

COMMUNITY SERVICE NEWS

by Chris Cronk

PRO BONO CLINIC

This month **Hope Fishback and I** held down the fort, so to speak, at the March Pro Bono Clinic. I know there is spring fever in the air, but what a great way to spend a few hours one 3rd Saturday morning and then you can go to the park!!!! More importantly WE NEED YOU!!!

MTPA now has a title to uphold. Our association has won the National Federation of Paralegal Associations Member Association Pro Bono Award for 2002 (whew that's a mouthful!!). We couldn't have won if we didn't have a great group of dedicated volunteers contributing!!! THANK YOU for all your hard work (224+ hours) throughout the year. Teresa Grooms will accept the award for MTPA at the Spring convention the weekend of March 28th which includes a \$500 check for the Pro Bono Clinic.

If you have never attended and assisted at a Pro Bono Clinic, I urge you to do so in 2003!!!

The Clinic dates for the next six months are April 19th (tentative due to Legal Services office moving), May 17th, June 21, July 19th, August 16th and September 20th. If you are interested in assisting at a Saturday morning clinic, attorney soliciting or intake training or would like additional information about the clinics and/ or other ways MTPA is assisting the NBA's Pro Bono Division please email or call me, Chris Cronk at ccronk@wallerlaw.com or (615) 850-8761.

CASA NEWS

CASA SCHOOL SUPPLIES NEEDED

I would like to announce a school supply collection and begin collecting school supplies through out the spring and summer so that come the new school year MTPA can make a generous donation of supplies. Any donated items can be brought to the monthly luncheons or you can contact me to make arrangements to get them to me. With five months until September, we should be able to gather together a truck load of paper, pencils, notebooks, etc.

CASA ADVOCATES -

Any new CASA advocates out there who have just completed the training program? Any CASA advocates that have had a particularly interesting case and would like to share the story with MTPA? Please let me know.

CASA is always in need of volunteers to train as advocates. If you are interested in learning more about becoming an advocate and the training program CASA offers, please let me know and I will have the CASA organization for the appropriate county send you an information packet.

NASHVILLE RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE

I recently had a tour of the Nashville House with my daughter's cadet girl scout troop. What an amazing place. As I've been fortunate enough in my life not to have had a serious medical situation arise with my daughter that would require my traveling outside this area for her treatment – I can only imagine what a blessing the House is for families who have had to travel to Nashville for that reason.

I learned that they use weekend volunteers to supplement the regular housekeeping that is done during the week. I understand it's basically dusting, vacuuming etc. I thought that this might be another opportunity for MTPA to assist. As you know MTPA is encouraging members to collect pull-tabs for the Ronald McDonald House. It's easy and the benefits to the House are great.

Getting a group together to clean one weekend a month or even once a quarter would also be of assistance to the House. If there is any interest by members in contributing to this task, please let me know. Also for the more ambitious there are volunteer opportunities to work at the house in 3 hour shifts from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.; supplying meals and meal preparation; and general donations are always needed in the form of food items and household, cleaning and office supplies. Check out www.rmhnashville.com for more information on the Nashville Ronald McDonald House.

LAW DAY 2003

CALLING ALL MTPA MEMBERS!!! LAW DAY IS NEAR and we still do not have a committee formed. A committee is needed to brainstorm some ideas for MTPA's Law Day project. Without interested members there will not be a Law Day project this year. Anyone interested in any way with this year's Law Day preparations, please let me know. Last year a great group of MTPA members planned and put on a series of discussions with the kids in the after school program at the YWCA.

Law Day is a national celebration which takes place during the month of May. This year's theme is 'Celebrate Your Freedom. – Independent Courts Protect Our Liberties.' While the Constitution grants us rights, without the Court system the Constitution might as well just be a piece of parchment. This year the focus is on our court system and how it enforces the Constitution, protects our rights as Americans, and makes the rule of law a reality.

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!!

Come on everyone – I know a majority of us take time to volunteer in the community. This is your opportunity to plug the charity or community organization you volunteer for!! Or for you to give a public pat on the back to another MTPA member you know who volunteers his or her time for the public good!!!! I can't spotlight an MTPA volunteer if I don't know who they are. Please help me out.

*******RESOLVE TO GET INVOLVED IN 2003*******

*If you have any ideas or suggestions for MTPA participation
in community related activities, please let me know!!
MTPA Members are the BEST!!*