



January 2013

The WAAT Newsletter

The Quarterly Newsletter
of the Women Attorneys Association of Topeka

New Board Members

Jennifer Hays
President

Angel Zimmerman
Past President

Laura Graham
President Elect

Alison St. Clair
Secretary

Barbara Dye
Treasurer

Mindy Miller
Career Development

Luanne Leeds
Just Desserts

Hon. Marla J. Luckert
Archives/Bylaws

Jennifer Sherber
Young Lawyers

Kristin L. Ballobin
Newsletter

Dara Montclare
Program

Joshana L. Offenbach
Public Relations/Website

Angel Zimmerman
KWAA Liaison

Sandra Sigler
Social

Julia Gilmore Gaughan
Membership



President's Message: Jennifer Hays

I hope everyone had a great holiday season. We are ready to start off the new year with more CLEs, socials, and networking opportunities.

So far, we have had a productive year. The WAAT Board was able to assist with getting "Journeys on Road Less Travelled" online at <http://contentdm.washburnlaw.edu/cdm/>. A big thank you goes out to Mary Feighny and the Washburn Law School Library for helping accomplish this project.

The KWAA destination CLE was a great opportunity for our members to multitask learning, shopping and catching up. The WAAT mentor/mentee social with Washburn Law's WLF was a success with lots of students getting a chance to mingle with female attorneys while enjoying delicious Burger Stand cuisine. Our holiday social was a blast with great food and a wonderful production of "A Christmas Story" at the Topeka Civic Theatre.

The WAAT board is also excited to announce that this year's McFarland Award recipient will be Judge Karen Arnold-Burger and we look forward to the reception on February 20, 2013 over lunch at the Kansas Law Building.

I hope to see you all at our upcoming meetings and events.

Curious about the history of WAAT?

To Learn More Visit: <http://www.topekawomenattorneys.com/leadership/WAAT%20history.pdf>

Newsletter Committee Members

Kristin L. Ballobin Alma L. Whitelaw

WAAT Holiday Party By Dara Montclare

On December 19, 2012, WAAT hosted its annual Holiday Party that was available to all WAAT and KWAA members in the Archive Room of the Topeka Civic Theatre.

We had a wonderful time at the holiday party this year. Hazel Hill chocolates made an appearance again, and despite the weather threat, there were plenty of us there to start the holiday season off and watch "A Christmas Story" together.

We started in a cozy room with a beautiful Christmas tree, where the food was laid out by the head elf, Sandra Sigler.



Above: Food galore behind Marty, Judge Luckert and Angel
Right: Hazel Hill Table



Then we chatted up a storm, so to speak, before we went into the show. We heard some pretty hard rain while the show was going on, so during admission we were treated to a spectacle of nickel size hail completely covering the lawns and parking spaces as we peeked outside.



Member Profile: Mary E. Christopher

By: Alison St. Clair



Most of us in the legal profession realize that getting a legal education can be difficult and requires sacrifice and dedication. No one knows this better than Mary Christopher. Although Mary delayed her legal education to start a family, she remained focused on her goal of becoming an attorney. Mary's story reminds us all that you really can achieve what you set out to do as long as you're willing to work hard and take a chance on yourself.

Mary attended Kansas State University where she earned a Bachelor's Degree in English Literature. Although the idea of going to law school appealed to her, she had no idea how she would pay for it. The oldest of five children, she already worked two or three jobs to pay for her undergraduate education. However, Mary was not about to give up on her goal of becoming an attorney. After graduating from Kansas State, Mary, by that time married with young children, took a position as a legal assistant at Turner & Boisseau in Great Bend, Kansas, first working part time and gradually becoming full time. She enjoyed the work and again thought of going to law school. Unfortunately, she and her family were hours from the nearest one, and she and her husband were putting all of their money into his new tree business.

However, Mary's desire to get a legal education only grew. In 1998, Mary finally signed up for the LSAT in the hopes of finally making her dream of going to law school a reality. She was still concerned with the financial burden, but her decision paid off – Mary was awarded a three-year scholarship. Luckily, her family was on board; they moved to Silver Lake so that Mary could attend Washburn University School of Law. Despite a hectic schedule that included a husband starting a new business, three children all participating in school and athletic activities, and her clerkship at the Appellate Reporter's Office, Mary excelled in law school. She was a Washburn Law School President's Scholar, Notes Editor of the Washburn Law Journal, and she graduated with honors in 2001.

After graduating from law school, Mary worked as a research attorney at the Kansas Supreme Court for the Honorable Bob Abbott, a job which she calls "a wonderful opportunity that I will never forget." She went on to work for the Kansas Health Care Stabilization Fund and then Goodell, Stratton, Edmonds & Palmer, where she became a partner in 2012.

Shortly after she began working as an attorney, one of Mary's good friends took her to a WAAT luncheon meeting and she was hooked. She says that she "really enjoyed the friendly atmosphere, the programs and the camaraderie." Mary became a member and was thrilled when she was asked to join the Board a year later. She has held several positions on the Board, including Career Development chair, Archives/Bylaws chair, Secretary, and President. Mary's many contributions to WAAT include initiating the organization's website and rewriting the bylaws, and she considers the friendships and personal connections she has made to be the most valuable benefit of joining WAAT. Mary has enjoyed several WAAT events during her membership, including the holiday parties and the 50th anniversary. One of the best memories she has of a WAAT event is that of a young mother expressing her gratitude for WAAT's contributions during its Read to Me program.

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Chief Justice Kay McFarland Attorney of Achievement Award Recipient 2013 Judge Karen Arnold-Burger

The Board of Directors of WAAT is pleased to announce that it has selected **Judge Karen Arnold-Burger** as the 2013 recipient of the Chief Justice Kay McFarland Attorney of Achievement Award.

In 2006, the Women Attorney's Association of Topeka created the Chief Justice McFarland Award to honor her many accomplishments in the legal field. The award recognizes an individual who has achieved professional excellence in her field and has influenced other women to pursue legal careers, opened doors for women lawyers in a variety of job settings that historically were closed to them, or advanced opportunities for women within a practice area or segment of the profession.

Judge Arnold-Burger served as First Assistant City Attorney for the City of Overland Park before accepting a position as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in Kansas City, Kansas. She was appointed to the Overland Park Municipal Court in 1991, and was appointed Presiding Judge of that court in 1996. Governor Mark Parkinson appointed her to the Kansas Court of Appeals on January 6, 2011.

Judge Arnold-Burger has always been a leader in her profession. She served as President of the Johnson County Bar Association, the Kansas Municipal Judges Association, and the Earl E. O'Connor Inn of Court. She has served on the Executive Board of the NCSCJ, a section within the Judicial Division of the American Bar Association. She has been an adjunct faculty member at the National Judicial College since 2000, and was elected by her fellow faculty members to serve on the Faculty Council beginning in 2010. In 2006, she was awarded the Justinian Award for Professional Excellence by the Johnson County Bar Association. The award is given annually to an attorney who exemplifies integrity, service to the community, and service to the legal profession. She currently serves on the Board of Governors of the University of Kansas School of Law.

Please join WAAT in honoring Judge Arnold-Burger. The date of the Award reception will be announced soon!



Member Profile (continued from Page 3):

Mary is very passionate about women attorneys organizations. In her opinion, although there has been gender equality progress in the right direction, there is still much ground to be gained by women in the legal profession. She believes that membership in WAAT has allowed her to voice concerns about such issues in a friendly environment and has given women in the legal profession a chance to advance their professional interests while making a positive difference in the greater Topeka community.

Mary is an excellent example of what a strong woman can accomplish when she sets her mind on achieving something. Although at times her dream of law school seemed impossible, she refused to give up. Had Mary not remained so focused on her goal, the legal profession and WAAT would be missing out on an outstanding attorney and wonderful colleague.

Thank you Mary for all of your contributions to WAAT and the legal community!

General Membership Meeting January 16, 2013

REMEMBER! WAAT General Membership Meetings are scheduled this program year for **the third Wednesday** each month, to accommodate our members who have a conflict with another meeting generally scheduled for the fourth.

Our luncheon this month is with the Women's Legal Forum at Washburn School of Law. We urge you to attend to support WLF. Besides, you don't want to miss Aaron Jack, Kansas Securities Commissioner, talk about investor education and protection, not to mention the few major mistakes most investors make.

WHERE: Washburn Law School, Room 102
TIME: 12:05 to 1:00pm
DATE: JANUARY 16, 2013

RSVP: by Monday, January 14th by replying to this message or dara@valentine-law.com.

Box Lunch is \$10.00 with your reservation. If you do not want a lunch, please clearly state NO LUNCH on your RSVP, otherwise one will be ordered for you.

Save the Date

Judge Christel Marquardt's Retirement Reception

Monday - January 28, 2013
5pm – 7pm
Location: Kansas Bar Association

Request for pictures: Please review your archives or forward this email to those who would have pictures. I am gathering pictures for a slide show – please submit pictures to angel@valentine-law.com

Upcoming WAAT General Membership Meetings:

February 20, 2013
March 20, 2013
April 17, 2013
May 22, 2013

WAAT Membership

Know someone who is interested in joining WAAT?

Visit: <http://www.topekawomenattorneys.com/join-waat> for the form below or contact our Membership Board Member Julia Gilmore Gaughan at jgaughan@morrislaing.com

WOMEN ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION OF TOPEKA

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

2012-2013

NAME: _____

FIRM/AGENCY _____ TITLE: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City/ST/Zip: _____

_____ Check here if you do NOT want your address listed in directory or used for related mailings

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email Address: _____

Practice Areas: _____

Undergraduate Institution: _____ Degree: _____ Year: _____

Law School _____ Year: _____

Annual Dues (July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013)

New Admittees 2012 free _____ Admitted to Bar 1-3 Years, \$20 _____
Admitted to bar 4+ Years, \$30 _____

Committee Preferences

I am interested in serving on one of the following committees:

Membership _____ Bylaws _____ Social _____ Young lawyers _____

Program _____ Newsletter _____ Public Relations _____ Website _____

RETURN TO:

WAAT

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TOPEKA, KS 66601