



EQUAL TIMES

BEXAR COUNTY WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Unbelievable, but it is December and the year is drawing to a close. It has been my absolute honor to have served as President this past year. I am blessed to have worked with this organization and developed the ties and friendships I know will last for many years.

We have a wonderful group of members, officers, and directors. I want to thank all of you for your hard work this past year to once again create a terrific year with lots of achievements and great memories. In particular, I want to thank our Board members and those that served on our various committees this year to put together many excellent events and programs.



Laura C. Mason

Thank you to Suzanne Oliva (also our Vice President) and Gaylia Brunson for chairing this year's Autumn Affair, which involved organizing a separate hard-working committee and executing all details of the event. It was a beautiful event and inspiring representation of our organization. Thank you to Lorie Blount for her work on behalf of the BCWBF to organize our community service and projects, including the Elder Law Handbook. As always, I appreciated Elsa Marie Garza serving as our official and unofficial photographer, documenting our events and making sure we are preserving our history. Thank you to Christine Reinhard, for chairing our honors and awards committee and serving as Immediate Past President this year, but more importantly for all the great advice and input she has provided to me not only this year but during our numerous years together on the Board. Thank you to Danielle Hargrove for serving as our Secretary, and continuing to help with the BCWBF investments. Natalie Hall served as Treasurer and kept us on track this year, and had the big task of reconciling all of the financial aspects of Autumn Affair – very much appreciated! Thank you to Tiffanie Clausewitz for chairing our website and communications committee, and for re-designing our website (take a look at the great new site!).

Beverly Smith put together a new recurring *Equal Times* article highlighting a member of the judiciary, which is a great, interesting addition to our publication. Speaking of our fabulous newsletter, thank you to Regina Stone-Harris for being the editor-in-chief of the *Equal Times* and all her work to put together this newsletter each month. Thank you to Monica Lerma for chairing this year's Law Day at (con'd on p. 2)

DECEMBER 2011

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January 13, 2012 Deadline for Texas Bar Foundation Awards

By Christine E. Reinhard

The Texas Bar Foundation is soliciting nominations for its annual state-wide awards. They include the Dan Rugeley Price Award, the Lola Wright Foundation Award, the Outstanding 50 Year Lawyer Award, the Ronald D. Secrest Outstanding Trial Lawyer Award, and the Samuel Pessara Outstanding Jurist Award. New this year is the Gregory S. Coleman Outstanding Appellate Lawyer Award, established in memoriam for former Texas solicitor general and Austin lawyer, Gregory Coleman, who passed away last November in a plane crash. Nomination packets and information on the qualifications for each award are available through the Texas Bar Foundation's website, txbf.org. Nomination packets must be received by no later than January 13, 2012 at 5:00 p.m, so don't wait to nominate a fellow BCWB lawyer today!

President's Column (con'd)

the Plaza Club with students of Fox Tech – always an enjoyable and worthwhile event. To Lisa Alcantar and Maggie Giltner, thank you for a wonderful job organizing this year's luncheons and speakers. I looked forward to each of our luncheons for the camaraderie and informative topics presented. Thank you to Katherine Patton Noll for chairing our membership committee, and working with Tiffanie Clausewitz for new ways to energize our organization (keep watching for more details). Marissa Helm (also our Treasurer-Elect) and Nada Ismail Taha did a terrific job of organizing our mentor/mentee program and events, together with our WLA representatives, Teresa Reyes Bonar and Victoria Bongat. Thank you to Jamie Rose Shipley, Connie Basel, Julia Mann, Maurleen Cobb, and Carol Jendrzej for organizing many of our social events, including our Central Market CLE, Julian Gold event, President's Party, and our State Bar Reception. These were great events for reconnecting with and meeting new members.

Thank you to Emma Cano for chairing our nominations and elections committee chair and serving as President-Elect. I have greatly enjoyed working with Emma on the Board, and know she will be a fantastic leader for the organization next year. I exit as President knowing that this organization will continue to grow and flourish with Emma and the other leaders we are fortunate to have.

This year's BCWBA
2011 San Antonio Bar
Association "Fun Run
for Justice" Team:

Rosa Cabezas-Gil,
Carol Jendrzej,
Diana Geis,
Rebecca Simmons,
Santee Bryan Marion,
Suzanne Oliva,
Danielle Hargrove &
Lorie Blount

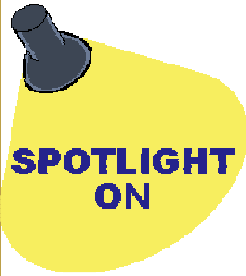




Beverly Smith

Justice Phylis J. Speedlin

By Beverly Smith



'Tis the season to share with you all the warm holiday spirit that Justice Speedlin emanates all year long. So enjoy a cup of hot chocolate or a glass of egg nog while I will give you the skinny on our very own Justice Phylis Speedlin, “behind the black robe!” Here we go ...



BS: I was wondering about that full page spread on the cover of SA Lawyer back in September 2011. That was a very nice cover.

PS: Well there is no article to accompany the cover. The photo is for serving my term as the President of the San Antonio Bar Association (SABA). I served from August 2010 to August 2011 and I was a board member for ten years prior to that.

BS: How was your term as President of SABA?

PS: It was a great term and I had a good year attending community events and functions. We have over 3000 members in SABA and it is a very diverse, fun group of members.

BS: Do you have a favorite TV show?

PS: My husband and I love to watch The Closer. We actually tape old episodes and watch them together. I'm sad that this is the last season.

BS: What do you like to do for fun?

PS: My husband and I love to exercise, we do weight training 3-4 times per week, we enjoy church and having dinner parties at our home.

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

PS: I love fiction. Right now I am reading David Baldacci, he is a very good author. By far my favorite book is the Bible. I read it often and I try to live by its principles.

BS: What kind of work did you do as a young lawyer, prior to becoming a judge?

PS: I was a trial lawyer for 17 years, then a civil court judge for three years prior to becoming an appellate court judge. I have been on the Fourth Court of Appeals for eight years now.

BS: How about giving attorneys some words of wisdom based on what you see from the appellate bench?

PS: Always conduct yourself professionally. From your dress and appearance, to timeliness and courtesy, be professional about what you do in court. My Mentor George Spencer Sr. shared this wisdom with me: “Never do anything as a lawyer that you would not be proud to stand on the front steps of the courthouse (con'd on next page)

Spotlight on Justice Phylis J. Speedlin (con'd)

and announce that you had done.”

BS: What kind of music do you listen to?

PS: I mostly listen to Christian music.

BS: Do you have a pet peeve based on what you see from the appellate bench.

PS: Prepare and take the time to proof read your briefs. Do not attempt to cite references to the record that are meant to misinform or defraud the court. Take great pride in your work and be accurate with citations. Also, spell-check your work yourself, do not just depend on the computer to spell check for you, that can lead to more grammatical errors. Also, be respectful and courteous to opposing counsel, your client, and the judges.

BS: What is your favorite food?

PS: Well, even with my Greek heritage, I love Italian food ... bread, pasta, carbs, carbs, carbs, I love it.

BS: What is one thing that you really enjoy?

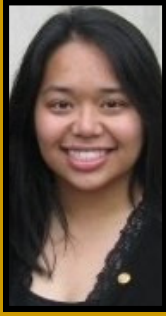
PS: I love my new iPad! I absolutely adore it and highly recommend it!

BS: Are you still Chair of the new Veterans Program?

PS: Oh yes... It is a part of the Community Justice Program that we started in 2001. We will be celebrating the tenth anniversary here soon. However, The Veterans Clinic is only about a year in existence and doing well. I encourage volunteers to come out and take part in one of the clinics. We have them monthly and they are “advice only” clinics. The matters range from criminal, family, and even immigration law. We usually have from 20 to 25 veterans per clinic. Attorneys are welcome to volunteer under the CJP tab on the SABA website at <http://www.sabar.org/index.cfm>.

BS: WOW ... From SABA President to the CJP Foundation President to the Veterans Clinic Co-Chair ... just as portrayed in Justice Speedlin's spotlight photo, this woman has been a spirited contributor to our community all year long. It was such a pleasure to sit and learn about the warm heart beating behind the black robe. You too can experience the spirit of this Amazing Justice ... Just volunteer online for the Veterans Clinic next year!

To learn more about Justice Phylis Speedlin go online to: http://www.4thcoa.courts.state.tx.us/court/justice_pspeedlin.asp.



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

Women's Law Association Update

By Victoria Marie S. Bongat

On November 3, the Women's Law Association (WLA) held its annual silent auction for charity in the Sarita Kenedy East Law Library. Beginning at 8 a.m., law students, professors, faculty and staff members browsed the auction lots and placed bids. There were a variety of items and packages donated to the silent auction including a pet basket, a wine tasting, date nights, bar exam review courses, and an Xbox.

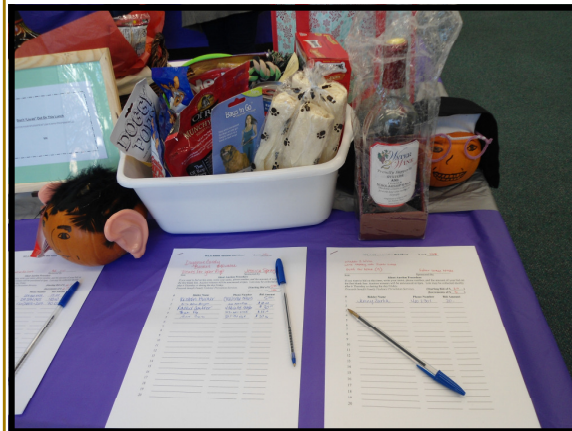
Officers and volunteers worked throughout the day to welcome people, answer questions, and encourage bidding. The 1L senators coordinated refreshments and kept the food table covered all day.



At 6 p.m., several timers went off, signaling the official end of auction bidding. Bidders were asked to step away from the tables as officers and volunteers highlighted the names of winning bidders and gathered bid sheets. Many items were picked up and paid for that evening. Clean-up went smoothly, and signs were collected on the way to vehicles. Bidders continued to pay for and pick up their auction items over the next week.

Names were drawn for both the iPad 2 and the Americus Diamond circle of support pendant. While one winner was present and could collect her prize immediately, the other winner was notified shortly thereafter.

One week after the auction, thank you notes were written and gratitude was expressed to everyone who contributed to the event's success. Although the total amount of money raised has not yet been fully determined, Vice President Jenny Zarka was pleased and fairly certain her goal for the auction made during the summer was exceeded.



Upcoming Event: Joint Meeting/
Luncheon with Bexar County
Women's Bar Association
(1/23/2012) from noon to 1 p.m.
in the Sarita Kenedy East Law Li-
brary on the St. Mary's University
School of Law campus.

The Tenth Annual Extreme Family Law Makeover:

"What's Love Got To Do With It?"

When? *Friday, February 24, 2012, 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.*

Where?? *The Stanley & Sandra Rosenberg Sky Room, University of the Incarnate Word*

How Much???

Early Bird Registration (by February 10, 2012)

SABA Family Law Section Members - \$175.00 (membership has its privileges)

Non-SABA Family Law Section Members - \$250.00

After February 10, 2012: \$275.00 (NO EXCEPTIONS)

**ALL reservations are NON-REFUNDABLE after 5:00 p.m.
on February 17, 2012 (NO EXCEPTIONS)**

Register Online at [http:](http://)

Registration includes Seminar Materials, Breakfast, Lunch, Afternoon Snack, Party on the Patio &
7.5 Hours of CLE Including 2.0 Hours of Ethics



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

