



State Bar Board Meets in Galveston

On Sept. 25, the State Bar Board of Directors met in Galveston for its quarterly meeting. The following are among the meeting's highlights:

- **Professional Liability Insurance Disclosure** — “Our goal is to inform and to listen,” State Bar President Roland Johnson said as he laid the groundwork for the board’s anticipated vote in January 2010 to recommend to the Supreme Court of Texas whether or not lawyers should be required to disclose to clients whether they carry professional liability insurance. The Court has asked the Board to make a recommendation. Johnson presented a detailed plan to educate and solicit feedback from State Bar members and the public. The plan includes public hearings around the state, letters from State Bar directors to the lawyers in their districts, and multiple ways to provide input, such as posting comments to the State Bar blog or sending emails to statebarpresident@texasbar.com. Johnson urged directors to attend the public hearings in their area and to volunteer to discuss the issue and answer questions at local bar association or section meetings. A clearinghouse has been set up at www.texasbar.com/plidisclosure that includes the letter from the Court to the board of directors, the reports of a State Bar task force and Supreme Court committee that studied the issue, and a list of hearing dates and locations.
- **Changes to MCLE Regulations and Standards** — David Smith and D. Hull Youngblood offered a preview of the MCLE Committee’s proposed changes to the MCLE Regulations and Accreditation Standards for CLE activities. The changes would eliminate outdated definitions and the distinction between “group participatory” and “interactive participatory” CLE; increase options for accreditation of electronically delivered CLE (including podcasts, DVDs, and CDs); allow for flexibility in defining the approved delivery methods as technology changes; and decrease allowable self-study from 5 to 3 hours per year because the options for accredited CLE will increase and cover many of the formats previously approved only for self-study credit. The changes to the MCLE Regulations would take effect on June 1, 2010, with the exception of Section 3.1, which requires attorneys to complete at least 12 accredited CLE hours. The effective date for Section 3.1 would be June 1, 2011. This would give all attorneys the same opportunities for completing CLE under the new regulations. The board is expected to consider the proposed changes during its January 2010 meeting.



State Bar President Roland Johnson (center) presented resolutions honoring Galveston lawyers Jeffrey H. Kilgore (left) and Duana Boswell-Loechel for their service to the community and legal profession following Hurricane Ike. Kilgore organized efforts on the island as president of the Galveston County Bar Association. Boswell-Loechel volunteered at the FEMA Disaster Recovery Center.

- **New Disciplinary Rules** — Texas Supreme Court Justice Phil Johnson, the Court’s liaison to the State Bar, reported that the Court was preparing to issue an order proposing changes to the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct (see p. 844) and would allow 60 days for comment. Johnson also responded to a question about whether the Court had made up its mind on PLI disclosure. Johnson assured that the Court has not made a decision. “We want to hear the recommendation of the board,” he said.
- **Client Security Fund** — Janna Clarke reported on the corpus of the Client Security Fund. In recent years, the board has bolstered the fund, which provides financial relief to clients who have lost money or property as a result of an attorney’s dishonest conduct.
- **Employee of the Quarter** — State Bar Executive Director Michelle Hunter presented the employee of the quarter award to Julia Cortez, office manager for Texas Lawyers Care, the State Bar’s pro bono department.
- **Presidential Initiatives** — Roland Johnson updated the board on *Transition to Practice*, the mentoring initiative that local bar associations, in-house counsel, or law firms can adapt for the needs of their young lawyers; *After The Bar Exam* (see p. 874), the web-based education resource for law graduates who are awaiting their bar exam results; and the second installment of Leadership SBOT, the State Bar’s leadership academy, which met Oct. 1–3 in College Station. ❖