

STATE BAR *of* TEXAS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

February 26, 2010

State Bar Election Season Begins — State Bar president-elect candidates **Bob Black** of Beaumont and **Debbie Bullion** of Sugar Land and TYLA president-elect candidates **Jeff Chandler** of San Angelo and **Natalie Cobb Koehler** of Meridian start their campaigns on March 1. Out-of-office campaigning will continue through March. Please read the election guidelines and welcome the candidates to your firms and cities. Voting will take place April 1–30. For more information, visit www.texasbar.com/election.

MCLE Changes — Changes to the MCLE Regulations and Accreditation Standards, approved by the Board in January, will allow members to complete all CLE requirements by listening to or viewing approved downloadable CLE activities, such as podcasts. The effective date for these changes is June 1, 2010, which will allow increased availability and affordability of CLE options. Additionally, beginning June 2011, members of the bar will be required to complete 12 of their 15 MCLE hours each year through accredited CLE. If you receive questions, a summary, FAQ, and redline version of the changes are available at www.texasbar.com/mcle.

Deadline for Annual Meeting Resolutions — Resolutions must be filed at the Texas Law Center by 5 p.m. on April 1 to be considered during the State Bar Annual Meeting in Fort Worth. Proposed resolutions should be sent in care of the State Bar Executive Director, P.O. Box 12487, Austin 78711-2487. Questions should be directed to Candiss Held at (800)204-2222, Ext. 1416.

State Bar Challenges Lawyers to Write a 140-character Novel — Ernest Hemingway reportedly considered his best work to be his most succinct: a six-word novel he came up with to settle a bar bet: “For sale: baby shoes, never worn.” In March, the State Bar will challenge lawyers to write their own brief work of fiction — but with a modern twist: 140-character, Twitter-ready novels. The grand-prize winner will receive an Apple iPad as well as recognition during the Legal Innovation Track at the State Bar Annual Meeting on June 10. Details will be available March 1 at www.texasbar.com/140characternovel.

YouTube Contest Deadline is April 1 — The theme for this year’s YouTube contest is “The Importance of the Legal Profession.” Entrants are asked to create a 30-second video on why lawyers are important or why the legal system is important. State Bar directors and their families are not eligible to win, but please encourage your friends and constituents to enter. Find details at www.texasbar.com/texansonjustice.

Increased Focus on Lawyer Mental Health Planned — State Bar President-elect Terry Tottenham is working with TexasBarCLE and the Texas Lawyers’ Assistance Program (TLAP) for the 2010-2011 fiscal year to produce a panel of speakers to address addiction and mental health issues for attorneys. At virtually all TexasBarCLE live courses this coming year, the panel will discuss signs for colleagues to look for, intervention techniques, and resources for attorneys with addiction and mental health issues. A DVD will be produced and made available for local bar associations to show to their members.

New TexasBarBooks Titles to Feature Digital Downloads — For the 2010 edition of *Texas Pattern Jury Charges — Family* and the 3rd edition of the *Texas Family Law Practice Manual*, TexasBarBooks will offer the

digital versions as downloads rather than including them on CD-ROM. Offering the digital editions as downloads will save TexasBarBooks thousands of dollars in production costs.

TexasBarCLE Announces “Standing Ovation” Awards — TexasBarCLE has selected six volunteers to honor for exceptional contributions in 2009 to the Bar’s continuing legal education efforts. Pamela Stanton Baron of Austin, Daniel W. Bishop II of Austin, Judge Royal Furgeson, Jr., of Dallas, Katrina Grider of Houston, Thomas C. Riney of Amarillo, and Prof. L. Wayne Scott of San Antonio were each found worthy of a “Standing Ovation” award. The awards are given each year by the TexasBarCLE staff in appreciation for a few volunteers’ extraordinary dedication and commitment, as well as for being gracious and easy to work with.

Group Billing of Annual Fees — The State Bar Membership Department is working with large law firms to coordinate payment of membership fees for the upcoming dues season. Group billing streamlines the annual dues and member fee payment process. Contact Dee Stacey at (800)204-2222, Ext. 1807.

Texas Bar Circle Continues to Grow — Texas Bar Circle now has more than 12,000 registered users. Activity in the State Bar’s social networking site has picked up, notably among solo and small firm lawyers, whose Circle group has 1,010 members and an active discussion board. Visit www.texasbarcircle.com. In other social media developments, TexasBarCLE and TexasBarBooks have joined the State Bar on Facebook.

AfterTheBarExam.com Receives Award — After the Bar Exam has received a Commendation of Merit in the 2009 Excellence in New Communications Award competition from the Society for New Communication Research. AfterTheBarExam.com is an online program to connect Texas bar examinees who are in the three-month period awaiting their results with the State Bar of Texas. It provides links to local bar associations, practice area tips, and access to TexasBarCLE’s Online Classroom.

TYLA Cybercrimes Video Available Online — TYLA’s latest project, *R U Safe? Protecting Yourself in Cyberspace*, is designed to educate children and their parents about online dangers and provide them the tools they need to be safe online. It is intended to serve students at every age level (elementary, middle school, and high school) and also contains a section for parents. Watch the video at <http://www.tyla.org/rusafe>.

Annual Meeting Registration Available Online — The State Bar Annual Meeting will take place June 10–11 in Fort Worth. Speakers include legal technology expert Richard Susskind, former U.S. Secretary of the Army Pete Geren, and legal analysts Jeffrey Toobin and Roger Cossack. Participants can earn two days of quality CLE. For registration and law firm sponsorship information, go to www.texasbar.com/annualmeeting.

By the Numbers — The State Bar will save a projected \$1,200 per year through a wastewater rebate program with the City of Austin. A staff “Pedometer Challenge” has started with 200 employees participating.

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.

