



TRUTH, JUSTICE AND INFORMATION FOR ALL

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE COLLIN COUNTY LAW LIBRARY

ISSUE 2009-03 WWW.COLLINCOUNTYTX.GOV

NOVEMBER

New on the Shelves

Baker's Texas Criminal Evidence Handbook, Lang Baker, 2009.	Courtroom Handbook on Texas Evidence, 2009.	codes and rules, 2009.
Baker's Texas Drugs & DWI Handbook, Lang Baker, 2009.	Navigating the Federal Trial, Robert Larsen, 2009.	Texas Criminal and Traffic Law Manual, 2009-2010 Edition.
Baker's Texas Family Code Handbook, Lang Baker, 2009.	O'Connor's Business Organizations Code Plus, 2009.	Texas Elder Law, Molly Abshire, 2009.
Baker's Texas Penal Code Handbook, Lang Baker, 2009.	O'Connor's Federal Employment Codes Plus, 2009.	Texas Penal Code: with tables and index, 2010.
Baker's Texas Penal Code Handbook, Lang Baker, 2009.	O'Connor's Property Code Plus, 2009.	USCA: RIA's Complete Analysis of the Tax and Benefits Provision of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Thomson West.
Bender's Federal Practice Forms: federal rules of criminal procedure, 2009.	O'Connor's Texas Crimes & Consequences, 2009.	
Child Custody and Visitation Law and Practice, Sandra Little, 2009.	Police Misconduct, Law and Litigation, Michael Avery, 2009.	<i>All print materials are available for attorney checkout.</i>
	Texas Criminal Procedure:	

Issue 2009-3

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Hours of Operation:
Monday—Friday
8:00 am—5:00 pm

Staff is available for a presentation to your organization.

Advanced Criminal Law CLE 2009 Available

The Law Library is proud to offer the latest State Bar of Texas Custom CLE Advanced Criminal Law Course to attorneys.

The cost is \$341.00 per person. For this price, you will view the DVDs and receive a copy of the course books (in print or

flash format) for you to keep. This course provides 42 hours of participatory credit and 4.75 hours of ethics credits.

*A minimum of two attorneys must participate each time the course is administered; the course must be completed within a *single**

calendar month.

The course has been reserved for the months of November and December.

Please contact the Law Librarian should you wish to reserve it for a future month.

RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER VIA E-MAIL!

If you would like to receive this newsletter via email, please call the library at 972-548-4260 or email me at: ldodds@co.collin.tx.us

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Articles and Websites of Interest

Attorney General Identify Theft Information

<http://www.texasfightsidtheft.gov/>

The Attorney General of Texas has created a webpage for victims of identity theft and for those who want to protect themselves from becoming victims.

Information provided includes the AG's downloadable Identity Theft Toolkit.

Reverse & Render, Legal Blog

<http://www.reverseandrender.com/>

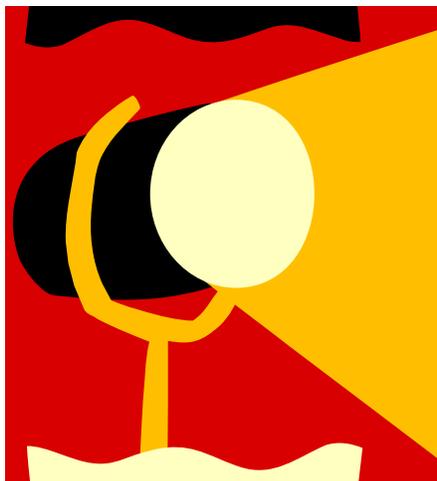
Published by Cowles & Thompson's
Appellate Law Section

Provides insightful commentary on Texas appellate law, focusing on Dallas and North Texas opinions.

"Five Steps to Improve your Legal Writing"

Cherisse Mastry Patton, Consumer & Commercial Law, v. 13, no. 1 (2009), p. 17-19.

Patton provides these pointers: (1) Play by Your Own Rules. In other words, maintain consistency throughout your writing. If you use a comma before "and" in a series, do so every time. (2) Use Your Time Wisely. Most writers get bogged down in the revision process. A perfectly good sentence is revised into an embellished, incoherent mess. Keep short sentences which make strong points and limit your editing time. (3) Avoid Blatant Errors. Keep a cheat sheet for those terms or usage rules which routinely trip you up. (4) Use Commas Wisely. Comma use is generally a matter of personal style. However, they must be used to set off nonessential clauses. A nonessential clause is one that can be deleted from a sentence without changing the sentence's meaning. (5) Play to the Crowd. Always know who your audience is and write to that audience.



"Suggestions for the First Time Litigator In Probate Court"

Judge Gladys B. Burwell, State Bar Litigation Section Report: The Advocate, v. 48, Fall (2009), p. 94-98.

Judge Burwell points out several key factors for the attorney heading into a court with probate jurisdiction for the first time. Most importantly, the attorney must know what type court the case will be heard in. Whether it is a statutory probate court or constitutional county court determines how the case could proceed. The Government Code will give the jurisdiction of the court and answer questions such as jury size and what to include in the initial pleadings. The attorney should obtain a copy

of any local or administrative rules or any judge-issued administrative orders that may affect the case. Unless directed differently by the Probate Code, the Rules of Civil Procedure govern all probate cases. Judge Burwell discusses rules related to fees, service and notice which have been known to trip up first-time attorneys in Probate Court. She points out that most personal service citations in Probate Court have a return date of 10 days to the Monday next rather than the 20 days in other courts. Understanding of the statutes of descent and distribution is also vital for attorneys in any heirship proceedings. With regard to guardianship, the attorney

should be familiar with the disqualification statutes and the cases where courts have determined standards and issues for disqualification. Attorneys should also be aware of the court's control of attorney's fees and reimbursable expenses. V.A.T.S. Probate Code Sec. 233(c) and V.A.T.S. Probate Code Sec. 665C(b) specifically deal with contingency fee contracts. Judge Burwell's article is a must-read for any attorney appearing in Probate Court for the first time, and for those who need a refresher.

Copies of these entire articles may be obtained in the Law Library or from the Law Librarian via email: ldodds@co.collin.tx.us.

How do I . . .

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Please bear with us while we are short-staffed. We will be back to full capacity before long!



Find Citing References to Your Case While Using Westlaw

To view a list of cases and other materials that cite your case, click *Citing References* on the Links tab in split-page view or *KeyCite Citing References* at the bottom of the KeyCite History page in full-page view.

The first portion of the KeyCite citing references result lists all negative citing cases, followed by a list of other cases, administrative materials, secondary sources, and briefs citing your case. Citing cases are categorized by the depth of treatment they give your case. Quotation marks indicate the citing case directly quotes the cited case.

To restrict the list of citing references to those discussing points of law dealt with in specific headnotes, click the **Headnotes** arrow in the left frame of the KeyCite Limits page, or hold your pointer over the arrow next to *Limit KeyCite Display* at the bottom of the KeyCite citing references result and choose **Headnotes** from the displayed menu. A list of topics and key numbers under which the headnotes from the cited case are classified is displayed in the right frame. Select one or more check boxes preceding the topics and key numbers and click **Apply**.

excerpted from *Using KeyCite in westlaw.com*

Sorry for the Delay!

As most of you are aware, the newsletter was due out in September. Please forgive the delay.

within the next few weeks. Bear with us while we are short-staffed.

As always, feel free to call, drop by, or email me at any time with questions, comments, or concerns.

I'm settling into my new position as Law Librarian, and I hope to fill the Assistant Law Librarian position

Please be assured that the level of service you have come to expect from the staff at the law library will remain the same.

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Law Library Holiday Closures

The Collin County Courthouse (and the Law Library) will be closed on the following upcoming holidays:

November 26 and 27 for Thanksgiving.

December 24-25 for Christmas.

A full listing of county holidays can be found on the county website at:

<http://www.co.collin.tx.us/holidays.jsp>.

Did you know . . .

Marriage and Divorce Verifications can be ordered through the Texas Department of State Health Services.

A Verification is a letter confirming whether or not a marriage or divorce was recorded in the State of Texas.

Orders may be made online at www.Texas.gov or by mailing an Application to Texas Vital Records, Department of State Health Services, P.O. Box 12040, Austin, Texas, 78711-2040.

Each verification costs \$20.

A big thanks to the *Frisco Bar Association* for their underwriting of Judy McCullough's retirement party. We greatly appreciate your generous support!

A Little Legal Humor

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