

STATE BAR *of* TEXAS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

April 11, 2008

Assisting Eldorado — The State Bar is providing free online training to lawyers volunteering to serve as attorneys ad litem for the hundreds of children recently taken into state custody in West Texas. State Bar Director Tom Vick, who formerly served as chair of the State Bar Family Law Section, is leading an effort to compile a list of qualified volunteers for the court to consider. Director Guy Choate is also assisting with volunteer efforts. A training session is taking place in San Angelo today. Among the State Bar entities providing assistance are the Family Law Section, the Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect, the Access to Justice Commission, TexasBarCLE, and both Legal Services to the Poor committees. Presiding Judge Barbara Walther of the 51st District Court in San Angelo is a past judicial liaison to the State Bar Board of Directors and past chair of the Texas Center for the Judiciary. To volunteer, visit www.texasbar.com.

Court Administration Task Force — The three work groups that make up the Court Administration Task Force reported their initial findings during a full-day meeting on Monday, April 7. The next task force meetings are scheduled for May 20 in Austin and June 24 in Houston.

Stewart-Morris Board Room Rededicated — Members of the Stewart and Morris families and other special guests gathered at the Texas Law Center on April 10 for a ribbon-cutting ceremony and dinner to celebrate the renovation of the Stewart-Morris Board Room. For more than 50 years, in two separate buildings, the Stewart-Morris Board Room has served Texas lawyers. Thanks to the continuing partnership between the State Bar and the Stewart and Morris families, the room has been renovated to provide a state-of-the-art meeting facility. The historic character of the room has been retained (tables refinished, wall covering restored) while upgrading the room's technological capabilities. The State Bar Executive Committee test drove the room last week.

State Bar Election — The 2008 election for State Bar and TYLA presidents-elect and directors has started. All attorneys eligible to vote received an email on April 1, 2008, with a voter authorization number and voting instructions. Please check your email and vote today. Paper ballots will also be mailed. Voting runs through April 30.

Minorities at the Podium Project Launched — The State Bar Office of Minority Affairs and TexasBarCLE have developed a new program called Minorities at the Podium. MAP's purpose is to 1) identify ethnically diverse and women attorneys who are qualified and available to write articles for and present topics at the State Bar's continuing legal education courses, 2) assist course directors and course-planning committees in diversifying their faculty; and 3) increase the visibility of attorneys through their participation in the speakers circuit. A brochure is being mailed to all minority and women attorneys.

“Standing Ovation” for TexasBarCLE Volunteers — TexasBarCLE honored nine Texas attorneys with “Standing Ovation” staff appreciation awards for their exceptional contributions to the State Bar’s continuing legal education efforts in 2007: Craig Ball of Austin, Debra Bruce of Houston, Warren Cole of Houston, Robert Hirschhorn of Lewisville, Mike Maslanka of Dallas, George “Tex” Quesada of Dallas, Steven Saunders of Austin, Michele Surratt of Lubbock, and Tom Watkins of Austin.

Download Pattern Jury Charges — TexasBarBooks is adding a new feature for online purchasers of certain books, such as the *Texas Pattern Jury Charges*. Purchasers can immediately download the full electronic version of the book from the TexasBarBooks website. They will then be shipped a copy of the book. The feature will make it possible to provide subscribers with electronic updates.

Video Websites and Ad Review — Attorney or law firm videos disseminated on video websites such as YouTube, MySpace, and Facebook that solicit legal services are considered advertisements in the public media and are required to be filed with the Advertising Review Committee. The application can be downloaded at the Advertising Review website at www.texasbar.com/adreview. The fee is \$75. Failure to file can result in a fine/fee of \$300, and possible disciplinary action. If you have any questions, please contact the Advertising Review Department at (866)566-4616.

Building Update — The windows have been replaced on the 6th floor of the Texas Law Center and construction of the 6th floor is on schedule to be completed by May 15. Staff on the 3rd and 4th floors will move at that time.

National Trial Competition — A number of State Bar staff volunteered to serve as witnesses for the final rounds of the National Trial Competition, which is organized by TYLA and the American College of Trial Lawyers. Twenty-eight mock trial teams from across the country convened in Austin, with a team from the Chicago Kent School of Law winning for the second consecutive year.

Annual Meeting Registration Live — Online registration is open for the 2008 State Bar Annual Meeting, which will take place June 26-27 in Houston. Visit www.texasbar.com/annualmeeting.

By the Numbers — During the first six weeks of a walking challenge coordinated by a staff wellness committee, 185 staff members have taken more than 54 million steps, or roughly 27,000 miles.

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 and promote diversity in the administration of justice and the practice of law.

