



# The Legal Star

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## Message from the President:

Spring is finally here! We've all been looking forward to longer days, cheerier weather, planning vacations, just getting outside and enjoying some fun in the sun. The RVPA Board has been quite busy making plans for the upcoming months – we have a lot of great events in the works that you won't want to miss!

RVPA is committed to providing quality educational opportunities to its members. Our CLE Committee has put together an excellent line-up of CLE speakers for the spring and summer months. Visit RVPA's website to view the full schedule of speakers and topics for our monthly Lunch & Learns.

Speaking of Lunch & Learns, we are pleased to announce a return to our in-person Lunch & Learn format beginning in June! In order to ensure that all members continue to have access to our monthly CLE opportunities, we plan to live-stream the speaker presentations via Zoom. We are excited to provide this option to our members and guests, and hope that you will continue to join us each month, whether virtually or in-person.

Warmer weather also means more opportunities for our members to get involved in the community! The Community Relations Committee is organizing a waterways cleanup through the Clean Valley Council for **Saturday, April 10th**. Read ahead in the newsletter for more details. Come out and join your fellow paralegals in cleaning up trash from the riverbank at Vic Thomas Park. You'll be contributing to a good cause, and get to spend some quality time in the great outdoors! (We're kind of a fun group to hang out with too.)

The RVPA Board would like to congratulate all of our student members who will be graduating from their paralegal studies programs this spring! We are proud to have all of you as part of this organization – we love our students! Congratulations

on all of your hard work and achieving your goals. We look forward to working alongside some of you as you begin your paralegal careers!

As always, I want to express my deepest and sincerest gratitude to the RVPA officers and board members for all of their hard work in keeping this organization running smoothly. None of this would be possible without you – you all are the best!

Finally, I want to say THANK YOU to all of our members for hanging in there with us through a very challenging year. We've traversed a lot of uncharted territory over the past 12 months, but we've come through it together. I can't wait to see all of your faces in person again! Until then, stay safe, stay healthy, and enjoy this beautiful spring!

Shannon Honaker - RVPA President

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## April Virtual Lunch & Learn



**SPEAKER:**

John P. Fishwick, Jr., Esq.,  
Fishwick & Associates

**TOPIC:**

Qui Tam/False Claims Act

[LEARN MORE](#)

**RSPV By April  
5th to get the  
information.**

**DATE AND TIME**

04/08/21  
12:00pm-04/08/21  
1:00pm

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## May Virtual Lunch & Learn



**SPEAKER:**

Ramsay McCullough, III, Esq.,  
Medical Facilities of America

**TOPIC:**

An Attorney's Experience with  
Paralegals in Government,  
Private Practice, and  
Corporations

[LEARN MORE](#)

**RSPV By May  
11th to get the  
information.**

**DATE AND  
TIME**

05/13/21  
12:00pm-05/13  
/21 1:00pm

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**Clean Valley Day is on April 10th!**



Join us at Vic Thomas Park for the Clean Valley Counsel's annual spring clean up day! Don't forget to wear your RVPA T-shirt or a blue shirt. Gloves and trash bags will be provided.



**When: April 10th at 8:30 a.m.**

**Where: Vic Thomas Park**

1234 Midvale Ave SW, Roanoke, Virginia 24016.

(The park behind BlackDog Salvage at the Memorial Ave/13th Street Bridge.)

**Volunteer!**

congratulations

VWCC and ANU  
paralegal program



*Graduates*  
class of 2021

RVPA is planning a celebration in honor of our local paralegal studies program 2021 graduates! The Membership Committee will be hosting a graduation cookout, time and date to be announced. More information coming soon!

## **Save the Date:**

Jaunt for Justice 5K  
October 2nd, 2021

The RVPA will host the second annual "Jaunt for Justice 5K," a 5K Run/Walk to benefit Legal Aid Society of the Roanoke Valley (LASRV).

Online registration will open July 1st. Come on out and help RVPA support Legal Aid Society!



[LEARN MORE](#)

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practically  
★ legal

The Roanoke Valley Paralegal Association's second annual educational conference, Practically Legal, was held during the week of February 15th – 18th, 2021. We were unsure how the conference would translate to a virtual setting, but thanks to everyone who participated this year, it was a great success! You all showed us that we can still accomplish great things even when we are not together in person.

The conference would not have been the success it was if it were not for our sponsors this year: Planet Depos, Mode5, Affinity Consulting Group, Virginia Court Reporters Association, Arara Language Solutions, and Armenhyl. Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, we increased the number of student scholarships we could provide for

conference registrations for seven students from VWCC and ANU students: Lindsey Cervone, Tommie Lackey, Christina Huffman, Nicole Wells, Faith Carleno, Grace Ray, and Shalisa Browhow.

And of course, we can't forget to thank all of our wonderful speakers who donated their valuable time to spend part of their days with us sharing their knowledge in order to keep our whole community educated on very important topics that all paralegals use daily. Victor S. "Dinny" Skaff, III, Esquire, from Glenn Robinson Cathey Memmer & Skaff PLC, kicked off the week with a great presentation about Paralegal Ethics. Tuesday's session featured Cynthia Bragg, RPR, CCR, LCR, from CLB Court Reporting & Videography, who shared her tips on how court reporters and paralegals can work together to make better transcripts for our offices. On Wednesday, Deputy Clerk Janet "Becky" Collier joined us from the Roanoke City Circuit Court Clerk's office to present on using the court's e-filing system to file documents. We wrapped up the week on Thursday with Abigail Davis-Hess, Certified Legal Manager from adh-consulting, who shared some tips and tricks about the Case Management Systems we all use every day in our offices.

We look forward to seeing how our members take advantage of our continued education opportunities to help further our community. Don't forget that you can use the CLE's to apply for VARP (Virginia Registered Paralegal) certification through VAPA (Virginia Alliance of Paralegal Associations) or to become a Certified Paralegal through NALA (National Association of Legal Assistants). Learn more about both programs below.

[Learn More about VAPA Here](#)

[Learn More about NALA Here](#)

If you are interested in volunteering for the CLE Committee, please reach out by emailing to RVPA at [rvpa2018@gmail.com](mailto:rvpa2018@gmail.com). Plans are in the work for our next conference in 2023 and we hope to see you all there. Stay tuned!

Audrey Gray, RVPA Vice President



# Ever thought about mailing yourself?



You may want to hang this particular dream up. In June of 1920, Congress passed a law that made it a federal crime to mail yourself, or any other human, via USPS. Yes, you read that right. Despite it being legal, and even a typical thing to mail babies from the year 1913-1920, you will be placed under penalty for doing so now.

This law stems from an idealistic man by the name of Henry 'Box' Brown. In 1849, Brown, with the intention of escaping slavery, packed himself into a 3 x 2 feet wide and 2.5 feet high box, equipped with three small holes for breathing purposes, and mailed himself to Philadelphia.

After being separated from his beloved wife and children to the despair of slavery, Henry 'Box' Brown schemed up a way to relieve himself from all the agony he had felt the majority of his life as a slave. Cue *Alice in Chains*, "Man in the Box".

While sharing what I thought to be another unrealistic, funny law with my eight-year-old son, to my surprise he showed me several YouTube videos of parents shipping their children by mail for the purpose of new content. Although, a law, it seems enforcement of this particular law may be at play amongst other violations any Paralegal would easily notice.

Christina Huffman, VWCC Paralegal Studies Student

## **Want to get more involved with RVPA?**

Are you looking for a way to get more involved?  
Do you have ideas for future RVPA events?  
Are you looking for a new way to network?

**Join one of RVPA's Committees today to get  
started. There is a perfect place for everybody!**

Much of the "behind the scenes" work of planning and coordinating RVPA's events and efforts throughout the year is accomplished by committees.

Joining a committee is a great way to get to know paralegals from other Roanoke area law firms. The time commitment is minimal - perhaps a couple of hours a month, but the rewards are infinite!

If you are new to the area, just started a new job at a local law firm, or are a paralegal studies student at VWCC or ANU, becoming active with RVPA provides excellent networking opportunities and a chance to interact with others in our tight-knit Roanoke legal community.

We hope you will become involved with a committee this year!

[\*\*Learn More!\*\*](#)

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**Supreme Court of Virginia Opinions  
Shoemaker v. Funkhouse, et al.  
Record No. 191218  
Decided on March 25, 2021**





For those of us who assist attorneys in torts law, or who are currently studying torts law, this Virginia Supreme Court case is for you!

This case involves a wrongful death lawsuit in which a woman by the name of Gina Shoemaker was accidentally shot and killed by Shawn Nicely, the grandson of Richard and Anna Funkhouser.

Ms. Shoemaker was visiting her mother at the exact time that Mr. Nicely was visiting his grandparents, the Funkhousers, when they gave their grandson permission to fire a rifle at some targets, which were located in the direction of the neighboring residence that Ms. Shoemaker was visiting. Mr. Nicely was shooting the rifle when one of the bullets burst through the walls of the home and struck Ms. Shoemaker, killing her.

Jessica Shoemaker, the administrator and personal representative of Gina Shoemaker's estate, filed a complaint alleging a wrongful death action against the Funkhousers and Mr. Nicely, claiming that the Funkhousers owed a duty to refrain from allowing their grandson to shoot a rifle in the direction of the home that Ms. Shoemaker was visiting, and that they were negligent in doing so. The Funkhousers filed a demurrer, claiming that they owed Ms. Shoemaker no duty to exercise reasonable care. The trial court granted the Funkhousers' demurrer. Jessica Shoemaker appealed the matter.

This case was appealed all the way up to the Supreme Court of Virginia, where it was eventually reversed and remanded for further action. It includes a dissenting opinion by another justice. If anyone wants to strengthen their knowledge on

tort law, the matter of *Shoemaker v. Funkhouser, et al.* will provide some helpful insights.

Amelia Long, VWCC Paralegal Studies Student

[Read the full Opinion Here](#)



**April 1 - April 30, 2021**

Legal Food Frenzy (LFF) is an annual fundraising competition created in partnership with the Virginia Attorney General, the Young Lawyers Division (YLD) of the Virginia Bar Association, and the Federation of Virginia Food Banks.

RVPA is a participating organization in the 2021 Legal Food Frenzy. Be on the lookout for an upcoming email with more details!

If your law firm is interested in getting involved as well (there's a contest!), you can find the details [HERE](#).



LAW ★ DAY 2021  
ADVANCING THE  
**RULE** OF **LAW** **NOW**

Law Day, held annually on May 1st, is a national day set aside to celebrate the rule of law in our society and to cultivate an understanding of the legal profession. Law Day provides an opportunity to understand how law and the legal process protect our liberty, strive to achieve justice, and contribute to the freedoms that all Americans share.

This year's theme is "Advancing the Rule of Law Now." to reminds all of us that we the people share the responsibility to promote the rule of law, defend liberty, and pursue justice.

The American Bar Association will be holding a live stream event on Youtube called "Advancing the Rule of Law Around the World" on Thursday, April 29th from 3:30 - 5:00 p.m. ET.

[Learn More](#)

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**Something to Brighten your Day**



**THE CONTRACT HAD A  
FEW STRINGS ATTACHED**



**I PLAYED WITH THEM  
FOR SEVERAL HOURS**

made on imgur



Roanoke Valley  
Paralegal Association

