

STATE BAR *of* TEXAS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

April 10, 2006

Board Meeting — The April meeting of the Board of Directors is only a couple of weeks away. We hope that everybody has RSVP'd and made their travel arrangements. There is a lot on the agenda and Eduardo and Paula have put together a great meeting that highlights South Texas hospitality, the cultural and social richness of the area, as well as an opportunity to meet local lawyers.

SBOT Election — The elections for president-elect and district directors began on April 3. Online voting will continue through 5 p.m. CST, Wednesday, April 12. Paper ballots will be mailed April 17 to those who do not vote online. They must be returned by May 2. As of today, 5,456 lawyers have voted.

Friday Legislative Update — Almost 3,000 members opted to receive a "Friday Update" during the special session of the Texas Legislature. The email is intended to keep lawyers updated on what is going on at the Capitol in regard to school finance as well as how possible tax options might affect the legal profession. We hope this program will continue during the regular session of the Texas Legislature that starts in January. The State Bar will not take a position on the various alternatives, but we do believe it is important to provide Texas lawyers with timely information on legislative activities.

Minority Affairs Director Search — The State Bar has received 41 applications for the minority affairs director position, which will remain open until filled. Please spread the news that the job is open and refer people to the State Bar website for more information.

Dues Season — Beginning May 1, Texas lawyers can pay annual dues, occupation taxes, and join sections online at www.texasbar.com. Attorneys can log on to their "My Bar Page" and pay with a debit transaction to their checking or savings account. State Bar members can also update their online attorney profile.

Poverty Law Conference — More than 250 legal aid and private, pro bono attorneys attended the 2006 Poverty Law Conference, which took place April 5-7 in Austin. The three-day training focused on issues related to representing low-income Texans. Supreme Court Justice Harriet O'Neill was the keynote speaker.

Poverty Law Section Meets — The first general membership meeting of the Poverty Law Section was held April 6 during the Poverty Law Conference in Austin. The section has created the following committees: CLE Committee, Membership Committee, Networking and Newsletter Committee, and Specialization Committee. The Section already has 260 members.

Potential Investment Managers Interviewed — On Monday, April 3, interviews for Investment Managers were held at the Law Center. The Review Committee interviewed four management firms that responded to an RFP for investment managers for the State Bar. The committee will make a recommendation to the board in April to hire an investment manager, as well as financial and internal auditors for the next three fiscal years.

Summer Advanced Courses — Preparations are under way for the big summer advanced courses: Estate Planning, Real Estate, Personal Injury, Family, Criminal, and Civil Trial. TexasBarCLE staff are using a refined marketing plan for these courses that should reduce significantly the number of unwanted mailings.

Section Reps to the Board — On April 7, the Council of Chairs elected Warren Cole, chair of the Family Law Section, to fill the large section representative to the board position, and Lisa Tatum, a past-chair of the African American Lawyers Section, to fill the small section representative to the board position, effective June 15.

Celebrating 10 Years of Service — The Asian Pacific Interest Section held its 6th annual Retreat and 10th Anniversary Celebration on Saturday, April 8, at the Texas Law Center in Austin.

Texas Family Law Practice Manual — TexasBarBooks selected the 2006 CD-ROM of *Texas Pattern Jury Charges: Family* to experiment with including links to PDF versions of cited cases. The trial run was so successful that links to cited cases will be included on the CD-ROM for the *Texas Family Law Practice Manual*, along with a PDF of the Texas Family Code. The 2006 supplement will be available this summer.

Publishing Opportunities for Sections — TexasBarBooks Director Sharon Sandle spoke to the Council of Chairs about publishing opportunities for sections. Sections that would like to propose a book idea for consideration should contact publications attorney David Ashmore at dashmore@texasbar.com.

Online IOLTA Compliance — Beginning May 1, Texas attorneys can submit their mandatory IOLTA compliance information online at www.teajf.org. Previously, the foundation has handled compliance via U.S. mail at a cost of \$46,000 or more annually.

Kudos — Pat Allison received the “Member of the Year Award” from the Association of International Petroleum Negotiators (AIPN), a non-profit organization founded in 1981 to enhance the professionalism of cross-border energy negotiators throughout the world. Its members include (but are not limited to) engineers, attorneys, geologists, geophysicists, and accountants. Congratulations on this great honor!

Family Tradition — On April 2, a team from South Texas College of Law won the ATLA Mock Trial National Championship in Miami. Among the four team members was Gabe Vick, son of director Tom Vick!

Pro Bono Survey Results — Texas Lawyers Care received a draft report of the results from a recent telephone survey of Texas lawyers’ pro bono activities. The final report should be available next week. Preliminary results show that the 66 percent of lawyers who reported offering pro bono legal services to the poor donated an average of 44.3 hours. These results indicate that Texas lawyers contributed 1.8 million hours of free legal services, 1.4 million hours of substantially reduced-fee legal services, and \$14.7 million in financial contributions in 2005.

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.

