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## Message from the President

Technology – Friend or Foe?

By: Colleen Colton, NMG



*Colleen Colton*

You’ve heard about people who do not even know how to turn on a computer? Well, my problem was turning it off. My secretary introduced me to my first computer, turned it on and showed me how to get into Word Perfect. Before she left she said “You have to get back to this screen (the C:\>) before turning it off or bad things will happen.” I worked for over an hour to get back to that screen. I had a lot to learn.

Now I love and depend on my computer. I was lost when our agency Internet and e-mail stopped working last week. I love creating spreadsheets and using the spell-check feature, as well as the thesaurus. E-mail has saved me hours, maybe even weeks or months, playing phone tag. I love clip art and tables and Power Point and being able to insert, delete, copy and paste.

Naturally, I love the fact that the Center for Guardianship Certification exams are now taken on a computer. Submitting applications and renewing online is convenient and saves postage. Technology offers opportunities to operate more efficiently and cost effectively. The response to this new way of doing things has been very positive.

CGC’s move to new technology started me thinking about the role technology plays in my personal and business life. As far as my personal life goes, the big change has been e-scrapbooking so I won’t have so many scrapbooks to take to the nursing home. But you’re probably more interested in technology as it relates to business life.

You have probably heard it said, “To someone with a hammer, every problem looks like a nail.” Of course, every problem isn’t a nail; and technology isn’t an all-purpose solution either. Technology is great for tracking data, communicating information to many people quickly and easily creating documents. On the other hand, technology can be inappropriately used. When emotional content needs to be conveyed through vocal tone or body language, communicating through e-mail instead of making personal contact may make the problem worse.

Sometimes it seems there are two kinds of people in this world – those who eagerly embrace every emerging technology and those who are being dragged kicking and screaming into the world of 21st century technology. I’d like to make a case for the middle ground. See where you fall. How many of the following technologies do you use?

- Word processing software
- Spreadsheets
- Database
- Check writing and accounting software
- Internet (give yourself extra points for wireless)
- Smart phones
- Business website
- Remote access or telecommuting
- Laptops for working in the field
- Social networking
- Blogs
- Digital presentations
- E-blasts
- ListServe
- Texting
- Scanners (lots of extra points if you've gone paperless)
- Webinars
- Video conferencing
- Probably several others that I'm not savvy enough to be familiar with

There is so much out there. It is almost impossible to do it all. How do you decide how much to invest in technology? Our agency is in the process of deciding whether to jump on the social networking bandwagon. Many of the nonprofits in our community are on Facebook, but is it right for Guardianship Services, Inc.? I am trying to apply the same standard here that I apply to all agency-related questions. Is it good for the client? Will it help us serve the client better?

Will we be able to recruit more and younger volunteers to assist clients if we Tweet? Will gathering information in a database give me the numbers I need to improve

funding proposals so I can hire more case managers to serve clients? Will my doing a blog help us access services for clients by improving community understanding and support for our service? Will the clients benefit from e-blasts to promote communication with volunteers or professional peers? Is a computerized Care Plan easier and quicker to keep updated? Sometimes it's hard to know until you try.

I love technology, but I am a little concerned about how it has changed our expectations. Back when we had to re-type almost the entire 30-page document to fix something on page four, we sometimes lived with our mistakes. Now that there is the perceived potential for perfection, are we losing the ability to forgive ourselves and others for mistakes? In the 1970's, it was okay to tell legislators nobody knows how many guardianships there are.

In the age of computers "I don't know" is becoming a less acceptable answer. The information age is supposed to make it possible for us to know everything. But, even with all this technical know-how, is that a realistic expectation?

Technology is good, but it's not good just because it's technology. Each of us has to find his or her own optimal level of technology use. If you haven't thought about buying new database software, I'm not trying to convince you that you should buy one. If you are thinking of buying new database software, I'm not trying to discourage you. I'm just asking – have you thought about using a database? What do you think using a database or any other bit of technology could do for you and your clients?

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## NEW WEB-BASED APPLICATION AND EXAMINATION PROCESS NOW AVAILABLE

In May, CGC introduced a significant and exciting change in how applications are accepted, as well as how certification examinations are provided.

Now, the application process for both taking the guardianship certification examination and renewing your certification (if you are already an NCG or an NMG) is easier than ever! All applications can now be completed online and your credit card will automatically be charged. You are no longer required to seek the services of a notary for your application(s), and you won't have to cut a check or pay for postage.

In addition to changing the application and recertification process, CGC will only offer paper and pencil as an option for testing in Texas at the TGA conferences (in accordance with our contract) and for individuals who request that option through the ADA form. All other examinations will be provided through a web-based system. This new and easy way to take the guardianship certification examinations will result in a more technologically-friendly system.

Examinations will be offered through ExamSoft. No Internet connection at the exam location is

required, however, you will need a laptop computer to take the exam. All exams will be downloaded to your computer prior to the day of your examination, but you will not be able to access it until the proctor gives you the password to unlock the exam. Practice tests will be available to you prior to the exam, so you can test the system and make sure that everything is in good working condition prior to your exam day.

Note that the requirements for laptop computers are located on the homepage of the ExamSoft CGC website at [www.examsoft.com/cgc](http://www.examsoft.com/cgc). There are special requirements for MAC users, so please pay close attention to what is required.

Applications for examinations and recertifications can still be found on the CGC homepage at [www.guardianshipcert.org](http://www.guardianshipcert.org). If you have any questions regarding this exciting change in the delivery of CGC services, please feel free to contact CGC Headquarters at 717-238-4689 or [certification@guardianshipcert.org](mailto:certification@guardianshipcert.org). We look forward to moving in this direction and hope you feel the same!

### Schedule of Upcoming Examinations

National Certified Guardian Examination  
Date: Tuesday, September 14, 2010  
Location: Findlay, OH

National Certified Guardian Examination  
Date: Saturday, October 02, 2010  
Location: Hershey, PA

Florida Competency Examination  
Date: Sunday, November 14, 2010  
Location: Fort Lauderdale, FL

National Certified Guardian Examination  
Date: Wednesday, September 15, 2010  
Location: Springfield, IL

National Certified Guardian Examination  
Date: Friday, October 15, 2010  
Location: Tualatin, OR

National Certified Guardian Examination  
Date: Wednesday, November 17, 2010  
Location: Houston, TX

National Master Guardian Examination  
Date: Monday, September 20, 2010  
Location: Santa Fe, NM

Oregon Certification Examination  
Date: Friday, October 15, 2010  
Location: Tualatin, OR

Texas Certification Examination  
Date: Wednesday, November 17, 2010  
Location: Houston, TX

National Certified Guardian Examination  
Date: Wednesday, September 22, 2010  
Location: Albuquerque, NM

Texas Certification Examination  
Date: Friday, October 29, 2010  
Location: El Paso, TX

Texas Certification Examination  
Date: Wednesday, May 18, 2011  
Location: Austin, TX

National Certified Guardian Examination  
Date: Wednesday, September 22, 2010  
Location: Chicago, IL

National Certified Guardian Examination  
Date: Friday, October 29, 2010  
Location: El Paso, TX

National Certified Guardianship Examination  
Date: Wednesday, May 18, 2011  
Location: Austin, TX

National Master Guardian Examination  
Date: Saturday, October 02, 2010  
Location: Hershey, PA

National Certified Guardian Examination  
Date: Sunday, November 14, 2010  
Location: Fort Lauderdale, FL

# 2010 NGA Conference Comes to the Sweetest Place on Earth – Hershey, Pennsylvania

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The 2010 NGA Conference in Hershey, Pennsylvania, will be a sweet experience and the smell of chocolate in the air is just a bonus. Between October 2 and October 5, at The Hershey Lodge, there will be 10 breakout sessions geared to specific practice issues, plus these general sessions that feature speakers and topics that impact every guardian:

Dr. Bill Thomas, an International Authority on Geriatric Medicine & Eldercare, will open with *Eldertopia: The Secret Meaning of Age and Aging*

Learn about *Non-drug Behavioral Alternatives for People with Dementia* from Ann M. Kolanowski, PhD, RN, FGSA, FAAN., a Professor of Psychiatry, Penn State College of Medicine, and Director of the Hartford Center of Geriatric Nursing Excellence & the Quality of Life Project

Get *An International Perspective on Challenges for the Future of Third-Party Care*, by Fulbright scholar Katherine C. Pearson, Professor of Law, Penn State University Dickinson School of Law, and Director, Elder Law and Consumer Protection Clinic

Other sessions will investigate Medicaid Support for Guardianship Services and the Department of Veterans Affairs Fiduciary Program

A highlight of the Conference is sure to be Tuesday's two-part session on *Guardianship Practices, Challenges and Issues*. If you've tried everything, but can't find a solution or can't figure what to do now, you'll get help from this panel and other colleagues in the room. This interactive session provides an opportunity for experienced guardians and newcomers to share problems and accomplishments. Bring case problems and ideas.

## **Hershey is a Sweet Place for a Conference**

When you hear the word Hershey, you automatically think of chocolate...but did you know that the Hershey area offers countless other treats that add enticing reasons to attend the 2010 National Conference on Guardianship?

In the surrounding area there's Gettysburg, celebrated Civil War battlefield and a charming historic town; Lancaster's Pennsylvania Dutch Country (plus, some terrific outlet shopping); Harrisburg with one of the most beautiful capitol buildings in the country; the mid-point of the Appalachian Trail; a championship golf course; casino; micro-breweries; wineries; museums; horseracing; a falconry course; farmers markets; and more. Hershey also provides easy access to five of the East Coast's popular metropolitan areas: Washington, DC, Philadelphia, Baltimore, New York City, and Pittsburgh. NGA has arranged special optional tours that can make some of these spots part of your conference memories.

While staying at The Hershey Lodge you'll also have access to things unique to the Hershey community!

- The Hershey Spa with a special chocolate facial or a complete body dip
- The Hershey Gardens
- The Hershey Museum
- The Hershey ZooAmerica
- Hershey's Chocolate World
- And some excellent dining downtown where the streetlights are shaped like Hershey Kisses.

Hershey is easy to reach by air, train or car.

The Hershey Lodge offers shuttle service for the 15 minute transport from both Harrisburg International Airport and the Amtrak station in Harrisburg.

The best flight connection is Harrisburg (MDT) where seven major airlines operate out of the airport with over 120 daily flights, including direct flights from most major Eastern cities.

You'll find complete conference details along with easy online registration and hotel reservations at [www.guardianship.org/10Conference](http://www.guardianship.org/10Conference). Don't forget, early bird registration deadline is September 1st.

The National Guardianship Association offers two scholarships that cover the registration fee for the 2010 National Conference on Guardianship.

### **Fred Kretz Memorial Scholarship for Public Guardians**

The scholarship rewards a public guardian who is a member of the National Guardianship Association or who holds membership in one of NGA's affiliate state associations, and who has earned certification from the Center for Guardianship Certification.

### **NGA Family Guardian Scholarship**

Because family guardians bring an important perspective to the guardianship profession as effective advocates for quality services, the NGA Family Guardian Scholarship has been created to reward a family guardian who is a member of NGA or who holds membership in one of NGA's affiliate state organizations. A family guardian is defined as an individual who acts as a guardian for one

or more vulnerable adults related to the guardian by blood, adoption or through marriage or friendship.

Both scholarships are supported by the Silent and Live Auctions held each year at the Conference. Donations of items for the auction are still needed. Find auction details at: [www.guardianship.org/10Conference](http://www.guardianship.org/10Conference).

### **IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER**

August 30 – Hotel room discounts end at the Hershey Lodge (block may fill before this date)

September 1 – Early bird registration discount ends - don't miss out on this significant savings!

September 20 – Last day to receive a refund for cancellation of registration

## **Online Clearinghouse to Help Courts, Judges Cope with Aging Population**

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*New website will provide courts with information, resources and training*

*Taken from the National Center for State Courts  
June 15, 2010 press release.*

The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) launched a new website to provide the nation's courts with resources, information, and training related to aging, probate issues, and elder abuse on June 15, which was World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

The new site, [www.eldersandcourts.org](http://www.eldersandcourts.org), is an initiative of NCSC's Center for Elders and the Courts (CEC), which serves as the primary resource for the judiciary on issues impacting the elderly. The CEC was established by the National Center in 2008 and is funded by a grant from the Retirement Research Foundation.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the number of people older than 65 will more than double between 2000 and 2050, while the number of people older than 85 will quadruple. As Americans age, courts must educate staff on aging-related issues, develop innovative strategies to address elder abuse, and reform guardianship policies and practices. The CEC aims to increase judicial awareness of issues related to aging, provide training tools and resources to improve court response to elder abuse and oversight of adult guardianships, and develop a collaborative community of judges, court staff, and aging experts.

The new website will serve as an online clearinghouse of information on aging issues as well as an online community where judges and court personnel can exchange information. The site also features the following resources:

- an interactive map that allows users to access information on specific state laws related to elder abuse and adult guardianships as well as links to state resources on aging
- a database of "promising practices," such as court technologies and administration procedures that have been successfully implemented by courts
- ten training videos that cover topics such as creating an elder justice center, creating an elder protection court, and working with adult protective services
- an elder abuse curriculum designed for presentation by state judicial educators

The site will also feature the Elder Abuse Toolkit for the Courts, which includes an interagency coordination guide, model practices, a data collection guide, and performance standards. The toolkit, which was funded by a grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, is scheduled to be available in the winter of 2010.

# What's in a Name? Much.

By *Ginny Casazza, NCG*

The Center for Guardianship Certification changed the name of its credential “Registered Guardian” (“RG”) to “National Certified Guardian” (“NCG”) because names matter.

Earning a credential is a way to demonstrate proficiency and professionalism. But what's the difference in registration and certification? Most importantly, what's the commonly perceived difference between a Registered Guardian and a Certified guardian? Knowing the commonly accepted definitions of these terms is important in knowing what a credential brings to you in terms of public perception.

Registration is generally known as a process in which people with a service to offer submit their names to an organization that maintains a list of such people. Often, becoming registered only involves submitting your name and contact information. Much of the time, registration does not include eligibility criteria or an exam.

Certification is a process in which an independent certifying body develops a standard for certification, requires that you meet basic eligibility requirements and pass an exam. Well-developed certifying programs generally require a component of continuing education and the most advanced have a process for decertification. Certification programs, especially in the absence of professional licensing, offer the best credential for the professional and for the persons they serve.

With these definitions in mind which would you rather call yourself? Are you a registered guardian or a certified guardian? If you are certified by the Center for Guardianship Certification you are a National Certified Guardian and the name matters. The Center for Guardianship Certification's credential is now more appropriately named for your benefit. You have a credential to be proud of — you earned it. Use it.

## Calendar

2010 National Conference on Guardianship  
October 2 - 5, 2010 – Hershey, PA

For information:

<http://www.guardianship.org/10Conference/default.htm>

PFAC Fall Conference

November 4 - 5, 2010 – Long Beach, CA

For information:

<http://www.pfac-pro.org/pages/meetings.htm>

9th Annual National Aging & Law Conference:  
The Changing Face of Aging

December 9 - 11, 2010 – Alexandria, VA

For information:

[http://www.guardianship.org/events/10/  
NationalAgingLawConf.pdf](http://www.guardianship.org/events/10/NationalAgingLawConf.pdf)

2011 National Conference on Guardianship  
October 1 - 5, 2011 – Minneapolis, MN

## CGC is looking for a few good writers to add to its list of newsletter contributors...

Do you have an interesting story to tell, information on a relevant topic, an update on what's going on in your state or have you received an award/special recognition lately? Do you have any suggestions for topics you would like to read about in the newsletter?

Then we want to hear from you!

**Call or e-mail any questions, ideas or submissions to the *CGC Connection* editor at:**

[editor@guardianshipcert.org](mailto:editor@guardianshipcert.org)

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# Welcome New National Certified Guardians

*Alphabetical by last name  
May 1, 2010 to June 25, 2010*

Trisha Atwood.....	Eureka, CA	Paulee Lemmons.....	Mt. Pleasant, SC
Rene Bassett Butler.....	Wood River, IL	Joan A.Magee.....	Los Angeles, CA
Donna L. Brill.....	Towson, MD	Charlotte E. McCleerey.....	Mission Viejo, CA
Carolyn L. Brown.....	Hines, IL	Daniel F. McGowan.....	Rockford, IL
Joseph T. Brown.....	Rantoul, IL	Jack Montgomery.....	Altadena, CA
Maureen E. Burt.....	Mission Viejo, CA	Jodi Montgomery.....	Altadena, CA
Eddie Carpenter.....	Jacksonville, IL	Kendra J. Moses.....	Peoria, IL
Dana Danielle Clark.....	Clarksville, TN	Matt Myrick.....	Fairmount, IL
Dawn A. Conolly.....	Galesburg, IL	Janet E. Paull.....	Carlisle, PA
Roslyn Cooley Prayer.....	Towson, MD	John J. Regan.....	Hampstead, NH
Barbara B. Cox.....	Blairsdon, CA	Susan L. Regan.....	Hampstead, NH
Diane E. Davies.....	Atascadero, CA	Deborah S. Riley.....	Towson, MD
Daniel G. Deneen.....	Bloomington, IL	Kathleen E. Segal.....	Oakland, CA
William L. Exeter.....	San Diego, CA	Dotri Shaw-Hargrove.....	Greeneville, TN
Diane Frye.....	Louisville, IL	Julie A. Sugita.....	Alpine, CA
Joyce Korla Hayes.....	West Grove, PA	Linnea E. Thompson.....	Moline, IL
Millar Allen Holter II.....	La Quinta, CA	Elizabeth White.....	Towson, MD
Katrina Deanne Huggins.....	Collierville, TN	Diane Yohnka Jorstad.....	Morris, IL
Kathleen L. Knox.....	Millbrae, CA	Tara Zinn.....	Cypress, TX

*For more information and a complete list, go to [www.guardianshipcert.org](http://www.guardianshipcert.org)*

## Congratulations New National Master Guardians!

Mark Feigl – Concord, NH  
Donna M.C. Keddy – Whitefield, NH  
Jayne McCabe – Whitefield, NH

## Changes to Texas Rules Governing Guardianship Certification

The Supreme Court of Texas adopted changes to the Rules Governing Guardianship Certification, effective April 6, 2010. Of particular interest is the adoption of the designation “TxCG” for Texas certified guardians. Other changes of note include changes to the continuing education requirements, changes to annual reporting requirements to the Guardianship Certification Board to track statutory changes, and adoption of guidelines in reviewing applicants’ criminal history. For a summary of all Rule changes and the complete revised Rules, visit the GCB’s website at [www.courts.state.tx.us/gcb](http://www.courts.state.tx.us/gcb). For any questions concerning certification in Texas, please contact the Guardianship Certification Program Director at [lesley.ondrechen@courts.state.tx.us](mailto:lesley.ondrechen@courts.state.tx.us).