



Equal Times

Serving the BCWBA for 30 Years

President's Column

April is here, and with it comes the Bexar County Women's Bar Association's annual Law Day celebration. Each year, Law Day is celebrated nationally on May 1 to honor the rule of law. Law Day underscores how the law and the legal process contribute to the freedoms all Americans share. Law Day also provides an opportunity to recognize the role of courts in this democracy and the importance of jury service to maintaining the integrity of the courts.



The theme of this year's Law Day is "American Democracy and the Rule of Law: Why Every Vote Matters." As noted by the Texas State Bar,

One of our nation's most cherished ideals is "government of the people, by the people, and for the people." The right to vote is the very foundation of government by the people and is one of the simplest, yet most powerful, duties we hold as citizens. We must continue to emphasize the work of our Founding Fathers and protect every citizen's right to be heard and right to vote. As we approach the 50th anniversaries of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, this year's Law Day theme, American Democracy and the Rule of Law: Why Every Vote Matters, calls on every American to reflect on the significance of a citizen's right to vote and the challenges we still face to ensure that all Americans have an opportunity to participate in our democracy.

As we do every year, the Bexar County Women's Bar will celebrate Law Day with the young women law-magnet students from Fox Tech High School. Read below for details about this much-loved event. We hope you will take time to join us in celebrating Law Day, and encouraging the young women from Fox Tech.

April Luncheon: Celebrate Law Day with Fox Tech Students

On April 2, 2014 the Bexar County Women's Bar Association will host a luncheon at the Plaza Club for law-magnet students from Fox Tech High School, a 2012 National Blue Ribbon recognized high school. Prior to the luncheon, students will compete in the State Bar's and BCWBA's Law Day Contest, which includes an editorial contest, photography contest and poster contest. Contest winners will receive scholarships. During the luncheon, Judge Tina Torres, Bexar County Court at Law #10, will address the students and BCWBA members regarding this year's Law Day theme—American Democracy and the Rule of Law: Why Every Vote Counts. After the luncheon, the students will visit with BCWBA members and ask questions regarding the legal profession.

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Events to Attend

- Apr. 2: Law Day Luncheon with Fox Tech Students
- May 6: May Luncheon with Andrew Borrego
- May 13: Volunteer for CJP
- June 12-13: Annual Retreat




Volunteer for the Community Justice Program

By Carmen Samaniego

Please join the BCWBA as a volunteer for the Community Justice Program. We need at least 10 volunteers to participate in a Family Law Clinic at Texas RioGrande Legal Aid. The Community Justice Program is designed to permit attorneys from all practice areas to participate. The clinic involves uncontested matters. Mentors are on-call to support and guide you from start to finish. If your case becomes contested or complex, attorneys from Texas RioGrande Legal Aid will take over.

The clinic will be held on May 13, 2014, at Texas RioGrande Legal Aid, located at 1111 N. Main Avenue, San Antonio, TX 78212. The clinic begins at 5:30 pm. We need 10 volunteers, but more volunteers means more access to justice! Someone in our community needs your help. Please contact Carmen Samaniego at attorneycarmen@me.com to sign up.

No time to post a job or deal with calls and emails?



View the St. Mary's University Law Resume Books


The St. Mary's University School of Law Office of Career Services has resume books for cities around the state. This is a quick and easy way to view quality resumes of St. Mary's law students and graduates without posting a job.

Log in to the Symplicity job bank today to:

- Find resumes that fit your specific hiring criteria
- Post a job opportunity
- Register to interview on campus

law-stmarytx-csm.symplicity.com/employers/

For more information, contact Suzanne Patrick at spatrick@stmarytx.edu or 210-436-3511.



ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY
School of Law
Office of Career Services

Save the Date!



Bexar County Women's Bar Retreat
June 12-13, 2014
Purple Sage Ranch in Bandera, Texas

Thursday evening June 12, through Friday afternoon June 13

- Relax
- Reconnect
- Earn CLE credits
- Enjoy the beautiful Texas Hill Country

Please join us for an unforgettable Retreat at the Purple Sage Ranch

Details to follow soon!

- Amazing scenery, world class food
- Top notch accommodations, down home hospitality

Purple Sage Reviews:
www.purplesageranch.com

Judicial Spotlight: Judge Laura Parker, 386th District Court



This month we put the spotlight on Judge Laura Parker, presiding judge of 386th District Court. She presides over a general jurisdiction court with a preference for juvenile matters. Judge Parker is board certified in Juvenile Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. In addition to her regular juvenile docket, Judge Parker presides over two specialty courts, a juvenile drug court and a mental health court for girls. In 2011, the Governor appointed Judge Parker to serve on the executive board of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, the state agency overseeing juvenile justice in Texas. She is the Chair of the Bexar County Juvenile Board and previously served as the Local Administrative Judge for the Bexar County District Courts. She obtained her B.A. in Hispanic Studies from Vassar College in 1987 and graduated cum laude from St. Mary's University School of Law in 1992.

Q. Tell us about your history as an attorney and then judge.

A. I began my career as a prosecutor in the Bexar County District Attorney's Office in 1992. I worked in several different divisions including Misdemeanor, Felony Trial, DWI, Family Violence and Juvenile. I was appointed to the 386th District Court in 1999 when the legislature created a second Juvenile Court in Bexar County. I have been through four elections.

Q. Did you always know you wanted to be a judge? What inspired you to make this decision?

A. My father is a lawyer so law school was a natural course for me. I think all attorneys think or dream about maybe becoming a judge one day. I was definitely in the right place at the right time with the kind of experience the Governor was looking for when I got my appointment. I loved being a prosecutor, so I don't know that I would have ever run for a bench without having been appointed first.

Q. Tell us about your history with the Bexar County Women's Bar and other women's organizations, and the impact you believe such organizations have on their members and the greater community.

A. I joined the BCWBA shortly after becoming a judge. Prosecutors are somewhat isolated from the various bar associations and I had never been very active with any legal groups outside of the Texas District and County Attorney's Association. Becoming a member of BCWBA has introduced me to a huge group of inspiring women lawyers whose paths I may never have crossed. I am also a member of Impact San Antonio, a women's giving circle, and SA100, a women's group that grew out of the first class of women in Leadership Texas back in the 1980's. All three groups, BCWBA, Impact SA and SA100, show the power of women's philanthropy as well as provide support for all of us to excel in our chosen professions.

Q. What has been the most surprising thing about being a judge? Something you didn't expect when you ran for the position?

A. I don't think that I realized how cathartic it is for a person to get to have his or her say in court. One of the most important things I focus on, especially because I work with kids, is patience. Even if I don't do what the child asks me to do, I find that having me listen to his or her story makes such a difference when accepting consequences with grace. I am sure that is true no matter the type of case. A big part of a judge's job is to just let people tell their side of the story. (con'd on next page)

Save the Date!

Join us for our monthly luncheon on Tuesday, May 6, 2014, at Club Giraud as we welcome Andrew Borrego, a Texas Rising Star in the area of Entertainment and Sports Law and distinguished member of our San Antonio Bar. Details to follow.



Mentor-Mentee Update

By Hella Scheuerman

We have completed the Mentor-Mentee group assignments. This program has become so popular that we had a long list of law students sign up to participate. We are thankful to have so many attorneys volunteer for this great program! This program is designed for you to make the Mentor-Mentee relationship your own. We hope that through this program, Mentees will meet other attorneys with whom they can discuss similar experiences as professional women. BCWB is in the process of planning an upcoming event, where all of the Mentor-Mentee groups will receive an invitation. In the meantime, you are encouraged to meet and get to know each other. Have fun!

Judicial Profile: Judge (con'd from p. 3)

Q. Excluding the law – what are you passionate about?

A. I am passionate about my family. I have a 12 year old daughter and will have been married for 14 years this April. My career was well underway before I married and I am one of the oldest moms among my daughter's age group. I hope that because of what I see daily in my job that I help her make good choices and have all of the opportunities that I have had in my life.

Q. Tell us a few of your favorite things.

A. Book? To Kill a Mockingbird (of course), The Alchemist, Ex Libris

Movie? Out of Africa, anything with Kevin Spacey

Restaurant? Stella at Blue Star (currently)

Pastime? Tennis, skiing, traveling

Q. If you could give one piece of advice to up and coming female attorneys, what would it be?

A. My advice to young lawyers is to make sure that you have interests outside of the law. Don't let the pressure or competition of our profession keep you from developing other parts of yourself. Don't neglect your family and friends. Make time for girl trips!!! Everyone needs to have fun and the more fun the better!!!!

Thank you, Judge Parker! Such great advice!

BCWBA Lites

Justice Luz Elena Chapa was selected as a Texas Bar Foundation Fellow and is a 2014 Inductee to the San Antonio Women's Hall of Fame.

Past BCWBA President Dayla Pepi and Past WLA President Julia Null (shown at far right in the adjacent photo) are recipients of St. Mary's University's 2014 Franzke Feminist Award. Also, honored are: Adriane Meneses, Grace Keyes, and Richard S. Pressman.



Upcoming WLA Events

With the new month, comes a new 2014-15 WLA board. Campaigning week is April 1 through April 4. Winners will be announced on April 4 at WLA's Annual Half Wit. Afterward members will celebrate the new board with Fiesta-Toga infused grub, garments and gaiety.

April 8 is our last WLA meeting for the year. Saving the best meeting for last, during this meeting the old board will pass the torch to the new board members. This day will honor our current board members as well as celebrate the new WLA officers.

A big thank you to Bethbiriah of Bethography for all of these wonderful pictures!

Women's Law Association (WLA) Update

The WLA had the honor of hosting the Fourth Court of Appeals for oral arguments. After the riveting debate, the Justices attended WLA's general meeting where all students were invited to join. During the meeting, the winners of the Alma L. López and Catherine M. Stone awards were announced. A big congratulations to Julia Null who received the Chief Justice López "Women in Leadership" Award and to Elizabeth Germano who received the Chief Justice Stone "Rock of Justice" Award.



WLA also celebrated St. Patrick's Day by conducting a very successful and very tasty bake sale. Members donated St. Patty's Day themed baked goods to help raise money for next year. This event also served as an informational session for our upcoming 2014-15 board elections.



**FEDERAL BAR ASSOCIATION
SAN ANTONIO CHAPTER**

and the Federal Bar Association Bankruptcy Section

Presents

**Who's on First in Bankruptcy Court?
A state court player's guide to the bankruptcy
game.**

Bankruptcy impacting your probate proceeding or family law case? Ever had to file a proof of claim in a bankruptcy proceeding? Has a bankruptcy case affected a litigation or judgment enforcement action?

The Federal Bar Association San Antonio Chapter is hosting a half-day bankruptcy seminar for state court practitioners to discover more about the interplay between common state court issues and bankruptcy. The seminar will address bankruptcy rules and procedures, family law, probate, real estate, secured transactions, tax issues, and removal/remand as it relates to common state law matters. Presenters include Chief Judge Ronald B. King and Judge Craig Gargotta, along with many bankruptcy practitioners in the field.

Thursday, April 10, 2014

8:30 a.m. Registration

9:00 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.

Approval pending for 3.75 hrs (1.0 ethics) Texas MCLE Credit

**Hipolito F. Garcia Federal Building and
United States Courthouse**

First Floor Conference Center

615 East Houston Street

San Antonio, Texas 78205

\$25 for FBA members; \$40 for non-FBA members;

\$15 students (limited seats)

(includes box lunch & drinks)

Register by April 1, 2014 www.fedbarsatx.org