



# The Gavel



*Newsletter of the Lycoming County Paralegal Association*

## KEYSTONE ALLIANCE WRESTLES

AS

## REGULATION MOVEMENT GAINS MOMENTUM

Editorial by George Roles

At the Fall 2006 meeting of the Keystone Alliance, as a matter of “new business” tucked away near the end of the meeting, the delegates from Philadelphia Association of Paralegals (PAP) announced that it had been invited to, and in fact had participated in a “Summit” on the future of the paralegal profession in Pennsylvania. Participants in the “Summit” reportedly included members of the Bench and Bar, paralegal educators, members of the international paralegal management community, and paralegals. PAP stated that the meeting was more or less an informal get together where the paralegal profession was generally discussed, including the topic of regulation.

The delegates launched into a frenzy of debate when they heard the topic of regulation had been discussed. Specifically, delegates questioned PAP about why the Keystone Alliance or any other local association was not invited. The delegates also asked PAP why it didn’t inform the Keystone Alliance until after the fact, and when it will disclose to the Alliance the minutes of that “Summit”. The PAP delegates would only say that they did not know why

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## LAW DAY 2007 A GREAT SUCCESS

*LCPA Members Actively Participate in Activities*

Law Day 2007 was celebrated in a packed Lycoming County courtroom, on Tuesday, May 1, 2007. The five Lycoming County Common Pleas Court

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## LUNCH & LEARN COURTHOUSE SERIES

*Well Attended*

Court Administrator

Lycoming County Court Administrator, Kevin Way kicked off the “Courthouse Series” of Lunch and Learns on April 20, 2007 at the Commissioner’s Meeting Room in the Executive Plaza. Mr. Way discussed Court procedures and the requirements of using coversheets as set forth under the local court rules. He provided helpful tips on “walking a document through”. Mr. Way answered many questions from the large group of paralegals.

Prothonotary

The second Lunch and Learn in the

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## LAW DAY ACTIVITIES

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judges and U.S. District Court Judge Malcolm Muir presided at the special session of court. Judge Muir was the Guest of Honor.

The program, which has been sponsored by the Lycoming Law Association annually for many years, showcased the winners of the annual essay and artwork contest that is co-sponsored by the Lycoming County Paralegal Association. Joy Reynolds McCoy of McNerney, Page, Vanderlin and Hall was Chairman of the Law Day Committee and Mistress of Ceremonies.

The student winners were then called on to display their art works or read their essays. The elementary division (grades 1-6) essay topic this year was as follows:

You and your family are going on vacation to Disney World. While you are on the plane, waiting for take-off, your little sister has a temper tantrum and starts yelling and screaming and crying. Your mom and dad cannot make her stop! The pilot makes you and your family get off the plane and the plane leaves for Florida without you. Should the airline be permitted to kick you and your family off the flight because of the way your sister was acting?

The secondary division (grades 7-12) essay topic this year was:

Should a municipality be permitted to pass laws which punish landlords for renting property to illegal immigrants and/or punishing employers for employing illegal immigrants?

The artwork topic (for all age groups) was Symbols of Patriotism.

The Elementary division winners: (Essays): Brian Stopper -- 1st Grade, Jackson Elementary School; Taylor Nickens -- 3rd Grade, Cochran Elementary School; Kate Mitchell -- 5th Grade, Rommelt Middle School. (Artwork): Bailey Culver -- 2nd Grade, Ashkar Elementary School; Carson Wishard -- 4th Grade, Lyter Elementary School.

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## KEN SAWYER RADIO TALK SHOW

Paralegals Live On-Air

As part of the Law Day celebration, the LCPA was invited to be guests on WRAK's Ken Sawyer's Radio Talk Show. On air, Sharon Shaw and Rebecca Buttorff answered questions from Ken Sawyer such as "what is a paralegal" and "what do paralegals do". Sharon provided information on her specialty – elder law and Rebecca described her duties as a personal injury and civil litigation paralegal. Additionally, Ken asked how one becomes a paralegal.

*Paralegal Day  
July 27, 2007*

### WANTED:

#### PARALEGAL MENTORS

LCPA Launches New Mentoring Project

Remember what it was like when you were in college studying to be a paralegal. You were learning information that you thought would prepare you for your job in the legal field. Little did you know what it was really like out there in the world of law. Wouldn't it have been nice to have a seasoned paralegal to talk with, and to answer your questions?

Well, here is your chance to help future paralegals. Volunteer to be a Paralegal Mentor. Share your "real world" knowledge with a paralegal student. Let them know what they can expect when they graduate. Share with them what a career in the multifaceted paralegal profession is like in the "war" room versus the classroom.

If you are interested in becoming a Paralegal Mentor, contact Rebecca Buttorff at [rebeccab@lepleylaw.com](mailto:rebeccab@lepleylaw.com). It will be a learning experience for the both of you.

## GAVEL EDITOR

### *George Roles Steps Down as Editor of GAVEL*

Since the fall of 2004 George Roles has been the Editor of the GAVEL. He has provided many interesting articles related to our profession and has kept us abreast of national articles through the NFPA. He redesigned the look of the GAVEL and gave us the first "in color" version in 2005

George is currently attending Widener School of Law. As a result of the demands placed upon him at law school, he has decided to step down as Editor.

George will continue to be an active member of the LCPA as Treasurer, Keystone Alliance Primary, and Continuing Education Committee Chair.

Thank you George for your dedication to the LCPA!

## FALL 2007 EDUCATION SEMINAR

**WHEN:** September 27, 2007

The Continuing Education Committee has been working on this year's educational seminar. It has been tentatively set for September 27, 2007 so mark your calendars.

**Watch for upcoming details.**

### Special Thanks

Thank you to Stephanie Wyant and Sharon Shaw for their work on securing speakers and organizing the lunch and learns.

## Lunch and Learn

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Courthouse Series' was held on June 26, 2007 at the Commissioner's Meeting Room in the Executive Plaza. Lycoming County Prothonotary, Bill Burd provided information to a group of approximately 26 paralegals on filing documents in his court office. Additionally, he provided information on how to obtain passports and discussed the lengthy processing times due to the increased high volume. Prothonotary Burd also discussed how to access the Pennsylvania Judiciary's Web Application Portal. (<http://ujportal.pacourts.us>.) This service provides public access to view and print Case Docket Sheets from Pennsylvania's three Appellate Courts, Criminal Cases from Courts of Common Pleas as well as the Magisterial Districts. For more information on Prothonotary Burd's filing guidelines, you can go to [www.lycolaw.org/court/filing\\_guide.htm](http://www.lycolaw.org/court/filing_guide.htm).

**Watch for flyers on the next in the LCPA's Lunch & Learn "Courthouse Series."**

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## "Brown Bag Lunch and Learn"

### Senate Bill 1205 (Act No. 109)

Scott B. Cooper, Esq. was the presenter at the LCPA's first "Brown Bag Lunch & Learn". The L&L provided 1 CLE credit. Approximately 15 attorneys and paralegals were in attendance. Scott discussed how Senate Bill 1205 permits the Department of Public Welfare to intercept overdue child support from lump sum monetary awards or settlement paid by insurers and workers' compensation carriers. He explained how the overdue child support becomes a lien by operation of law against the net proceeds of any monetary award. He provided the Child Support Section website where a search can be conducted. The website is [www.humanservices.state.pa.us/csww](http://www.humanservices.state.pa.us/csww).

# LCPA Scholarships & Awards

## 2007 Maxine Stiffler/Lycoming County Paralegal Association Scholarship Fund Recipient Named

### *LCPA Student Member Receives Award*

The award of \$250 is given to a student in the third or fourth year of Penn College's Legal Assistant/Paralegal program. The student must be pursuing a bachelor-degree and be in his or her third or fourth year of studies.

Successful applicants must have a minimum grade-point average of 3.0. and preference is given to nontraditional students. Part-time students are eligible to apply as well.

The 2007 Maxine Stiffler/Lycoming County Paralegal Association Scholarship was awarded by

Penn College to Stephanie Davis. Stephanie is a senior in the Legal Assistant program at Penn College. She has been a student member of the LCPA since 2006. Stephanie is the current President of Penn College's Legal Society. She received the award in 2006 as well.

Congratulations to Stephanie!

## 2007 Outstanding Sr. Project Award

Tina Bilbay was awarded the Lycoming County Paralegal Association's Senior Project Award. She received \$150.

Congratulations Tina!!!!

## LCPA & LLA Working Toward Common Goal

For several years, it has been the desire of the Lycoming County Paralegal Association to have a better affiliation with the Lycoming Law Association. We are two distinct groups with a common goal.

The Board has met with Jessica Engel, Executive Director of the Lycoming Law Association, in an effort to have a better understanding of how the two groups can come together in this quest. We have discussed our differences and similarities in the hopes of building a solid foundation to become a united front.

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## ***JOB BANK***

NOTE FROM MICHELE FREY – COMMITTEE CHAIR

The LCPA Job Bank retains resumes of our members who are seeking employment as well as accepts employment postings for positions currently available. Resumes will be provided to any Lycoming County attorney or law firm interested. Employment opportunities will be advertised in LCPA emails and our newsletter, "the Gavel." Upon request, the LCPA will keep the information/specifics confidential. Additionally, internship opportunities will also be advertised as the LCPA has several student members looking forward to working hard while gaining exposure to the legal community.

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# STUDENT MEMBER NEWS

## Welcome Student Members

The LCPA is pleased to announce that several of the students enrolled in the Paralegal Studies program at the Pennsylvania College of Technology have joined the LCPA!

Many of them are first-time members; however, Stephanie Davies and Rebecca Hovestine are veteran members. Welcome to the new Penn College members:

- Josiane DeSousa,
- Ronca Boyd,
- Kristy Small,
- Tamera Shaffer;
- Jennifer Doane.

Additionally, the LCPA is proud to welcome

- Shana Eberlin

as the first student member from Lock Haven University. Shana has recently graduated from the Paralegal Studies program and completed her internship with Sullivan County's District Attorneys Office.

The LCPA welcomes its new and returning student members and welcomes input from the students for future Lunch and Learn topics that may be beneficial to them.

We invite them to become an active members of the LCPA.

Welcome!

## PARALEGAL MENTORS

### AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS

What is it really going to be like as a paralegal? Which paralegal field best suits my personality and goals? Want to find out what a career in the multifaceted paralegal profession is like in the "war" room versus the classroom?

Well, you're in luck. There are a number of seasoned LCPA member paralegals who are ready and willing to discuss their respective fields of law with you. Join the LCPA Paralegal Mentoring program.

Not only will it be a great way for you to learn from experienced paralegals, but it will be a great way for you to increase your peer-to-peer paralegal network. If you would like to take advantage of this really great "real world" opportunity, contact Rebecca Buttorff at [rebeccab@lepleylaw.com](mailto:rebeccab@lepleylaw.com).

You will be glad you did!

## LCPA Visits Pennsylvania College of Technology's Legal Society

The LCPA was invited to speak at Penn College's Legal Society's March 27, 2007 meeting. The students and the professors have invited the LCPA to speak for the past several years. The event is very well attended and the students are always interested to learn about the benefits the LCPA has to offer - this year was no different.

Michele Fry provided information to the students on the Lunch and Learns, Seminars and Job Bank opportunities. Ken Try, charter member

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there was lack of invitation or disclosure, and that it would circulate the minutes to Alliance delegates as soon as they are available. The meeting ended with a request from the Keystone Alliance directed to PAP to see if it could secure an invitation for each local association as well as the Alliance to attend any future "Summit," to which request PAP indicated it would forward to the meeting "organizers."

It seems to me that:

- If the Keystone Alliance is the "state-wide voice for paralegals in Pennsylvania,"<sup>1</sup> and in fact is the only statewide organization in place to represent our profession as a whole, then it would make sense that any organizer of an event such as the "Summit" should want representatives from the Keystone Alliance present. Twenty-five states currently have regulation in some form, (one more will regulate within the next few months)<sup>1</sup>, in EVERY instance, the paralegals of that particular state guided the regulation movement. Any serious discussion about the paralegal profession in Pennsylvania should include the statewide organization, regardless of whether discussion turned to regulation.
- Even though the Keystone Alliance is not a business entity, it does have structure and organization, it adheres to by-laws and reports as an entity to the IRS. There are currently eight paralegal associations in the state, and seven of them belong to the Keystone Alliance. Although we, (the local associations), are not partners in a "profit-making" sense, we still owe each other the "duty of finest loyalty."<sup>1</sup> Why PAP would not disclose that a "Summit" was happening is beyond me.

Shortly after the Fall 2006 meeting, all primary and secondary delegates to the Keystone Alliance received from PAP a copy of the invitation letter and agenda relating to the "Summit". It seems that PAP, was more than a mere invitee, for the invitation read, "Pierce College of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with the assistance of The Philadelphia Association of Paralegals (PAP), is conducting a summit meeting addressing regulation and education for the paralegal profession," and that "The purpose of the meeting was to explore the positive and negative consequences of regulating paralegals." The agenda for that meeting was titled "Paralegal Regulation Summit." Apparently, the "Summit" was a bit more than an informal get together where the topic *turned to* regulation as PAP had earlier informed the Alliance. Moreover, the invitations were to go out to every president of every local association in Pennsylvania, but for some reason, no other association received an invite other than PAP. It was beyond me why PAP would purposefully

misinform, misrepresent, and blatantly hide this information from the Alliance. Perhaps it did. Perhaps it didn't.

Not surprisingly, the whole issue was placed on the agenda for the Spring 2007 meeting of the Alliance. At this meeting, which we just held in mid April, when the topic came up, PAP announced that it had not secured invitations for all of us. On the other hand, now the "organizers" were asking the Alliance to actually host the "Summit." PAP further announced that the "Summit" would go on with or without the Alliance participation, and that absent being the host, PAP could not guarantee even a simple invitation to anyone in the room. This came as a shock and surprise to the delegates, in that we were all expecting a response to our request for an invitation, not a demand that we are either in as a host, or out altogether.

Once again, heated debate mounted. After two hours or so, it appeared that the Alliance was split. Some of the delegates decided that hosting the

“Summit” would not be a bad idea. Some others, Lycoming included, questioned the timing of the event. Reason? The Alliance has been working on an official position on regulation for the last year and a half. At this point, the Alliance can take no official position on regulation, and therefore is not entirely qualified to lead a discussion on the subject – especially a discussion with the stature and expertise of the audience anticipated at the next “Summit.” (PAP is fully in favor of outright state-mandated testing and licensure as the preferred mode of regulation. Preliminarily, it looks like the Alliance will officially declare a majority position that a mixture of minimum education requirements in addition to state certification is preferred).

Additionally, the next “Summit” is scheduled for sometime this fall. If the Alliance is going to put its name on, host, and moderate a meeting of this substance, it had better be a spectacular event. Anything less will be devastating to the Alliance, its image, and future ability to lobby. Spectacular or not, either will leave Summit attendees with a lasting memory of the Alliance. We must be very, very careful not to put the cart before the horse.

These were the positions that Rebecca and I put forward at the meeting. Nonetheless, the Chair (who, by the way is from PAP), called for

a vote by email after the delegates had an opportunity to get feedback from their respective local boards. Fortunately, because of a technical Robert’s Rule violation, the vote did not carry, and the Alliance is not hosting a Summit in October. We will, however, be asking for an invitation directly from the “organizers” themselves.....whomever they may be.

Shortly after the defeat of the Summit question, PAP called for a special meeting of the Alliance. (Under our by laws, a special meeting must be held if called by at least 10% of the membership. Since there are only eight of us, all it takes is one). The purpose of this meeting as called by PAP was (1) participation in a 2007 summit, and (2) the future and purpose of the Keystone Alliance. The meeting was held a few Saturdays ago by telephone conference. Although the general outcome of the special meeting was the same as before – stalemate – progress was made in some regards. Those opposed to the 2007 Summit issue made it clear that its votes were not against the Summit itself, rather the timing of the Summit. Having a Summit is a great idea, if given time to plan, and if the Alliance has an official position on which to stand.

The only formal business conducted at this meeting was a motion brought and passed to officially host a 2008 Summit. Otherwise progress was made in certain other regards relative to the future of the Alliance. I will keep you posted.

PRIMARY REPRESENTATIVE: GEORGE ROLES  
SECONDARY REPRESENTATIVE: REBECCA BUTTORFF, RP

<sup>1</sup> Art. I § 1.3, By-Laws of the Keystone Alliance of Paralegal Associations, (Dec. 2002)

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.paralegals.org/associations/2270/files/REGULATION\\_CHART\\_02\\_07.pdf](http://www.paralegals.org/associations/2270/files/REGULATION_CHART_02_07.pdf)

<sup>1</sup> *Meinhard v. Salmon*, 249 N.Y. 458 at 463 (N.Y. 1928) (*Cardozo, Ch. J.*)(referring to the legal duty that partners in a joint venture owe each other)

## LCPA and LLA Working Together

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Jessica has met with the LLA Executive Committee and they have approved extending a special CLE rate to the Lycoming County Paralegal Association of \$7.50 per credit hour per attorney in order to access all the benefits associated with our Accredited Provider Status with PACLE. This is great importance to the LCPA. It will give us the opportunity to better serve not only the Paralegals of the community, but also the Attorneys, hence making us a stronger organization. It will also put us in a position to work together with the LLA for the benefit of the Lycoming County legal community.

The LCPA appreciates the effort that Jessica has made on our behalf and looks forward to the two organizations working together.

*Bar Liaison – Janice Koziol*

## LCPA Visits Law Society

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of the LCPA, presented information on how membership in the LCPA is a great way to network in the legal community. He talked about his past experiences and others who obtained jobs through networking.

Rebecca Buttorff, provided information to the students about the current status of regulation in Pennsylvania and how membership in the LCPA helps Lycoming County paralegals keep abreast of the regulation trend in PA as well as nationwide. Additionally, she introduced to the students the LCPA Mentoring Program.

The students were invited to attend April's Lunch and Learn meeting, which was hosted by Attorney Kevin Way. There were numerous students in attendance!

## Job Bank

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The LCPA Job Bank is available for use only to LCPA members and members of the Lycoming County Bar Association. Advertisements placed by attorneys and law firms are free.

If you are interested in posting an available position or reviewing the resumes in the Job Bank, please do not hesitate to contact Michele Frey at Lepley, Engelman & Yaw (323-3768 or [MicheleS@lepleylaw.com](mailto:MicheleS@lepleylaw.com)).

## Law Day Activities

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The Secondary division winners: (Essays): Bethany Stoner -- 7th Grade, McCall Middle School; Ryan Brague -- 12th Grade, St. Neumann Regional Academy. (Artwork): Kristina Carey -- 7th Grade, St. John Neumann Regional Academy; Cody Sones -- 9th Grade, Hughesville High School; Melissa Little -- 12th Grade, Hughesville High School.

A reception sponsored by the Lycoming County Paralegal Association, in the children's honor, was held in the Juror's Lounge for pizza and cake.

Following that, another reception was held in honor of Judge Muir at the Old Corner Hotel.

This year the monetary prizes for Best in Category were raised to \$100.00 and the Committee hopes that in the future, with the help of sponsor, that all monetary prizes can be raised in search of more participation.

*LCPA Law Day Committee Chair – Janice Koziol*

## 2007 MEMBER DIRECTORY

Last Name	First Name	Email Address	Area of Practice	Employer
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Boyd	Ronca	<a href="mailto:RoncaBoyd@yahoo.com">RoncaBoyd@yahoo.com</a>	Penn College of Technology - Student	Penn College of Technology - Student
Buttorff	Rebecca	<a href="mailto:Rebeccab@lepleylaw.com">Rebeccab@lepleylaw.com</a>	Personal Injury, Civil Litigation	Lepley, Engelman & Yaw
Davies	Stephanie	<a href="mailto:jskbest@verizon.net">jskbest@verizon.net</a>	Penn College of Technology - Student	Penn College of Technology - Student
DePasqua	Philip	<a href="mailto:Polepasqua@mpvh.com">Polepasqua@mpvh.com</a>	Litigation Paralegal	McNerney, Page, Vanderlin & Hall
DeSousa	Josiane	<a href="mailto:Josieds@hotmail.com">Josieds@hotmail.com</a>	Penn College of Technology - Student	Penn College of Technology - Student
Doane	Jennifer	<a href="mailto:Jend@lepleylaw.com">Jend@lepleylaw.com</a>	Penn College of Technology - Student - Civil Litigation	Lepley, Engelman & Yaw
Eberlin	Shana Jo	<a href="mailto:Seberlin1@aol.com">Seberlin1@aol.com</a>	Lock Haven University - Student	Lock Haven University - Student
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Forsyth	Susan		Domestic/ Family Law	
Frey	Michele	<a href="mailto:MicheleS@lepleylaw.com">MicheleS@lepleylaw.com</a>	Estate Planning, Estate Administration, Civil Actions	Lepley, Engelman & Yaw
Hovestien	Rebecca	<a href="mailto:hovreb42@pct.edu">hovreb42@pct.edu</a>	Penn College of Technology - Student	Penn College of Technology - Student
Jacob	Edwin "Hank"	<a href="mailto:Hjacob@mmdlawoffice.com">Hjacob@mmdlawoffice.com</a>	Civil Litigation	Self-Employed / Marks, McLaughlin & Dennehy
Jones	Sue	<a href="mailto:Saiones4@comcast.net">Saiones4@comcast.net</a>	Divorce, Custody, Adoption	Miele & Rymysza
Joy	Rachael	<a href="mailto:RachaelJ@lepleylaw.com">RachaelJ@lepleylaw.com</a>	Criminal Defense	Lepley, Engelman & Yaw
Koziol	Janice	<a href="mailto:Jkoziol@mpvhlaw.com">Jkoziol@mpvhlaw.com</a>	Domestic Relations	McNerney, Page, Vanderlin & Hall
Mallery	Christie	<a href="mailto:Christie@comcast.net">Christie@comcast.net</a>	Criminal Defense, Family Law	Schemery & Zicoello
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Roles	George	<a href="mailto:GeoRoles@comcast.net">GeoRoles@comcast.net</a>	Trial Preparation, Legal Research	Law Office of W. Jeffrey Yates, Esq.
Rooney	Melissa	<a href="mailto:Melissa@cbatty.com">Melissa@cbatty.com</a>	Domestic / Family Law	Elion, Wayne, Grieco, Carlucci, Shipman & Irwin
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Shaffer	Tamera	<a href="mailto:PCTcollegemom@comcast.net">PCTcollegemom@comcast.net</a>	Penn College of Technology - Student	Penn College of Technology - Student

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Small	Kristy	<a href="mailto:Kristy734.@comcast.net">Kristy734.@comcast.net</a>	Penn College of Technology - Student	Penn College of Technology – Student
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<b>Sustaining Member</b>				
Pennsylvania College of Technology		<a href="mailto:Kderr@pct.edu">Kderr@pct.edu</a>		
Contact: Prof. Kevin Derr				

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Check out our website at <http://www.lycolaw.org/lcpa/main.htm>