THE OBA WEBSITE
By: George Butterfield

There are many resources available to OBA members. One of those is the OBA website. The website is not only a source of information about who’s who in the OBA and what events are approaching, but it is also a valuable website for doing legal research and getting practical assistance. The purpose of this article is to give an overview of what is available on the website. This will be done by considering what resources are available in each main area listed on the left side of the homepage. If you are not familiar with the website, consider opening to it on your computer at omahabarassociation.com and clicking on each of the links as they are described in this article.

The HOME page includes a brief message by the OBA President, Gerald L. Friedrichsen, followed by a listing of the next few events on the OBA calendar. Each event is hyperlinked so that you can click on the link and get information about the event. There is also a welcome statement about the Lawyer Referral Service and a link to that page; “SPECIAL NOTICES” of items of interest and upcoming events; and a link to “Westlaw.Watch.” More will be said about these resources later in the article.

The first link after the homepage is entitled ABOUT OBA. It opens with some basic information about the OBA and includes a link to the e-mail for the OBA office (omahabarassociation@creighton.edu.) OBA COMMITTEES are listed with a link to the Contact Chair for each committee. The Contact Chair’s name, e-mail address, and telephone number are given. The EXECUTIVE COUNCIL link is similar in that it lists Officers, Immediate Past President, Immediate Past Treasurer, and the Executive Council. Name, e-mail address, and telephone numbers are included. The ABOUT OBA page also includes a PHOTO GALLERY. The Gallery has a drop down menu that lists various events. If you click on an event, e.g., 2008 Zoo, photos from that event are available. A PICTORIAL DIRECTORY is also available to OBA members who log in using their username and password (if you do not have these, you can get both by completing a profile form and submitting it to the OBA office). After logging in, a search box appears that can be used to search for an OBA member by last name or year they graduated. All attorneys can be listed by leaving the search box blank and hitting Enter, and attorneys whose names begin with a particular letter of the alphabet can be recalled by simply typing in that letter and hitting Enter. The Pictorial Directory includes profile information on each attorney. The attorney’s profile is password protected and can be updated at the attorney’s discretion.ABOUT OBA also has a MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION link which includes a link for a Dues Statement and Membership Application which can be downloaded, printed, filled out, and then mailed in. Finally, a CONTACT US link gives the office information for Cherie Sempek, Executive Director of the OBA, and Donna R. Birkby, Executive Director of the Lawyer Referral Service.

The LAWYER REFERRAL link has material for people who need to find a lawyer and also for lawyers. The FIND A LAWYER link has basic referral information, including a video describing the available service. There is also an Attorney Request Form that the person can complete and submit online. The OBA office then follows up on the request. The section under LAWYER REFERRAL that is FOR LAWYERS is password protected and directs you first to a login screen. After logging in, the materials in that area of the webpage are available. There are several other places within the OBA website that are also password protected but the user only has to login once to access them all. Under For Lawyers, there is a page entitled Introduction Letter which provides the Mission Statement for the LRS. There is also a Policies and Procedures page that gives the guidelines for admission to the OBA Lawyer Referral Service. Finally, there is a page that includes links to a Membership Application Form and an Areas of Practice list. The application form downloads to your computer to be filled out and returned to the OBA office along with the necessary registration fee.

The next two areas within the OBA website are the CALENDAR OF EVENTS and OBA MESSAGE CENTER. Each entry in the calendar is hyperlinked and opens to a page of information about the event. The message center also includes details of upcoming events and programs or other items of interest. The link for MEDIATION gives an overview of the OBA Mediation Referral Program. It discusses the nature of ADR and mediation and then the advantages of mediation. The page directs a person considering mediation to call the OBA office for a referral.

There is also a RESEARCH TOOLS page that has federal, general, state, and other links. Along with this page, there is the “Westlaw.Watch” link on the home page of the website. If you are an OBA member, you can register and Westlaw will send you a brief e-mail message giving updates on Nebraska cases. The service is fine for letting you know that something is out there, but it can be quite deceiving because with each case a link is given. You think that you can click on it and get the case but, instead, it sends you to a Westlaw login screen. If you subscribe to Westlaw, this is a nice feature, but if you do not, the link is of no use. The service is valuable, though, because it does let you know that an opinion is available, even if you cannot use the link to get to it.

One of the most significant features of the OBA website is the CIVIL JURY VERDICTS page. Included are only the civil jury verdicts that appear in the OBA Newsletter and do not necessarily include all civil jury verdicts of the courts. The database of verdicts is updated when the Newsletter comes out each March, May, September, and December. The webpage opens to a series of search boxes connected to a search engine. You can search by case number, case title, plaintiff’s attorney, defendant’s attorney, special damages, or remarks. The searchable date range is July 2001 to June 2009. You can also search by type. The pop-up menu gives a laundry list of 82 case types beginning with Breach of Agency Duty of Loyalty and ending with Will Contest. You can also specify the judge in the case, if you know who

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New NALA Certified Paralegals

The National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc., is pleased to announce that the following paralegals have successfully completed the two-day CLA/CP examination and are now entitled to use of the “CLA” or “CP” professional credential:

- Sandra M. Banks, CP
- Erickson & Sederstrom
- Alison L. Barthel, CP
- Gross & Welch
- Kimberly A.S. Brown, CP
- Spencer Fane Britt & Browne
- Elizabeth Elliott, CP
- Boyle Hess & Elliott, CPA’s
- Rebecca Kay, CP
- Croker Huck Kasner Dewitt
- Anderson & Gonderinger
- Mindy L. Mutahi, CP
- Woodmen of the World Life Insurance Society
- Laura J. Olson, CP
- Katske Henatsch & Suig
- Terri L. Peetz, CP
- Mutual of Omaha
- Mary Jo Schettler, CP
- Mutual of Omaha
- Teresa B. Shafer, CP
- Kimberly Studeman, CP
- Lamson Dugan and Murray
- Mieko Young, CP
- Mutual of Omaha

These paralegals are among 183 paralegals in the State of Nebraska and 15,378 paralegals nationwide who have attained this goal.

Established in 1976, the CLA/CP examination program is a voluntary professional credentialing program developed by the National Association of Legal Assistants and administered by a board composed of paralegals, members of the American Bar Association and members of the field of education active in paralegal training. The CLA/CP program involves successful completion of a two-day comprehensive examination covering the topics of communications; legal research; ethics; human relations and interviewing techniques; legal terminology; judgment and analytical ability; and substantive law. Thereafter, evidence of continuing legal education must be submitted periodically in order to maintain certified status.

The National Association of Legal Assistants, headquartered in Tulsa, Oklahoma, is a national, non-profit association which represents over 18,000 paralegals through individual members and 85 affiliated state and local associations. It is the leader in the growth and development of the paralegal profession, providing continuing education, professional development, and certification programs for the career field.

Information describing this and other programs of the National Association of Legal Assistants may be obtained by contacting:

NALA Headquarters
1516 South Boston, Suite 200
Tulsa, OK 74119-4013
918-587-6828 Fax 918-582-6772

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It was. The pop-up menu lists a total of 21 judges. You can also specify the verdict type, if you know it; including defendant, mistrial (hung jury), or plaintiff.

The final link at the OBA website is entitled NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE. There are currently no newsletters available, although the newsletters are being made into pdf files and may be available at least to OBA members in the near future.

The OBA website is kept up to date and provides the public and OBA members a wealth of information. Go to omahabarrassociation.com often to access the resources, to keep informed, and to know who’s who and what’s happening in the OBA.

NEW!!!

RENTAL EQUIPMENT
AT THE COURTHOUSE

The Omaha Bar Association has purchased new equipment for rental at the courthouse. Combining some of the current equipment with new purchases, there will be available for rental at the courthouse the following: (1) TV monitor with a new DVD/VCR combo unit; (2) new TV-DVD combo unit; (3) monitor and new ELMO; and (4) new Visual Presentation Station which includes the following: a new cart which houses a laptop computer, DVD/VCR combo unit, scanner unit, and an ELMO. The station also includes a 52” TV monitor for the jury and three 19” TV monitors for the judge and two counsel tables. There will be a new contract for rental of the equipment with discounts given to OBA members. We do not have a specific date as to when the new presentation station will be available for rental, but hopefully some time in September. We will send a blast e-mail in the future regarding available dates for training on the visual presentation statement equipment.