

# STATE BAR *of* TEXAS

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

*January 30, 2006*

A big thank you to Eduardo and Paula and the Houston directors who helped make the January board of directors meeting run smoothly and efficiently. If you have any suggestions regarding how we can make quarterly meetings even better, please do not hesitate to let me know. President-elect candidates Andrew Strong and Gib Walton attended the TYLA board of directors meeting in San Antonio this past weekend and are digesting the information they have received about deadlines and rules related to the election. We congratulate both of them on their nominations and wish them much success (and comfortable shoes) throughout the campaign season!

**American Bar Association Meeting in Chicago** — The mid-year meeting of the ABA will take place in Chicago starting next week. State Bar President Eduardo Rodriguez is on the program several times to update attendees on the success of the Pipeline Project and discuss disaster response and the lessons Texas lawyers learned from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Several Texas lawyers will be honored during the meeting, and the Houston Bar Auxiliary will be recognized for its great service programs.

**TYLA Officer Candidates** — The Texas Young Lawyers Association met in San Antonio, Jan. 27-28. In addition to the State Bar president-elect candidates, State Bar President Eduardo Rodriguez and President-elect Martha Dickie addressed the board, as did Texas Supreme Court Justice Dale Wainwright. During the meeting, the TYLA board nominated its officer candidates for the upcoming year. (The election for TYLA president-elect will be included on the ballot of all Texas lawyers who qualify as TYLA members; the other officer positions will be elected by a vote of TYLA directors.) The nominees for president-elect are Tal Hammock of Texas City and Bill Miller of Texarkana. The nominees for vice president are Cheryl Camin of Dallas and Jennifer Morris of Dallas; chair-elect, Cade Browning of Abilene and Mary Reveles of Richmond; secretary, Christy Albano of McKinney and Jamey Secrest of Temple; and treasurer, C.E. Rhodes of Houston and Lisa Richardson of Austin.

**Internal Audit** — Sprouse & Anderson is currently conducting the State Bar's internal audit. This year, auditors are focusing on the membership department, purchasing and facilities, cash receipts, public funds investment, and the information technology department. The audit tests internal controls to determine whether they are in place and being used consistently.

**Judicial Poll** — The online portion of the Judicial Poll began on Jan. 23. The last day to vote online is Feb. 1. Attorneys who do not vote online will be mailed a paper ballot on Feb. 8, 2006. Visit the State Bar website to cast your vote at [www.texasbar.com](http://www.texasbar.com).

**General Counsel Search** — The first meeting of the General Counsel Search Committee will be Tuesday morning. Each of you should have received an email that included a list of committee members.

**EEO Training** — State Bar employees will receive a mandatory, 90-minute EEO training on Tuesday morning. If you call the Law Center in the morning and reach voice mail, know that staff will return your call as soon as possible after the training is completed.

**Construction Update** — The ceiling is completed on the fifth floor and substantially completed on the third floor. The fourth floor is taking its turn at working with no ceilings. The fire alarm was triggered last week by dust in a smoke alarm due to construction. In its efforts to disconnect the smoke detector, the fire department blew out the main fire panel, which is being replaced.

**CLE Webcasts** — On Jan. 11, a webcast attendance record was broken with 399 registrants for a two-hour TexasBarCLE program, Changes to the Business Code: What Every Practitioner Needs to Know. Another well-attended live webcast, Testing Your Ethics: A CLE Webcast That Asks What YOU Would Do If ...?, drew 202 viewers on Jan. 25.

**Texas Pattern Jury Charges** — TexasBarBooks and the Pattern Jury Charges Oversight Committee are moving forward with an initiative to test how understandable Texas PJC's are to jurors. The jury consulting firm CSI of Irving will evaluate how well jurors, under trial-like conditions, understand some key jury charges. The mock jurors in this project will be asked to evaluate the understandability of some of the present charges and then to assess a version written in more common language. Initial testing is scheduled for Feb. 17.

**Books on Amazon.com** — TexasBarBooks is in the final editing and production stages of Winning with Stories: Using the Narrative to Persuade in Trials, Speeches, and Lectures. The book will be released in March or April 2006 and will be offered through Amazon.com as well as TexasBarCLE.com.

**ATJ Update** — The Litigation Section has awarded four scholarships to legal aid lawyers to attend its annual training. The scholarships include travel, hotel, and tuition. The Family Law Section has announced that it will sponsor six pro bono recruitment trainings around the state this year — in Waco, Abilene, Amarillo, Ft. Stockton, the Rio Grande Valley (city to be named), and Paris.

**Section Reps to Board** — The Council of Chairs seeks nominations for two upcoming vacancies to the Section Representatives to the Board Committee. The open positions are from a large section and a small section. Nominations, which must be received by March 1, 2006, can be forwarded to Kathy Casarez at [kcasarez@texasbar.com](mailto:kcasarez@texasbar.com).

**Customer Service Update** — In December 2005, the Membership Department received 419 requests for letters of good standing and 122 requests for a duplicate bar card.

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the State Bar of Texas is to support the administration of the legal system, assure all citizens equal access to justice, foster high standards of ethical conduct for lawyers, support and provide services to its members, enable its members to better serve their clients and the public, and educate the public about the rule of law.

