

Captain Marise C. James was born on 22 November 1957 in Christiansted, St. Croix. She graduated from St. Joseph High School in 1975 and attended George Washington University in Washington, DC, where she received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Zoology. She also attended the University of Maryland School of Law in Baltimore, Maryland where she received a Juris Doctorate degree in 1986. She is a member of the Bars of the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Third Circuit Court of Appeals and serves on the Grievance and Legal Assistant Committees of the Virgin Islands Bar Association.

CPT James has practiced law in the Virgin Islands for the past eighteen years in the private and public sectors. She has worked with the firm of Hodge & Sheen, the UVI Political Status Public Education Program, the SBA Disaster Loan Program, the Department of Planning and Natural Resources, the V.I. Legislature and for Governor Roy L. Schneider. She was the owner of her own legal practice and the founder of The Paralegal Institute. CPT James is the host and producer of "Topics", a weekly television show. She is also a real estate broker, a business consultant, a hearing officer and a mediator. She sits on the boards of the Virgin Islands Historical Society of the District Court, the St. Croix Foundation for Community Development, and the St. Croix Landmark Society.

CPT James was commissioned through direct appointment on April 24, 2002. She is an honor graduate of the 161st Judge Advocate Officer Basic Course. She also received The Judge Advocate General's School Award for Professional Merit for Second Highest Overall Class Standing.

In 1987, CPT James married Anthony Paul of Trinidad and they have three children: Camille, Sydney and Jordan.

Captain Geraldine P. Vaval was born on 12 August 1965 in Christiansted, St. Croix. A 1983 graduate of Charlotte Amalie High School, she began her military career on October 1983 as an enlisted soldier with the US Army Intelligence and Threat Analysis Center at Arlington Hall Station in Arlington, Virginia.

CPT Vaval served ten years on active duty and had a number of noteworthy accomplishments: Graduated as the Distinguished Honor Graduate of her Basic Non-Commissioned Officer Course in 1990; served as the Administrative Assistant to the Vice-Chief of Staff of the Army, General Gordon Sullivan from June 1990 to June 1991; and also served as General Sullivan's Administrative Assistant in his position as Chief of Staff of the Army from June 1991 to October 1991.

CPT Vaval's other active duty assignments include a tour in Korea and assignments with the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans and the Office of the Judge Advocate General, both at the Pentagon. She also served with the following Reserve units – 97th ARCOM, Ft. Meade, Maryland; F/1/317th Regiment, Alexandria, Virginia; and the 9th Theater Support Command, Ft. Belvoir, Virginia. On December 10, 2000 she was commissioned as a First Lieutenant by direct appointment in the Judge Advocate General's Corps.

Prior to obtaining her full-time position with the V.I. National Guard, CPT Vaval practiced law in the private and public sectors. She worked with the firms of Bobby G. Henry, Jr., and Associates (Largo, MD), LaJuan Martin and Associates (Washington, DC), and Vincent & Brown (Washington, DC). She also served as the Chief of Staff and Legal Counsel to Senator Adlah "Foncie" Donastorg, Jr. (25th Legislature).

CPT Vaval has earned an Associates of Science degree in Criminal Justice from Park College; a Paralegal Certificate and Bachelor of Science degree in Paralegal Studies from the University of Maryland University College; and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Baltimore School of Law. CPT Vaval's military education includes the Primary Leadership Development Course, the Basic Non-Commissioned Officer Course, the Advanced Non-Commissioned Officer Course and the Officer Basic Course.

CPT Vaval is a member of the Bars of Maryland and the U.S. Virgin Islands.



THE LAUGHABLE ESQUIRE

A STX man was injured when he & his horse were struck by a car at an intersection. He sued the driver of the car. In court, he was cross-examined by the driver's lawyer. Lawyer: you've told us all about your injuries. However, according to the accident report, you told the police officer at the scene that you weren't injured at all, isn't that true? Plaintiff: well, let me explain. Lawyer: Go right ahead (thinking he had him on the ropes). Please tell the jury. Plaintiff: when the officer arrived at the scene, he looked at my fallen horse & found that he had a broken leg, so he took out his weapon & shot him. The officer then asked how I was doing. Suffering from the same injury as my horse, I of course immediately replied, "I'm OK!"

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1, JANUARY 2005

THE LEGAL GUARDIAN

4031 LA GRANDE PRINCESSE, LOT 1B, CHRISTIANSTED, USVI, 00820-4353;
(340) 712-7720; FAX: (340) 712-7737



In order to serve you better, The Legal Guardian will be published on a monthly basis, to provide you with information to help you become and remain legally healthy.

This first issue will introduce you to the Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Corps and your local JAGs.

Future issues will present a main topic, along with some legal tidbits, a quote of the month, the Laughable Esquire Corner and other information.

If you are interested in a specific topic, please feel free to ask for it.

THE ARMY HAS RELIED UPON LAWYERS SINCE JULY 29, 1775, WHEN COLONEL WILLIAM TUDOR, A 25-YEAR OLD HARVARD GRADUATE WAS SELECTED AS THE FIRST JUDGE ADVOCATE OF THE ARMY. THE SECOND JUDGE ADVOCATE OF THE ARMY, COLONEL JOHN LAURANCE, WAS APPOINTED IN 1777 AND PROSECUTED A NUMBER OF PROMINENT OFFICERS, INCLUDING GENERAL CHARLES LEE, MAJOR GENERAL BENEDICT ARNOLD AND BRITISH MAJOR JOHN ANDRE.

IN 1802, THE POSITION OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE WAS ABOLISHED AND MOST LEGAL FUNCTIONS WERE TRANSFERRED TO THE STATE MILITIAS. CONGRESS REESTABLISHED THE POSITION OF JUDGE ADVOCATE OF THE ARMY IN 1849 AND IN 1862, LEGISLATION WAS PASSED AUTHORIZING A CORPS OF JUDGE ADVOCATES. THIRTY-THREE JUDGE ADVOCATES WERE APPOINTED DURING THE CIVIL WAR AND MANY LEGAL SCHOLARS, INCLUDING A FORMER U.S. SUPREME COURT JUSTICE, ALSO SERVED WITH THE ARMIES OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES.

DURING WORLD WAR I, THE JAG DEPARTMENT, THE FORERUNNER OF THE CORPS, EXPANDED TO 426 OFFICERS, MANY OF WHOM WERE RESERVE JUDGE ADVOCATES. DURING WORLD WAR II, THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL'S SCHOOL WAS ESTABLISHED.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL'S CORPS HAS BEEN WHEREVER THE ARMY HAS BEEN: WHETHER IT IS RESPONDING TO RENEWED THREATS IN THE MIDDLE EAST OR NORTHWEST ASIA; PROVIDING HUMANITARIAN RELIEF IN AFRICA; OR NATION BUILDING IN THE CARIBBEAN, LATIN AMERICA AND EASTERN EUROPE.