



# EQUAL TIMES

## BEXAR COUNTY WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION

### PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

At our recent BCWB retreat, I was reminded of the importance of staying connected with the women in our legal community. There are so many accomplished, talented, genuine women in our profession from whom much can be learned. The best part is that so many are willing to share their stories, their time and their wisdom with each another. That is exactly what happened at our recent 2012 BCWB retreat. Those who attended the retreat know that it was a great success.



Emma Cano

The retreat was informative, extremely well-attended, included fantastic speakers, provided great networking opportunities, and was just plain fun! A nice little get-away in Fredericksburg with some inspiring women was the perfect way to start the summer. Judge Renee McElhaney coordinated planning for the retreat and did an outstanding job!! Thanks to all who helped with the retreat—you have set the bar high for the next one. Wishing everyone a Happy Fourth of July! See you soon!

#### Upcoming Events:

July 10:  
Monthly Luncheon at Club Giraud

July 19:  
Central Market CLE: "Cooking with the Judges"

July 27:  
Around Town Lunch at Fuddruckers on 410 & Ingram

August 7:  
BCWB Monthly Luncheon at Club Giraud



**The Art of Practicing Law ... in Heels!**  
Retreat Schedule

**Thursday:**  
6:00-7:00—Reception (sponsored by Gabriel's Wine & Spirits)  
7:00-9:00—Dinner and Book Club—*Wicked Success Inside Every Woman* (discussion led by Justice Simmons)  
9:00-11:00—Lounging Lady Lawyers (Wine and conversation; sponsored by Kim Tindall & Assoc.)

**Friday:**  
7:30-8:00—Breakfast  
8:00-8:30—The Art of Practicing Law ... in Heels (Chief Justice Stone)  
8:30-9:00—The Art of Marketing ... in Heels (Heather Tesmer and Diana Gels)  
9:00-9:30—The Art of Profit Relationships ... in Heels (Sara Oyarce)  
9:30-10:30—The Art of Litigating ... in Heels (Judges Ender, Artaga, and McElhaney; Sorreese Williams—facilitator)  
10:45-11:15—The Art of Management ... in Heels (Victoria Garcia)  
11:15-11:45—The Art of Negotiating ... in Heels (Laura Tamez)  
11:45-12:15—The Art of High Ethics ... in Heels (Maureen Gable)  
12:15-1:30—Look Who's Coming to Lunch: The Marriage! (What Every Male Attorney Wants to Know)

### JULY 2012

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Monica Lerma



Lisa Alcantar

## BCWBF 2012 Autumn Affair 30th Year Anniversary of BCWBF's Fundraiser

By Monica Lerma

We are thrilled to announce the beneficiary for the 2012 Autumn Affair is:

### *“Girls On The Run of Bexar County”*

“Girls on the Run” is a developmentally focused youth sport program for girls in third through eighth grade. The program combines training for a 5K run with a positive youth development curricula. The organization’s objective is to educate and empower girls to prevent the display of at-risk activities in the future. The organization strives to inspire girls to be joyful, healthy and confident. You can learn more about the organization at [www.gotrsanantonio.org](http://www.gotrsanantonio.org).

The 2012 Autumn Affair will be held on Thursday, October 11, 2012, at 6:00 p.m. at the Witte Museum. On our 30th Anniversary event, we will celebrate the past while celebrating our female judiciary and our Belva Lockwood award winners.

We would love to have your help making this event a success. You can join one of our committees, contribute to our auction or raffle, or sponsor our event.

Our next monthly committee meeting is Thursday, July 12, at Pulman, Cappuccio, Pullen & Benson, LLP (2161 NW Military Highway, Suite 400).

If you can donate an item for our silent auction or raffle, please e-mail Tiffanie Clausewitz ([tclausewitz@pulmanlaw.com](mailto:tclausewitz@pulmanlaw.com)) or Lisa Alcantar ([lalcantar@prdg.com](mailto:lalcantar@prdg.com)).

And if you’d like to become a sponsor, please contact Hella Scheuerman at ([hschc@allstate.com](mailto:hschc@allstate.com)) or Lorie Blount at ([Lorie.Blount@uhs-sa.com](mailto:Lorie.Blount@uhs-sa.com)).

If are interested in joining a committee, but cannot make the monthly meetings, just let us know. Contact Autumn Affair co-chairs, Maurleen Cobb (210-378-8945)/([mcobb@mwcobblaw.com](mailto:mcobb@mwcobblaw.com)) or Monica J. Lerma (210-464-7408)/([mjlerma@sr-llp.com](mailto:mjlerma@sr-llp.com)) and we will get you in touch with the committee of your choice.

We’re looking forward to hosting a great event! Thank you for helping to make this year’s Autumn Affair a success!

## July Luncheon Announcement

By Lisa Alcantar

Please join us at Club Giraud on Tuesday, July 10th as we welcome Lauren McLaughlin of Strasburger & Price. Lauren will give a presentation entitled “Estate Planning and Probate: A Toolbox of Basics for Attorneys.” Take the opportunity to expand your understanding of estate planning concepts, as well as the probate process in Texas. Whether or not this is your primary area of the law, McLaughlin’s presentation has far reaching applicability in your practice and personal life. RSVP by Friday, July 6, 2012 by emailing [events@bexarcountywomensbar.org](mailto:events@bexarcountywomensbar.org). Cost is \$25 (\$15 for students), payable online or at the door. CLE approved.



Gaylia Brunson

## Community Service Column

By Gaylia Brunson

Summer time is upon us and while most of our children are happy for the break from school, there are thousands of children in San Antonio who are going hungry instead of cheering for their “freedom.” To help fight this battle, San Antonio Food Bank uses its Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) to help fill the vacuum for those children who have lost their access to regular daily school lunches and breakfasts.

SFSP provides nutritious meals and snacks to children during the summer time and the meals are provided to the children free of charge. SFSP provided more than 300,000 meals last year. This year, the program has been expanded to provide children in rural areas with free meals throughout the summer with the target being school-aged children under the age of 18.

The San Antonio Food Bank needs your help with the expansion of this program since meals are actually distributed to local housing developments, daycares, and summer camps as wells are provided at the on-site feeding program locations.



### HOW TO VOLUNTEER

For safety purposes the minimum age for volunteering is 8 years of age (18 years of age for Mobile Pantry opportunities). Volunteers under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult when volunteering.

1. Go to <http://safoodbank.org/index.php/get-involved/donate-time> to complete a volunteer application.
2. Your application will be reviewed by someone at the SAFB and will be accepted or denied. If your application is denied, you will be contacted by SAFB with an explanation for the denial. You should have a response within three business days of submitting your application.
3. If your application is accepted, a volunteer coordinator will review SAFB’s calendar for availability and cross-reference it with your proposed availability and the volunteer coordinator will then send you a calendar request for the volunteer opportunity, date, and shift requested.
4. If your dates don’t match SAFB’s dates, the volunteer coordinator will contact you to discuss other possible dates or volunteer opportunities.

For more information, please go to the San Antonio Food Bank’s website at [www.safoodbank.org/index.php/home](http://www.safoodbank.org/index.php/home).



Gaylia Brunson

## July Cooking Class CLE: Saucy Sweet Pleasures

By Gaylia Brunson

**When:** Thursday, July 19, 2012, 6:00 p.m.

**Where:** Central Market Cooking School (2d Floor at Central Market on Broadway)

**Cost:** \$50.00 per person. Includes food, wine and one hour of CLE credit.

**RSVP:** Attendance is limited. Enrollment is on a first come, first served basis. Payment must be received by BCWBA no later than July 10, 2012. To register, please go to <http://www.bexarcountywomensbar.org/> and click on the Central Market link.

**Details:** Join us for some summery light recipes paired perfectly with wine and earn CLE credit by listening to Fourth Court Justices Catherine Stone, Karen Angelini, Phylis Speedlin, and Rebecca Simmons speak about Appellate Court Updates and Cases of Interest. The menu will include: White Gazpacho with Frozen Grapes, Tropical Avocado & Shrimp Salad with Ginger Dressing, Sesame Seed Crusted Salmon with Mango Salsa, Coconut Rice, and Individual Cilantro Pineapple Upside Down Cakes with Coconut Ice Cream.

## Book Club Meeting

By Gaylia Brunson

**When:** Sunday, August 5, 2012, 4:00 p.m.

**Where:** Stonewerks, The Rim, 5807 Worth Pkwy, San Antonio, Texas 78257

**What:** *The Weird Sisters* by Eleanor Brown

**RSVP:** E-mail Gaylia Brunson at [gayliabrunson@gmail.com](mailto:gayliabrunson@gmail.com) by Friday, August 3, 2012

Please join our group for refreshments, snacks and a discussion of the *New York Times* Bestseller *The Weird Sisters*. *The Weird Sisters* isn't an emotionally heavy book (in my opinion) like our last Book Club selection, but will prove to make for an interesting discussion!

## Save the Date! BCWBF 2012 Autumn Affair

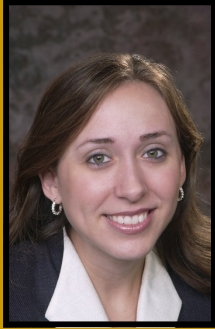
By Suzanne Dapra Oliva

Please mark your calendars for the 2012 Bexar County Women's Bar Foundation Autumn Affair to be held at 6 p.m. on Thursday, October 11, 2012 in the courtyard of the Witte Museum. This year, the BCWBF's signature fundraising event benefits the non-profit group, "Girls on the Run" (see [www.girlsontherun.org](http://www.girlsontherun.org)) inspiring preteen girls to be "joyful, healthy and confident." Our next Autumn Affair committee meeting will be held at noon on July 12, 2012 at the law offices of Pulman, Cappuccio, Pullen & Benson, LLP, 2161 Northwest Military Highway.

If you are interested in helping to make the Autumn Affair an event to remember, volunteer to be on a committee by contacting either Maurleen Cobb (800-6777 or [mcobb@mwcobblaw.com](mailto:mcobb@mwcobblaw.com)) or Monica Lerma (464-7408 or [mjlerma@sr-llp.com](mailto:mjlerma@sr-llp.com)) and attend the next meeting. We're looking forward to hosting another fabulous event!



Suzanne Dapra Oliva



Natalie L. Hall

## A Point of View: Perspective on Moving from the Out-House (Kidding) to the In-House ...

By Natalie L. Hall

As many of you know, I made an exciting career move about three months ago, leaving my position as a Shareholder in Cox Smith's business litigation department ("Outside Counsel") to General Attorney for AT&T, handling business litigation for the South Texas region ("In-House Counsel"). There are many similarities to these two careers but some important differences that I did not appreciate or fully understand until I made my recent move. I have been asked to share a few, so here are the top five highlights that hopefully will help you when dealing with your clients in the future:

1. Things Take Time...A lot More Time: "No I cannot get you that discovery in 30 days!" I cannot help but remember the days when I found myself secretly frustrated with my client on discovery matters. What did they mean they did not have the documents I carefully asked of them 30 days beforehand? I don't think I fully appreciated how difficult it can be for clients to find the discovery we often expect should be easy to get, especially since they work for the company. Bottom-line is that while you may ask your In-House Counsel for documents well in advance, that In-House Counsel often has to maneuver through a maze of departments and people to gather the critical information you need. And guess what, not everyone is sitting at their desk waiting for the email asking for documents with bated-breath! Discovery really can be the most difficult task for In-House Counsel, and the bigger the company, the harder the task. So be patient and play nice with your opposing counsel, especially during discovery, as I promise you will need to ask for that discovery extension to make your In-House Counsel breathe easy.
2. Outside Counsel Don't Work Harder, In-House Counsel Just Get To Work Smarter: Come on, admit it, you know at some point you have thought that In-House Counsel have it really easy with cushy 8 to 5 jobs who get to sit around like God and just manage other lawyers doing all the hard work. Well, if you haven't thought it, you will at some point when you are slaving away on a weekend trying to churn out that legal answer your In-House Counsel asked you to please get by Monday. But it simply is not true, at least from my perspective. In-House Counsel have many tasks that go well beyond the myth: Yes, we all manage cases handled by Outside Counsel, but we also do many other things. For example, we handle the day-to-day emergencies that our business units come across that have not yet risen to full-blown litigation but need legal attention. We also handle legal matters internal to the company to ensure those issues never become a litigation emergency. We also are actually serving as the lawyer handling the cases for our clients where Outside Counsel is not retained (and this is becoming more and more of the norm given the recent spike in most firms' legal rates). And that is just a few of the critical tasks we do each day. So please don't assume as Outside Counsel that you are working harder. And again, that usually is the feeling you get when you are stuck on the weekend churning out that project In-House Counsel asked for your help on at the last minute. But that is where the working Smarter comes into play! (con'd on next page)

## A Point of View: Perspective on Moving from the Out-House (Kidding) to the In-House ... (con'd from p. 5)

3. We Billed Once Upon A Time Too: Believe it or not, most of your In-House Counsel were on the outside at one point in their legal career. So, we understand the billable hour saga and demands. But despite that reality and shared experience, that somehow gets chunked out the window when we cross the threshold to In-House Counsel. Instead of making us more understanding and sensitive to the bills, we become much more critical of the bills we receive from the firms we retain. No, we will not understand why a legal memo took eight hours to research and draft. No, we will not understand or appreciate the legal conferring of three lawyers in a room to strategize on a legal issue (even though we all did it at some point in time). Yes, we do have higher expectations and want our firms to be thoughtful about billing matters. So remember that just because we once were sending out bills ourselves and we once were one of you, does not mean we still are of the same perspective. For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light...just kidding!

4. "Little" Things Mean A lot: I often remember being told by my clients when I was Outside Counsel that they appreciated my responsiveness and quick email summaries on the status of a case, etc. These were very little things for me to do, but for some reason highly valued by my clients, I didn't understand it. Now, as In-House Counsel, I get it. In-House Counsel have a constant demand for reporting to various business units in the company and those updates and status summaries are like gold to them. Being able to pull in a quick update or get a fast response is priceless and will keep clients coming back for more. It may seem a little task to you, but it means a lot to the client and it will keep them coming back to you for the next case.

5. Stay In Touch: It is very important to stay in touch with your In-House Counsel. I always knew this when I was Outside Counsel, but didn't really appreciate the influence that a simple contact means, especially when hiring Outside Counsel. Let's be honest, most lawyers are competent and can get the job done at a certain level...so what then differentiates the hiring? Relationships! So remember, play together, stay together!

Hope these tips are helpful to my Outside Counsel friends. It is a different perspective and appreciation of topics I gained as In-House Counsel...and it is all about your viewpoint.

Photos from this Year's Annual Retreat

