



2012-2013 Nominations and Elections Slate of Candidates

CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT-ELECT

Audrey M. Saxton, PLS

Bio: Audrey has been a member of NALS since 2006, earning her PLS certification in September 2006, recertified in October 2011, and has her sights on testing for the PP certification in 2012. She is currently serving as President of NALS of Tucson & So. AZ (NTSA), Treasurer for NALS of Arizona (NOA) (since 2010), and on the NALS Marketing Committee. Audrey is the 2009 NALS of Tucson & So. AZ Award of Excellence winner and was a finalist for the 2009 and 2010 NALS of Arizona Awards of Excellence as well. She also currently sits as Editor of *The LegalLetter* and *The Abstract*, NTSA's and NOA's newsletters, and as Technology Chair for both NTSA's and NOA's websites, NALSoFTucson.org and NALSoFArizona.org. Audrey has been actively involved on a number of committees on the local and state levels since she joined NALS and has been a presenter at the NALS Professional Development Conference in Tulsa and at NTSA's and select law offices' CLE meetings in the areas of technology and social media. Audrey also submitted and won the NALS Foundation Jett Founders Award for NALS of Tucson & So. AZ's 2010 Charity Golf Tournament event which raised money for scholarships for NALS members, college students and helped support homeless teens toward high school graduation.

Audrey has just over a decade of experience directly in the legal field, with prior experience in office management and bookkeeping. Most recently, she has been working in the Tucson AZ office of the firm of Lewis and Roca LLP in the litigation section since 2007. She supports attorneys primarily in the areas of real estate litigation and contract and commercial litigation. Her previous employers include City of Tucson Criminal Prosecutor's Office, the law firm of Robinson & Rylander, PC, and Holmes Weddle & Barcott PC in Anchorage AK.

Audrey's interests span well beyond her work in the legal field and her service to NALS and the community with her freelance work as a graphic designer and in digital productions. Besides her technical pursuits, she is also a skilled tournament Texas Hold'em poker player, a prolific reader and movie junkie, when time allows. Audrey is also the proud mother of two teenage daughters, Kaitlyn and Moira, and is married to Steven Dingeldine, a retired USAF Master Sergeant, with two daughters of his own (Brittney and Brylee).

**CANDIDATE FOR
SECRETARY**

Kari S. Kirk

Bio not provided

**CANDIDATE FOR
TREASURER**

Thelma Gonzales, PLS

Bio: Thelma Gonzales, PLS is a member of NALS of Tucson & So. AZ and has been a member of NALS since 1989. During that time, Thelma has held about every office on the local level (President three times), and just about every office on the state level except for Treasurer. Thelma has been awarded the NALS of Tucson & So. AZ Award of Excellence twice and the NALS of Arizona Award of Excellence once. On the national level, she served as Region 8 Director for two years in addition to having served as chairman of many committees and having helped with many conferences.

Personal Statement: "This Association has been a very big part of my life for many years and it would be my honor to once again serve it by serving as Treasurer for the 2012-2013 year."

~ *Thelma Gonzales, PLS*

CANDIDATE FOR DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP

Vernelle Collins, PP, PLS

Vernelle's legal experience spans the scope of more than 30 years. Currently she holds the position of Word Processor for the prestigious law firm of Fennemore Craig, P.C. She often has the difficult challenge of working with multiple attorneys practicing in many different areas of the law. Verne performs a variety of challenging assignments, working with attorneys in the Phoenix, Denver, Las Vegas, Nogales and Tucson offices. While meeting the demands of working with a wide variety of challenging personalities, Verne maintains a level of professionalism and humor that promotes both calm and confidence to get the job done.

Vernelle's membership with NALS dates back to 1985. She took and passed the ALS certification exam in July 1987 at the National Conference held in New Orleans, Louisiana. Her determination to gain certification was second to none, as she often chides that she sat for the PLS exam more times than the late John F. Kennedy, Jr. sat for the New York Bar. After numerous attempts to pass the PLS, she successfully certified in Little Rock, Arkansas in July 2004. The news of her certification was literally heard around the country, as her determination and drive served as an inspiration to not only her fellow chapter members but to others throughout the United States. After achieving this goal she immediately set a new goal to sit for and pass the Certified Paralegal Professional exam, studying tirelessly and traveling from Michigan to Natchez, Mississippi to take the exam. She received her PP certification in July 2005. Subscribing to the premise that NALS is the premier association for legal professionals, Verne has been remains one of NALS' biggest cheerleaders.

At the State level, she has served as the Director of Public Awareness and Marketing during which time she compiled the NOA Legal Information Directory and Resource Central listing of often used links. Verne assisted with marketing and preparation of the course program and attended the 2010 NOA Survivor Course. She also worked with the 2009-10 and 2010-11 installation and awards banquet committees and is currently assisting with the preparation of 2011-2012 installation and awards and winter conference programs.

On the national level she has served on the Education Committee; Webinar Committee, written articles for the e-News publication and is currently serving on the 2012-13 NALS Leadership Library Task Force Committee. Prior to moving to Arizona, she served as Certification Chair for NALS of Michigan during which time she implemented a computerized self-study program that shares in the acclaim for more than five successful certifications.

CANDIDATE FOR DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Terry Houston, PP Emeritus

Bio: Terry is a Certified Professional Paralegal Emeritus and NALS Life Member. After majoring in stenography in high school with a minor in math, she began her lifelong secretarial career in Los Angeles, first as a secretary in the sales department of an aluminum mining and production company, then senior executive secretary and travel coordinator for a major U.S.-flag steamship line. Terry transitioned to legal work after moving to Arizona in the early 1990s, working for three years in intellectual property rights litigation with a solo practitioner, followed by two years in insurance defense for a nationwide insurance company, then seven years with one of Arizona's largest defense firms assisting with cases involving defense of legal malpractice.

Terry has been active in NALS since joining in 2004. Her contributions to NALS of Phoenix include:

- Education Director 2004 and 2005
- New Member of the Year 2004
- Certification Director 2011
 - Prepared and taught the NALS of Phoenix 2011 Certification Study Group program
 - Awarded the NALS Jett Awards Founder's Award for 2012
- Award of Excellence nominee 2011
- President-elect 2012

Terry has been a member of the NALS Education Committee since 2005, serving as Vice-chair in 2010-2011 and Chair in 2011-2012. She says she sees education as the primary benefit of NALS membership, and has been very involved with the NALS Education Committee, preparing and moderating Online Study Group and Online Learning Center learning sessions, preparing and presenting NALS WebEd sessions, and has submitted several articles for the "Leading the Way" column in the *NALSdocket* and other NALS publications.

After five years in west Texas, she enrolled in the Commercial Music program at South Plains College in Levelland, Texas, Terry and her husband returned to Arizona in 2010. Their hobby is traveling, and they say their happiest memories include having circumnavigated the globe in 2008 onboard the maiden world cruise of Cunard Line's M/V *Queen Victoria* and attending the London celebration of Prince William's marriage in 2011.

Personal Statement: "I am honored to have been nominated for the position of NALS of Arizona Education Director and, if elected, promise to uphold the commitment to provide superior education opportunities for NALS Members." ~ *Terry Houston, PP Emerita*

CANDIDATE(S) FOR DIRECTOR OF MARKETING

Bud Hart
(incumbent)

Bud Hart currently serves NALS of Arizona as its Director of Marketing (2011-2012) and has worked with several other legal associations within the state and nationally, including:

- ALA (association of Legal Administrators) Valley of the Sun chapter
- APA (Arizona Paralegal Association) Phoenix chapter
- NALS Phoenix, Tucson and Yavapai County chapters

Bud is a marketing professional and has been spearheading the development of Nationwide Legal Services in Arizona with the implementation of In house Investigations unit and helping with the development of Nationwide's Document Solutions Program.

Bud currently resides in southeast Phoenix. He holds a current private pilot license and is qualified to command over fifteen different types of aircraft, including single engine, multi engine, and sail plane. Bud's first solo flight took place at the age of sixteen in Corona, CA. He is also a member of the AOPA and the Young Eagles and is an avid golfer. Bud enjoys working with charities such as the American Legion and the Legion Rides. Bud is a California native who moved to Arizona from San Diego in pursuit of happiness and says that he has found it in Arizona.

Barbara Leach, PLS

Barbara Leach, PLS (aka "Cookie") joined NALS in 1987 and is a NALS Life Member. Her career in the legal field began in October 1980. In fall of 1980 Barbara made a career change and entered the legal field as a part-time legal secretary trainee in San Ramon, California. Her family returned to Washington State in July 2003 where she went to work as a receptionist in a mid-sized law firm. Less than three years thereafter, she was employed as a legal secretary and has worked in the areas of personal injury and medical malpractice litigation; probate and estate planning; tax; corporate; and real estate law, and is currently working as a word processor. While advancing in her career, she obtained a paralegal certificate from Puget Sound University School of Law.

During her tenure as a NALS member in Pierce County, Washington, she served on the local board 14 years consecutively, serving in every position, except treasurer. Three of those years she simultaneously held state offices or chairs. She has also served on the NALS Membership Committee (3 years); and is a mentor/sponsor for numerous members in several states.

Barbara moved to Arizona in 2004. She has served as Certification Director and Membership Director for NALS of Phoenix; and, Membership Director and Certification Chair for NALS of Arizona. She has also chaired and been on several committees of both entities.

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Barbara "leads by example". Early in her membership when attending a NALS seminar on *Professional Development*, the information she took away and lives by is: "We are always an ambassador and representative of our family, our employer, and NALS; and to consider what's best for each of these environments when making any act or decision."

Personal statement: "I owe a lot of my success as a legal support professional to NALS. Along the way through the continuing education and personal life experiences I've learned that bestowing a positive attitude, kindness, mentoring, and sharing of time and knowledge (giving and receiving) are priceless gifts. I maintain that by joining an association or group, a commitment is made to do my best and to give back more than I receive.

If elected, I pledge to do my best to continue to promote NALS in an affirmative light, mentoring, and informing the membership and the public of all current and upcoming events. This is a challenge I welcome and embrace. I will endeavor to uphold the level of competency and confidence the membership has reflected in nominating me for this position." ~ *Barbara Leach, PLS*