

HISTORY OF THE PARALEGAL DIVISION OF THE STATE BAR OF TEXAS

1993 - 1994

The Board met October 1-2 at the Marriott Hotel in Austin in conjunction with Texas Forum XII. The topic of the Texas Forum was specialty certification examinations for legal assistants. Members of the Legal Assistants Advisory Commission answered questions regarding the specialty areas to be covered by the examination.

Denise Schumann of the Texas Board of Legal Specialization presented copies of proposed eligibility criteria and a proposed calendar to implement the first round of legal assistant Specialty Certification Examinations.

The Board met January 14-15 at the Sheraton Hotel in Austin. The January 1994 issue of the *Texas Bar Journal* was dedicated to the issues of the legal assistant profession, a first for Texas legal assistants. Mike Wise, Chair of the Editorial Subcommittee of the SBOT Standing Committee on Legal Assistants was the driving force in the development of that issue of the *Texas Bar Journal*.

Judge Thomas requested that the Division prepare an opinion statement on the issue of exempt/non- exempt status of paralegals and the Board decided to survey the issue in the April issue of the TPJ.

At the request of the Legal Assistants Committee, the Division agreed to assume future responsibility for the *Attorney's Guide for Practicing with Legal Assistants*, with the Bar retaining financial responsibility for same.

Bylaws amendments were approved by the Board to be presented to the membership for a vote. Those proposed amendments the Bylaws were published in the February 1994 issue of the *Texas Paralegal Journal*.

A Professional Development Advisory Committee was established to oversee the operations of coordinating the advanced seminars in the areas of law being tested.

It was reported at the April 8-9 Board meeting in Dallas that the first specialty certification exams offered were taken by 157 individuals on March 26, 1994.

The Division membership, as of the April 1994 Board meeting, stood at 2,182. During the April Board Meeting, the Board elected 1994-1995 officers: Debra Crosby, Chair; Sally Andress, Chair Pro Tem; Melanie Villarreal, Secretary; Rhita Koches, Treasurer; and Grace Guillot, Parliamentarian.

Javan Johnson, Chair of the Membership Committee, attended the April Board meeting to present her recommendations for changes in the membership application process

The Annual Meeting was held at the Omni Hotel in Austin. Members were welcomed by Jan Soderman, Co-chair of the Annual Meeting Committee, Pam Conlan, outgoing District 4 Director, and Linette Edwards, President of the Capitol Area Paralegal Association. Special recognition was given to Fernando Guerrero, Bar Membership Department, Miguel David Wise, Vice Chair of the Legal Assistants Committee of the Bar, and Denise Schumann, TBLS. The Outstanding Committee Chair award went to Sylvia Coatney, Chair of the Professional Development Committee. Javan Johnson, Membership Chair, was also recognized. Gary McNeill of TBLS was presented the Award of Excellence.

Legal Assistants Division Board of Directors 1993 - 1994

Officers:

Chair:	Debra Crosby
Chair Pro Tem:	Nancy A. Nixon, CLA
Treasurer:	Terri Gibbons
Secretary:	Melanie Villarreal
Parliamentarian:	Deane A. Galloway, CLAS

Directors:

Linda A. Carrette, CLA	District 1, Place 1
Mary Elizabeth Walker	District 1, Place 2
Sally Address	District 2, Place 1
Terri L. Gibbons	District 2, Place 2
Janet Norman, 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
Alison McIntyre	District 9
Grace Guillot, CLA	District 10
Carolyn K. Benson, CLA	District 11**
Vacancy	District 12
Melinda Hicks	District 13
Rhita Koches, PLS, CLAS	District 14
Melanie D. Villarreal	District 15
Deane A. Galloway, CLAS	District 16

* Kelly Cavin was appointed to serve the remainder of Nancy Nixon's term.

**Gigi (Carlisle) Linne was appointed to serve the remainder of Carolyn Benson's term.