

# Paralegal Focus

## INSIDE

**Member Spotlights 4-9**

**NFPA News 10-11**

**Did you Know? 12-13**

### PLEASE SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS!

Paralegal Focus is the quarterly  
newsletter of Vermont  
Paralegal Organization, Inc.

Vermont Paralegal Organization, Inc.  
is a Member of the National  
Federation of Paralegal  
Associations (NFPA).

Vermont Paralegal Organization, Inc.  
P.O. Box 5755  
Burlington, VT 05402-5755  
[vermont@paralegals.org](mailto:vermont@paralegals.org)  
[www.vtparalegal.org](http://www.vtparalegal.org)

*Newsletter Design By  
Jeffrey T. Moreau*

## President's Message

*By Lucia White, CP®*

What is your vision for the VPO? What has helped you or might help you achieve more in your paralegal career? What ideas do you have for the future of the profession in Vermont? What about nationally? If you know someone who thinks about these questions, that person would be a great candidate for the VPO board. If you think about these questions, YOU would be a great candidate for the VPO board. Yes, YOU!

The VPO annual meeting of the members will be via Zoom on May 19 at 12:30 pm. Mark your calendars and watch your email inboxes for more information! We will hold elections via an electronic anonymous poll. Immediately following the election, we will have a town hall to discuss future initiatives for the VPO with the newly-elected board. We will not be offering CLEs at this May event because we are hopeful that we will be able to have in-person educational sessions in the fall.

One of the biggest challenges we have finding leaders of the VPO is resistance to self-promotion. We know that you are talented, smart, hard-working, creative, passionate paralegals, but often it takes board members asking people to run for positions in order for our Nominations Chair to put together a candidate slate. Let's end that trend this year!

When asked to serve, board members have graciously accepted and have done excellent work – leaning into the roles that others knew they would excel at. If you are interested in a board position, talk to someone on the board about what is involved, talk to a colleague about it, or nominate yourself. This isn't time to be bashful!

Because of the structure of our organization as laid out in our bylaws, all the officers are up for election every other year. There will be continuity and stability on the board through the Standing Committee chairs, who vote with the officers on board business. There is also a prescribed role for the Past President as a tie-breaking vote. Several of our current officers will term off and will not be able to run for those positions again this year. Others may not return to their current posts for other reasons. Our officer positions are President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, NFPA Primary, and NFPA Secondary. At this point, only the NFPA Primary intends to run for her position again.

*Continued on Page 2*

*Continued from Page 1*

We would love to have a slate with multiple options for people to vote on. It is a gift whenever there is new energy on the board.

If you are passionate about issues affecting paralegals, please consider running for the board. But regardless, mark your calendars for May 19!

## Editor's Message

*By Louise Reese*

Happy 2021! Welcome to new and renewed members. I am very excited to see what 2021 has in store for us, but I encourage everyone to be proactive and reach for the positive and fulfilling.

We will be holding our first virtual annual meeting on May 19. Please attend and vote for your next VPO board. Nominations must be returned by March 31, 2021.

We also have Spotlights to share with you. Cathy Foutz is a long-time member, and Chad Heise has been a member for the past couple of years.

There are some virtual national events taking place in 2021 that allow members to attend at a more affordable cost without all the travel. Please read Tina's summary of those events in NFPA News.

There have also been some changes in the 2020 Vermont Rules for Electronic Filing, and some webinars on various changes and things to know. VPO member, Lynn Wdowiak recently posted some handouts from the March 4, 2021 webinar in the Members Only Forum. Please log in and take a look.

Thank you to all of our members who share their knowledge with each other through the newsletter!





## Membership News

As of February 2021, we have 60 active members: 45 voting; 12 associate; 2 sustaining corporate; and 1 sustaining individual.

If you have any questions about renewing your membership please contact our Membership Chair, Melinda Siel.

We also have some membership drive activities in the works. If you would like to assist on specific projects, please contact Melinda Siel.

Please welcome our newest members, Caitlin Belcher from Vermont Land Trust, Inc., Kimberly Pritchard (now a sustaining member) from Iroquois Pipeline Operating Company, John Sealey, M.P.S. from Heilmann, Ekman, Cooley, & Gagnon, Inc., and Sharon Zukowski, NCG from Northern Vermont Paralegal Services, LLC. Welcome to the family Caitlin, Kimberly, John, and Sharon!



### **VOTING!**

You can now register for the May 19 virtual annual meeting on the VPO website under Events.



# Q&A

## Chad Heise Member Spotlight

<b><i>How old are you?</i></b>	53
<b><i>Describe your family?</i></b>	I live with my girlfriend, Shauna Larson, and her two daughters, Skylar (15) and Sydney (12). My brother Coby lives in Maple Corner, Vermont with my nephews, Maddox (14, going on 18) and Gage (11). My parents, Don and Bev (both 73, going on 43), split their time between Maple Corner, Vermont and Dunedin, Florida.
<b><i>Town in which you live?</i></b>	Moscow, Vermont.
<b><i>What is your favorite food?</i></b>	Sushi.
<b><i>Do have any pets? If so, what are they, and what are their names?</i></b>	Cooper—she’s a 12+ year-old Irish Wolfhound-Lab-Australian Cattle Dog mix, adopted from the Ozark Humane Society in Arkansas. She barks quarterly, just to be sure she can actually bark.
<b><i>What kind of hobbies do you have?</i></b>	Music (bass, guitar, keyboards, drums), windsurfing, surfing, snowboarding, mountain-biking, metal sculpture, and my 1984 Honda CB650 retro café-style motorcycle (think “Road Warrior,” the film from around the same era).
<b><i>How do you unwind at the end of a long work week?</i></b>	Pre-COVID, I used to play hockey in a Friday night league in Stowe, which was a perfect way to unwind! These days, it’s 100% agave tequila (served neat) while relaxing with my girlfriend.
<b><i>What is your educational background?</i></b>	BA in English from University of Vermont, 1991.
<b><i>Where do you work?</i></b>	Primmer Piper Eggleston & Cramer PC.

<b><i>When did you first become a paralegal?</i></b>	I started at Preuss Walker & Shanagher in San Francisco, California (a small boutique firm), in September of 1995. Partner Chuck Preuss was very supportive of employees pursuing other interests, so I worked there on and off until August 2012, after the firm had merged with Philadelphia-based Drinker Biddle, and Chuck Preuss had retired.
<b><i>What area of law do you work in?</i></b>	Litigation.
<b><i>What do you enjoy about working in that area of law?</i></b>	Attempting my best “Magnum P.I.”
<b><i>If you could work in any other area of law, what would it be?</i></b>	Immigration.
<b><i>What is the one thing about being a paralegal you would change if you could?</i></b>	Of course, we’re all working remotely now, but were we to return to our offices, I’d like an actual office. Like, with a door. Not a cubicle. Paralegals should have their own offices. Just sayin’.
<b><i>How or why did you first enter the paralegal field?</i></b>	I always assumed I would go to law school, so working as a paralegal was the logical step. I got a little side-tracked with other interests, the years went by, and the law school window seemed to pass. That said, if I could do it over, I’d probably do things exactly the same way!
<b><i>Did you hold other positions, or have a different career, prior to becoming a paralegal, and if so, what was it?</i></b>	I’ve explored a few other “careers” before (and during) my tenure as a paralegal. I played bass in a national touring act signed by Capricorn Records, started a San Francisco annex of Heise Metal Sculpture (a found metal sculpture enterprise that my uncle Bill Heise started in 1966 in Warren, Vermont), and established a windsurfing/kiteboarding camp in Trujillo, Honduras. Pursuing those interests was more fun than one should be allowed to have, but, as the saying goes, “Don’t quit your day job.”
<b><i>What do you love about the paralegal profession?</i></b>	The “Magnum P.I.” moments. Wait, did I already say that?
<b><i>What things about the profession do you dislike?</i></b>	Reviewing thousands of emails prior to a document production.



<b><i>How long have you been a member of the VPO?</i></b>	Two years.
<b><i>Tell me about the skills or traits you possess that you find most useful in your position?</i></b>	My ability to “bridge the gap” between partners, associates, and support staff—mobility within the hierarchy, if you will. Also, my OCD...er...attention to detail.
<b><i>What character oddities or personality traits do you find at odds with your career?</i></b>	I’ve been told I tend to dig six feet when I’ve been instructed to dig three feet. It’s a work in progress.
<b><i>What brief advice or friendly tip would you offer to someone just entering the paralegal field?</i></b>	The legal assistants and administrative staff always know more than you do. They are crucial to your success. Buy them ice cream cones...often.





# Q&A

## Cathy Foutz Member Spotlight

<b><i>How old are you?</i></b>	66. Yeah, 40+ years as a paralegal.
<b><i>Describe your family?</i></b>	I have three grown sons and a delightful almost-two year old granddaughter.
<b><i>Town in which you live?</i></b>	South Burlington. I raised my family in Hinesburg – very convenient to CVU – but tired of the wintry drives.
<b><i>What is your favorite food?</i></b>	It's hard to pick just one, but I'd never be able to give up ice cream.
<b><i>Do have any pets? If so, what are they, and what are their names?</i></b>	I “share” a wonderful yellow lab with my youngest son. They moved to North Carolina 18 months ago though...but I think I get dibs on a few weeks of summer in Vermont for Bode. I also have a rescue kitty named Polly, who is good company while working from home.
<b><i>What kind of hobbies do you have?</i></b>	I love to watch almost any sports, but my own activities are walking, skiing, swimming, beaching...I have no artistic or crafting abilities. My passion is in volunteering, limited with the pandemic and pared down with age – but I've long run the Make-A-Wish All-Star Hockey Classic each June, and am the Volunteer Coordinator for Camp Knock Knock, an annual family bereavement camp. I've been very busy this year with the Jr. League Diaper Bank – we've distributed over a half million diapers around the state in the last year!
<b><i>How do you unwind at the end of a long work week?</i></b>	With a pint of a Vermont IPA, or a large glass of white wine! And plans for physical activity over the weekend, preferably outdoors.
<b><i>What is your educational background?</i></b>	I graduated from UVM decades ago, and attended the Institute for Paralegal Training in Philadelphia. On completion of a litigation course, they found me my first job in Washington, D.C.

<b><i>Where do you work?</i></b>	At Paul Frank + Collins for the last 11 years. Before that, Hoff Curtis for 6 years, Sheehey Furlong & Behm for 13 years, and Pierson Wadhams for 4 years. My first paralegal job was at Kirkland & Ellis – now the largest firm in the country! I worked in their D.C. office – using my political science degree – for 3.5 years, then ski-bummed for 2 years in Colorado. I returned east thereafter, working for 3.5 years at Boston firm now known as KL Gates. Moving “back” to Vermont was the compromise for longing to return to the Rockies.
<b><i>When did you first become a paralegal?</i></b>	Over 40 years ago.
<b><i>What area of law do you work in?</i></b>	Currently, insurance coverage work around the country, sprinkled with Vermont civil litigation.
<b><i>What do you enjoy about working in that area of law?</i></b>	I love big-case work where I can be creative; a salt brine sinkhole in the South happened 8.5 years ago, but its litigation continues...
<b><i>If you could work in any other area of law, what would it be?</i></b>	I enjoyed Family Law to some extent – working with people – although that can be exhausting. I’ve been interested in Probate and helping older folks navigate that system – but I have no mathematical proclivity!
<b><i>What is the one thing about being a paralegal you would change if you could?</i></b>	More pay...and lower billable hours’ goals.
<b><i>How or why did you first enter the paralegal field?</i></b>	Near the end of college, I considered law school but was not ready for three more years of academics. The Philadelphia Institute was a great introduction to the field, with the bonus of placing me in an exciting job in D.C. I never quite got back to considering three more years of academics!
<b><i>Did you hold other positions, or have a different career, prior to becoming a paralegal, and if so, what was it?</i></b>	I had considered pursuing a Masters in Social Work a number of years ago, but found that doing volunteer work with children’s charities was satisfying and involved less responsibility.
<b><i>What do you love about the paralegal profession?</i></b>	The variety! I learned early on that I like “the Facts” much more than exploring The Law. I did not want to be arguing before the court – supporting in the first row behind counsel table was, and is, much more in my comfort zone. And with each job change, I have learned so much more, and grown professionally.



<b><i>What things about the profession do you dislike?</i></b>	The billable hour goals, and long days.
<b><i>How long have you been a member of the VPO?</i></b>	Um, forever? I remember when it first started, with the folks from Langrock’s office. I had been a member of the Massachusetts Paralegal Organization so it was familiar to me.
<b><i>Tell me about the skills or traits you possess that you find most useful in your position?</i></b>	Curiosity, enjoyment of working with people, preferring to be in a supporting role, experience in many areas of the law, and my education.
<b><i>What character oddities or personality traits do you find at odds with your career?</i></b>	My technology ineptitude! It is not my forte at all, and while I am fine when I am showed how to use a new program – and use it – I am easily frustrated by my lack of natural ability, and interest.
<b><i>What brief advice or friendly tip would you offer to someone just entering the paralegal field?</i></b>	One approach is to start with a supporting role in a firm, and work your way up. I do find a solid college degree is important, as writing skills are necessary. Flooding the area firms with resumes even if there are no postings may well land on a desk where your skills and experience are seen as “just right.” And the VPO is a great networking organization!





NATIONAL  
FEDERATION  
*of*  
PARALEGAL  
ASSOCIATIONS Inc.  
®

## NFPA News

*By Tina Wiles, NFPA Primary*

There are some NFPA events coming up that members of the VPO can attend this Spring: Region V delegates meeting; NFPA Non-Policy Annual Meeting; and the Joint Conference. There are also several volunteer opportunities available if you would like to become more involved on a national level. I have provided information about each meeting and opportunity below. If you have any questions, please let me know.

### SPRING REGION V MEETING

The Region V's Spring Meeting will be held on April 10, 2021. This meeting will be a virtual event again this year. If you want to attend the meeting to see what is happening within Region V (the Northeast), and on a national level, let me know. This is also a great opportunity to see how you can network with other local paralegals and become involved with the VPO, within our region, and/or on a national level without a commitment of travel and added expense. This is also a great way to see what the Primary Delegate and the Secondary Delegate do on behalf of the VPO.

### JOINT CONFERENCE

Joint Conference is a conference for association leaders to attend workshops on Leadership, Regulation, and Certification. Joint Conference will be an entirely virtual event held June 11-13, 2021. By going virtual, this change affords all association members the opportunity to access valuable information regarding association leadership, certification and regulation within the paralegal profession from the comfort of their own home or office without the added expense of travel. These trainings will prepare you to serve as a local association board member or volunteer.

This year's Joint Conference will deliver the same top-quality speakers and educational content our members and other attendees have come to expect. We also hope that by eliminating travel expenses for attendees, this virtual event might even allow more members to participate.

The agenda and speakers will be announced in the next couple of weeks. Please check back on our [Joint Conference Page](#) for updates and be on the lookout for emails that will alert you to new information.

## **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

Maren Schroeder (NFPA Dir. of Positions and Issues) [positionsdir@paralegals.org](mailto:positionsdir@paralegals.org) is in need of volunteers for the following positions:

Access to Justice Committee Members

Advocacy Committee - Region V Member (or committee members)

Marketing the Paralegal Profession Committee - Chair (or committee members)

Position Statement Review Ad Hoc Committee - Chair (or committee members)

Ronell Badua (NFPA Dir. of Marketing) [marketingdir@paralegals.org](mailto:marketingdir@paralegals.org) is in need of volunteers for the following positions:

Advertising/Public Relations Coordinator

Website Content Coordinator

Please reach out to them directly if you are interested in any position.

## **MORE NFPA NEWS!**

FastTrack was extended to March 31, 2021.

Happy Belated Birthday to NFPA! It was created on January 13, 1974.



# did you know?

The Caledonia, Essex, Franklin, Grand Isle, Lamoille, Orleans, and Washington trial courts began using Odyssey on February 1, 2021, and electronic filing through Odyssey File & Serve is scheduled to commence on March 15, 2021.

-----

An Emergency Order amending Rules 2, 4, and 11 of the 2020 Vermont Rules for Electronic Filing was promulgated on February 22, 2021, and effective March 15, 2021.

Rule 2 is amended in two ways. The definition of “service contact” in amended Rule 2(k) provides a more detailed explanation of the types of service contacts that are used in the e filing system, and the source of the “public list,” which is the primary reference for serving another party through Odyssey File and Serve. Rule 2(l) is added to provide a definition of “submission agreement.” A submission agreement is how filers certify compliance with Rule 5(b)(5) and (6) (regarding nonpublic information) and amended Rule 11(g)(3) (regarding service requirements). The submission agreement appears as certification “boxes” that must be checked to proceed with electronic filing.

Rule 4(b)(3) is amended to clarify that an filer must enter a current service contact email address as a condition of registration, and to further require immediate updating of a changed service contact address.

Rule 11 is amended in several ways to clarify aspects related to service and certification of service. Rule 11(d) describes the method of service among filers. Amended paragraph 11(d)(1) clarifies that service of electronic filings between filers must be made using the electronic filing system by choosing the “File and Serve” function and selecting the party from the Public List. Amended paragraph 11(d)(2) allows agreements among filers for alternative methods of service, and further prescribes the conditions of such agreements.

Rule 11(g) is amended to clarify how to certify service in the e filing system and to detail the circumstances where a separate certificate of service, complying with either V.R.C.P. 5(h) or V.R.P.P. 5(e), is required. Amended paragraph (g)(1) provides that all filers must certify compliance with service requirements through a submission agreement. Where all parties are

efilers, the submission agreement suffices to certify service. Amended paragraph (g)(2) addresses the filer's obligation to file an additional certificate of service when serving: (A) a party who is not required to efile and has not elected to efile; (B) a party who has failed to provide a service contact; or (C) a party with whom the filer has an agreement for an alternative method of service under subparagraph (d)(2).

Revised Rule (g)(3) prescribes the content of the required submission agreement certification as to service. The certification details that, for any filing that must be served, the filer has included a certificate of service complying with paragraph (g)(2), and that any remaining parties have service contacts and have been served through the efilings system File and Serve function.

These amendments can be found on the Vermont Judiciary website under Vermont Court Records -> Proposed and Promulgated Rules.

-----

*AO 49 Amendment - Declaration of Judicial Emergency and Changes to Court Procedures 3-8-21*

**This Order was promulgated on March 8, 2021, effective March 15, 2021.**

This order further amends A.O. 49, which declared a Judicial Emergency on March 16, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Paragraph 2 is amended to extend the effective date of the Administrative Order until May 31, 2021, based on the projections of public-health experts concerning the course of the pandemic.

Paragraph 3(a), which previously suspended jury trials in civil cases until at least January 1, 2021, is deleted. The resumption of civil and criminal jury trials is governed by former ¶ 3(b), requiring court-by-court authorization of the Chief Superior Judge and the Court Administrator based on various specified factors.

Paragraph 6, regarding filing and service by email, is amended to reflect that the provisions of the 2020 Vermont Rules for Electronic Filing govern service by and to attorneys in all Superior Courts as of March 15, 2021.

Paragraph 23 is amended to authorize the Board of Bar Examiners to administer the July 2021 UBE by remote means.

Added ¶ 24 amends Vermont Rule of Civil Procedure 68 to allow plaintiffs to make offers of judgment as previously provided in the rule only for defendants. The Advisory Committee on the Rules of Civil Procedure proposed the emergency amendment.

The full Order and other updates regarding the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and court operations are available at [<https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/about-vermont-judiciary/covid-19-and-court-operations>]

## Vermont Paralegal Organization

P.O Box 5755  
Burlington, VT 05402-5755  
[info@vtparalegal.org](mailto:info@vtparalegal.org)  
[www.vtparalegal.org](http://www.vtparalegal.org)

### Board of Directors 2019-2021

		<u>Phone</u>	<u>Fax</u>	<u>E-mail</u>
President:	Lucia White, CP®	878-8775	878-8790	<a href="mailto:lwhite.home@gmail.com">lwhite.home@gmail.com</a>
Vice President:	Louise Reese	859-7063	859-8763	<a href="mailto:lreese@dinse.com">lreese@dinse.com</a>
Secretary:	Jill Drinkwater, CRP	864-4555	864-4659	<a href="mailto:jdrinkwater@healaw.com">jdrinkwater@healaw.com</a>
Treasurer:	Sara Boyden, RP	859-7062	859-8762	<a href="mailto:sboyden@dinse.com">sboyden@dinse.com</a>
NFPA Primary:	Tina Wiles	388-7933	388-9200	<a href="mailto:vponfpa1@gmail.com">vponfpa1@gmail.com</a>
NFPA Secondary:	Carisa Warren	879-7133	879-0408	<a href="mailto:Carisa@unsworthlaplante.com">Carisa@unsworthlaplante.com</a>
Past President:	Kristin Provost, RP®	540-7920	658-1643	<a href="mailto:kprovost@veic.org">kprovost@veic.org</a>

### Standing Committee Chairpersons

Membership:	Melinda Siel	495-5260	860-1208	<a href="mailto:msiel@dunkielsaunders.com">msiel@dunkielsaunders.com</a>
<u>Finance:</u>	Diane Drake	864-0880		<a href="mailto:ddrake@primmer.com">ddrake@primmer.com</a>
Professional Liaison:	Carie Tarte, RP®	489-5258	489-5386	<a href="mailto:carie@malevandmaley.com">carie@malevandmaley.com</a>
Paralegal Certification Ambassador	Krista Cadieux, RP	859-7059	859-8759	<a href="mailto:kcadieux@dinse.com">kcadieux@dinse.com</a>
Ethics:	Carie Tarte, RP®	489-5258	489-5386	<a href="mailto:carie@malevandmaley.com">carie@malevandmaley.com</a>

### Special Committee Chairpersons

Advertising:	Carie Tarte, RP®	489-5258	489-5386	<a href="mailto:carie@malevandmaley.com">carie@malevandmaley.com</a>
Bylaws:	Melinda Siel	495-5260	860-1208	<a href="mailto:msiel@dunkielsaunders.com">msiel@dunkielsaunders.com</a>
Continuing Legal:	Carie Tarte, RP®	489-5258	489-5386	<a href="mailto:carie@malevandmaley.com">carie@malevandmaley.com</a>
Employment Opportunities:	Heather Rylant	846-8355	862-7512	<a href="mailto:hrylant@drm.com">hrylant@drm.com</a>
Legislative Paralegal Affairs:	VACANT			
Newsletter:	Louise Reese	859-7063	859-8763	<a href="mailto:lreese@dinse.com">lreese@dinse.com</a>
Website:	Caitlin Belcher	262-1216		<a href="mailto:cbelcher@vlt.org">cbelcher@vlt.org</a>
Pro Bono:	VACANT			
Sponsorship:	Carie Tarte, RP®	489-5258	489-5386	<a href="mailto:carie@malevandmaley.com">carie@malevandmaley.com</a>





**Vermont Paralegal Organization partners exclusively with Liberty Mutual to help you save \$782 or more a year on auto and home insurance.<sup>1</sup>**

**Enjoy the benefits of being part of a community.**

You could **save up to \$782 a year**, and you'll have access to all the advantages of being a Liberty Mutual customer:



**24-Hour Claims Assistance**

Online or by phone



**Accident Forgiveness<sup>2</sup>**

No premium increase due to an initial accident



**Better Car Replacement<sup>TM3</sup>**

If your car is totaled, we'll give you the money for a model that is one year newer.



**24-Hour Roadside Assistance<sup>4</sup>**

Real help when you need it



**Liberty Mutual**  
INSURANCE



**Contact me for a free quote.**

Jennifer Goeke  
170 South Main St Ste 102  
Rutland, VT 05701  
802--665-8045  
Jennifer.Goeke@libertyMutual.com  
Client # 114704

<sup>1</sup> Average combined annual savings based on countrywide survey of new customers from 1/1/15 to 1/29/16 who reported their prior insurers' premiums when they switched to Liberty Mutual. Savings comparison does not apply in MA. <sup>2</sup> For qualifying customers only. Accident Forgiveness is subject to terms and conditions of Liberty Mutual's underwriting guidelines. Not available in CA and may vary by state. <sup>3</sup> Optional coverage in some states. Availability varies by state. Eligibility rules apply. <sup>4</sup> With the purchase of optional Towing & Labor coverage. Applies to mechanical breakdowns and disablements only. Towing related to accidents would be covered under your Collision or Other Than Collision coverage. Coverage provided and underwritten by Liberty Mutual Insurance and its affiliates, 175 Berkeley Street, Boston MA 02116. ©2017 Liberty Mutual Insurance Valid through November 11, 2017.