

HISTORY OF THE PARALEGAL DIVISION OF THE STATE BAR OF TEXAS

1992 - 1993

The Board, the Legal Assistants Committee of the Bar, and paralegal educators from across the state met for Forum XI in Austin on October 2, 1992. Demonstrations of the Lawyer/Legal Assistant Team Approach and an Update on Paralegal Regulation were the topics of the meeting.

Sharyn Aust Smith was forced to resign from the office of the Division Chair, as well as her directorship because she had started working in another district. Linda Manning, District 9, was elected by the Board to complete the remainder of Sharyn's term. Karen McAbee was appointed to serve out the remainder of Sharyn's term as the District 3 Director.

Debra Crosby, Director from District 5, read a statement on behalf of the Division at the ABA Hearing on the Delivery of Legal Services by Non Lawyers held in San Antonio on January 8-9. This hearing was one of many across the country. The Board voted to send the ABA Commission information with regard to the Division, its membership criteria, code of ethics, and other information to assist in the Commission's evaluation of non-lawyer practice.

A written report of the Task Force on Specialty Certification was presented; the Board instructed the Professional Development Committee to develop recommendations for seminars\review classes in anticipation of the legal assistant certification exams.

The Professional Development Committee finalized plans for a CLE seminar entitled "Advanced Concepts for the Practicing Paralegal" to be held in late February and early March in Dallas/Ft. Worth, Austin/San Antonio, and Houston/Galveston.

Chair Manning reported on the results of the straw poll on Reorganization which had been submitted to the Division Members in December 1992. Results of the poll were to be published in the next issue of the *Texas Paralegal Journal* (TPJ). The Bylaws and Rules Committee was charged with drafting changes regarding 16 districts and directors, president and president-elect (elected by the Board) and term limits for directors.

The Publications Committee recommended certain changes to the TPJ which included printing it on white paper with green ink and incorporating a new logo design.

Article II Disciplinary Procedures, Section E, Complaints of the Bylaws was amended to include the following definition of a complaint:

"or a permanent injunctive decree or judgment granted in favor of the UPL Committee of the State Bar of Texas against a member."

At the April Board meeting in Austin, it was reported that the Division was monitoring the progress of the Leedom bill which proposed licensing and regulation of legal technicians. During the April Board meeting, the Board elected 1993-1994 officers: Debra Crosby, Chair; Nancy Nixon, Chair Pro Tem; Melanie Villarreal, Secretary; Terri Gibbons, Treasurer; and Deane Galloway, Parliamentarian.

The Section Chairs of the Bar and the Bar Board approved offering subscriptions to the SBOT sections to Division Members.

April 5, 1993 was a very special day in the life of the Division when Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 69 was signed by the President of the Senate, Bob Bullock, and the Speaker of the House, Pete Laney, commending the Division, the legal assistants of the State of Texas, and resolving that the 73rd Legislature of the State of Texas had declared October 23 of every year as Texas Legal Assistants Day.

Specialty Certification for Legal Assistants was approved by the Supreme Court of Texas on May 18, 1993, to be administered by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. Committee co-chairs Sharyn Aust Smith and Linda Fiegenger presented the Board with the proposed contract with Pro-Lit for the production of seminars pertaining to the Specialty Certification Exams.

The Annual Meeting of the Division was held on Saturday, June 19, 1993, at the Radisson Hotel in Ft. Worth. Amy Harvison, Co-Chair of the Annual Meeting, welcomed the members. Justice Linda Thomas joined the members for lunch. Luanne Womack received the Outstanding Committee Chair award for her work as the Publications Committee Chair, and District 15 was given special recognition for its tremendous growth. Attorneys Russell Johnson and Mark Warner were presented awards for free legal services rendered to the Division. Sylvia Coatney was honored for her work on the Professional Development Committee as were members of the Annual Meeting Committee. As of the Annual Meeting, Norma Hackler announced that the Division's membership was 2,171.

Legal Assistants Division Board of Directors 1992 - 1993

Officers:

Chair:	Sharyn Aust Smith, CLA*
Chair Pro Tem:	Deane A. Galloway, CLAS
Treasurer:	Nancy A. Nixon, CLA
Secretary:	Carla Weighmann, CLAS
Parliamentarian:	Linda Fiegenger, CLA

Directors:

Linda A. Carrette, CLA	District 1, Place 1
Mary Elizabeth Walker	District 1, Place 2
Sally Andress	District 2, Place 1
Terri L. Gibbons	District 2, Place 2
Sharyn Aust Smith, CLA	District 3**
Pamela Conlan	District 4
Debra Crosby	District 5
Eyvonne Palmer, CLAS	District 6
Nancy A. Nixon, CLA	District 7
Leigh Burton, CLA	District 8
Linda J. Manning, CLA	District 9
Carla Weighmann, CLAS	District 10
Carolyn K. Benson, CLA	District 11
Michelle M. Beecher	District 12
Linda M. Fiegenger, CLA	District 13
Deborah M. Conrad, PLS, CLA	District 14
Melanie D. Villarreal	District 15
Deane A. Galloway, CLA	District 16

* Sharyn Aust Smith, CLA was replaced as Chair by Linda Manning, CLA, at the January, 1993 Board Meeting as Sharyn Aust Smith moved from District 3 making her ineligible to be the Director of that District.

** Karen L. McAbee replaced Sharyn Aust Smith, CLA, as Director of District 3 at the January Board meeting.