



NALS of Michigan

Berrien-Cass Legal Support Professionals

...the association for legal professionals

2006 JETT AWARD ENTRY

I. General Description of Your Program

A. The official title of the program

Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Berrien-Cass Legal Support Professionals and Honoring Court Observance Week and Berrien and Cass Attorneys in Practice 25+ Years

Small Chapter: Programs or campaigns conducted by chapters with 25 or fewer members.

On the date our event occurred, we had 12 members.

Category:

This program is submitted under #2. Association Development (Enhancement of image/ Bar relations), but could also fall under categories (Court Observance, membership).

Submitted By: Berrien-Cass Legal Support Professionals (Michigan)
Nancy M. Comfort, Vice President
3106 Ross Drive, Buchanan, MI 49107-9435
Work: (574) 234-7373, Ext. 275; Home: (269) 695-6429
ncomfort@weisshomes.com or dcncusa@sbcglobal.net

B. A brief description of the program, including format, size, purpose, topic, and audience.

The event was an evening dinner, which included celebration of our chapter's 50th anniversary, recognition of attorneys in practice over 25 years, and included a speaker that would encourage attendance and participation by members of the Berrien and Cass County Bar Associations. We also included Court Observance during the program and displayed membership materials. There were 250 invitations mailed, and 74 attended.

C. A brief summary of your program.

By inviting a State Supreme Court Justice as the guest speaker, we believed that we would attract local judiciary and attorneys that would normally not attend. In addition, certificates were presented to attorneys and judges who were admitted to the Bar 25+ years ago. The judiciary, a past State Bar of Michigan president, Past NALS of Michigan (state) presidents and Legal Professionals of the Year were introduced, as well as past local presidents in attendance. Most of those attending would not have been there for the sole purpose of celebrating our chapter's 50th anniversary with a membership drive.

II. Judging Criteria

A. Needs Assessment

1. How was the need for this program identified?

We wanted a special event to celebrate our 50th anniversary. We know that we are one of the first chapters to celebrate this milestone nationally, and wanted a memorable event of commemoration. We also wanted to attract a good number of attendees from the judiciary and local attorneys.

2. How does this program address this need?

With a small chapter, just celebrating the anniversary wasn't enough to attract attendees, so we worked together to plan an event that would attract the attendance of local attorneys and judiciary in addition to current and former members. This was done by having a speaker that would attract attendance, as well as with recognition.

B. Planning and Design

1. List the program's objectives.

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of our small local chapter and make it a very special, well attended event. As small as we are, we knew that our anniversary would not be enough to attract many attendees, so we added a Michigan Supreme Court Justice (running for office) as our featured speaker and honored attorneys in attendance with 25+ years of service to the Bar to attract our local judiciary and attorneys. During our event, we included recognition of a local past State Bar president, our members who were past NALS of Michigan state presidents, past state legal professionals of the year recipients, past local presidents, members and former members in attendance, and awarded an honorary membership to our non-member volunteer webmaster.

2. Describe the steps taken to design and develop the program (planning process, members involved, creativity).

We had a committee of 6. We met to plan our event and divided the responsibilities among us. The Berrien County Bar Association gave us one of their four allotted lists of attorneys through the Michigan State Bar, with the date they were admitted to the Bar from the State Bar of Michigan, so that list did not cost us any money. We sent out over 250 invitations, and planned the program to include honoring our chapter as well as local attorneys and Court Observance Week. We set up the location of the event to be centrally located for all attendees, worked with the Country Club on the menu and room set-up, ordered an anniversary cake, centerpiece flowers, and gave pen flashlights as a memento to all attendees. We made the invitations, programs, menu cards, and name badges to utilize our theme and local chapter logo.

C. Logistics and Production

1. How was the program delivered to the target audience?

The head table consisted of program participants. Round tables of 8 were set up, to promote small group visiting during the meal. Near the registration table, a table was set up with membership posters, applications, brochures, and other promotional materials. Prior to the event all members served as greeters and discussed our Association and the benefits of membership with arriving attendees.

2. Provide details describing educational materials, methods, and resources.

The invitation and program included details of our celebration, and the program included details about our association and the Code of Ethics. Our name badges also contained our local chapter's logo. During our event,

many references were made to our association and its purpose; including many compliments of support staff by our Master of Ceremonies and guest speaker. A table was set-up that included Association posters, membership brochures, applications, and copies of our @Law Magazine, received from NALS Resource Center. Court Observance information was obtained from the NALS website, and the Court Observance Week Proclamation received from the Governor of Michigan was displayed.

D. Budgeting and Finance

1. What is the annual income and expenses of your chapter?

An approximation of our chapter's annual income and expenses is \$1500 in income and \$1400 in expenses per year. In addition we have \$1800 in our memorial scholarship fund, and award one college scholarship each year.

2. Was this program funded in whole or in part by a Grant from the NALS Foundation?

No, our plans for this event were not finalized in time to apply for a grant.

3. What were the program's broad financial objectives?

Subsidized service: we wanted to celebrate our 50th anniversary, but we don't have a lot of funds to work with. We planned an event that would attract attendees, the reservation fee included approximately \$5+ more than the cost of the meal to help with expenses, and then we asked for financial assistance from the Berrien and Cass County Bar Associations to pay for costs of this event not covered by the registration fees. Both local Bar Associations agreed to pay for one-third of the left over cost of holding this event.

4. Provide the projected revenue and expense, as well as the actual revenue and expense.

Since this event was held on October 18, 2006, in order to submit this Application prior to the November 1, 2006 deadline, final numbers haven't been received. We did not make a specific budget before hand, but all committee members agreed to be as conservative as possible with expenditures. The figures below are as close as we can estimate the revenue and expenses to be at this time.

Registration fees received: \$1,725

(74 reservations; 3 guests, 10 members at \$20; 62 others at \$25 each)

Meals with tax and gratuity: \$2,173.50

Flowers: 10 centerpieces, 1 head table centerpiece, 1 corsage = \$143.10

Meals for 3 guests and gift for speaker: \$79

Flashlights (memento for attendees, with extra to distribute at future events): \$370.70

Printing supplies for invitations, programs, name badges: \$120 (some supplies were donated)

Postage: 250x.39=\$97.50

Anticipated additional expense after subtraction of registration profit: \$1,258.80, split 3 ways.

Our chapter will be responsible for around \$419.60 from our treasury funds.

5. Provide your best estimate of association resources expended on this program.

Anticipated expense will be \$419 from our treasury funds. No members added up volunteer time in estimation of expenses. We believe that volunteering time is required in any worthwhile endeavor! We had six committee members that worked together and divided up all necessary tasks. This was a large undertaking for our small chapter, but we felt it was very worthwhile and successful.

E. Marketing, Promoting, and Advertising

1. List and describe the specific marketing, promotional and advertising vehicles used.

Invitations were sent to Berrien and Cass Judiciary, attorneys with 25+ years of service to the Bar, local politicians, former and current members, all state chapters and executive committee, and other interested parties. Information regarding our event was published in two local newspapers prior. A newspaper reporter attended our event as our guest. One picture and article about our guest speaker was printed the day after our event. Additional pictures were taken and are expected to be published in the near future with an additional article.

All attendees were given a pocket flashlight with our local chapter name and "Established 1956" in celebration of our 50th anniversary. We wanted attendees to take home something that would serve as a reminder of our event, as well as our existence.

The invitations, programs, name badges, and menu cards all promoted our local Chapter.

F. Evaluation

1. To what extent did the program achieve stated objectives

We acquired 2 new members. There is interest and potential for more. Follow-up contacts will be made with potential members with future meeting flyers.

In addition to targeting judiciary, attorneys, former and potential members as attendees, we invited state and local politicians to increase public awareness of our existence. One of our district's State Representatives from the Michigan House of Representatives attended, and several other politicians sent their regrets.

Even if former members don't rejoin after attending our event, we were happy several participated; two for the first time in well over 10 years.

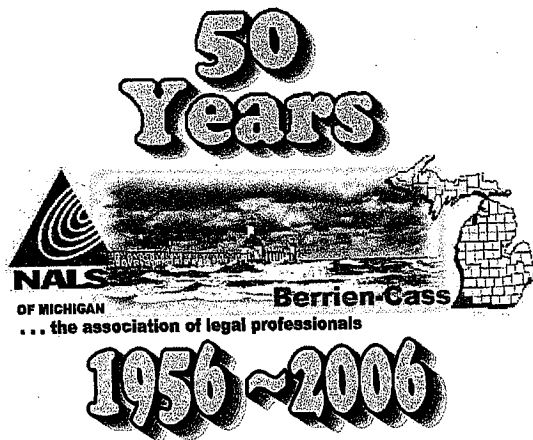
2. What broader impact, if any, did this program have on the growth, image or performance of the chapter or its members?

By promoting our 50 year existence to the judiciary and local attorneys, as well as reminding or informing them of our purpose and benefits, we are hoping to grow in numbers and well as in attorney support. In addition, the newspaper coverage was very helpful in promoting ourselves to the community at large.

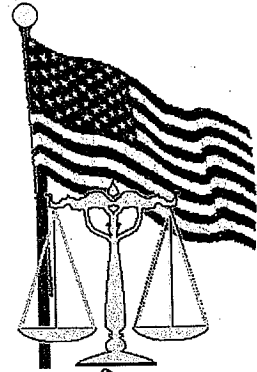
3. Based on the outcome of this program, describe the most significant changes you might make the next time you offer it or a similar program.

Some attendees came because they received a follow-up telephone invitation after the invitation was received by mail. We could have a committee in place to make more follow-up telephone calls were made after paper invitations were received, which could bring in a larger number of attendees. In addition, we intend to follow-up with a mailing of membership information and a flyer for our next seminar to attorneys, former and potential members in attendance, in order to remind them of our existence and encourage membership.

In addition, we should have charged \$30 for registration, rather than \$25, in order to help toward break-even of expenses. When the fee was set, we didn't have a clear idea of expense, and it would have been helpful to plan expenses more accurately.



Celebrating Our 50th Anniversary
Berrien-Cass
Legal Support Professionals



Honoring Court Observance Week
& Berrien and Cass Attorneys
in Practice 25+ Years

Wednesday, October 18, 2006
 Orchard Hills Country Club
 2841 Niles-Buchanan Road, Buchanan

\$25 per person
 Choice of:

- 8 oz. Black Angus Grilled Strip Steak
- 8 oz. Chicken Breast Marsala
- North Atlantic Salmon with Dill and Beurre Blanc
- Grilled Portabella Mushrooms, Saffarito with Wild Rice (Vegetarian)

Side dishes: Oven Roasted Potatoes, Mixed Vegetable Medley, Side Salad, Bread Basket
 Coffee and Tea

Cake will be served for Dessert

Cash Bar, including alcoholic and soft drinks

Guest Speaker: Justice Maura D. Corrigan
 Michigan Supreme Court

5:30 P.M. - Cocktails

6:30 P.M. - Dinner

7:30 P.M. - Program

Sponsored by: Berrien-Cass LSP
 Berrien County Bar Association
 Cass County Bar Association

RSVP with dinner choice and payment by October 10 to
 Diane Clark, c/o Dale Blunier Law Office, P.O. Box 327,
 Edwardsburg, Michigan 49112-0327.

Questions: Betty Knoll, bjkfeldman@comcast.net

Justice Corrigan to visit Niles Oct. 18

NILES — A top Michigan jurist will pay a visit to the region on Oct. 18. Michigan Supreme Court Justice Maura D. Corrigan is scheduled to speak at the Berrien Cass Legal Support Professionals' annual Court Observance Program at the Orchard Hill Country Club on Niles-Buchanan Road. The event will begin at 5:30 p.m.

Corrigan, 58, was elected to the state's highest court in 1998, and she has twice served as chief justice. Prior to this posting, she was appointed to the Michigan Court of Appeals in 1992, serving as that

court's chief judge from 1997 to 1998. She has also been a U.S. assistant attorney, being the first woman to serve as chief assistant U.S. attorney.

She was also considered for nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court following the retirement announcement of Justice Sandra Day



Corrigan

O'Connor in July 2005.

Corrigan, who is running for a second eight-year term on the state bench, is a 1969 graduate of Marygrove College in Detroit, and she received her juris doctorate degree from the University of Detroit Law School in 1973.

Her first job after law school was as a law clerk on the Michigan Court of Appeals for Judge John Gillis. She has also been a partner at the Detroit law firm of Plunkett & Cooney.

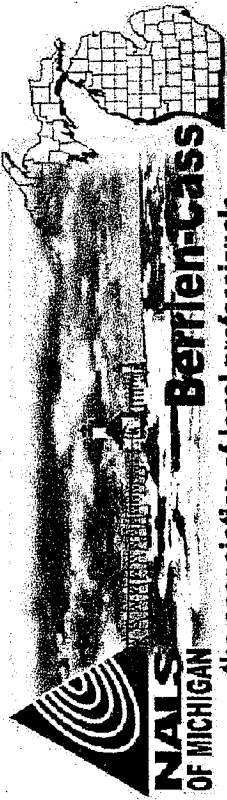
Also on the 18th, the BCLSP will celebrate its 50th anniversary and will honor

present and past members, as well as legal professionals who have served the area for many years, some up to 40 years.

Invitations have been extended to the Berrien County and Cass County bar associations, judicial members of all the courts and other dignitaries. Reservations are required and must be sent to Diane Clark at the Dale Blunier Law Office in Edwardsburg.

For more information about the event, contact Betty Knoll, BCLSP president, at (269) 683-0700, or e-mail her at bjkfeldmanlaw@comcast.net.

**50
Years**



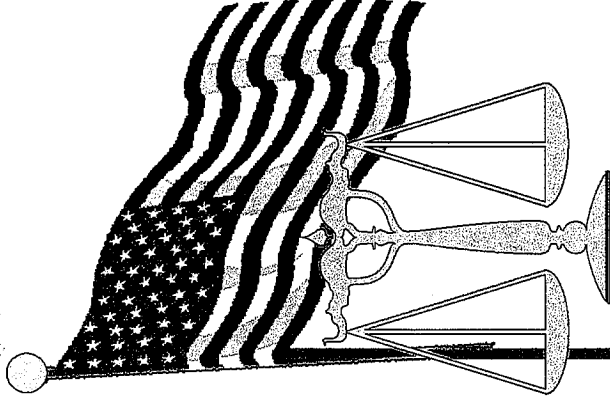
... the association of legal professionals

1956 ~ 2006

This event was sponsored by the Berrien County Bar Association, Cass County Bar Association, and Berrien-Cass Legal Support Professionals.

Program Committee: Diane Clark, Nancy Comfort, Mary Fahey, Betty Knoll, Vicki Papczynski, Sherry Younger

**Celebrates the 50th Anniversary
Berrien-Cass
Legal Support Professionals**



**Honoring Court Observance Week
& Berrien and Cass Attorneys
in Practice 25+ Years**



1956 ~ 2006

Berrien-Cass Legal Support Professionals is part of NALS, the association of legal professionals. We are a multi-level association with opportunities for professional and personal growth at the national, regional, state, and local levels.

NALS offers a one-stop source for training, educating, and developing a professional staff who will be committed to their legal career and to your law office and practice.

NALS has the resources and experience to assist in training, educating and maintaining long-term support staff who understand their position on your legal services team.

NALS has over 75 years of experience in providing support to its nationwide membership of legal professionals through education, professional development, and networking.



Code of Ethics

Members of NALS are bound by the objectives of this association and the standards of conduct required of the legal profession.

Every member shall:

- ▲ Encourage respect for the law and the administration of justice;
- ▲ Observe rules governing privileged communications and confidential information;
- ▲ Promote and exemplify high standards of loyalty, cooperation, and courtesy;
- ▲ Perform all duties of the profession with integrity and competence; and
- ▲ Pursue a high order of professional attainment.

**Orchard Hills Country Club
Buchanan, Michigan
Wednesday, October 18, 2006**

**5:30 p.m. Cocktails
6:30 p.m. Dinner
7:30 p.m. Program**

Program:

Welcome: Betty J. Knoll CEDR Berrien-Cass LSSP President

Master of Ceremonies: Robert N. Feldman Esq.

Introduction of Head Table and Honored Guests

Invocation: Honorable Casper O. Gnathwohl

Retired Berrien County Trial Court Judge

Dinner

Dessert Commemorating Our 50th Anniversary

Introduction of Speaker: Justice Maura D. Corrigan

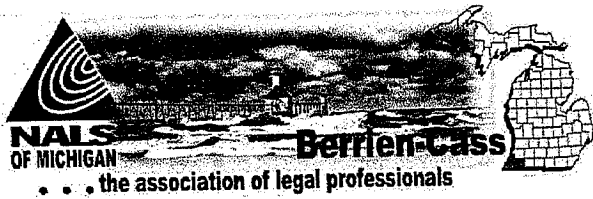
Michigan Supreme Court

Honorary Member Presentation: Betty J. Knoll

Recognition of Berrien and Cass Attorneys in practice 25 + years

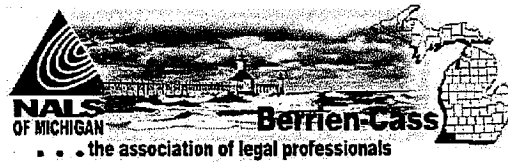
Special Recognitions: Robert N. Feldman, Esq.

Closing: Robert N. Feldman, Esq.



NANCY

**Nancy M. Comfort
Weiss Homes, Inc.
Berrien-Cass LSP Vice President**



**North Atlantic Salmon
with Dill & Beurre Blanc**



... the association of legal professionals

Certificate of Recognition

Honorable Lynda A. Tolen

Admitted to the Bar on October 26, 1977

CONGRATULATIONS ON 29 YEARS OF SERVICE AS A MEMBER
OF THE STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN

Betty J. Knoll CER

Betty J. Knoll CER, President

Dated: *October 18, 2006*

Out for justice



Daily Star photo/MICHAEL C. GUILMETTE JR.

Michigan Supreme Court Justice Maura Corrigan speaks to guests in the Orchard Hills dining room Wednesday evening during a dinner hosted by the Berrien-Cass Legal Support Professionals as they celebrated their 50th anniversary and honored area judges, attorneys and legal professionals.

A judicial visit

Michigan Supreme Court justice visits Niles

By MICHAEL C. GUILMETTE JR.
Niles Daily Star

NILES — A crowd of judges, lawyer and legal professionals packed the Orchard Hills dining room Wednesday evening to hear one of Michigan's top judges speak.

Justice Maura Corrigan of the Michigan Supreme Court served as

keynote speaker at the Berrien-Cass Legal Support Professionals dinner highlighting Court Observance Week and honoring area judges and attorneys who have been in practice for 25 years or more.

Corrigan, from Detroit, spoke passionately about what she feels is a critical issue facing Michigan and the rest of the country — children born out of wedlock and children being raised in foster care.

"This is the greatest moral crisis we are facing," Corrigan said, blaming the problem on the breakdown of family

units. "What used to be an institution is now an option."

She pointed out the percentage of children born into two-parent households has fallen to 40 percent nationwide, and as low as 10 percent in Detroit.

Corrigan has long been an advocate of child welfare, and she sat on the Pew Commission for Children in Foster Care. She noted the number of children in foster care in Michigan is 20,000 — and 40 years ago, this number was only

See CORRIGAN, Page 2



CORRIGAN

Continued from page 1

1,200.

What the nation needs to solve this problem, she said, is a shift in culture.

"We stopped smoking in the United States," Corrigan said. "Why can't we support marriage?"

Corrigan encouraged those in attendance to mentor children in broken homes and in foster care. She said she has mentored three children who have "aged out" of the foster care system, referring to children who were in foster care until age 18.

Corrigan spoke very highly of the Michigan Supreme Court, saying the state's highest court has

done a lot of good work and it is held up as a model for other state courts. The caseload for the court is heavy, averaging about 2,600 cases heard each year, she added.

Elected to the court in 1998, she has twice served as chief justice. She likened managing the sometimes contentious court to "being a chaperone at a Serbo-Croatian dance," a line that brought laughter from the crowd.

Running for re-election in November, Corrigan encouraged everyone to pay attention to the non-partisan portion of the ballot — the portion where elected state justices and judges are listed. She also

told the group to be mindful of the ballot proposals being put to the voters.

Corrigan, who was on President Bush's "short list" to replace Sandra Day O'Connor on the U.S. Supreme Court, said she was honored to be mentioned.

She said the consideration was a product of the work the court has done.

She was also pleased to be able to address so many noted colleagues at the dinner.

"I feel very privileged and honored to commend the many years of service put in by these people this evening," Corrigan said.