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COMPUTER & TECHNOLOGY • CONSUMER & COMMERCIAL • ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES
FAMILY • GENERAL PRACTICE, SOLO & SMALL FIRM • GOVERNMENT LAWYERS • HEALTH • HISPANIC ISSUES
IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY • INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES • INSURANCE • JUDICIAL
JUVENILE • LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT • LGBT • LITIGATION • MILITARY • MUNICIPAL JUDGES
OIL, GAS AND ENERGY RESOURCES • PARALEGAL DIVISION PUBLIC UTILITY • REAL ESTATE, PROBATE & TRUST
SCHOOL • TAXATION • WOMEN AND THE LAW • WORKERS' COMPENSATION

2010-2011 State Bar of Texas

SECTION REPORTS

Section reports are included in the July issue of the *Texas Bar Journal* to keep Texas lawyers updated on State Bar section activities. The reports do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the State Bar of Texas. State Bar policy is formulated by the State Bar Board of Directors or by the membership through referendum. For more information or to join sections, visit texasbar.com/sections or call (800) 204-2222, Ext. 1420.

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ADMINISTRATIVE AND PUBLIC

Ann Bright, Chair

The Administrative and Public Law Section again sponsored the annual Mack Kidd Administrative Law Moot Court Competition on Oct. 15–16, 2010, with final arguments held in the courtroom of Austin's 3rd Court of Appeals. Sixteen teams participated in the 2010 competition. The team of Sarah Judge and Jose Magana Salgado of Baylor Law School won the competition. The 2011 competition is scheduled for Oct. 21–22.

The section also joined with the University of Texas School of Law CLE to sponsor the Advanced Texas Administrative Law Seminar on Sept. 2–3, 2010, at the AT&T Conference Center on the University of Texas campus in Austin. More than 380 persons attended the seminar. The 2011 seminar is scheduled for Aug. 25–26, at the AT&T Conference Center.

The section continues to sponsor the *Texas Tech Administrative Law Journal*, which is issued in two volumes — fall and spring — and is provided to all members as part of section dues.

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Susan Schultz, Chair

This year, the Alternative Dispute Resolution Section teamed up with TexasBarCLE for its annual CLE program and sponsored a day of interactive training covering practical tips on negotiation, peacemaking, and conflict transformation. On Jan. 28 in Houston, nationally recognized speaker and author Doug Noll presented *Tactical Interventions in Mediation: Preventing Bad Settlement Decisions and Impasse Minute by Minute*. To make this CLE program accessible, we also offered and granted several scholarships.

To highlight specific issues of interest and allow more member participation, the section revived the committee structure. To support committees as well as the general mission of the section, we continue to develop our website. We have added a members-only section to strengthen opportunities for dynamic online communications and education.

The section is also committed to playing an active part in the broader ADR community. Over the past year, representatives of our section have met twice with representatives of other mediation and ADR organizations to start a dialogue.

ANIMAL

Jean Jennings, Chair

The Animal Law Section had a very productive year. The section's membership increased almost 20 percent. For the first time in its history, the section submitted legislation that was working its way through the Texas Legislature at the time of submission of this update. If passed, the bill would correct a technical problem in the language of the dangerous dog statute that permits appeals in some jurisdictions while denying them in others.

The annual Animal Law Institute was held on April 29 in Austin and included local and national attorneys speaking on a variety of animal law issues. This year's conference featured a panel discussion on the real and perceived distinctions between animal rights and animal welfare and the impact on the practice of animal law.

The section is upgrading its website with a new design and additional content for members as well as working on several new projects for the coming year, including animal law CLE programs, a law student writing competition, and the development of a consumer guide to animal laws. The section is also pursuing collaborative projects with Texas law schools that offer animal law classes.

APPELLATE

David Coale, Chair

The Appellate Law Section is active in all aspects of modern appellate practice. The all-electronic *Appellate Advocate* is now available on Lexis and Westlaw thanks to the hard work of Dylan Drummond and Brandi Wingate.

Scott Rothenberg and Thomas Allen developed bylaws for a "Hall of Fame" project to recognize great appellate practitioners of the past, and we hope to work with the Texas Supreme Court Historical Society to soon name the first inductees.

The section presented a one-day CLE — "Handling Your First Civil Appeal" — which we hope can become available on DVD to bar groups around the state. The committee also co-sponsored a half-day appellate CLE program in Beaumont with the Jefferson County Bar. The committee joined forces with the Individual Rights and Responsibilities Section to present a CLE track at this year's Annual Meeting with a panel on the Roberts Court and an appellate law update panel. Our section's popular seminar for corporate counsel was held in Dallas on June 17. Our section's

Appellate Law 101 and Advanced Civil Appellate Course will be in Austin on Sept. 1–3. Our website has past *Advocate* issues, a library of CLE materials, a membership directory, and more at tex-app.org.

ASIAN PACIFIC INTEREST

Michele Wong Krause, Chair

The Asian-Pacific Interest Section started off with a bang with a well-attended networking reception, held in conjunction with the Bar Leaders Conference in Houston in July 2010. Responding to the devastating earthquake and tsunami that struck Japan in March, the section issued a letter of condolence and encouraged our members to contribute to the disaster relief efforts by matching member donations.

On April 15–16, the section hosted a very successful 15th annual conference and retreat, "Building Bridges; Creating Dynamic Relationships in a New Decade," at the Barton Creek Resort & Spa in Austin.

In addition to a stellar CLE program, conference attendees had the rare opportunity to hear a candid "Inside the General Counsel's Office" discussion. Lawrence Tu, general counsel to Dell, Inc., conducted an interview with Don Liu, general counsel to Xerox Corporation about the road to becoming a general counsel, as well as the challenges a general counsel faces in their positions.

At this year's Annual Meeting in San Antonio in June, the section co-sponsored a Diversity Forum and hosted a joint reception with the Hispanic Issues, African-American Lawyers, and American Indian Law sections.

BANKRUPTCY

Byrnie Bass, Chair

Last year, the section agreed to contribute \$20,000 to the Texas Access to Justice Foundation and the three legal aid organizations throughout the state and agreed to contribute 25 percent of the net profits from its annual Bench Bar Conference, held May 28–29 in Horseshoe Bay, to these same organizations.

Under the leadership of Mike McConnell, the section enjoyed a presence at the National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges, where it honored Northern District of Texas Chief Judge Barbara J. Houser for service as NCBJ chair last year. Josh Searcy chaired the Young Lawyer's Section. His work and the work of his team have resulted in an expansion of the Young Lawyer's Section.

Under the leadership of Eduardo “Eddie” Rodriguez, pro bono clinics in the southern part of the state were organized and are now beginning to flourish.

The Section ended the year on solid financial footing, primarily because of the leadership of the preceding chairs of the section, who we’d like to recognize: Robert B. Wilson (Lubbock), Deborah Williamson (San Antonio), Charles Beckham (Houston), Debbie Langelhennig (Austin), Berry Spears (Austin-Houston), and Judge H. Christopher Mott (Austin).

The section will continue to flourish under the leadership of new chair, Judge Cooter Hale of Dallas.

BUSINESS

Richard A. Tulli, Chair

The Business Law Section continued to provide its members information in periodic e-newsletters and the *Texas Journal of Business Law*. For Referendum 2011, the section prepared and sent its members an informational statement regarding the proposed amendments to the disciplinary rules.

The section sponsored or co-sponsored six CLE programs offered by TexasBarCLE and the University of Texas CLE: The Essentials of Business Law and the Advanced Business Law Strategies courses, the Advanced In-House Counsel Course, and courses on securities regulation, choice and acquisition of entities, and LLCs and partnerships. The member-discount offered at each TexasBarCLE course was approximately equal to, and could far exceed, a member’s annual dues. At the 2011 Annual Meeting, the section co-sponsored a one and a half-day CLE program with the Corporate Counsel Section and co-sponsored the keynote speaker, Edmund Morris. The section’s Venture Capital/Private Equity Committee also produced podcasts and the section’s website (texasbusinesslaw.org) continued to offer various resources for members.

Several section committees prepared potential legislation intended to improve Texas business law. Most of that potential legislation, including amendments to the Texas Business Organizations Code and amendments to Article 9 of the Texas UCC, was introduced in the 2011 Texas Legislature. During the session, the section also monitored legislative developments and posted on its website for its members weekly reports regarding legislation of interest to business lawyers.

Two of the section’s committees were influential in certain national organizations regarding provisions of Article 9 of the UCC and regarding legal opinion practice.

COLLABORATIVE

Kevin R. Fuller, Chair

This past year was the very first year of the Collaborative Law Section’s existence. We’ve spent the last year working with the State Bar and other sections trying to introduce ourselves and the collaborative process to the rest of the bar. Most lawyers are still unfamiliar with the basic process and practice of collaborative law, and the section is trying to introduce this process to more lawyers and the public as well. Primarily the collaborative law process is a settlement process — a way for people to resolve their legal disputes away from the courthouse and outside the traditional litigation and discovery process.

The collaborative process is somewhat similar to starting a mediation-type process at the very beginning of the dispute instead of toward the middle or end of the dispute. In the collaborative process, the parties commit to obligations of full disclosure and to resolving the dispute following a problem-solving model. The collaborative process asks the parties to openly define their goals, interests, and concerns, to jointly gather necessary information and documents to make informed decisions, and then to explore options for resolution that will meet as many of the competing and shared goals and interests of the parties as is possible under the circumstances.

If you’d like to learn more about the collaborative process or the Collaborative Law Section, visit collaborativelawsection.com.

CONSTRUCTION

James R. Old, Jr., Chair

The section acquired 298 new members this year. We held a “sold out” 24th annual Construction Law Conference in San Antonio and had a successful golf tournament during our Annual Conference in March. The planning for our 25th “Silver Anniversary” Conference has started. The section’s other signature CLE event, the Basic Course in Texas Construction Law, was held in Houston, headed by Kimberly Davison of Dallas. Our next Basic Course should debut a new, comprehensive textbook on construction law, edited by George Baldwin of Austin. The upcoming Basic Course, again headed by Davison, will be held in Dallas in October.

The section’s *Construction Law Journal* continues to publish first-rate articles on construction law topics involving the latest developments in the field. Our website is turning into a fantastic resource. Section members and non-members alike may purchase educational webcasts on construction issues 24/7 by browsing the online webcast library at www.constructionlawsection.org. Bill Sommers of San Antonio led the way for us to enthusiastically support the State Bar’s *Texas Lawyers for Texas Veterans* initiative. As a result of the overwhelming support of members, our section was again able to make substantial charitable donations to the Texas Access to Justice Foundation and the University of Texas School of Law Center for Public Policy Dispute Resolution. The section also provided scholarships to construction management and construction sciences students at the University of Texas and Texas A&M University and the high-grade student in a construction-related class at Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law.

COMPUTER & TECHNOLOGY

Grant M. Scheiner, Chair

It was a banner year for the Computer & Technology Section. We provided new services for our members, had unprecedented section growth, and gave back to the legal community. Our biggest achievement was launching an iPhone app that includes more than 50 state and federal codes, rules, and statutes. The Texas Bar Legal App has quick searches, an email tab for sending portions of statutes to yourself and others, plus an “annotation” tab for free case law research in certain areas. The app is available in Apple’s App Store. An Android version, plus a mobile-optimized “web app” version (for BlackBerrys, Palms, and other devices), was unveiled at the State Bar Annual Meeting in San Antonio in June. For more details, visit sbot.org.

In April, the section’s council was pleased to approve \$10,000 in complimentary section memberships to all of the Texas attorneys who work for organizations that receive Texas Access to Justice Foundation funding, including Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas, Lone Star Legal Aid, Texas RioGrande Legal Aid, Inc., and several other organizations. The council also approved complimentary section memberships for newly licensed attorneys.

Our CLE reached more people this year

than ever before. The section partnered with the State Bar to present the “Adaptable Lawyer” track at this year’s Annual Meeting and included “60 Apps in 60 Minutes,” a lively overview of legal and personal mobile apps for lawyers on the go.

CONSUMER & COMMERCIAL

Andrew E. Sattler, Chair

In its tradition of offering quality CLE, the Consumer & Commercial Law Section’s Advanced Consumer and Commercial Law two-day CLE program was well received, as was the section’s CLE offered at this year’s Annual Meeting in San Antonio. The section implemented a new CLE program for less urban areas of Texas. The goals of the program are to encourage pro bono representations while simultaneously providing free up-to-date consumer law CLE. The pilot for this program will be held in Laredo. Any local bar association interested in more information about this free CLE should contact the council at txconsumerlawyers.org/council.php.

The section continued its support of legal aid through its sponsorship of the Champions of Justice for Veterans Gala and a benefit dinner for the Texas Access to Justice Commission. The State Bar announced a need for consumer and commercial law practitioners to participate in its *Texas Lawyers for Texas Veterans* initiative and many of the section’s members answered the call by offering to volunteer and assist other attorneys.

The section revamped its website (txconsumerlawyers.org), adding current law topics in association with the University of Houston Law Center. The section’s list serve has proved to be a valuable tool to its members and remains an active forum. The Section’s newsletter, *The Journal of Consumer & Commercial Law*, continues its long tradition of publishing quality materials that are both current and relevant to the practice of law in Texas.

CORPORATE COUNSEL

Alma Reyes, Chair

The section offered a new benefit, *Corporate Counsel Newsstand*, to its more than 3,000 members this year. This benefit allows Section members to receive a daily (or, at their option, weekly) email that keeps them up to date on subject areas and jurisdictions that they choose. The information provided to them via email is consolidated and organized from many sources. *Newsstand*, which is key-

word searchable, can be subscribed to via RSS feed into the feed reader of the member’s choice.

For the first time in the section’s history, the Section offered its members two newsletters in one bar year, with the Spring 2011 newsletter published electronically for the first time and sent to section members in PDF format. Each newsletter contains practical articles of current interest to corporate counsel written by law firm and in-house attorneys who share their expertise on the subject matter of their articles.

We also continue our involvement with the State Bar’s pro bono initiatives, including *Texas Lawyers for Texas Veterans* and *Partnering for Pro Bono*. We awarded grants of \$26,000 to the three Texas legal aid agencies, as well as grants totaling \$4,000 to the Texas Access to Justice Commission for its internship program and the Corporate Counsel Pro Bono Award. In addition, the section’s council members and advisers collectively contributed more than \$2,000 to the Texas Access to Justice Foundation to support civil legal services to the poor.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Peter T. Gregg, Chair

The section introduced or expanded several important programs advancing the interests of its members. We introduced “From the Bench: Judicial Perspectives on Environmental/Administrative Cases,” a series of insightful, practice-oriented judicial interviews with the Texas Supreme Court and Austin Court of Appeals’ chief justices, the Travis County District Court’s presiding judge, and other notable judges and hearings examiners. The interviews, conducted by Professor Ron Beal, focus on administrative procedure and appeals in contested environmental cases, but have relevance beyond that practice area.

We also introduced the State Bar of Texas Green Star Program, which offers Texas law offices the opportunity to become accredited and recognized for their environmental and energy stewardship for meeting standards established by the ABA-EPA Law Office Climate Challenge Program.

We again awarded scholarships to the highest-ranking students in the introductory environmental law courses at each of Texas’ nine law schools and funded clerkships at several Texas agencies. We sponsored the

“Texas Environmental Superconference,” the most successful conference of its kind, and “The Changing Face of Water Rights in Texas,” an important CLE for water rights practitioners.

We also continued our quarterly publication of the *Texas Environmental Law Journal*, are preparing a new edition of *The Essentials of Texas Water Resources*, and continue to keep our members informed through daily clipping services and the section website (texenrls.org).

The section funded tree-planting projects dedicated to improving urban canopies in Texas in support of the American Bar Association Section of Environment, Energy, and Resources’ “One Million Trees” project.

FAMILY

Charlie Hodges, Chair

This year saw the development of the section’s first long-range strategic plan. Approximately 25 members of the section participated in two full days of meetings to develop our mission, vision, and values. Simply put, the mission of the Family Law Section is “to promote the highest degree of professionalism, education, fellowship and excellence in the practice of family law.” We intend to review our progress annually to make sure we are fulfilling our mission and providing the best services possible to our members.

The State Bar approved the section’s legislative package. All of our bills found legislative sponsors and our bill relating to mistaken paternity passed both the House and the Senate and was signed by Gov. Rick Perry. Our other bills, including those relating to child hearsay, spousal maintenance, and addressing fraud on the community estate have been heard in one or more committees and are making their way through the process. The section worked closely with the Texas Family Law Foundation in its legislative efforts.

We have continued to provide our members with services such as the quarterly *Section Report* and the annual *Bibliography and the Family Law Toolkit* publication. A new *Family Law Ultimate Checklist* was published this year by the section. Later this summer, we will publish our *Legislative Update* detailing the actions taken by the legislature that affect Texas family lawyers.

Our award-winning Pro Bono Program continued to train attorneys who take pro bono cases in family law, assisting legal

aid providers in Texas with much needed help in a time of budget crunches and increasing need.

GENERAL PRACTICE, SOLO & SMALL FIRM

Thelma S. Clardy, Chair

The section continued its efforts to work on behalf of solos and small firm practitioners, which make up a majority of Texas lawyers. In the past year, the section's council was actively involved in the review of proposed changes to the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct. The council continued its program involving "brown bag" sessions with law school students to educate them on practice tips, particularly as sole practitioners and small firm practitioners. The council once again co-sponsored the General Practice Institute in Waco with Baylor University. A panel of excellent speakers versed in various types of practices participated in the day-long event, which continues to be well attended. The council again hosted a CLE seminar at the State Bar's Annual Meeting in San Antonio in June.

GOVERNMENT LAWYERS

Mick McKamie, Chair

This year, the section's council, under the leadership of Award Committee Chair Leah Hayes, worked hard to describe and establish a new Section award. Nominations have been received and are being evaluated, and the first award will be given to a deserving Texas attorney this month at the Best Practices Course in Austin.

The section approved some important amendments to the section's bylaws that are designed to more accurately reflect actual practices, recognize the formal relationship with the State Bar, and address new technology issues. Most important, the section's request to change its name to "Government Law Section" will be considered by the State Bar Board of Directors later this year.

The section put on the seventh annual Best Practices Course in conjunction with Suing and Defending Governmental Entities Seminar in San Antonio. Also, the section co-sponsored two important and well-received CLE presentations at the Annual Meeting in San Antonio in June.

Section members have demonstrated increased participation in State Bar initiatives to serve the public at large, and special groups in need.

HEALTH

Bruce Howell, Chair

Last year, the Health Law Section faced the challenge of dealing with the issue of health law reform and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010. This legislation is estimated to cause more than 200,000 pages of regulations to be promulgated. To that end, the Health Law Section sponsored its fall Health Law Conference with the Texas Hospital Association and devoted this meeting entirely to issues raised by the new legislation.

In addition, the Health Law Section has continued its involvement with the State Bar *Know Your Rights* brochure and has continued its initiative for scholarships for health law students in law school, as well as maintaining its website for health law development.

HISPANIC ISSUES

John Vasquez, Chair

The section hosted its first annual CLE event on Feb. 22 at the Texas Law Center in Austin. The CLE, "Texas Hispanic Community at the Crossroads: Challenges and Opportunities for Hispanic Lawyers," was highlighted by presentations from U.S. Rep. Charlie Gonzalez of San Antonio, State Sen. Jose Rodriguez of El Paso, and State Reps. Rafael Anchia of Dallas and Jessica Farrar and Armando Walle, both of Houston. The conference also included brief remarks by State Bar President Terry Tottenham. The CLE was followed by activities sponsored by the Mexican American Bar Association of Texas and the Hispanic Bar Association of Austin.

The section created a website (texas.hispanicissuessection.com), which includes information about upcoming events and links to other websites of likely interest to members.

The section has also been following the recently created American Bar Association Commission on Hispanic Rights and Responsibilities. The section was represented at the inaugural meeting of the Commission in Chicago, Ill. The Commission has plans to meet in Texas later this year.

This summer, the section will take part in the Annual Meeting of the Hispanic National Bar Association in Dallas.

IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY

Gordon Quan, Chair

While a relatively new section, we have grown to more than 600 members in two

years. We have launched our website (texasimmigrationandnationalitylaw.com) and are developing information to be provided on a timely basis of upcoming events, as well as useful information in this rapidly evolving field. With 20 bills concerning state action on immigration matters introduced in the Texas Legislature, the section worked on a series of presentations to provide public information on these proposals. Panel discussions with leading scholars, practitioners, and legislators on both sides of the issue were planned in Austin, Houston, and San Antonio with the various law schools.

The section also proved helpful in providing legal guidance to the Texas Department of Public Safety in regard to clarifying eligibility of commercial driver's licenses, helping almost 1,000 truck drivers retain their licenses.

The section also sponsored two panels while at the 2011 Annual Meeting in San Antonio that looked at a recent Supreme Court ruling regarding immigration reunifications of a criminal plea and what immigration action the Legislature was able to pass. Additionally, the section sponsored a debate on immigration reform.

INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Michael F. Linz, Chair

Anticipating the approach of its 40th anniversary, the Individual Rights and Responsibilities Section had another outstanding year in 2010–11. As in years past, our members received the University of Texas School of Law's *Texas Journal on Civil Liberties and Civil Rights*, which publishes cutting-edge articles at the intersection of law, politics, and society as written by judges, lawyers, professors, and students from the university.

We updated our website (irrtx.com) to provide interesting and informative resources to our members and the legal community, and we streamlined and improved our financial reporting to the State Bar. At the request of the State Bar, we were fortunate in being able to provide a number of expert counsel to serve with its *Texas Lawyers for Texas Veterans* initiative and to make presentations at law schools throughout the state. Together with the LGBT Section, the section hosted the annual Bill of Rights Course and, as in years past, was able to provide outstanding presentations by leading experts in

constitutional and civil liberties law and practice.

At this year's Annual Meeting in San Antonio in June, the section, along with the Appellate Section, provided a full morning of excellent CLE in the areas of constitutional, appellate, and individual rights law.

INSURANCE

Lee H. Shidlofsky, Chair

The Insurance Law Section enjoyed another active year. Education continues to be an important goal for the section. The section co-sponsored several successful CLE programs. In addition, the section continues to publish the *Journal of Texas Insurance Law* as well as a weekly "Right Off the Press" email. The Section's *List Serve* also continues to be an active sounding board and forum for debate on hot topics and unresolved issues. The section also is exploring new mediums to bring timely information to its members. The section already has done a number of telephone seminars and looks forward to doing webinars and podcasts as well.

The section's council had a special meeting in December to discuss the needs of the section and goals for the future. The discussion quickly turned to technology and the need to ensure that our membership receives important information in a timely manner and in an appropriate format. Some of the items discussed already have been implemented. For example, we have updated our website (txins.org) and are exploring additional ways to make our website more useful to our members. The council also appointed a Technology Committee to explore different ways to keep current, such as a Facebook page, Twitter posts, and a Section app for iPhone and Android users.

A special thanks to all of the council members for their dedication and hard work and to all the section members who provided ideas, input, and feedback.

JUDICIAL

Steve Smith, Chair

The Judicial Section has had both a rewarding and challenging year. As this bar year began, the Section was involved in dealing with Ethics Opinion 484 and its effect on judges (and other elected officeholders as well). Thanks to the leadership of Past Chair David Garcia and others who testified at Ethics Commission hear-

ings, the commission withdrew its opinion. Legislative action is underway to clarify a judge's ability to receive reimbursement for travel, lodging, and meals for attending judicial education and similar judicial activities.

At its Annual Meeting in Corpus Christi, the section was honored to present its inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award to retired Chief Justice Jack Pope for his service to the state. Judge Pope was very moved by the award and it was special for him to receive it in the community where his exemplary judicial career began.

The Judicial Compensation Commission's report and recommendations were very supportive of the judiciary, but this has been a challenging legislative session. The section's legislative committees provided yeoman work in monitoring bills and providing resource testimony when requested. Through their work, and with the assistance of the State Bar's Governmental Relations Director KaLyn Laney and Hank Mitchell of the Alliance for Judicial Funding, we have been able to make sure that any legislation affecting the judiciary was not harmful.

We look forward to seeing you at the section's Annual Meeting in Dallas on Sept. 18–21. Visit us at judicialsection.com.

JUVENILE

Nydia D. Thomas, Chair

The Juvenile Law Section continued its proud tradition of providing quality CLE during the 24th annual Robert O. Dawson Juvenile Law Institute held in Corpus Christi in February. The conference marks nearly a quarter century of enhancing the knowledge and professionalism of juvenile justice legal practitioners in Texas. Despite a tough economy, 420 conference participants explored emerging issues in juvenile law, including human trafficking, social media and networking, and DNA forensic evidence. In addition, the conference's silent auction garnered nearly \$8,300 to help sustain the section's commitment to providing college scholarships and financial support to several deserving Texas Youth Commission students. Next year's Robert O. Dawson Juvenile Law Institute will be held Feb. 27–29, 2012, in San Antonio.

The section also collaborated with Dallas-based Texas Lawyers for Children, Inc. (TLC) in the launch of a new online resource for TLC attorney members to utilize communication tools such as an email

network, an online discussion board, and document vault. This service will offer a private, secure way for attorneys to discuss practice tips and share expertise about juvenile delinquency cases.

During the 82nd Legislative Session, practitioners around the state learned of the infrastructure changes ahead for the juvenile justice system. The section hopes to continue to be at the forefront in providing timely, accurate, and useful information pertaining to the ever-changing practice of juvenile law. We invite you to learn more about the Section on our redesigned website (juvenilelaw.org).

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

Valorie Glass, Chair

The Labor and Employment Law Section's goals this year were to continue producing quality CLE programs and case law updates for our members, expand our jury charge database, and fund pro bono efforts to help the broader community address employment issues. With the help of many people, we were able to accomplish these goals.

The section's premier CLE event was its 21st annual Employment Law Update held in San Antonio on Sept. 18–19, 2010, highlighting the most current developments in the labor and employment arena. The section was also heavily involved in planning and providing speakers for the State Bar Advanced Labor and Employment Law Course held in Austin in January.

We continue to publish the *Labor and Employment Law Newsletter*, under the direction of South Texas College of Law Professor Richard Carlson, and this year we went paperless; the newsletter can be found at laborlaw.org. By going paperless, funds were released for pro bono initiatives. The section contributed by funding grants to nonprofit organizations for employment-related issues in the amount of \$12,500 and awarded four \$5,000 summer internships for law school students to provide employment law assistance to nonprofit organizations.

The section's jury charge database grew with dozens of jury charges now available on our website for cases running the gamut from employment discrimination to employment tort and contract claims. The council and the section are to be commended for their efforts to promote awareness of labor and employment legal issues.

LGBT*Eduardo Juarez, Chair*

The section's membership voted unanimously to change the section's name to "LGBT Law" at the 2010 Annual Meeting, at which the Judge Norman W. Black Award was presented posthumously to U.S. District Judge Jerry Buchmeyer in commemoration of his 1982 ruling in *Baker v. Wade* advancing LGBT civil rights. The section's name change was followed with robust marketing: the adoption of a logo, which was used to redesign the section's website (lgbtlawtx.com) and design lapel pins, a standing banner, and a tablecloth. The State Bar Board of Directors adopted, as part of the Bar's 2011 legislative package, the section's proposal to repeal Penal Code §21.06 (the offense of homosexual conduct) held unconstitutional by *Lawrence v. Texas* in 2003. Houston State Reps. Jessica Farrar and Garnet F. Coleman introduced identical bills mirroring the section's proposal, and the bills received a hearing before the House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee. Former Chair Charles Spain and current Chair Eduardo Juarez testified in favor of the bills.

In 2010, the State Bar Insurance Trust began to "make domestic partner benefits available" for Bar members. This was the result of the section's efforts since 2003, when the section urged the trust to expand benefits as such by formal resolution.

The council planned a remarkable CLE for this year's Annual Meeting in San Antonio in June, with the first out lesbian EEOC commissioner and nationally recognized legal scholar, Chai Feldblum, as a keynote speaker.

Finally, the section joined Facebook: facebook.com/LGBTLawTx.

LITIGATION*Walker C. Friedman, Chair*

As part of the Litigation Section's mission to promote professional excellence through serving and educating our members, and through working for equal justice in our adversarial system, the Section's CLE activities continue to improve. The Litigation Update seminar was held in San Antonio in January, where Judge Royal Furgeson received the Luke Soules Award. In what has become an annual affair, the section sponsored and co-sponsored speakers for this year's Annual Meeting in San Antonio: Edmund Morris, H.W. Brands, Douglas Brinkley, and a number of Texas legal legends.

The Advocate, the section's quarterly periodical, continues under Professor Lonny Hoffman's superb leadership. The section also publishes the quarterly online *News for the Bar* with essays, interviews, news, and tips. This year, the section created a Facebook page (facebook.com/LitigationSection). During the legislative session, the section kept members informed through "LS Snap" emails, which included news about legislation affecting the courts, court administration, and the litigation process.

The section has continued its pro bono efforts, funding six summer legal internships and contributing grants totaling \$26,000 to several worthy organizations.

The section presented ethics programs at three different Texas law schools this year and mentoring programs at eight. Four video interviews of legendary Texas trial lawyers are now on our website (litigationsection.com) as part of the section's program to preserve the wisdom of many great attorneys; more interviews are to come.

Finally, the section updated its finance policy and bylaws this year.

MILITARY*Kay M. Perry, Chair*

The section's annual meeting was held in June 2010, at which time the section voted to amend our bylaws, elected officers, and presented the Colonel Ted E. Bailey, Jr. Award for an Outstanding Reserve Component Judge Advocate in Texas and the Colonel Tom Krauska Award for an Outstanding Active Duty Judge Advocate Assigned in Texas.

Members of our section worked closely with the Supreme Court of Texas as they adopted Rule XXII, which allows military attorneys who are not licensed in Texas to represent low-income military members in Texas courts for civil legal matters.

The Military Law Section met in New Braunfels in October for our fall meeting and CLE, at which time we heard from distinguished speakers including South Texas College of Law Dean Donald J. Guter, U.S. Navy, RAdm (Ret.). At that meeting, we also heard a presentation on the Houston Veterans Court program, which is now being implemented in several cities throughout Texas.

In March, the section was one of the sponsors of the St. Mary's University School of Law Military Law Association's 5K/10K walk/run to raise money for Fisher

Houses in San Antonio, which are homes where family members of wounded service members can reside for free while their loved one undergoes treatment.

The section met for its spring meeting/CLE in Galveston in April, where Richard "Racehorse" Haynes spoke with us about his trial and military experiences.

MUNICIPAL JUDGES*Judge Aaron S. Kaufman, Chair*

During the last year, the Municipal Judges Section has worked on increasing member participation and on elevating the stature of the municipal court judiciary. The section has co-sponsored receptions at several Texas Municipal Court Education Center regional seminars that many of our attorney municipal judges attend in fulfillment of the annual judicial educational requirements.

The Municipal Judges Section is happy to report that we have an active and effective Legislative Committee, led by Judge Celeste Villarreal, that monitored and studied legislation during the 82nd legislative session that could affect municipal courts or municipal judges in Texas. The section created a Facebook page that contains information on section committees, discussion pages, and links to the pages of the State Bar of Texas and the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center. The page — titled Municipal Judges Section of the State Bar of Texas — can be accessed at texasmunicipaljudges.com. With wider acceptance, the Facebook page can become a valuable resource to municipal court judges by increasing communication with our members and sharing proper information with our members and the public.

The section waives dues for first-year members; regular member dues are \$15.

OIL, GAS, AND ENERGY RESOURCES*Fabéné J. Welch, Chair*

The section focused on a complete renovation of its website, oilgas.org, which now provides a fully searchable database of all section reports dating from 1963, all materials from section-sponsored CLE programs, other oil and gas treatises, the Texas Title Standards, and the Pattern Jury Charges. The website also features information relating to all section activities and general information of interest to those involved in the oil and gas business.

The section also focused on improving the quarterly *Section Report*, which is now being sent to members in print and electronic formats. The electronic version is fully searchable and, through an agreement with Casemaker, each cited case is “hot-linked” directly to the case text.

Our summer internship program was expanded to opportunities for three students, one at the Texas Railroad Commission, one at the General Land Office, and one at the Public Utilities Commission. The section has continued its scholarship program offering \$1,000 to the highest-grade recipient in an introductory oil and gas course at each of the Texas law schools.

The oldest of the State Bar Sections, the Oil, Gas, and Energy Resources Law Section has begun planning for a 75th anniversary celebration to occur in 2013. The celebration will include a dinner event designed as a fundraiser for our scholarship program. Additionally, in association with our 75th anniversary, we have undertaken several historical projects designed to tell the stories of past section chairs and council members through website vignettes and expanded historical perspectives that may become a publication project.

PARALEGAL DIVISION

Debbie Oaks Guerra, President

This year, the Paralegal Division continued to reach out to paralegals across the state to provide educational and networking opportunities.

The 2010 Texas Advanced Paralegal Seminar was held in Austin from Sept. 29–Oct. 1. Nearly 300 attended and were able to obtain 14 hours of CLE through a five-track structure. In addition, for the first time, we offered several of the topics streamed live for those who were unable to attend. TAPS 2011 — Pearls of Wisdom will be in Fort Worth on Oct. 5–7. The division will celebrate its 30th anniversary at the CLE event.

The fourth edition of *The Paralegal Handbook*, published by West Publishing, was released late last year and has also been released in electronic format for the Kindle.

Our “Profiling the Paralegal Profession” video continues to be available on our website, txpd.org. Those who view the video are able to receive 0.5 hours of MCLE credit. The video, produced by El Paso Community College, features several past presidents of the division discussing certification, benefits of the paralegal standards, and case law, and how parale-

gals can be utilized in various areas of law.

The Paralegal Division recently finished work with the State Bar Research & Analysis Department compiling an updated Salary Survey. Close to 1,500 paralegals from across the state participated in the survey. The results may be accessed on the section’s website by clicking on “About PD” and “2010 Salary Survey Results.”

POVERTY

Roger L. Gette, Chair

The Poverty Law Section is one of the State Bar’s newest sections. With a membership of more than 450, our section’s members consist of attorneys, law professors, students, and others who either practice in or have an active interest in poverty law. The section offers several no-charge benefits to members, including our popular “First Friday CLE,” a one-hour teleconference presentation on current topics by experts in their areas. Our website (povertylawsection.com) highlights the monthly CLE offering, along with registration information. Our newsletter, *The Reporter*, also can be accessed at our website. Another valuable benefit of membership is the *Poverty Law Handbook*, a comprehensive how-to guide written by Texas poverty law experts on areas including real property law, landlord/tenant issues, public benefits, and unfair debt collection. With a yearly membership fee of \$15, the section offers these and other great benefits to its members.

In 2011, we are helping to develop a Poverty Law Primer, which will be useful to both pro bono attorneys and new attorneys who may be new to the practice of poverty law. The section also is working with the State Bar to develop legal specialization in poverty law. The section’s annual meeting, held in April, not only offers an opportunity for members to interact with one another, but allows the section to recognize individuals who exemplify the practice of poverty law through its Noble and Impact awards.

PUBLIC UTILITY

Patrick J. Sullivan, Chair

The Public Utility Law Section is among the smallest sections of the State Bar and is dedicated to the continuing education of attorneys practicing utility regulatory and transactional law. The section’s primary event of the year is its

annual section meeting and seminar, which will take place on Aug. 12 at the AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center in Austin. This year, the major state utility regulatory agencies — the Public Utility Commission of Texas, the Office of Public Utility Counsel, the Railroad Commission of Texas, and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, along with the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, which controls the electric power grid for approximately 85 percent of Texas customers — have been subject to sunset review by the Texas Legislature. There have been proposals to combine some or all of the utility regulatory functions into fewer agencies. Additionally, a major power shortage in February led to a review of corrective actions that should be implemented in the ERCOT market. These matters will be a major focus of this year’s meeting. Invited speakers include each of the Public Utility Counsel of Texas commissioners, who will be joined by some of the best utility lawyers from around the state.

Check out the section’s website (texaspublicutilitylaw.org) to find links to state and federal regulatory agencies and learn more about this year’s seminar.

REAL ESTATE, PROBATE & TRUST

David A. Weatherbie, Chair

The Real Estate, Probate & Trust Law Section’s most visible accomplishment this year is the complete redesign and reconfiguration of our website (reptl.org) and the *REPTL Reporter*. *The Reporter* is now fully integrated with the website.

In this legislative year, REPTL has been active in promoting legislation from both its Real Estate and its Probate and Trust divisions. As of this writing, the REPTL-sponsored Texas Assignment of Rents act, drafted by a REPTL committee, has been passed by the Senate and awaits passage by the House. The legislative package of REPTL’s Probate and Trust division is proceeding successfully as well.

This year, REPTL has completed the rules and other preparations for its law school writing contest, which will offer cash awards for the best papers on topics related to real estate, probate, and trust law. Information about the contest is available on the website.

REPTL has also redoubled its efforts for public service and pro bono, making a significant contribution to Texas C-Bar and

other contributions to projects and sponsorships that serve the needs of REPTL members and the public. REPTL has also made a commitment for more significant public service and pro bono projects, grants, and assistance in the future.

SCHOOL

Joy Baskin, Chair

Last summer, the School Law Section held its annual retreat and CLE program at the Hyatt Hill Country Resort in San Antonio. Attendees enjoyed several hours of high-quality legal education on school-related topics, including employment, litigation, grading policies, and technology, as well as an overview of charter school governance and a guest speaker on family law issues. Planning is well underway for the 2011 summer retreat to be held at the Hyatt Lost Pines Resort in Bastrop. This year's topics will include criminal law; Section 1983; employment, litigation, and legislative updates; advertising; schools in pop culture; ethical issues in communicating with children; and representing public school clients during times of economic crisis. This year is the 25th anniversary of the School Law Retreat, and the section will celebrate with a video commemorating the establishment of the retreat.

The section's newsletter will be published this spring, under the leadership of editors Leticia McGowan and Allan Graves. In addition, we are working with the State Bar to make improvements to our section website (schoolawsection.org).

We look forward to a special school-law themed *Texas Bar Journal* later in 2011.

Finally, as chair of the section, I serve on the Education Committee of the Supreme Court of Texas Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families. I am honored to share in the work of this cross-disciplinary effort to improve educational outcomes for children and youth in foster care.

TAXATION

Patrick L. O'Daniel, Chair

The Taxation Section continues to run its award-winning pro bono program for pro se litigants at the U.S. Tax Court, which covers all tax court calendar calls in Texas. The section's Committee on Government Submissions prepared and submitted several significant commentaries regarding proposed regulations or rules at both the federal and state levels and also had its members testify twice on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., with respect to the submissions. The section continued to add to and refine its CLE webcast library, available on the section's website (textaxsection.org). Currently, the library contains more than 55 webcasts with more than 40 CLE hours available (including more than seven ethics-credit hours). The section continued several longstanding and highly acclaimed live CLE events, including the Texas Federal Tax Institute, its meeting with the Comptroller's Office, the Advanced Tax Law course, the International Tax Symposium, and the Property Tax Conference.

The section also offered a program of CLE at the State Bar's annual meeting, which culminated in a lunch interview with former Internal Revenue Service Commissioner Larry Gibbs as part of the highly acclaimed Texas Tax Legends program led by Bill Elliott.

The section's electronically published *The Texas Tax Lawyer* continues to be technologically improved and well received.

Finally, the section selected Stanley M. Johanson, James A. Elkins Centennial Chair in Law and University Distinguished Teaching Professor of the University of Texas School of Law, as the 2011 recipient of the Outstanding Texas Tax Lawyer Award.

WOMEN AND THE LAW

Carol Jendrzey, Chair

Last year, the section's focus was to become more active in the community

and with local bar groups. For example, we highlighted the WINGS program in our newsletter. We held multidisciplinary programs on the health care reform bill with the co-sponsorship of groups such as the University of Texas Health Science Center (UTHSC) in San Antonio and Harlingen, UTHSC's Council for Excellence in Women's Health, the Bexar County Women's Bar Association, and the Hidalgo County Bar Association. We attended the new attorney inductions and reached out to numerous women bar associations. We also donated \$2,500 to the State Bar's access to justice program.

At this year's Annual Meeting in San Antonio, we presented "Perspectives on the Changing Roles of Women and Men in the Workplace and the Family." Deborah Fowler, deputy director of Texas Appleseed, received the section's Ma'at Justice Award. Mary Korby, a partner in Weil, Gotshal & Manges, also received the Sarah T. Hughes Award. We also co-hosted a reception and wine tasting — "On Banc on Wines in Texas" — with the Bexar County Women's Bar Association and Texas Women Lawyers. Texas Supreme Court Justice Debra Lehrmann, 14th Court of Appeals Justice Gina Benavides, and 4th Court of Appeals Justice Rebecca Simmons were guest speakers.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Barbara Lombrano-Williamson, Chair

The Workers' Compensation Section added a Hearings Officer Committee chair to our Council, which recognizes that our section members who are hearings officers have unique challenges apart from our regular membership. We have revamped our newsletter and are once again on schedule to produce three issues a year. We have been able to keep in contact with our members and keep them up-to-date on items by using our list serve and sending out blast emails. We are in the final stages of developing a webpage.

The section once again co-sponsored the State Bar's 2010 Advanced Workers' Compensation Seminar. In connection with the seminar, the second annual charity golf tournament was held. Money was raised for five charities that have a direct connection to our section members. Due to the success of the charity golf tournament, another one will be held in connection with the 2011 Advanced Workers' Compensation Seminar. ☘



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