



# EQUAL TIMES

## BEXAR COUNTY WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION

### PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

I hope your November is off to a great start! I've been reflecting on the past year as we quickly approach December and the end of another year for the Bexar County Women's Bar. Last month's Autumn Affair was a wonderful event and a highlight of our year so far. It was a special evening. I would once again like to thank Gaylia Brunson, Suzanne Oliva, and the entire Autumn Affair Committee for pulling out all the stops in planning and executing our signature event.



Laura C. Mason

In reflecting on this past year, I thought about the terrific members we have and how much fun it has been to work together in our organization. I recently saw a number of our members at a Girls Inc. luncheon I attended. Hope Andrade, Texas Secretary of State, was the honored guest and featured speaker at the luncheon. She spoke a lot about role models and mentorship, something that is close to my heart and close to the heart of our own organization.

A number of things struck me during that luncheon, including some of the shocking statistics for young girls in our own community. For example, San Antonio has one of the highest teen birth rates in the nation. Too many young girls in San Antonio and elsewhere have a low self-image reinforced by the images they see around them and in the media. I wondered about these girls, the ones who are the "statistics," and wondered what types of role models they had (good or bad), what kinds of dreams they had for their own lives, and whether they had anyone who expressed belief in and support of them.

In thinking about girls and role models, I couldn't help but think about my own niece (age 6, about to turn 7 and angling for black boots from her aunt for her birthday). I hope she will look to the positive images that abound, and not be swayed by the negative images that she will also surely see.

There are many positive images and role models in our community for young girls and women. Looking around at that luncheon and around at the events of the Bexar County Women's Bar, it is wonderful to see the high number of successful and positive women in our own community – women attorneys and women in other professions. I'm pleased our organization emphasizes mentorship and plans a mentor/mentee program for our members and students at St. Mary's, as well as our annual Law Day Luncheon with Fox Tech. (con'd on p. 4)

### NOVEMBER 2011

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## Autumn Affair 2011 Was a Success!

By Suzanne Oliva & Gaylia Brunson

Thank you, thank you, thank you! To everyone who helped make the Autumn Affair 2011 another wonderful success, we are sincerely grateful for all your hard work! Whether you served on a committee, sponsored the event, solicited raffle or auction items, modeled in the Julian Gold fashion show, escorted our beautiful models, volunteered at the event, or simply came out to support the BCWBF and the Center for Family Relations, we couldn't have done it without you!

We enjoyed near-perfect weather in the gorgeous setting of the Witte Prassel Courtyard. The food was delicious and the "New York Fashion Week" fashion show was so much fun! Our Belva Lockwood award recipients, Carol Jendrzej and Priscilla Camacho, shared their moving stories and provided inspiration to us all. Meg Barron, Executive Director of the Center for Family Relations, reminded us that our proceeds are going to a worthy organization. A good time was had by all, as we honored our female judiciary and auctioned and raffled off amazing items and packages.

A special thanks to all our sponsors and donors, with special recognition to our Spotlight Sponsors: Cox Smith, Gardner Law, Schmoyer Reinhard LLP, and Valeo Energy Foundation.

We also want to thank our Runway Sponsors: Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP, Board of Directors, Center for Family Relations, Bracewell & Giuliani LLP, Haynes and Boone, LLP, Jackson Walker, L.L.P., Jendrzej Family, KCI, The Lynd Company, The Law Offices of Loree, Hernandez & Lipscomb, Law Office of Maurleen W. Cobb, NuStar Energy L.P., Plunkett & Gibson, Inc., Pulman, Cappuccio, Pullen & Benson, LLP, SABA Family Law Section, San Antonio Young Lawyers Foundation, State Bar of Texas, St. Mary's University School of Law Office of the Dean/Alumni Relations/Law Alumni Association, and Strasburger Price Oppenheimer Blend.

Please remember to attend the holiday luncheon on December 9th at the Contessa Suites Hotel where we will present the Center for Family Relations with the proceeds from the event!



Autumn Affair Co-Chairs  
Gaylia Brunson  
& Suzanne Oliva



Belva Lockwood Award Winners  
Priscilla Camacho & Carol Jendrzej



BCWBF Board Members Laura Mason, Gaylia Brunson & Danielle Hargrove toured the Center for Family Relations

## Autumn Affair 2011 Photos



Board Member & Committee Chair Tiffanie Clausewitz,  
Board President Laura Mason &  
Past President & Committee Chair Christine Reinhard



Board Member & Treasurer Natalie Hall &  
Board Member & Committee Chair Tiffanie Clausewitz



Director Emma Cano,  
Young Belva Lockwood Awardee Priscilla Camacho &  
Past-President & Committee Member Lisa Barkley

## October Luncheon Recap

By Lisa P. Alcantar

As is fast becoming a tradition, the Honorable Scott Brister, former Texas Supreme Court Justice, was our October Luncheon speaker. He provided in depth and humorous look at the cases decided by the Texas Supreme Court during the last judicial year. If you missed him this year, make sure to look for his appearance next year. It's a luncheon not to miss!

## November Luncheon Announcement

By Lisa P. Alcantar

Please join us on Tuesday, November 1st at Club Giraud, as we welcome our own Pam Huff. Pam, a shareholder at Cox Smith, will discuss "Taking Your Brand Beyond U.S. Borders." Her talk will include comments on evaluating global interests and the dangers of TM expansion, creating a branding strategy, and related issues. Pam will share some amazing stories about what her clients have faced in other countries. CLE credit is available. Please RSVP by Friday, October 28, through the events website or to [lalcantar@prdg.com](mailto:lalcantar@prdg.com) or [mgiltner@prdg.com](mailto:mgiltner@prdg.com).



Tiffanie Clausewitz

## Our Website Has a New Look!

By Tiffanie S. Clausewitz

Have you visited [www.bexarcountywomensbar.org](http://www.bexarcountywomensbar.org) lately? Our site has had a bit of a makeover, and we're proud of how it looks! As the "face" of BCWB to the world, we are doing our best to update and expand our website to include additional information, news, calendar events, social networking capabilities, and more. If you are interested in volunteering a small amount of your time to help with this project (no web experience necessary!), please contact Tiffanie Clausewitz at [tclausewitz@pulmanlaw.com](mailto:tclausewitz@pulmanlaw.com).



## President's Column (con'd from p. 1)

I encourage you to participate in our mentorship programs and other community programs. We have some truly remarkable members who can serve, and already do, serve as outstanding role models and examples. I'm proud to work with all of you, and look forward to the continued work and success of our organization to positively impact women.



The Women's Law Association Invites You To Join Us At The:

The Annual Charity Silent Auction  
Benefitting  
Family Violence Prevention Services, Inc.

When: November 3, 2011

Time: 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Where: Alumni Room

Sarita Kenedy East Law Library

St. Mary's University School of Law

Refreshments will be provided.







Beverly Smith



## Justice Sandee Bryan Marion

By Beverly Smith

OK. OK. The government has started beta-cloning Justices, she has a twin, or maybe she's just that dynamic and mega-active in the San Antonio community! Let's call them "Justice SBM sightings" for this article.



This month the spotlight had a hard time keeping up with Justice Marion. Hold onto your seat and I will give you a flash version of our very own Justice Sandee Bryan Marion, "behind the black robe!" Here we go ...

*BS: Justice SBM sighting at Catholic Charities 8th Annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon ...*

*SBM: Monica Bonilla invited me to speak at the event. Because I served as a Bexar County Probate Judge from 1992 to January 2002, I was honored to recognize the volunteers for the Guardianship Services. These volunteers are true heroes for all the care they provide to the elderly in this community.*

*BS: Justice SBM sighting at the Community Justice Program ...*

*SBM: Judge Larry Noll and I serve as Co-Chairs of the CJP and we have pro bono clinics two or three times each month. The Community Justice Program is a hugely successful program because of all the lawyers who step up and volunteer to provide free legal services to indigent clients who desperately need help.*

*CJP has expanded. In addition to the divorce clinics, CJP now handles the Wills Clinic, the Veteran's Clinic and the Special Education clinic. CJP offers many opportunities for lawyers to serve our community.*

*BS: Justice SBM sighting at the Autumn Affair ...*

*SBM: I love the Bexar County Women's Bar Association's Autumn Affair. It is always a fun event with a great cause—donating thousands of dollars to deserving charities. This year, I attended with my daughter, a third year law student at St. Mary's Law School. We especially enjoyed watching the judges model the fabulous clothes from Julian Gold.*

*BS: Justice SBM sighting at the SAYLA Judicial Reception ...*

*SBM: The young lawyers in our community are inspiring. I frankly don't know how they do all they do! In addition to starting their legal careers, they always donate their time, talent and money to worthwhile causes in San Antonio.*

*BS: What about books, do you have a favorite book?*

*SBM: I recently read *The Help* after my daughter recommended it. She said "you will love it." She was right.*

*BS: What about favorite TV shows?*

*SBM: You would think I get enough law through my work, but I like most TV shows dealing with the law. Last year I got hooked on a new one called *Harry's Law*. Kathy Bates, who plays the lead character, recently said in an interview that she is 62 years old and loves playing the role of a great lawyer. (con'd on next page)*

## Justice Sandee Bryan Marion (con'd)

*BS: What about a Life Lesson you can share with us?*

SBM: Find the area of law you enjoy because practicing law is stressful.

*BS: How about giving us all a helpful tip based on what you see from the bench.*

SBM: Prepare, Prepare, Prepare. You must take the time to prepare for each and every case you handle. Trying to “wing it” will eventually catch up with you. If you prepare, not only will you be representing your client well, but you also will be developing a good reputation. And, as we all know, our reputation is everything. Also, be respectful of opposing counsel and the court. You can be an excellent advocate without being rude.

*BS: What is one of your pet peeves?*

SBM: “Bad Manners”

*BS: What is one thing that you really enjoy?*

SBM: My husband, Homero Garza, and I love trying new restaurants. However, every Friday night you will find us at same restaurant enjoying our favorite Mexican food. Homero and I married 17 years ago and together we have two lovely daughters. Nicole is a 5th grade teacher in the East Central School District and Natalee is a law student at St. Mary’s. Last year I walked half the Rock ‘n Roll marathon and I am training to do it again this year.

*BS: Justice SBM sighting at an elementary school?*

SBM: Oh yes, one of my favorite programs is Rotary. I have been a member for almost 20 years. It’s motto is “Service Above Self.” Through Rotary, I am volunteering this year with SA Reads, a San Antonio Youth Literacy Program. Every week, I spend one hour reading to two second graders at a downtown elementary school. It is gratifying to see them improve their reading skills by such a simple act.

*BS: As you can see from the “SBM sightings,” this woman is a mover and a shaker in San Antonio. The theme I picked up from Justice Marion’s selfless community support is that “service” is not work if you love what you are doing. It was such an honor to interview Justice Marion because in all the accounts of the projects and events that she Chairs or participates in, she partakes with a warm spirited passion for giving. Justice Sandee Bryan Marion is simply Amazing!*

To learn more about Justice Sandee Bryan Marion go online to: [http://www.4thcoa.courts.state.tx.us/court/justice\\_smarion.asp](http://www.4thcoa.courts.state.tx.us/court/justice_smarion.asp).



Girls in San Antonio deserve every opportunity to be inspired, to have fun and to meet terrific collegiate role models.

San Antonio Sports asks you and other women community leaders to help accomplish just that by sending a girl or a team of 10 girls to the NCAA Division I Women’s Volleyball Championship on December 15 and 17 in the Alamodome. The nation’s top four collegiate teams will vie for the national title right here in the Alamo City. Our girls should have the chance to see these amazing student-athletes in person. By underwriting one ticket for \$33 or 10 tickets for \$333, you can make that a reality. San Antonio Sports will identify the girls through its many partnerships with local schools and nonprofit organizations from underserved neighborhoods. All you have to do is make the opportunity possible. Please donate using the attached donor form or donate online at: <http://www.sanantioniosports.org/sendagirl.html>. Thank you in advance for your generosity! If you have questions, please contact Ross Davis at [rdavis@sanantioniosports.org](mailto:rdavis@sanantioniosports.org).



Emma Cano

## Cast Your Vote! Election Time for the Bexar County Women’s Bar

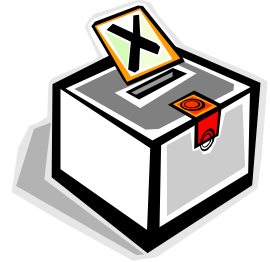
By Emma Cano

It is time for the Bexar County Women’s Bar to elect its Officers and Directors for the 2012 year. Official ballots will be mailed next week to every current attorney member with voting instructions. Ballots must be received by 5 p.m. Friday, December 2, 2011, to be included in the tally. The slate of Officers is as follows:

President-Elect:	Suzanne Oliva
Vice President:	Natalie Hall
Treasurer:	Marissa Helm
Treasurer-Elect:	Danielle Hargrove
Secretary:	Tiffanie Clausewitz

There are five vacancies on the Board of Directors. The candidates are:

- Lisa Alcantar
- Michelle Bartley
- Connie Basel
- Judge Renee McElhaney
- Katherine Noll (formerly Patton)
- Hella Scheuerman
- Brittany Wild



We have a wonderful slate of candidates – please remember to vote! If you have any questions, please contact Emma Cano, Nominating Committee Chair at 210-978-7405 or via e-mail at [emma.cano@haynesboone.com](mailto:emma.cano@haynesboone.com).

## STATE BAR OF TEXAS

October 26, 2011

### Interested in serving on a State Bar of Texas Committee?

Committee appointment applications for the 2012-2013 Bar year are being accepted for consideration by President-elect Buck Files. To express interest in serving on a committee, please visit the [Committees website](#) to fill out the online form by December 5, 2011.

Committees are established by the board of directors and appointed by the president-elect to consider matters of interest to the Bar membership, update professional materials, recommend changes to policies and procedures, and study legal issues affecting the legal profession and the public.

Committee appointment terms commence after the annual meeting in June of each year. Appointment terms are generally for three years, and no member may serve on more than one committee at a time.

Questions about the committee appointment process? Contact Committees at (800) 204-2222, ext. 1503, or [Committees@TexasBar.com](mailto:Committees@TexasBar.com).



Victoria Marie S. Bongat  
President, Women's Law  
Association

## Women's Law Association Update

By Victoria Marie S. Bongat

On October 21, the Women's Law Association (WLA) held its Wine & Wit social at the home of Vice President Jenny Zarka. Members enjoyed different wines, appetizers, conversation, and activities designed to allow members to become more familiar with each other in a relaxed and beautiful setting. After playing a game in which members had to match current or former WLA officers with a unique fact about themselves, the 1L Senators were announced for the class sections. The evening's last events were karaoke, a game of one-up one-down, and charades.

The second general meeting of the year took place on Monday, October 26, 2011. Members were encouraged to wear pink in recognition of breast cancer awareness month, as well as domestic violence awareness month which is observed with the color purple. Guest speaker Meera Ballal (pictured below in the orange dress), executive director of the Family Justice Center, spoke about her path and the process of going to law school and getting to where she is today. Ballal talked about the Family Justice Center and shared stories of her experience teaching English in a village near the Carpathian Mountains, as well as explaining the circumstances behind her application to law school. She admitted that she hated every minute of law school, and said she would have loved to push a button to skip past it. After her first year, a professor advised her to apply for a public interest scholarship that would take her away from campus and remind her why she wanted to go to law school. She spent that summer in Washington, D.C. and returned to complete law school with renewed purpose.



Although Ballal offered great candor and insight throughout her talk, some memorable bits of wisdom included: pay attention to patterns; regularly check happiness meters, knowing that there will be times are unhappy but expected (such as when preparing for the bar exam; and looking at the big picture. She said that if the members do not love what they are doing, they should peel back the onion to the next layer and keep going until they find something they love. When she finished speaking, President-Elect Alison Williams thanked her for sharing her time and experience. President Victoria Bongat concluded the meeting by asking members to remain for a picture and reminding them to leave their tickets with their names and e-mail addresses for the door prize drawing. Ballal stayed for awhile to speak with individual students and hand out materials concerning the Family Justice Center. The noon meeting was a success, and the entire presentation was well-received at the 5 p.m. meeting. An evening attendee won the WLA tote bag full of Halloween goodies.

Upcoming Event: Annual Silent Auction for Charity (11/3) benefitting Family Violence Prevention Services, Inc. See p. 4 for details.





Bexar County Women's Bar Association  
2011 Holiday Luncheon

Please join us for holiday cheer, a delicious lunch, special presentations, and great door prizes as we celebrate another wonderful year!

Help spread the holiday cheer by bringing a toy donation for Center for Family Relations.

December 9  
Noon to 1:00 p.m. at Hotel Contessa

Luncheon is \$35  
R.S.V.P. required by Monday, December 5th  
Reply to [lalcantar@prdg.com](mailto:lalcantar@prdg.com)





# SEND A GIRL! SEND A TEAM!

San Antonio Sports invites you to give one girl or a whole team of ten the chance to experience the NCAA Div. I Women's Volleyball Championship, December 15 and 17 in the Alamodome.

Your tax-deductible donation of \$33 to send one girl or \$333 to send a team of ten will inspire and delight girls from underserved neighborhoods in San Antonio.

**Complete the form below and return to San Antonio Sports today!**

## SEND A GIRL

**\$33** x # of girls = \_\_\_\_\_

## SEND A TEAM

**\$333** x # of teams = \_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

*total donation*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Card  AMEX  Mastercard  Visa

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Name on card \_\_\_\_\_

Card holder contact number (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

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*Make checks payable to San Antonio Sports.*

**Return by mail to**

*San Antonio Sports, PO Box 830386, San Antonio, TX 78283*

*or fax to 210.820.2199.*