

John SLOAN

HOMETOWN: LONGVIEW
POSITION: PARTNER IN SLOAN, HATCHER, PERRY, RUNGE,
 ROBERTSON & SMITH IN LONGVIEW
BOARD MEMBER: DISTRICT 2 SINCE 2022

INTERVIEW BY **WILL KORN**
 PHOTO COURTESY OF **JOHN SLOAN**



I DREAMED OF BEING EITHER A PREACHER OR A LAWYER. I wanted to be in the people-helping business. I thought that one or the other would be a good path to fulfill that dream. I was never called to preach so I decided to go to law school.

I LOVED THE COMPETITIVE NATURE OF PERSONAL INJURY LAW. I found a calling dealing with people at one of the absolute worst times of their lives. Helping those folks by going against the Goliaths of the world makes me still want to go to work every day.

THIS IS MY SECOND GO AROUND FOR STATE BAR OF TEXAS BOARD SERVICE. I was first elected to the board in 2007. I ran because of my previous service on a grievance committee. There, I saw the things that I hoped would be true for my board service—an earnest desire to safeguard the public and to better our profession. I was not disappointed. I saw that dedication in spades. I enjoyed my first term very much and decided to run again now that both my children are out of the home. I can say that everyone from our outstanding Executive Director Trey Appfel through all the people who work behind the scenes, we have an incomparable State Bar. I just can't say

enough how hard they work to make our bar association the envy of literally every state bar association in the nation. It is an honor to represent my district and to get to work with so many talented people from across the state.

PAST CHAIR CHAD BARUCH ENCOURAGED ALL THE DIRECTORS TO REACH OUT to local bar associations and speak to them about the many services that the State Bar provides. State Bar Communications Division Director Lowell Brown and his staff members prepared a killer PowerPoint to be used for these talks. Every one of the talks was well received, informative, and surprising to the lawyers in attendance. The benefits provided by our State Bar are amazing to me and seem to improve with every year. Our members can easily save enough to pay the cost of their bar dues in multiples just by taking advantage of the savings our staff has provided to bar members.

OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS IS CONSTANTLY DOING THE REAL WORK THAT IT TAKES TO IMPROVE OUR PROFESSION. The quarterly meetings are just the visible activities of the board. The real work takes place in the committees that all board members participate in. These committees work with our bar staff members to cover all the operations of the State Bar, from the administration of the business of the bar, to making sure that our members are offered education opportunities, and in the unfortunate and rare circumstance where a client loses money because of an unscrupulous lawyer, to providing a client security fund. We have a dedicated volunteer board that literally donates hundreds of hours a month in service to the members of the bar.

WE MUST NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF THE REALITY that we are elected by our local bar members and owe them the effort that it takes to talk to them about current issues and their viewpoints.

THE AVAILABILITY OF LEGAL SERVICES IN TEXAS IS ONE OF THE TOP ISSUES OF CONCERN. The Supreme Court of Texas has issued a preliminary order to address one way to bridge the gap by licensing paraprofessionals to help low-income individuals in certain legal matters, and the board is working with the court to provide comments on that order.

FIND AN AREA OF THE LAW THAT YOU LOVE AND DIVE IN! If you want to be an office practitioner, be the best that you can be. There is no excuse for not being knowledgeable in your field with all the legal education that the bar and other organizations offer. If you want to be a trial lawyer, do your best to get into the courtroom as soon as you can. Take some of those office practitioners to lunch and ask for their referrals. If you want to do civil work, talk to family lawyers and criminal lawyers about sending you potential clients. If you want to be a criminal defense lawyer, talk to family lawyers and civil lawyers. You could explore working in a district or county attorney's office. **TBJ**