



February 2014

The WAAT Newsletter

The Quarterly Newsletter
of the Women Attorneys Association of Topeka

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Kristin L. Ballobin
Newsletter

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Program

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Public Relations/Website

Madeline Rogers
Social

Dara Monclare
Membership



President's Message: Laura Graham

Reclaim Some Balance in Life!

Happy New Year, friends! I hope 2014 is off to a great start for you. WAAT finished 2013 with a bang! Our November program, with Washburn Law's Professional Development Director, Margann Bennett, presenting on "Networking – Strategic Friending," was a good reminder as to why WAAT exists. As Margann emphasized, "networking" doesn't have to be a formal, awkward, "meet and greet" type experience. Casually connecting with others – whether at a professional event or in a knitting class – broadens our horizons. The possibilities that can develop from those connections are endless!

Then in December, our Social Chair, Madeline Rogers, organized a delightful holiday gathering that gave us a prime opportunity to – you guessed it, network! The delectable goodies and play at Topeka Civic Theatre were the perfect backdrop for a relaxing, fun evening reconnecting with old friends and making some new acquaintances.

Now, hard as it is to believe, 2014 is off and running. Do you have any resolutions for 2014? Mine is to get back to the "old normal." Almost a decade ago, when my friend and I had a goal of running a marathon in every state in the nation, we managed to fit in several runs together a week, and did long runs together each Saturday morning. We were never speed demons, so the progressively longer mileage as we trained meant we spent a lot of time together, sharing our ups and downs, our successes and setbacks – not just about running, but about our lives as a whole. It was a great stress-reducer, not to mention the fact we were both in decent shape thanks to the running routine.

Several years into our quest, with a number of marathons checked off our list, I started a new job, and getting back home to Lawrence in time and with enough energy to connect with my friend for even a short mid-week run became increasingly difficult. Not long after that, my friend's job seemed in peril. She worked for an international company that split into two entirely separate entities, and for about a year, she was in limbo as to whether her job would survive the transition.

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President's Message Continued

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She worked like a maniac to prove herself indispensable, and fortunately she kept her job. But with everything we both had going on, we cut back from running together two or three times a week to maybe once. Although we weren't training properly and suffered some injuries as a result, we checked several more states off our list.

But the intense demands of our jobs and other responsibilities progressively took their toll; we eventually fell out of the running groove almost entirely. Despite the best of intentions, it's been almost four years now since we ran our last marathon! On the sporadic occasions we've made time and had the energy to lace up our shoes and run, we've both groused about being "crazy busy," "swamped," "completely maxed out" or trying to keep up with the "frenetic pace." We've come to refer to this as the "new normal."

Sadly, it seems like about everyone I know is operating in this mode today. Our society cultivates a mentality where people often think how busy they are defines their worth. Most of us carry smartphones or iPads or other devices to keep us connected almost anywhere and anytime – and we feel obligated to stay "plugged in" virtually nonstop. It's almost as if we wear "busy" as a badge of honor. Well I'm ready to remove the badge!

My running buddy and I have both vowed to make 2014 the year we return to the "old normal." While we're not yet planning to tackle any marathons this year, we are committed to connecting more regularly and keeping each other on track with some minimal exercise goals. It's not that I intend to slack off at work; I love my job and gain tremendous fulfillment from it. But my goal this year is to regain some balance and get back to enjoying life more fully!

In light of that, I'm particularly excited about WAAT's February program. The amazing Amanda Kiefer – a very busy corporate attorney, wife and mother, an active participant in many organizations (including being a past WAAT president and the current president-elect of the TBA), and a member of the 2014 class of Leadership Greater Topeka – will speak on the very issue of balance. Her presentation on "Tips for Surviving the Work/Life Pendulum" is bound to benefit us all. I hope you can join us for the February 19th lunch meeting.

And there is a lot more to look forward to with WAAT. Plans are underway for our mentor-mentee event with the Washburn Law students; spring will bring with it our annual Just Desserts event to fund the scholarship we present each year through the Washburn Women's Alliance; and many other activities are in the works. Remember, the best way to keep abreast of what's going on with WAAT is to check our new website or Facebook page, at:

<http://www.topekawomenattorneys.com/> <https://www.facebook.com/topekawomenattorneys>

I'm not sure who to credit with this, but I've heard it said before that, "Most people are so busy trying to do everything they think they *should* do, they never get around to doing what they *want* to do." My wish is that, in 2014, you can reclaim some balance in life and make time for what really gives you joy. Any my hope is that includes participating in WAAT activities! Please be in touch if you have ideas or suggestions for how WAAT can improve – or provide more "strategic friending" opportunities! Again, Happy New Year!

The Spring CLE April 11, 2014

What: Annual WAAT CLE
When: April 11, 2014
Time: 12:10 - 4:30 p.m.
Where: Washburn University School of Law, Room 102

The 4-hour CLE will consist of two hours of ethics CLE credit and two hours of regular CLE credit.

Presentations may include:

- Ann McDonald from the Kansas Lawyers Assistance Program on statistics and trends affecting women in the legal profession;
- Marty Snyder for Ethics Jeopardy; and/or
- A Judges' Panel

Please get the date saved on your calendar! Updates regarding the presentation will be made as the Spring CLE gets closer. Please contact Jennifer Sherber with any questions regarding the event.

February 2014 General Membership Meeting February 19, 2014 at Noon

The February WAAT program is "**Tips for Surviving the Work/Life Pendulum**," presented by Amanda Kiefer. Amanda is Corporate Counsel, Director of Minority and Women and Inclusion at the Federal Home Loan Bank of Topeka. She is a past WAAT president and currently the president elect of the Topeka Bar Association. Did I also mention that she is a mother of three?

This should be a fun and interesting program to attend! Please RSVP by Monday, February 17th by emailing Rachel Pickering at raepickering@yahoo.com or you can register online at WAAT's website (<http://topekawomenattorneys.com/>) by visiting the Event Calendar Page.

Non-WAAT members are welcome to attend, and all are encouraged to bring other attorneys.

Time and Place:

Wednesday, February 19, 2014

KBA Headquarters

1200 SW Harrison, noon to 1 p.m.

RSVP due by Monday, February 17th

A lunch for \$10.00 is provided with your reservation. If you do not want a lunch, please clearly state NO LUNCH on your RSVP, otherwise one will be paid for and ordered for you. If you prefer a vegetarian or gluten free lunch, the caterer can accommodate you; please just let me know your preference in your RSVP. Payment will be accepted at the luncheon; \$10.00 check payable to WAAT or cash.

WAAT's Mentor/Mentee Winter Event

WAAT's event with students from Washburn University School of Law's Women's Legal Forum is fast approaching. If you are interested in becoming a mentor to a law school student please let Kimberly Lynch, WAAT's Young Lawyer Chair, know your practice area(s) and she will try to match you with a student also interested in that practice area(s). The time commitment is entirely set by you and your mentee.

For more information please contact Kimberly Lynch by emailing her at Kimberly.Lynch@kdads.ks.gov.

WAAT Membership

Know someone who is interested in joining WAAT?

Please visit: https://waat.clubexpress.com/content.aspx?page_id=60&club_id=102226&sl=217684895 to join and pay online, or contact Dara Montclare, the Membership Chair, at dara.montclare@z2law.com.

Membership dues are \$20.00 for those admitted to the bar 1 to 3 years, and \$30.00 for those admitted 4 years or more. Individuals newly admitted to the bar are not required to pay for the first year of membership in WAAT. Law students are also provided with free membership into WAAT.

WAAT Board



We had to capture this momentous event when EVERY Board member was able to make it to one fateful Board Meeting!

Front (left to right): Dara Montclare, Barbara Dye, Laura Graham, Luanne Leeds, Alison St.Clair, Honorable Marla Luckert

Back (left to right): Jennifer Hays, Kristin Ballobin, Jennifer Sherber, Madeline Rogers, Rachel Pickering, Kimberly Lynch, Julia Gilmore Gaughan, and Whitney Casement

Save the Date!

Upcoming General Membership Meetings & Other Events:

- February 19th: *Tips for Surviving the Work/Life Pendulum* presented by Amanda Kiefer (see page 3 for more details)
- April 11th: WAAT Spring CLE (see page 3 for more details)
- May 21st: General Membership Meeting presented by TBA
- July 24-26th: Lindsborg Conference (registration begins in April)
- September 17th: **Constitution Day**—Judge Pierron invited WAAT members to participate in educating students in local school districts about Constitution Day. Presenters are needed at one or two school districts for grades K-12. Presentation ideas from those used in the past are available for inspiration. A committee of those interested in participating will be formed by Luanne Leeds. Please contact Luanne if you are interested in participating in this fun and important event (leedslua@gmail.com).

KWAA Video in Development

The Honorable Marla Luckert informed the WAAT Board that KWAA is developing a video about the first 250 women attorneys in Kansas, the first 150 women judges in Kansas, and the Lindsborg conferences.

KWAA members has asked its members, and is also asking WAAT members, to bring photos from the Lindsborg conferences and make comments about the first 250 women attorneys in Kansas, the first 150 women judges in Kansas, and the Lindsborg conferences that will be featured in the video.

KWAA will set up the video equipment at the February WAAT general membership meeting so that WAAT members can provide photos or commentaries regarding the events and women to be featured.

If you have any questions or would like to provide photographs or information, please contact Laura Graham for additional information (Laura.Graham@kbi.state.ks.us).

WAAT Holiday Party!

Fun was had by all on December 18, 2013 at the Topeka Civic Theatre & Academy for the show *Inspecting Carol*. Thank you to those of you that attended and made this event an enjoyable seasonal treat!

