

HISTORY OF THE PARALEGAL DIVISION OF THE STATE BAR OF TEXAS

1994 - 1995

The October 1994 meeting of the Board was held on October 7-8 at the Marriott Hotel in Austin, in conjunction with Texas Forum XIII.

It was reported that the State Bar College has invited the Division to submit a recommendation for an outstanding CLE presentation to be recognized by the State Bar College. The Board decided that no recommendation would be made at that time.

The Texas Board of Legal Specialization reported to the Executive Director that over 700 requests for applications for the specialty certification examination program had been received.

Javan Johnson presented, and the Board approved, a flyer on the benefits of Division membership. Johnny Lacy, CPA, presented his audit report showing that the Board had cut expenditures and curtailed non-essential spending. Justice Linda Thomas attended the Board meeting with a request that Division members submit articles to the *Texas Bar Journal* in connection with their upcoming issues on tribal justice and juvenile justice.

The Board met January 13-14 at the Sheraton Hotel in Austin. During that meeting, Sally Andress of Dallas was elected as the first President and Melanie Day Villarreal of McAllen was elected as the first President-Elect; a Nominations Committee was formed to handle nominations for the offices of Secretary, Treasurer, and Parliamentarian.

After some discussion, it was voted that the editorial policy for Letters to the Editor of the TPJ must be signed, but that the author's name will be withheld, upon request, and all letters will be published on a space available basis.

Jan Browning, former Director from District 2, addressed the Board and provided a presentation regarding Page & Addison's litigation with the Department of Labor. Ms. Browning requested that the Board formulate a policy regarding the exempt/non-exempt status of the profession.

The April meeting of the Board was held in Dallas, and the Board welcomed Wendi Rogers, newly-appointed Director from District 2, Place 2 (to fill the unexpired term of Heather Hart).

Sally Andress, incoming President of the Division, announced she would attend the April 28 orientation for section chairs of the Bar. The continuing problem of approval for MCLE for Division seminars was discussed. Nancy Smith of the MCLE department was assigned to address the Division's difficulty with approval, and the TBLS department had contacted Mike De La Rosa on the issue. Debra Crosby prepared a letter to the Legal Assistants Committee of the Bar for presentation at their next meeting. It was hoped that the Legal Assistants Committee would assist the Division in resolving the matter.

The Division's membership stood at 2,182 as of the April meeting.

The Publications Committee presented the Board with, and the Board approved, extensive revision of the Division's publication focus. The *Texas Paralegal Journal* was changed to a magazine-like format to be effective at the beginning of the 1995-1996 fiscal year, and will be published three times a year. The Board also adopted a news bulletin as one of its official publications which will also be published three times a year.

Elections by acclamation were held for 1995-1996 officer positions with Kelly Cavin being elected to the office of Secretary and Rhita Koches being elected to the office of Treasurer. Lisa Sprinkle was elected to the office of Parliamentarian.

The Board approved the appointment of Continuing Education Coordinator (CEC) by the Professional Development Committee. The CEC will be responsible for appointing a course director for each live presentation seminar sponsored by the Division.

The Annual Meeting, to be held in San Antonio, was discussed in a report by committee chair Laurie Borski. The Board voted to present the Committee Chair of the Year award to Javan Johnson of Longview and to present Special Awards to Fernando Guerrero of the Bar Membership Department for his dedication to the Division and to Kathy Harkins of Austin, Sally Andress of Dallas, and Barbara Coleman of Houston for their service as course directors for the 1995 Continuing Legal Education Seminars sponsored by the Division.

Debra Crosby presented a proposal to the Board for the establishment of a task force for long-range planning. The Board voted to approve the establishment of such a task force.

The Annual Meeting was held in San Antonio on June 1-2, 1995. The Outgoing Board met on Thursday, June 1, 1995 under the

leadership of Chair, Debra Crosby.

Among the motion passed were ratification of the 1995-1996 budget, approval of the revised Procedures Manual, and renewal of the contract of Norma Hackler, Executive Director.

The Annual Meeting of the Division was held on June 2, 1995 at the Marriott Rivercenter Hotel in San Antonio. Welcoming remarks were given by Laurie Borski, Chair of the Annual Meeting Committee, Mary Rittgers, President of Alamo Association of Legal Assistants, and Debra Crosby, Division Chair. After the meeting was called to order, Debra Crosby recognized outgoing 1994-1995 Directors, and welcomed incoming 1995-1996 incoming Directors. Plaques of recognition were given to several 1994-1995 outstanding volunteers. Plaques were presented to those Directors whose terms expired May 31, 1996 and would no longer be serving on the LAD Board. Special recognition was given to course directors for CLE seminars, including Barbara Coleman (Civil Trial), Kathleen M. Harkins, CLAS (Personal Injury), and Sally Andress (Family Law). The outstanding committee chair was Javan Johnson, Chair of the Membership Committee.

All the members of the Annual Meeting Committee were recognized and thanked for their hard work. 1994-1995 Committee Chairs were recognized as follows: Laurie Borski, Annual Meeting; Adele B. Hernandez, Elections; Javan Johnson, Membership; Sally Andress, Procedures Manual; Kay Redburn, Professional Ethics; Sylvia J. Coatney, Professional Development; Eva Lisa Dockery, Public Relations; Rosa Dobbs, Public Affairs; and Christine Levy, Publications. Debra Crosby introduced the 1995-1996 Committee Chairs: Lindi Massey, Annual Meeting; Adele B. Hernandez, Elections; Javan Johnson, Membership; Melanie Villarreal, Procedures Manual; Kay Redburn, Professional Ethics; Sylvia J. Coatney, Professional Development; Eva Lisa Dockery, Public Relations; Christine Levy, Publications; and Debra Crosby, Long Range Planning Task Force.

The very entertaining luncheon speaker was Judge Jerry Buchmeyer. Gary McNeill thanked Judge Linda Thomas for her work on behalf of the Division and presented her with a piece of luggage as an expression of appreciation by Mr. McNeil and the staff of Texas Board of Legal Specialization. Judge Thomas recognized her successor, Mike Wise, as Chair of the Standing Committee on Legal Assistants. Newly board certified legal assistants were recognized and presented their certificates.

Chair Debra Crosby installed the 1995-1996 officers of the Division which included the first President and the first President-Elect of the Division. The new officers for 1995-1996 are as follows:

President: Sally Andress, TBLS Board Certified Legal Assistant - Family Law
 President-Elect: Melanie Villarreal, CLA, TBLS Board Certified Legal Assistant - Civil Trial
 Treasurer: Rhita Koches, PLS, CLAS
 Secretary: Kelly Cavin, CLAS, TBLS Board Certified Legal Assistant - Civil Trial
 Parliamentarian: Lisa Sprinkle, CLAS, TBLS Board Certified Legal Assistant - Civil Trial

Legal Assistants Division Board of Directors 1994 - 1995

Officers:

Chair:	Debra Crosby
Chair Pro Tem:	Sally Andress
Treasurer:	Rhita Koches, PLS, CLAS
Secretary:	Melanie Villarreal, CLA
Parliamentarian:	Grace Guillot, CLA

Directors:

Kristin Wilkinson	District 1, Place 1
Cathy Blackwell Jackson, CLA	District 1, Place 2
Sally Andress	District 2, Place 1
Heather T. Hart	District 2, Place 2*
Janet Norman, CLA	District 3**
Carla L. Daggett	District 4
Debra Crosby	District 5
Connie Lawrence	District 6
Kelly Cavin, CLAS	District 7
Leigh Burton, CLA	District 8
Diane McQuire	District 9
Grace Guillot, CLA	District 10
Gigi (Carlisle) Linne, CLA	District 11
Barbara Fahlender	District 12
Melinda Hicks	District 13
Rhita Koches, PLS, CLAS	District 14

Melanie D. Villarreal, CLA
Lisa Sprinkle, CLAS

District 15
District 16

*Heather T. Hart resigned and was replaced by Wendi A. Rogers, CLA

**Jan Norman resigned and was replaced by Luanne Womack, PLS