



October 2013

# The WAAT Newsletter

The Quarterly Newsletter  
of the Women Attorneys Association of Topeka

## New Board Members

**Laura Graham**  
President

**Jennifer Hays**  
Past President/KWAA Liaison

**Luanne Leeds**  
President Elect

**Alison St. Clair**  
Secretary

**Barbara Dye**  
Treasurer

**Jennifer Sherber**  
Career Development/CLE  
Chair

**Julia Gilmore Gaughan**  
Just Desserts

**Hon. Marla J. Luckert**  
Archives/Bylaws

**Kimberly M.J. Lynch**  
Young Lawyers

**Kristin L. Ballobin**  
Newsletter

**Rachel L. Pickering**  
Program

**Whitney Casement**  
Public Relations/Website

**Madeline Rogers**  
Social

**Dara Monclare**  
Membership



## President's Message: Laura Graham

The incredible Helen Keller is quoted as having said, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." How true! When the 2013-14 WAAT board held its annual retreat in July, we talked about WAAT's strengths and weaknesses. We felt our strengths included many things in line with WAAT's multi-faceted purpose, a key component of which is "*encouraging the advancement, education and support of women in the legal professions.*"

I believe our greatest strength is in our collective voice and readiness to support, inspire, mentor and share wisdom with one another. The WAAT and KWAA listservs both amaze me! Nowhere else have I encountered professional colleagues more willing to answer questions and give advice – on legal issues, personal matters, or just about anything!

To build on our strengths, the goal of the WAAT board this year is to provide outstanding programming and CLEs; fun networking and social opportunities; and fulfillment through service to our community. Program Chair Rachel Pickering got us off to a great start with the Leadership program she lined up for our August meeting. We were fortunate to hear from a panel of seasoned attorneys, consisting of Judge Evelyn Wilson, Teresa Watson and Natalie Haag, and moderated by Justice Marla Luckert. Their insights resonated with attendees at every stage of their career.

Then in September, President-Elect Luanne Leeds coordinated our annual, feel-good Read to Me book drive. Michelle Kmiec, Director at Highland Park Parent-Child Learning Center, inspired us with stories about the amazing work she and her colleagues do with teen-mother clients whose children are cared for at HP-PCLC, instilling in them the value of completing their high school education and hopefully continuing beyond that, and equipping them with tools to be good parents. Michelle and her staff were very grateful for our generous donation of board books to distribute to the children at HP-PCLC.

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## President's Message Continued

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In terms of ways we can improve, a key opportunity we identified at our board retreat was growing our communications through social media and technology. I am delighted to inform you we are making great strides on this front! Public Relations/Website Chair Whitney Casement has spent tremendous time and effort to launch a new WAAT website that you'll read about elsewhere in the newsletter. We believe it will be both user-friendly and useful! For instance, the new website will provide online registration and payment options that members have requested for years. Whitney has also set up a new WAAT Facebook page; check out the photos from September's Read to Me program – and lots of other timely information – at: <https://www.facebook.com/topekawomenattorneys>.

There are too many great things going on to highlight them all, but suffice it to say, your WAAT board is involved, enthusiastic and excited to serve this long-vibrant organization. I know we're going to have a fantastic year! Stay tuned for many engaging programs, fun events and networking opportunities on the horizon. If you haven't been able to join us for awhile, I hope you'll make a point to soon. Remember, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

## Meet the 2013-2014 WAAT Board of Directors



### PRESIDENT ~ Laura Graham

Laura is a 1990 graduate of the University of Kansas, with a degree in Journalism. She received her J.D. with Dean's Honors from Washburn University School of Law, in 1993. She has been General Counsel to the Kansas Bureau of Investigation since May 2007. Prior to working at the KBI, Laura served as an Assistant County Counselor for Shawnee County, handling civil litigation; as a prosecutor to the Alcoholic Beverage Control division; and as an Assistant Attorney General in the Kansas Attorney General's Legal Opinions and Government Counsel Division.

Laura is very active in her profession and the community. In addition to her involvement in WAAT, she currently serves as Secretary of the Topeka Bar Association and also is a member of the Kansas Bar Association. She is a member and former president of the Topeka Heartland Sertoma Club and previously co-chaired the Sertoma Great Topeka Duck Race, raising approximately \$50,000 to benefit Big Brothers Big Sisters and numerous other local charities.

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### PRESIDENT-ELECT ~ Luanne Leeds

Luanne has been in private practice since 2007, and opened her own practice in 2009, Leeds Law, LLC. She practices in the areas of health care, employment, and civil rights. She is a member of the Topeka, Kansas, and American bar associations; Women Attorneys Association of Topeka; and Inns of Court. She received her bachelor's degree in Urban Planning from Rutgers University, Camden in 1990 and her juris doctorate from the Washburn University School of Law in 2006. She is admitted to practice in Kansas and Missouri.

In 2011, Luanne was awarded the Kansas Bar Association Pro Bono Certificate of Appreciation. She was also recognized by the Topeka Bar Association for her pro bono work in 2009.

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## Meet the WAAT Board Continued



### PAST PRESIDENT/KWAA LIAISON ~ Jennifer Hays

Jennifer Hays has been an associate attorney at Zimmerman & Zimmerman, P.A. since November 2007 and practices in the area of bankruptcy and collections. Jennifer is a life-long Kansan, having been born and raised in Lawrence. She attended the University of Kansas where she received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology with a minor in Philosophy in 2003. She then attend Washburn University School of Law and obtained her Juris Doctor in 2006.

Jennifer has served as president of the Kansas Credit Attorney Association and Women Attorneys Association of Topeka. She is a also a member of the Topeka Bar Association, the Douglas County Bar Association, Kansas Bar Association, the American Bar Association, and Judge Hugh Means Inn of Court.

Jennifer resides in Lawrence, KS with her husband Reese Hays who is also an attorney.

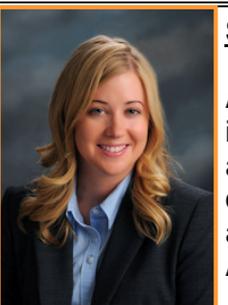


### TREASURER ~ Barbara Dye

Barbara has been a Research Attorney for the Kansas Court of Appeals since September 2008. She primarily writes prehearing memoranda for the judges before they sit for oral arguments. She deals with various issues pertaining to civil and criminal law.

Barbara is a 2004 graduate of the University of Kansas, with a degree in English. She received her J.D. with Dean's Honors from Washburn University School of Law, in 2008.

She loves training and riding her Buckskin horse, Echo. She also enjoys participating in Civil War reenactments with her family. Barbara is an avid reader of fiction novels, but her all-time favorite book is Jane Austen's *Pride & Prejudice*. The extent of her love for *Pride & Prejudice* led her to name her daughter after the main character in the novel.



### SECRETARY ~ Alison St. Clair

Alison attended Kansas State University, where she received a Bachelor of Science degree in Marketing and a minor in Spanish. She graduated summa cum laude in December 2008 and went on to study law at Washburn University. While at Washburn, Alison was a member of the Washburn Law Journal and received the Journal's 2012 award for Best Note for her article about SEC Rule 10b-5. She was also a member of Phi Alpha Delta legal fraternity. Alison graduated summa cum laude from Washburn University School of Law in May 2012.

Alison began working at Goodell, Stratton, Edmonds & Palmer, L.L.P. in August 2012 and has been with the firm for a little over one year. Alison is licensed to practice in the state and federal courts of Kansas. Her primary practice areas are bankruptcy, collections, business and transactional law, and civil practice. Alison is a member of the Kansas and Topeka Bar Associations, member and Board secretary of the Women Attorneys Association of Topeka, and member of the Sam A. Crow American Inns of Court. She also currently serves on the Topeka YWCA Women's Night Out planning committee.

Alison currently lives in Topeka, Kansas. In her free time, she attempts to play golf, paints, reads, and enjoys combat fit classes at ATA Martial Arts.

## Meet the WAAT Board Continued



### ARCHIVES/BYLAWS CHAIR ~ Honorable Marla J. Luckert

Marla J. Luckert is a justice of the Kansas Supreme Court, where she has served since January 2003. She was a Judge of the Third Judicial District Court of Kansas from April 1992 until her appointment to the Supreme Court, and she served as the Third Judicial District's Chief Judge from January 2000 until January 2003. She practiced law with the Goodell Stratton Edmonds & Palmer law firm from 1980 until her appointment to the bench. She also served as an adjunct professor of law at Washburn University.

Justice Luckert is a graduate of the National Judicial College's General Jurisdiction program and the Appellate Judges School at New York University School of Law. She received a bachelor of arts in history in May 1977, magna cum laude, and her juris doctorate in 1980, cum laude, from Washburn University of Topeka. While in law school, she served as technical editor of the Washburn Law Journal and received the faculty and alumni awards for best student note.

Justice Luckert is the author of several legal publications and is a frequent presenter for legal and lay audiences. She frequently presents programs for K-12 students and directed a legal internship program for high school students interested in legal studies. She and her spouse have three adult children.



### CAREER DEVELOPMENT/CLE CHAIR ~ Jennifer H. Sherber

Jennifer Sherber is an Attorney at the Health Care Stabilization Fund. She is a 2002 graduate of the University of Kansas School of Law. She received her BS in Business Administration from Kansas State University in 1999. Jennifer worked as an Associate at Rebein Bangerter, P.A. in Dodge City, Kansas prior to moving to Topeka.

Jennifer and her husband have two sons and live in Topeka. She is a Past-President of WAAT and is currently serving as the Career Development Chair.



### JUST DESSERTS CHAIR ~ Julia Gilmore Gaughan

Julia is in private practice at the Law Offices of Morris Laing Evans Brock & Kennedy, Chtd. She practices in the areas of civil litigation, complex commercial litigation, antitrust, banking, and construction law. Julia represents clients in the state and federal courts of Kansas and Missouri.

She is a 2008 graduate of the University of Kansas School of Law, where she served as Managing Editor of the Kansas Law Review and on the Moot Court Council.



### MEMBERSHIP CHAIR ~ Dara Montclare

Dara Montclare graduated Summa Cum Laude from Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona in 2003. She was an untraditional student, but didn't really notice in school that she was the oldest. When she graduated from Washburn Law School in 2006 her career took her to Kansas City, Missouri where she did Document Review for a few years. Then in 2010, a fellow classmate, had an opening in her firm at what is now Zimmerman & Zimmerman, P.A. and she joined the team along with two other fellow law students from the

same class, Angel Zimmerman and Jennifer Hays.

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## Meet the WAAT Board Continued



### NEWSLETTER CHAIR ~ Kristin L. Ballobin

Kristin has been an associate attorney with the law firm of Stevens & Brand, LLP since 2010, but was a law clerk for the firm while in law school since 2008. She practices primarily in the areas of bankruptcy law, commercial litigation, debtor and creditor's rights, and banking law. She is licensed to practice in the state and federal courts of Kansas.

Kristin graduated from Kansas State University in 2007 with a Bachelor's of Science in Architectural Engineering, and she also received her Master's of Science in Architectural Engineering in 2007 from Kansas State University. In 2010, Kristin graduated from the University of Kansas School of Law with her Juris Doctorate. While in law school, Kristin was a staff member of the Kansas Law Review and was a research assistant for two professors.



### PROGRAM CHAIR ~ Rachel L. Pickering

Born in Texas and raised in St. Louis, Rachel L. Pickering now makes her home in Kansas. She received her B.A. in History from the University of Missouri-St. Louis and her J.D. from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 2003.

Before law school, Rachel's interests were in intellectual property. She worked as a paralegal at an IP firm in St. Louis, a coordinator at the Kansas State University Research Foundation, and then clerked for an IP law firm during her last year of law school and after graduation.

In December 2005, Rachel switched gears by joining the Appellate Defender Office, where she handles criminal appeals.



### PUBLIC RELATIONS/WEBSITE CHAIR ~ Whitney Casement

Whitney began working as an Assistant Attorney General in the Kansas Attorney General's Office in the Civil Litigation Division in August of 2012. Her job duties include defending the State of Kansas in civil lawsuits, prosecuting civil asset forfeiture actions, and acting as litigation counsel for state agencies in disciplinary actions.

Whitney graduated from Washburn School of Law in 2012. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Washburn University in 2009, majoring in History and English.

During law school, Whitney participated in Moot Court, traveling to several competitions, and worked as an intern at the Attorney General's Office in the Consumer Protection Division.

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**A special thanks goes out to Whitney for her hard work on WAAT's new website! Please check it out: [www.topekawomenattorneys.com](http://www.topekawomenattorneys.com)  
For more information about this change, please see *Page 7*.**

## Meet the WAAT Board Continued



### SOCIAL CHAIR ~ Madeline J. Rogers

Madeline is an associate attorney at Woner, Glenn, Reeder & Girard, P.A., and works primarily in the areas of banking, bankruptcy; and business and real estate law and litigation.

She grew up in Overland Park, Kansas and graduated from Shawnee Mission West High School. At Benedictine College, Madeline played soccer and majored in Business Administration with a minor in Psychology.

Madeline received her J.D. from Washburn University School of Law where she earned Dean's Honors and Pro Bono Honors. While at Washburn Law she held positions as Moot Court Secretary, a Senior Editor on the *Family Law Quarterly*, and a Board Member in Equal Justice Works.

Her professional associations and memberships include the Kansas Bar Association, Kansas Women Attorneys Association, Sam A. Crow Inn of Court, Topeka Area Bankruptcy Council, Topeka Bar Association and the Young Lawyers Division, and Women Attorneys Association of Topeka.

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### YOUNG LAWYERS CHAIR ~ Kimberly M.J. Lynch

Kimberly M.J. Lynch is the WAAT Young Lawyer's Chair for 2013-2014. She is married and has two beautiful little girls.

Kim is a Special Assistant Attorney General and Senior Litigation Counsel for the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS). Kim defends the agency and its employees against federal and state tort-claim lawsuits. She also represents the agency in administrative matters relating to the discipline of licensed professionals and state employees and the appeals of administrative decisions. Before working at KDADS, she was an Assistant Attorney General in the Civil Litigation Division of the AG's Office.

Kim graduated from Washburn University School of Law in 2009. Kim was the President for the Women's Legal Forum at Washburn Law School from 2007-2008. Fun fact: while pregnant with her youngest daughter, Kim played Kathleen Sebelius in the 2011 Topeka Bar Show.

Kim enjoys coaching her oldest daughter's soccer team, the "Pink Cheetahs" with her husband.

## 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](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](mailto: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 Website Update

### By: Whitney L. Casement

Hello friends!

I am thrilled to announce that WAAT will have a new and improved website at the beginning of October. The website URL will still be [www.topekawomenattorneys.com](http://www.topekawomenattorneys.com). This new website will make it much easier for the Board to keep our membership apprised of current WAAT events, news, and pictures. At the request of many of our members, the Board is adding several new features to the website. These features include:

- Online *membership* registration and payment options
- Online *event* registration and payment options
- A "contact us" option
- A dynamic and up-to-date events calendar
- Updated pictures of members & events

Online membership directory with similar features to LinkedIn

If you are a dues paid member, you will automatically be included in the online directory, but you do have the option to opt out or include as little or as much information as you like. Dues paid members will also have access to a "Members Only" tab with special features after creating a username and password for the website.

Also new for WAAT is our Facebook Page, which you can access by going to [www.topekawomenattorneys.com](http://www.topekawomenattorneys.com) and clicking on the Facebook link on our homepage. You must "like" the Page to receive WAAT updates on Facebook. We also have a Twitter account we will soon use to "tweet" WAAT updates.

Please feel free to email me with any questions or comments about the website at [topekawomenattorneys@gmail.com](mailto:topekawomenattorneys@gmail.com). I hope you enjoy WAAT's new website!

Sincerely,  
Whitney L. Casement  
WAAT Public Relations / Website Chair

## WAAT's Annual *Read to Me*

Thanks to everyone who attended WAAT's Annual Read to Me Event on September 18, 2013. Also, a big thanks to everyone who donated books or made a monetary donation to this special event. It was another big success.

Michelle Kmiec, the Director of the Highland Park Parent-Child Learning Center, spoke about the Topeka facilities and the services that are offered to young parents. Michelle indicated that the book donations allow the facility to give each child one book, as well as a WAAT T-shirt, and the remaining books are used as incentives.

Highland Park Parent-Child Learning Center offers young parents valuable information to assist them in their parenting, while also requiring those parents to meet certain baseline criteria, such as strong attendance at school and a minimum GPA. The topics covered for these parents include: nutrition, disciplining your child, child development, literacy, etc.



## WAAT Holiday Party! December 18, 2013 at 5:30 p.m.

It is hard to believe, but it is almost that time of year again for WAAT's annual Holiday Party.

The social starts at 5:30 p.m. followed by the play. Attendees are welcome to attend the social, the play, or both.

### **Time and Place**

Wednesday, December 18, 2013 at 5:30 p.m.  
Topeka Civic Theatre & Academy  
3028 SW 8th Ave.  
Topeka, KS 66606

Here's the show synopsis:

### **Inspecting Carol** -

Mix together a struggling theater company, a tired production of *A Christmas Carol*, a really bad actor and a visiting inspector from the National Endowment for the Arts and you end up with *Inspecting Carol*, the off-the-wall holiday farce. Everything that could possibly go wrong does, as a fictitious theater company struggles to mount their annual production of the holiday classic.

Bad theater has never been this much fun before!

Daniel Sullivan and the Seattle Repertory Company created *Inspecting Carol* as an antidote to the endless parade of annual productions of *A Christmas Carol*. As it developed, the piece also grew into a satiric look at government funding for the arts and how it affects the organizations that receive it.

The insanity begins when the company members of a small regional theater mistake a neophyte (and very bad) actor as an inspector from the National Endowment for the Arts. In order to hold onto their funding, the company does everything possible to keep this person happy, including casting him in their production of *A Christmas Carol* and letting him rewrite large sections of the story. When the real inspector shows up, the company is forced to perform what can charitably be called the worst production ever of the Dickens' classic.

The ghosts of Christmas past, present and future forget their lines, Bob Cratchit throws out his back trying to carry Tiny Tim, Jacob Marley gets tangled in his chains, Mrs. Cratchit becomes a vampy sex kitten, Scrooge begins to speak his lines in Spanish to protest U.S. policy in Central America and the stage manager is stricken with an uncontrollable fit of the giggles... all before things really begin to go wrong!

**More reminders and updates to follow over the listserv!**

## Save the Date!

### General Membership Meetings:

- November 20th—Networking with Margann Bennett
- December 18th—Holiday Party
- January 15th—TBA