANET R. VANDENBERG, ALS

"My Greatest Challenge"

"My Greatest Challenge" is the theme our state president gave us for this article. Personally, I have encountered many challenges (professional and personal) over the years, and some challenges were more intense and challenging than others. However my faith and trust in God has gotten me through and given me the opportunity to move forward and

accomplish things I would have never thought I could have done without having that faith.

Oh no, some are probably saying, **what is she getting at, or where is she going?** I am going back to 1985 when I started in the legal profession and was living in Big Rapids. There was a fair share of attorneys practicing in the Big Rapids area (some as sole practitioners and others in larger establishments) but there was never any mention of any organization(s) for legal support professionals. So in 1988 when I moved to Petoskey, I was given an opportunity to see what this organization was all about after two local NALS members invited me to a meeting in Charlevoix. Twenty-three years later as a NALS member, I have worked in a sole practitioner's office doing elder law work, worked in the civil division of the District Court, briefly worked as an executive secretary for an interior design firm, earned my ALS certification, and currently as the executive assistant to a nursing home administrator, preparing board minutes, policies and procedures, that are governed by state and federal laws, etc. Without my NALS membership I would not have accomplishing any of these challenges and opportunities.

Membership in NALS is something that I believe greatly benefits all of us in some way or another. As most of you know, NALS has had a new logo for about a year now, and those words are **ENGAGE, INSPIRE, ENHANCE, PROMOTE** and as a member how would you describe those words? To me, **Engage** = to involve, participate; **Inspire** = to motivate or to influence; **Enhance** = to make greater; and **Promote** = to rise to a higher position or further growth. All of these words expand on the benefits we receive being a member of the multi-level association, with legal education, certification, and membership opportunities.

However, as we are all aware, membership in NALS does cost. With the current financial crisis across the United States, and especially here in Michigan, I believe wholeheartedly that the economic turndown we are dealing with across this state has become a challenge for many of our members. The economy is not only a factor, but many of our members are single individuals,

who might have young children at home, spouses possibly serving in the military, widows, retirees, etc. and it is very difficult to make “ends meet” when the dollar does not go as far as it used to. With the rise in cost for health care, medicine, utilities, food, gasoline, etc. we sometimes have to make cuts. Sometimes we can still afford our membership dues, but very possibly cuts would include attending quarterly seminars, annual and regional conferences. Having to pay for overnight accommodations, meals, and other travel costs, would up those figures. It could also affect how we further our education and earn our certifications, if that is important to us. But overall, **all members** should have that opportunity, if they so desire, to reap from the benefits available to all our members such as membership, attending board meetings, seminars, annual meetings on the state, regional and national levels, etc. Not all members are fortunate to have their dues paid by their employers as some of us do.

Recently I thought about when I first joined the tri-level association, and the number of members who attended the quarterly board meetings and/or annual state educational conferences/meetings. For our annual conferences, I can remember in 1990 when we used to start on Thursdays for leadership training and ended up on Sunday mornings. The last few years we do not start until Friday and end on Saturday night. Yes, the Executive Committee does meet on Thursday before annual meeting, but usually everyone is headed home by early Sunday. The total membership in Michigan used to be close to 500+ members, and was a time that everyone looked forward each year to renewing old friendships, make new ones, and mingle with those who mentored us through the years. Today our membership across the state is less than 300 and it has become a crunch time for many. What can we afford, what do we need to eliminate, how can we earn the hours we need for certification or re-certification, will our employers assist or not? Just a few questions that are asked regularly and are topics or items of great concern to many are regularly addressed.

So how can our members, including the executive committee, our chapter directors / alternates, committee chairs / committee members and even our members-at-large take this challenge and try and help our association resolve these issues? Are we willing to jeopardize our membership in NALS by not joining together and working cohesively on these challenges? Can we find ways to cut expenses that would lead to lower registration and/or hotel costs? Can we find ways to raise money from advertising in our quarterly publication, possibly the brochure, website, etc. to help? I know we like to go to the metropolitan areas that have some of the greatest hotels, etc., but we might have to look at alternatives. To keep these fees low, we have to make sure we have a specific number of attendees -- and if that doesn't exist, how can we make a profit. Think positively about this, but as a seasoned member, I do not see how our student members, retired members, individual members, including our members at large, who pay everything out of their own pockets, can continue. I believe it would be better to face this challenge now than to keep plugging along the way we have and not look for positive avenues to rectify those challenges.

We have decreased the registration fee for our quarterly seminars in an attempt to keep all costs to a reasonable amount -- and it seems to have worked. We also have so many well-educated members (current and retired) that have such a wealth of information that could possibly be a part of a panel discussion to bring us up-to-date on the issues at hand. For leadership training we utilized talented individuals such as Kathleen Amirante, Sharon Smith, Ruth DeMaria, to name a few, and a mock trial of past presidents was done in 2005. At Crystal Mountain last year, we utilized different individuals in a panel discussion on Medical Marijuana. Perhaps we could attempt to get some of the state employees from the attorney general's office, legislative branch, etc., to speak to our organization. In turn this might give us the option of encouraging their staff to become members. If we don't look outside the box to attract new members and/or keep existing

members, our membership statewide is going to continue to dwindle!

A quote from John Maxwell, which hits close to home for me, is as follows: ***“A leader is not great because of his or her power, but because of his or her ability to empower others. Leadership is developed, not discovered, and to be a leader you must be a team player.”*** So can the EC look outside the box and see what changes can be made? So then I ask this question to ALL our members: ***What is important to you as a member of the tri-level association?*** Please let the executive committee know your thoughts. These issues can be addressed and become a part of the *Sustainability Plan* including the operating plans that the executive committee discusses and reviews at least annually.



EXECUTIVE SECRETARY LYNN PHILP

My Biggest Challenge . . . Personally

It all began on Wednesday, June 5, 2005, when my dad was scheduled to have a full knee replacement at the West Branch Hospital. We didn't expect anything out of the ordinary. My brother and I were at the hospital with our mom during the surgery. Dad was out within three hours or so, everything seemed normal. We even went golfing that afternoon. He seemed to be in good shape a couple days later too and that Saturday, my brother and I decided it would be okay for us to head home.

On Sunday morning, Mom called to let me know Dad was in ICU because he was having an irregular heartbeat but that the doctors and nurses were monitoring him. I asked my mom if she wanted me to return up north but she said no. Later that afternoon, he was out of ICU and back into a normal hospital room.

On Monday morning, at work, my sister Denise called me in tears and obviously hysterical. As soon as I heard her voice like that, I went into

hysterics as well and immediately started crying, not knowing what she was going to tell me. My dad was back in ICU and in a coma. I immediately drove myself home and called my husband Steve along the way. He left work, we grabbed some clothes and headed to the West Branch hospital.

Apparently, on Sunday night, my dad had gas really bad and thought that if he went to the bathroom, he might feel better. Let me premise this first by saying that the average person takes 12 breaths per minute. My Dad was taking 60 breaths per minute at this point, and had ripped out his own catheter. The doctors and nurses at this point thought they'd better intubate him immediately to regulate his breathing and sedate him so they could determine what was going on.

During this time, we were all at our parents' house. My Mom was a wreck, as well as all of us kids, all five of us. (Yep, we're Catholic.) My brother is a great man. As we huddled around my Dad in ICU, he would say the prayers. He's so good at that, God bless him. Greg knew exactly what to say.

For 35 days, my Dad was in a sedated coma. We didn't know why. We didn't know when he would be out of the coma. And we didn't know what was wrong with him. For 35 days, he was on a ventilator. Typically, patients aren't allowed to be on ventilators for more than 7 days because they become dependent on it. My dad became dependent on that ventilator. A few times the nurses tried to remove it from him but he wouldn't breathe on his own.

I spent that first week with my mom. Her voice was so hoarse from telling all her friends and parishioners what had happened with my dad. One of us kids ended up relaying everything to Pastor Denise so she could explain what was happening to people who contacted her.

Once near the end of those 35 days, the doctors decided they would no longer keep my dad under sedation. It takes a very long time for the sedation to wear off. Mom and all of us kids were there when we thought Dad would be

“coming to,” but he was still on the ventilator. The nurses told us that my dad could hear everything we were saying to him while he was in the coma, but he didn’t remember any of it later.

At West Branch, the doctors decided that Dad needed a tracheotomy in order to wean him off the ventilator. Knowing this was going to happen was very difficult to deal with, let alone everything else my Dad had been through. We (meaning Mom and my siblings) all agreed to the tracheotomy. When Dad regained consciousness after the tracheotomy, things were much better, or so we thought. The hardest part with him being on the trach was his begging for water. He couldn’t have any. His voice was barely there because the ventilator damaged his throat. He wrote notes to us that just read “water,” and we couldn’t do anything about it. I don’t recall how long he had the trach, but it was for a month, if I remember correctly.

The most difficult part for me during this whole ordeal was one weekend in August that summer. I have a hard time telling people about this weekend because it really upset me and still does to think about it. Dad wasn’t eating food yet, still being fed intravenously. He was also sharing a room this particular weekend with an elderly man that I could only guess was having kidney dialysis based on the machine set up in the room. Dad had been talking gibberish all weekend long and he didn’t know who any of us were. I remember being there with Mom and I just totally broke down. I couldn’t take it anymore, seeing my dad in that state finally broke me. My mom is one of, if not THE strongest women I know after having gone through this whole ordeal. She was definitely the stronger person that weekend. The thought kept going through my mind, “my dad is a vegetable.” I was so upset that whole weekend and cried all night long, I could barely sleep knowing my dad’s current condition. That morning my eyes were nearly swollen shut from all the crying I had done the previous day. We questioned the doctors about the liquids they were feeding my Dad and I even remember Googling “Glucerna” and one of the side effects

was confusion. Needless to say, that was probably the roughest weekend of my life and I never care to relive it.

Of course, the doctors reassured us that he was under the best care. I have a new found respect for nurses and the jobs that they do every day. The care my dad received from them at both hospitals was immeasurable. I will also say this about small hospitals—I don’t think that the ICU wards at most hospitals allow so many visitors as my Dad had at any given time AND at any hour of the day. I believe the most they would permit is immediate family, but they allowed a few Judges in that my Dad knew well and I thank them for that.

I also don’t have a lot of experience with churches and pastors and such, even though I was raised Catholic, but Pastor Denise and the parishioners at my parents’ church were definitely a great source of support through all of this. Pastor Denise visited my Dad in ICU every couple of days. I remember being there with Mom and Dad during the Fourth of July weekend and Pastor Denise came to visit. She prayed and sang quite a few hymns for him while Mom and I sat in the room and cried. It was beautiful. I can’t express how much Pastor Denise has meant to my family.

And the parishioners—well, they came together and had a spaghetti dinner benefit to raise money to build a handicap-accessible ramp for my parents’ home so that Dad could eventually come home. And he did. After 268 days in the hospital, he finally came home.

In the years since, Dad never walked until about April 2011 when he was in a Tender Care unit. He was recovering from other minor surgery to remove a cyst on his back and he worked his tail off to walk; and now he does. This past summer he even got outside and mowed some of the lawn! Crazy, I know. I thought so too.

And that has been my biggest challenge, personally.



CERTIFICATION/EDUCATION DIRECTOR

RENEE STOUT, PP, PLS

My Greatest Challenge

My greatest challenge has been change. They say we are basically the people we will be by the time we enter kindergarten. I am not so sure.

As a child, I grew up in an abusive home. Watching people I love get hurt changed who I was. I had a choice; I could either follow in my parents' footsteps and be a victim, or I could learn from their mistakes and stop the cycle. I chose to stop the cycle. I am a better person for this.

My mother died when I was 20. I did not make this choice and did not realize it would change who I am. There are so many reminders, there is pain, there are the "what if's", and there is no choice; it changed who I am. I lost some of my joy in life. I am not a better person for this.

I got married months after my mother died to my best friend. He has been there for me since I was 16. I learned how to love, how to be a team, and how to compromise. I had the support I needed to become a strong, independent person. I am a better person for this.

I became the mother of two boys. Each changed who I am because they are very different people and need very different approaches to help guide them through life. My first child was so easy in every way – respectful, adorable, and kind as a child. As he went through becoming a man, he changed and became independent and rather broody. My youngest son was the opposite – a handful from the beginning. He was sick all the time, defiant, and angry. As he became a young man, he became loving and respectful. They are both wonderful people now, and I learned how to help both of them find their way. They bring joy to my life. I am a better person for this.

I had a horrible year in 2006. I got into a car accident and then got an infection that almost killed me. I had to learn how to deal with health issues and memory trouble. I know I am not the same person for this.

I lost a job that I had for almost 20 years. This caused issues with trust, loyalty, and finances. This changed my self-esteem. I am not a better person for that.

I have a new job that I love. I am learning new things almost every day. I am a better person for this.

I have learned that through thick or thin, I have my NALS sisters-in-law who help me, lean on me, and laugh and cry with me. We volunteer together and have fun together. My NALS pals have changed my perspective when I need a little help. I am a better person for this.

Who I am and what I need have changed many times, and this evolution has been tough. Change is a journey and adapting to change has been my greatest challenge.



MARKETING DIRECTOR VICKI BALLINGER, PLS

"My Greatest Challenge"

We all have been challenged during our lives. Some people have few challenges during their life. Others struggle for years on end. Some of us share challenges, while others bear the challenge alone. What may be easy for one person to deal with, can be horribly difficult for someone else. Whatever our challenges are, they are something we strive to overcome. If we are not successful the first time, we try again and again. We persevere.

I suffered through some classic teenage challenges; moving to a new town, trying to make friends at a new school, living in a home with one parent, being one of the "smart" kids

(can be a stigma, honest), having “zero” athletic ability, and being a natural klutz to boot.

We must remember that sometimes good things come from being challenged. The military helped me stay physically fit in my 20s, and provided me with training that started me on a career path that lasted a lifetime. I have traveled across the country. And I brought three smart, beautiful people into this world.

Most of us have experienced the challenges that marriage, parenthood, step-families, and even simple cohabitation may present. Add to these, the daily challenges in our work. Given all there is to choose from, it is difficult to pick my greatest challenge, but I think I have come up with one.

My greatest challenge is finding time to do the things **I WANT** to do. I do have time to myself, of course. Mark says I “dawdle.” He does not understand that downtime is not dawdling. Yes, I spend a little time waking up in the morning, and I spend a little time transitioning from office mode when I arrive at home in the evening. Yet, when I am at home, it seems like I never sit down. There are so many other things I want to do, though. I have stacks of books I want to read. I want to cook for friends, and do some holiday crafting. Most of all I would love to have the time to sit and write. There is a great story yet to be told, and with movie rights...well, it's a goal anyway.

So how do I embrace this challenge? Some people would say that I need to learn to say “no.” What can I say? I am cursed with a generous nature. I've been told that I am a giver, and it's likely that there is a measure of rescuer mixed in. I give away too much of myself. Most of what I give away is my time, but time is valuable. How much time do you have for yourself today? The rescuer doesn't worry about time, only about taking care of something or someone that needs help. As I get older, it is getting easier to “say no,” but acting on the impulse has taken an emotional toll over the years. I don't see it as a fault. I prefer to think of it as my little contribution to the human race, even if it is illogical (thank

you, Mr. Spock). Time will come, and peace of mind with it. Meanwhile, I am sustained by the hope that my efforts are making someone happy or that someone is at least benefiting from them in some way.

When it comes right down to it, I believe that each challenge we encounter is yet another lesson in life, and I am up to the challenge. Are you?



MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR TERESA M. GARBER, PP, PLS

"I Can Only Get Stronger"

Life is full of challenges. Face challenges, and life becomes interesting and helps one grow in character. Hide from challenges, and one loses valuable wisdom. Challenges can be anything from losing 10 pounds to losing a loved one. What seems a mere nuisance to some can look like Mount Everest to others. Again, challenges are everywhere. You can choose to run away. I choose, however, to press on. After all, I can only become stronger. I have faced many challenges this year (divorce, health issues, parents' bankruptcy, financial, etc.), but these pale in comparison to what I describe below.

My biggest challenge has been adjusting to my son's Asperger's syndrome diagnosis. For those of you who do not know what this is, it is on the high-functioning end of the autism spectrum. You have more than likely seen the commercials on television that say that 1 in 110 children are diagnosed with autism. That number may seem a little far-fetched. However, there were four other children in my son's elementary school that we knew of with some form of autism. Even in his taekwondo class there are three other kids with autism. My son is now in middle school, and he knows of a support group for students with autism. Believe me, just because it is not in your family does not mean it is not prevalent.

While every person with autism displays different characteristics, there are a lot of similarities. For

kids with Asperger's syndrome, some of the characteristics include hand-flapping, rocking, odd ways of playing with toys, speaking in "little professor-ese," having an intense interest in only one or a small amount of subjects, poor eye contact, an inability to understand everyday social cues, etc. Most children diagnosed with autism are boys. Many children with Asperger's syndrome also have ADHD, as does my son. This disorder was discovered in the 1940s, but has only been studied intently just within the past decade. It is now being speculated that many famous people had Asperger's syndrome, including Albert Einstein and Thomas Jefferson. It is not known if autism is genetic or a product of environment, and there is a lot of heated debate on the subject of vaccines and their role in autism. There are no medications to treat the disorder, and there is no known cure (also a heated debate).

My son, Jeffery, was diagnosed when he was six years old. We never had any problems until kindergarten. Of course, hindsight is 20/20. As I look back at old home videos, I now see the signs. The hand-flapping started when he was around 2. He never really "played" with toys. When he was much younger, he would line items up—anything he could get his hands on. I have pictures of my kitchen counter with a line of food products from the pantry, and it was a very neat, straight line. He did the same with toy cars, blocks, stuffed animals, anything. He was able to recite things he had heard, not just the words, but in the same tone of voice as the original person making the statement as if he was a playback of a recording. I have a video of my son at 3 years old sitting on the kitchen floor with his favorite book on his lap (I read it to him every night before bed) reading the book. Could he read? No, but he had every word memorized. And not just the words, what pages the words were on and how I expressed each word when I would read. When he was 3 a fire department visited his daycare center. He has been hooked ever since. Everything he did, talked about, read, played with, or watched on television revolved around fire trucks. He was only five years old and could tell our neighborhood firefighters that it was a Y

apparatus that they hooked to the fire hydrant to get two different hoses hooked up to the same spout at the same time (needless to say, the firefighters were very impressed, and I had to stay sharp on my own knowledge of firefighting). He is almost 13 now, and he still wants to be a firefighter, and he talks about it a lot.

As Jeffery grew older, I found myself acting as his daily interpreter. I had to explain to him why a girl was mad at the "funny" name he called her or why that boy did not want to play with his fire truck, as well as explaining to others what Jeffery was talking about and trying to keep him on track in a conversation. I found myself doing that with family members as well, which was the worst. There have been some family members who have not been as patient and understanding as I would have hoped, and it breaks my heart and angers me. It is not that they do not love Jeffery, it is that they do not understand and do not want to take the time to try.

Kindergarten is when the problems began to reveal themselves. We received no word from his teacher until the end of October at conferences. The first words out of her mouth were, "Jeff is very unique. I think he should be tested." I fought with this teacher for months, mostly because she was rude and could not give me even a guess as to what she felt the problem was. All the while Jeffery became more miserable. I finally conceded and took him to a social worker, who made the initial diagnosis. She gave us a referral to a child psychiatrist. However, child psychiatrists are few and far between in West Michigan, so we would not get in to see him for six months. In the meantime, we were referred to a neuropsychologist for a neuropsychological exam. That gave us official diagnosis #2 of Asperger's. When we finally made it to the child psychiatrist, we received the third official Asperger's diagnosis. Of course, by now Jeffery was in first grade.

My hopes and dreams for this child were shattered. I grieved for that child's future. I worried a lot about who would take care of Jeffery if something bad happened to me. And I worried about what his adult life would be like.

After a couple of months, I decided that I could not spend my life weeping for my son. I had to help him become a healthy, educated, happy adult; I was just going to have to put more effort into it than I thought.

We started working with the social worker immediately. When we were able to finally see the psychiatrist, we started on a drug regimen to handle the ADHD issue. We immediately began working with Jeffery's school to get him the special education services that he needed (occupational therapy, speech therapy, reading help, etc.). I grabbed dozens of books to help me better understand what we were dealing with. As Jeffery got older, we started engaging him in extracurricular activities so that he could work on his social skills. He loved bowling, and he was pretty good at it. We then discovered taekwondo through a physical therapist. That has made a world of difference. He not only is becoming tuned in with how his body moves, but he is working with others and many times in a leadership role (he is even a first degree black belt now). I have gotten in touch with other parents of kids with autism for guidance into the middle school transition. We are working with his current psychologist on getting him involved in a social group.

As I said earlier, this can only make me stronger, and I believe it has. Yes, I am vigilant (and you can call me a "helicopter mom" if you want) about every aspect of my son's life and am still there as his interpreter. I have become a strong advocate for my son, and at times a vicious pit bull. I became a stronger role model for Jeffery in my efforts to better his life. I have taken on battles with teachers, care providers, even family and other children; making a few enemies along the way, but opening the eyes of others. With the help of my parents, we act as his best friends. It is difficult to balance the parental role with a friend role, and I know that it is not the best parenting plan. However, Jeffery simply does not do well with kids his own age; he only does well with adults and children under the age of 10.

Yet, I also see the world with different glasses. I enjoy the innocence that Jeffery brings to every situation. I have learned about subjects I never thought I would (fire trucks, shipwrecks, dogs, autism). I definitely have learned that it is not about what you do not have, but about being happy with what you do and enjoying the smallest of things (I never thought a bowl of macaroni and cheese could be received with such fanfare). Even though I thought a great future for Jeffery would never be realized, I now know that he has a lot of potential. He may not become a fire fighter, but I bet he would make a great computer operator or architect or veterinarian or author. I think he would even be happy working at a factory that makes fire extinguishers. And with all of this, I am still living a life I want to live. I have a great job, I hang out with fantastic friends, I pursue my interests, and I get to work for a great organization that is NALS. It is a balancing act, and sometimes someone is disappointed that I am not doing something for them at a certain time. However, I do what is right by God, Jeffery, and me and work hard to keep it that way. I am becoming stronger every day in facing this challenge.

"The struggle of life is one of our greatest blessings. It makes us patient, sensitive, and Godlike. It teaches us that although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it."

—Helen Keller



IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT BEVERLY A. BISHOP, PLS

My Greatest Challenge

One of the duties of a NALS of Michigan officer is submitting an article to *The Official Record* each quarter. This, in itself, is very challenging to come up with interesting topics every time. During the year that Roxann Repasy was our president, she, along with the rest of the Executive Committee at that time, made this somewhat easier by picking topics ahead of time to write about. I continued that practice last year,

and President Sandy is following that tradition as well.

That being said, it is still very hard to write an interesting article every time. So in NALS land, my greatest challenge is coming up with enough to write about each subject given to make it interesting for you to read.

I have had several other “challenges/obstacles” in my life. Some are too personal to write about. They would include the unexpected death of my father, our grandson, and my failed marriage. However, I was faced with an incident two years ago that proved to be my greatest challenge.

In early October 2009, I fell down a flight of stairs and broke my neck (the C-1 vertebra). I had no idea the neck was broken until the CT scan proved it. My first thoughts were that I would not be able to attend the NALS National Conference in Anaheim, California, the following week, but I would do everything in my power to fly to Hawaii to meet my brother and sister-in-law for a vacation that had been planned for a year. However, the doctor had other ideas. He didn't say “no” to Hawaii, but he said I would be very uncomfortable. I understood what that meant when he fitted me with a very tight, very constricting, body brace! I understood even more about traveling on my ride home from Munson Hospital in Traverse City in our car. I had a shot for pain before leaving the hospital and was told to stop in two hours and take more pain medication just to get me home.

Since it was late when we arrived home, I couldn't wait to go to bed. That was not going to happen. We have a recliner chair in the lower level of our home, so my husband carried that chair upstairs so I could sleep. That was my “bed” for the next four months. The chair was put in our bedroom so my husband, Barry, could hear me during the night and could help me if necessary.

My next big challenge: getting to the bathroom. Because the brace was big and made me stand “at attention”, it was hard to get my balance. Barry would help me out of the recliner and into

the bathroom. Once finished, it was getting back into that chair and trying to get comfortable.

Next came showering and washing my hair! I had to get into another type of brace for this activity, which was waterproof. Fortunately, we have a very large walk-in shower. Barry would get in there with me, wash me, shampoo my hair and rinse me and my hair with me standing straight up. I could not bend my head down like I normally would do to rinse my hair. And what normally took five minutes was now a major task taking up to 15 minutes. I won't even go into shaving my legs!

Getting dressed was another major challenge. For the first two weeks I stayed in my bathrobe. It was too much to get dressed every day. When I did dress, Barry had to do everything from putting on my underclothing, socks, slacks/jeans, and finding something big enough to go around that brace. He did cut some old shirts at the neck to be able to go around the neck and chin portion of the brace. I bought extra large sweaters that buttoned in the front. I could not get anything over my head.

Eating proved to be as funny as it was challenging. I would forget about the large chin protector and start to put food in my mouth. Well, it usually ended up in my lap or on the table. I had to drink through a straw (hot and cold beverages), and I had to tuck a large napkin in the chin protector to keep me from collecting the bits of food that didn't fall on the table. Another challenge was remembering to bend at the waist instead of the neck when I needed to see where I was stepping or when something fell and I tried to pick it up.

Needless to say, I was totally dependent on my husband who helped me in all aspects of that recovery until I was able to get out of the brace 3 ½ months later. Even though I turned to him for just about everything, he didn't lessen my worth. When I tried to do something on my own, he stood by to see if I could do it without harming myself. If I couldn't do it, I accepted it and waited a while before trying again. If I could do it, we celebrated together.

After three weeks at home, I was given the OK to return to work part-time. After all, I could sit at my desk and type, I could answer the phone, and I could work on files if someone carried the heavy ones to my office. My weight restrictions was nothing over five pounds. We were short-handed at that time, so I knew it was important to have another person in our busy office. I had chosen the hours of 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., mainly because it was very difficult and time consuming to get me showered and dressed in the morning. Since my husband had to help with those activities and drive me to and from work, those hours seemed to be ideal for both of us since he also was working. Barry drove me to our administrative and legal offices to give the good news.

When I first injured myself, my boss said for me to not worry about work, but come back when I felt able to do so. This boss I refer to is the general manager, for whom I was the executive assistant to (not the attorneys I also worked for or the five other directors that I did work for). When I met with him and explained I had been cleared to return to work for the hours stated, he made a statement to me that I will never forget. He said, "You are of no use to me if you cannot be here a full day. If I need you to make an appointment for me, I don't want to wait until 9:30 to do it. So until you are out of that brace and able to put in a full day's work, you may as well stay home". I sat there stunned because I had never been told by any person I worked for in my 45 year career that I was of no use to them. I knew I could be of service to my department even with the restrictions.

I then did something I have never done in all my years of working. I told him he was wrong and shut his office door so I could speak my mind. When I was finished, he held his ground, saying I could come in if I wanted to but I would not be doing anything for him. He would continue to utilize the staff secretary for his work and even when I was in the office, I was not to answer his phone. My parting comment to him was that I would be in on Monday, would do everything I was capable of doing for the attorneys and the

other five directors and would do it with dignity. He would not make me feel unworthy.

I did return to work that Monday, and it was a definite challenge for me not to assist with his assignments when I knew the staff secretary was swamped. (He had made it clear to her that I was not to help with any of his work – did I say he was stubborn?) But I did what I do best, give any assignment 100%. Even though I was only there five hours a day, my two attorneys and the other directors appreciated every minute of my time. I held my head high and didn't let his comments affect my performance or my attitude.

By the time I was out of my brace and back to work full time, we had hired another staff secretary who was mostly assigned to him. I did assist in the training since I was the senior staff person. I continued to supervise the staff secretaries, perform my legal duties as a legal assistant, provide support to all of the directors, and other assignments that came my way. My general manager boss spoke highly of me at my retirement party. I wonder if he ever thought twice about what he said to me back then. I don't think so.

I know there are people out there that are in a much worse state than I was. Mine was only temporary, where others might be for life. I have a deep respect for anyone facing challenges like that. My experience gave me a better outlook on life. It humbled me. Even though I consider myself a happy person, I find more joy in each day now.

Some of you might think my greatest challenge was dealing with the restrictions of that brace, but the issue with my boss proved to be a bigger challenge (or obstacle) that I dealt with. I overcame the challenge of the restrictions of the brace and the inconsiderate boss, but as I mentioned earlier in this article, it continues to be a great challenge to me to come up with something interesting to write about every quarter, even when a topic is given.



PARLIAMENTARIAN KATHLEEN KLISH

“My Greatest Challenge”

This is an extremely difficult article to write because I feel as if I have been very blessed throughout my life. I have been fortunate in my career – or shall we say careers – to have been associated with good people who were able to help me along when I needed a referral, or a job, or just a pat on the back. I guess that means that this article will need to lean towards my greatest personal challenge.

I was divorced when my daughter was very young. I was working at a real estate office and ended up having to leave that job because of personal issues involving one of my superiors. I filed for unemployment and was given an opportunity by the State of Michigan to go to school to obtain my Certification in Architectural Technology. It was a state funded program, also funded by the University of Michigan, with classes being held at the Auburn Hills Campus of Oakland Community College. I went to school 5 days a week from 8:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. from May 1974 until October 1974 and received my Certification (comparable to an Associate Degree). I soon found employment with a real estate company during which time my employer recommended that I go to school and secure my Real Estate Salesperson’s license, which I did. I also went on to further my education and obtained my Residential Builders License and eventually my Real Estate Broker’s License. I keep both of those licenses current and attend regular continuing education. You just never know when you’ll have an opportunity at a second, third, fourth, or even fifth career.

You are probably wondering where the “challenge” part is in all of this. Well, as I stated earlier, I was divorced when my daughter was very young – and I was very young as well. Raising a child on my own was the ultimate challenge. There were times when I was working multiple jobs just to put a roof over our head and food on the table. Child support was

minimal, at best, and the jobs I had did not provide a lot of income. My family helped out as much as they could with free babysitting and “extra” groceries when they bought too much at the store by mistake. It was hard, at times, to tell my daughter that I couldn’t afford to let her participate in extracurricular activities or get her the “in” clothes that she wanted. However, with the help of my family and a lot of “doing without,” I was able to save enough money to move to an area that had a great school system. My lean budget became even leaner at that point but I knew, if I provided my daughter the best education I could afford, perhaps she would not encounter the same obstacles I had to overcome when she became an adult. The years of our struggles paid off and my daughter went on to attend college and, today, she is the Senior Vice President and Managing Director at StarcomMediaVest Group Performance Marketing. She worked very hard during all of her school years and, as a result, she is enjoying the fruits of her labors. I wasn’t able to give my daughter everything she wanted, but I was able to give her everything she needed.



TREASURER PATRICIA A. CONOR, PP, PLS

“My Greatest Challenge”

I would like to thank all of the Officers, Directors and Members of NALS of Michigan for the confidence you have shown in allowing me to complete the term of Treasurer for the 2011-2012 year. I look forward to seeing all of you at future meetings.

Change is a funny thing. You can accept it or reject it. I like to think of change in the following way:

C-Challenge – There are always challenges as we go through life. The challenge with change is to embrace that challenge and make it into an opportunity. Opportunities tend to allow a person to forge ahead and make the best of a situation.

H-Help – In making changes don't forget to ask for help with the changes you are making. No one person can make a change by herself; she always needs encouragement and advice from those around her to reach the goals needed to make a change.

A-Achievement – During the change process you will achieve your goals using all the knowledge you have gained during the process.

N-Never – The word “never” when making a change is not a negative word. Turn that into a positive by “never” allowing the change in your life to defeat you.

G-Growth – Without change there is no growth. Change happens all the time and we need to embrace the growth that comes from making a change.

E-Excitement – A change can be exciting and a way to prosper in your endeavors to embrace the change.

Change is a necessary part of all of our lives. Each one of us deals with it in a different way. We can prosper with that change and make it work for us.

My glass is always half-full and never half-empty. I always wait for the glass to overflow. What and how are you waiting? Half-full or half-empty? Always, your choice.



**NALS OF MICHIGAN
2012-2013 CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

February 4
NALS of Michigan Winter Seminar and Directors' Meeting
State Bar of Michigan Building, Lansing

February 15
Deadline to submit articles for the Spring Issue of *The Official Record*

March 1-4
NALS Professional Development & Education Conference
Tulsa, Oklahoma

March 3
CERTIFICATION EXAM

April 27-28
NALS OF MICHIGAN 51ST ANNUAL MEETING
Detroit Greektown

May 15
Deadline to submit articles for the Summer Issue of *The Official Record*

July 20-21
NALS REGION 3 Meeting

August 15
Deadline to submit articles for the Fall Issue of *The Official Record*

September 29
CERTIFICATION EXAM

October 18-20
NALS 61st Annual Fall Conference & Forum
Portland, Oregon

November 3 - CLE
WebEd: CASA – Court Appointed Special Advocates
www.nals.org/WebEd

November 5
NALS of Michigan Fall Seminar and Directors' Meeting
State Bar of Michigan Building, Lansing

November 10 - CLE
WebEd: Building Your Leadership Portfolio: Future Leaders Development
www.nals.org/WebEd

November 15
Deadline to submit articles for the Winter Issue of *The Official Record*

November 17 - CLE
WebEd: Litigation/Civil Law Session
www.nals.org/WebEd

December 1
Early Bird Registration Deadline – NALS 2012 Professional Development & Education Conference
www.nals.org/conferences

**Recap of the NALS 60th Annual Education Conference and National Forum
Cincinnati, Ohio – October 13-16, 2011
Beverly Bishop, PLS, Immediate Past President**

As your Immediate Past President, I serve as your liaison to NALS. In that capacity, NALS of Michigan funded me to attend the 60th Annual Education Conference and National Forum. I will recap the events of that conference as best I can.

First of all, this was my seventh national conference that I have attended since becoming a NALS member in 1999. This was, by far, the best one in terms of topics and speakers. With the four different tracks of law, there was an opportunity to earn 20 hours of CLE credits! It was very difficult to choose what session to attend on any given day. If you read my officer article this month, maybe this should have been listed as one of my “greatest challenges”.

Many attendees made comments that they were funded by their law firms due to the education tracks now in place. Their firms knew what was available to them and thought it was well worth the money to help finance the conference for them. That is a big plus!

The conference started with the opening keynote speaker. You will read more about that later in the article. Thursday was the Exhibitor Luncheon. Eight exhibitors were present and each gave a short speech on what their company offers. The exhibitors present were Avery Dennison, Capital University Law School, Cookie Lee Jewelry, Esquire Solutions, J. Hogan Group, Liberty Mutual Insurance, National Corporate Research, and UPS.

Thursday evening was the Welcome Party. This was in celebration of NALS 60th Anniversary. A DJ played tunes from the 60s, plus requests – and the dance floor was normally packed. This event was open to all conference attendees.

Friday’s lunch was on our own. Many of us ventured just a few blocks from the hotel to find numerous restaurants. There was a large variety to choose from.

The NALS Foundation had over 100 items donated this year. That didn’t include the silent auction items or the quilt made and donated by past president Dee Beardsley. “Auctioneer” Leslie Keys, PLS, again entertained us with her wit and skill before yelling “SOLD”! As of this writing, I have not been told how much was raised for the Foundation on all the items, but you can bet it was quite a bit!

Friday evening was the Foundation Gala Event. In keeping with the 60th Anniversary theme, a live band called Marquis66 performed. They played music from the 50s, 60, and 70s. Not only did the band members dress in 60s clothing, but many attendees did as well. We saw everything from go-go boots, tie-dyed clothing, and even a Jackie Kennedy look complete with pill box hat. Cameras were flashing all night long! This definitely was a “blast from the past”.

Saturday was the Recognition Luncheon. Not only did we have a great meal (as all of them were), but NALS recognized the newly certified members (from March 2011), the Engage 5 Superstars, and the Award of Excellence winner. This year’s award went to Cathy Hankins, PP, PLS. There were only two finalists: Cathy Hankins PP, PLS, and Carl Morrison II, AACP. We were fortunate to have one of the judges attend the luncheon. He was a guest at our table and honored to be there. He mentioned how difficult it was for all the judges to pick one winner as both were extremely qualified candidates. Look for Cathy Hankins’ article in the next issue of *@Law*. Congratulations Cathy!

The final fun event was on Saturday evening. Many of us boarded school buses that took us to the docks on the Ohio River. We enjoyed a wonderful buffet dinner, music, and games on the top deck. I never knew there were so many bridges connecting Ohio to Kentucky. We passed under several of them. The sights were beautiful, giving us lots of photo opportunities. Speaking of games, I partnered with Hawaii member Rose Carter for a game of corn toss. It's something like shuffleboard, but with a bean bag. Neither Rose nor I had ever played the game before. It was beginner's luck when we prevailed over MaryJo Denman and her partner! A good time was had by everyone on this dinner cruise.

Region 3 was one of the sponsors of both keynote speakers. The conference opened with keynote speaker Vicki Voisin, ACP. Many of you know Vicki from her weekly e-newsletter titled *Paralegal Strategies*. Her talk was titled "Exploring the Mystery of Ethics and Technology". She gave us eight modules explaining technology and how ethics plays into that. Those modules came in handy as we tried to solve a mystery of who killed Teddy Potts, the senior partner of a law firm. After all the modules were discussed, most of us figured out that Byron Ford, Teddy's partner, was the killer. CSI would have been proud!

The closing keynote speaker was Alanna Moravets, JD. She spoke about Professional Satisfaction: The New Science of Happiness. She said the legal profession is the only career that awards negativity. There are several types of energy: emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical. Her final statement to us was to make one commitment to our self – take five minutes to change a habit.

I will summarize the sessions I attended.

Avery Dennison Products: new products were introduced, such as repositioning labels that can be removed without ruining a document or envelope and repositioned in another spot; polypropylene binders; framed view binders; flip back binders; and, a 5 ½ x 8 ½ binder with pockets. Of course, we all got free packets of Avery items.

The Death Penalty: Capital Punishment by Kevin Werner. Mr. Werner is the executive director for "Ohioans to Stop Executions (OTSE)", a non-profit advocacy and educational organization in Ohio. He gave the primary flaws of the death penalty: impact on victims' families; geographic disparity; racial bias, cost, impact on the corrections employee, and execution protocol. He said the method of lethal injection is also flawed. Sometimes it can take more than two hours for the person to die. This has a tremendous impact on the families of the accused. Thirty-four states have the death penalty.

The Heparin Litigation with Melanie S. Bailey, Esq. Heparin is generally used to prevent blood clots. It is used in bypass surgery, kidney dialysis, and medically coating of stints and catheters. We all remember when actor Dennis Quaid and his wife filed suit against a major drug manufacturer after their newborn twins received an overdose of this blood-thinning drug. The Quaid twins survived, but three premature twins born in an Indiana hospital died from the same type of overdose. Instead of receiving 10 u/mL of the drug, the Quaid twins were given 10,000 u/mL. It was later proven that the vials of the drug had inadequate labeling and were the same size with no warning labels. The vials are now different sizes for a single dose and multi-dose. The labels have a larger font and are unique in color combinations. There is also a large red cautionary tear-off label.

Criminal Defense in the Military System presented by Captain Trenton Hamilton of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. There is no bail in the military, and legal representation is free. The jury is called Court Members. They are always senior members to the accused. For a military verdict, two-thirds have to agree. The accused can decide if the judge will give the sentence or the jury will. The majority of military trials from beginning to end take three to six months. If it is a rape or murder case, it can take up to a year. The military doesn't have a backlog of cases; they are very fast. The reason: unless they are dishonorably discharged or confined to prison for many years, they have to get back to active duty.

Divorce, Military Style by Captain Marla Kolcz-Ryan, Chief Legal Assistant at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. There is a special formula for members of the military, and it depends on how long they are in the military.

Shutting Down the Pill Mills by Aaron E. Haslam, Sr. Assistant Attorney General. Pill mills are where people can get prescription drugs by an illegal source: forged or altered prescriptions, doctor shopping, theft from a home or family sharing, robbery of pharmacies, and the Internet. He warned if parents hear these words from their children - “pharm”, “pharma”, or “skittling”, take notice. This is where kids are putting prescription pills in a bowl and everyone grabs a handful and takes them to see what affect they will have on the person. This can be fatal.

Lex Sportiva: Thoughts Toward a Criminal Law of Competitive Contact Sports by Christo Lassiter. Mr. Lassiter gave us many situations to think about. When a professional football player is injured so severely that he cannot play again, should the tackler be criminally charged with battery? He said some players are known for wanting to hurt other players. It gave us a lot to think about.

Online Social Cruelty with Officer Jeff Newman. This session covered sexting, cyberbullying and social media. He gave some staggering statistics: 87% of kids ages 13-17 have a cell phone, 49% of those send sexy pictures. Message can be forwarded forever. Seventeen percent of kids ages 6-11 have been victims of cyberbullying.

Thank You Vinny, Atticus, and Tom Cruise: Everything I Know About Cross-Examination I learned from the Movies by W. Kelly Johnson, Esq. Mr. Johnson showed clips of courtroom scenes from movies to show us the dos and don'ts of cross-examination.

If you haven't attended a national conference before, please consider doing so in the future. The next one will be in Portland, Oregon, in October 2012. If you can't get to Portland, start saving for the 2013 conference in Atlanta, Georgia.

I shared a room with President Sandy during this conference. She attended different sessions, so we compared notes at the end of each day. Thank you for the opportunity to attend this conference and share my experiences with you.



WHAT IS YOUR AREA OF EXPERTISE?

NALS Specialty Certificates

Earlier this year, NALS introduced the Specialty Certificate Program for members who want to achieve a designation in a specialty area or, in other words, an area of expertise. When working in the legal field, each of us has what you might consider “subject area domains,” “spheres of influence,” and/or “disciplines and fortes” in which we feel comfortable when achieved through formal education, certifications, and/or work experience. Many professional careers are specialized today (e.g., medicine, law, engineering, information technology) and now NALS is offering legal professionals an opportunity to market themselves with a Specialty Certificate in four separate areas of law: Litigation/Civil Law, Corporate Law, Estate Planning/Family Law, and General Law.

Do you want to make your PP and/or PLS shine with a NALS Specialty Certificate? The NALS Specialty Certificate webpage at http://www.nals.org/?page_id=3278 has many details about how to obtain and apply for a Specialty Certificate. Check it out!

Alphabet Soup: Unraveling the Mystery of Document Extensions

By: Gary Peet, Chief Information Officer, Lewis and Roca LLP

Many of us in the legal profession are fortunate in that we work in environments where a document management system (DMS) shields us from the confusing details of how and where a document is stored on our computer, or how the computer even knows which program to use when we want to work with the document. It is pretty simple for us. We just provide the document's name and a few other details in the profile information for the DMS and click OK. Then, every time we need to work on the document, the computer somehow knows where to find it and what program is used to work with it.

Yes, a DMS makes things a lot easier. But there are times when we have to work with "raw" documents on CDs or thumb drives where it may not be so easy. Or we may work at a firm that does not have a DMS. In those situations, we have to deal with not only the document name (also called a filename), but also the somewhat mysterious filename extension. So let's take a closer look at document filenames and their extensions.

Early History of Document Filenames

In basic terms, documents are simply computer files stored on a computer's disk drive. They have been that way since the first IBM PC^[1] was introduced in 1981 using MS-DOS (Microsoft Disk Operating System). In those early years of personal computers, the convention used to name document files followed a format consisting of two parts, separated by a dot:

1—File Name The name of the computer file. This part of the filename consists of a 1- to 8-character name.

2—Extension An optional 0- to 3-character suffix.

Because the filename was limited to 8 characters for the name and 3 characters for the extension, this format is referred to as the 8.3 naming convention.

An example of a document filename in those days could have been something like "ABCCORP3.LTR," and, in the early 1980s, this might have been a WordPerfect document. Note that both parts of the filename were typically used to name a document. In our example, the first part suggests that the document is for ABC Corp. The second part, the extension, was typically used to organize the documents. In this example, the extension ("LTR") identifies the document as a letter.

Filenames Get Longer

In 1995, Microsoft introduced the Windows 95 operating system. One of the features of Windows 95 was that document filenames were expanded to be able to contain up to 255 characters. When used with newer DOS and Windows programs, this allowed use of more meaningful document names instead of the cryptic 8-character names used previously. Using the earlier example, one could now name the “ABCCORP3.LTR” document to something more meaningful like “ABC Corporation 11_21_1998 Letter to Shareholders.DOC.”

There was one problem though. Long filenames did not work with older DOS programs—and many were still in use in the mid-1990s—so Microsoft had to do something to make the newer long filename structure backwards-compatible with those older DOS programs. Microsoft’s solution was to have Windows automatically convert long filenames into short 8.3 format filenames and store those short filenames within the document file. You may have come across these short filenames at some point. They typically contain a “tilde” (~) character in the 8-character name. The rules to truncate a long filename followed these guidelines:

- 1) Transfer up to 3 characters of the long filename extension to the short filename’s extension.
- 2) Transfer the first 6 nonblank characters of the long filename to the short filename. Replace certain special characters with underscores.
- 3) Insert a tilde (~) as the 7th character of the short filename, followed by a 1. If the resulting name caused a duplicate, then use ~2 or ~3 (and so on) until a unique short filename was established.

Using these rules for the long filename of “ABC Corporation 11_21_1998 Letter to Shareholders.DOC,” Windows would likely create a resulting short filename of “ABCCOR~1.DOC.”

Meaningful Filename Extensions

In the early MS-DOS days, there was nothing in the 8.3 filename to indicate which program was needed to work on the document. Unlike today’s systems, one could not just double-click the document and have it open up in whatever program was needed. One had to first start the program, then open the document. Sometimes that was a challenge. Do you open the document with WordPerfect? Or is it a WordStar^[2] document? Or even something else?

In today’s Windows operating systems, filename extensions are very important and they need to be very specific. This is because Windows associates specific filename extensions with specific programs. They have become, more or less, “file types.” For example, files ending in “.doc” are

associated with older versions of Microsoft Word. Files ending with “.docx” are associated with the newer versions of Word 2007 or Word 2010. Here are some examples of other filename extension associations:

<u>Extension</u>	<u>File Type</u>	<u>Opens With</u>
.xls	Excel worksheet	Microsoft Office Excel
.xlsx	Excel worksheet	Microsoft Office Excel 2007
.ppt	PowerPoint presentation	Microsoft Office PowerPoint
.jpg	JPEG image	Microsoft Picture Manager
.mov	Quick Time movie	Quick Time Player

Another benefit of associating extensions with programs is that one now does not need to go through the extra step of opening the program before opening the document. Nowadays, simply click on a document and it automatically opens the correct program and opens the document to use (at least in most cases).

If one is interested in seeing all the file type associations that are registered on a computer, one only needs only to know how to run Windows Explorer on that computer:

- 1) Open Windows Explorer and select Tools | Folder Options.
- 2) Click on the File Types tab.

Windows will then display all filename extensions and file types that are registered on that computer. In the lower part of the window, one will also be able to see the program that Windows opens when a file with this extension is used. By the way, these settings can be modified, but it is not recommended unless one is an advanced user.

There is one more important thing to consider when working with filenames and extensions. By default, Windows will “hide” filename extensions for known file types. For example, “.docx” will be associated with Word 2010. When you view your Word 2010 documents in Windows Explorer, none of them will show the “.docx” filename extensions because Windows assumes you do not need to see it. That is nonsense! Information is power. You can unhide those extensions by going into the Advanced Settings under Folder Options in Windows Explorer and remove the check in the checkbox for “Hide extensions for known file types.”

What is This Extension?

Thousands of computer programs have been developed for computers using the Windows operating system. There are nearly as many unique filename extensions that are associated with these programs. If you click on a filename that does not have its extension already associated with a program on your computer, Windows will stop and ask what program to use to open the file. Sometimes, you will be able to tell Windows to use another compatible program that is already installed on your computer, but more often than not you are probably going to have to install a new program that is compatible with the file you are trying to open.

There will be times when you will have no idea what program is associated with a file type, so you also will not have any idea what program you will need to install. There are a number of websites available on the Internet that can help figure this out. Some of the more popular websites that offer file extension information include www.filext.com, www.file-extensions.org, and www.fileinfo.com.

Glad We Have A DMS

If you are fortunate enough to work in a firm that uses a document management system, you really do not have to think much about filenames and extensions. But that does not mean your documents do not have them. The DMS gives you a user-friendly “window” to access your documents. This window contains a lot of information—document name, document number, author information, billing information, security restrictions, etc. But behind the scenes, the DMS keeps track of the document’s filename and extension, and uses that information to locate the document and open the appropriate program. Now that you know a little more about filenames, perhaps when you venture outside of your DMS those mysterious extensions will be a little less intimidating.

| @Law |

Gary Peet is the Chief Information Officer for the law firm of Lewis and Roca LLP, headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona. He has been involved in technology for over 35 years with experience in systems design and development, management consulting, and IT management. His writing and speaking engagements showcase his ability to convey complex technical issues to all levels of technology users in easy-to-understand, non-technical terms. Contact him via email at GPeet@LRLaw.com or by telephone at 602-262-5782.

[1] Subtle differences exist when working with Apple Macintosh computers, but because they are not widely used in the legal environment, this article addresses only IBM-compatible PCs using the Windows operating system.

[2] WordStar was a dominant DOS-based word processor in the early to mid-1980s.

Is it an “Inny” or an “Outty”?

By Nancy Honer, PP, PLS, NALS Marketing Committee

I’m talking about punctuation with quotation marks, not belly buttons (although I did have a good laugh when I thought of the title!). I don’t know about you, but it is not easy in every situation to remember if the punctuation goes inside or outside the quotation marks. If you find yourself avoiding resource manuals and rearranging sentences, you may benefit from this article. Join me as I research this topic and tackle my nemesis and shackle this giant.

Quotation marks are used to set off words spoken or written by someone, to emphasize words for special attention, and to display titles of certain works.

INSIDE the Quotation Marks

(1) Commas and periods are always placed inside closing quotation marks:

- Mother said, “You may take all the homemade pies home.”
- Back in the 1970s people used words like “far out,” “nifty” and “groovy.”
- Her last remarks, “I should have known better,” kept running through my mind.
- I marked the package “Fragile,” but the contents arrived broken despite my efforts.

(2) Question marks and exclamation points are inside if the quotation is a question/exclamation:

- “Have you,” she asked, “been interning this summer?”
- “Yikes!” Shelly said. “How did that happen?”
- “Who,” asked Mrs. Harris, “said, ‘That which you manifest is before you?’”
- Helen inquired, “Did you hear him ask, ‘Who knows the answer?’”
- Nelly’s first question-“How do you bake a turkey?”-was the same question I asked when I hosted a Thanksgiving meal.

(3) Enclosing titles:

- I liked Mary’s story, “The House on the Hill,” in the Reader’s Digest.
- I want to read “Who Stole Jake the Cat?”

OUTSIDE the Quotation Marks

(1) When punctuation is not part of the quoted material, place outside:

- Were you surprised when he said, “No, I don’t like ice cream”?
- Have you heard of the grammar term called “gerund”?
- How alarming it was to hear him say, “Your plane has left”!
- What do you think of the book, “Gas Prices Rising!”?

(2) Semicolons and colons are **always placed outside** the closing quotation marks:

- “Jim,” my father said, “you shouldn’t let the lawn get so high”; then he suggested I go mow the yard right now.
- According to the Internet, the following books have been termed as “highbrow reading”: Dream Wheels and The Lincoln Lawyer.

If this is clear as mud, you may want to invest in The Gregg Reference Manual by William Sabin. This manual is NALS approved and will serve as quick ammo when mean Mr. Quotation tries to stump you with an inny or an outty. This reference book is also a required study book should you be interested in pursuing a national professional certification designation (ALS, PLS or PP) offered by NALS. For both purposes, it is money well spent.

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NALS OF MICHIGAN MEMBER MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES

NALS of Michigan would like to acknowledge those members who are achieving a milestone membership anniversary for January 2012 through April 2012. Please join us in congratulating the following members:

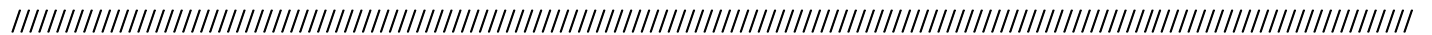
15-Year Anniversary

Kathy Ann Blunck (Grand Traverse Area LP)

25-Year Anniversary

Diane Y. Berry, PLS (NALS of Greater Kalamazoo)

Congratulations!



NALS OF MICHIGAN 2011-12 ORDER FORM



Name: _____
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 E-mail: _____

Product	Size	Color	Price	Quantity	Total
Oxford Shirt (long sleeve) (M-XL) (peach or blue) (1XL, XXL,XXL) Both NALS and NALS of Michigan logo available			\$32 \$36		
Cardigan (NALS of Michigan) (S-XL) (red, black, white, gray)			\$33		
Fleece Vest (Med only) 1 each black, rose (NALS) and red (NALS of Michigan)			\$32		
"Legal Cover Up" Nightshirt (one size fits all) Black or White (very roomy and comfortable!)			\$15		
Golf Shirt – 1 V-neck with collar (black) (Small) (NALS of Michigan)			\$22		
Silk Touch Pique Sport Shirt * (S-XL) (mint green – red – hibiscus – light blue) (XXL-2X)			\$25 \$30		
Sterling Silver NALS Pendant (limited edition – only 1 left!)			\$80		
NALS of Michigan Pin (NEW ITEM!)			\$5		
<i>Now Available!</i> 50th Anniversary Commemorative T-Shirt (S-2X)			\$15		
ORDER TOTAL:					
Shipping (price is per item):			\$3.00		
FINAL ORDER TOTAL w/Shipping:					

*Esprit de corps (pronounced es-pree deh core) translates from French as *group spirit*. It is a synonym for words like *morale*, *comradeship*, and *purpose*. It is often used in common language to refer to any group that appears united and protective of its members.

Make your check made payable to:
"NALS of Michigan"

and return this form to:



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*** Be sure to call ahead to confirm size and color availability ***

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Diane Y. Berry, PLS, NALS of Greater Kalamazoo (Articles)

Strategic Plan

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Patricia Emerson, PP, PLS, NALS of West Michigan (Chair)
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