

# HISTORY OF THE PARALEGAL DIVISION OF THE STATE BAR OF TEXAS

## 1998 - 1999

The 1998-1999 Incoming Board meeting was held June 13, 1998, at the Omni Bayfront Hotel, Corpus Christi.

The Public Relations Committee reported that *Legally Speaking* has taped 36 episodes, and identified 20 cities through a cable association to target for distribution.

The Board decided to decrease the editions of the *TPJ, etc.* to twice per year, to offset the costs of the website costs.

The Continuing Education Committee advised that it had begun planning a super CLE seminar for 1999.

The Long Range Planning Task Force held its first public forum during the June 1998 Meeting in Corpus Christi. This forum was organized to gather information from Texas legal assistants regarding the legal assistant profession and any suggested criteria for entering and working in the legal assistant profession. The Task Force advised it was planning other public forums during the fiscal year in DFW/Arlington, El Paso, Tyler, and Austin/San Antonio.

The Board of Directors met with the State Bar of Texas Standing Committee on Legal Assistants during Forum XVII. Following the Texas Forum, the Fall meeting of the Board was held September 18-20, 1998, at the Red Lion Hotel, Austin. Johnny Lacy, CPA, advised the Board that it had actually realized a profit of over \$2,000.

President Buchanan advised that the Bar had a concern of the title "Executive Director" and the Board suggested a change to the term "Legal Assistants Division Coordinator" which will be included in the recommended bylaw changes.

President Buchanan reported that the LAC did not believe that regulation is necessary to protect the public from the unauthorized practice of law and also expressed a concern that the LAC was not communicating with the Bar Board.

The Continuing Education Committee reported on the progress of the super CLE event to be held in San Antonio in September 1999. The event will be marketed as "LAU" - Legal Assistants University, a CLE Program of the LAD.

The Membership Committee advised that it was looking into the possibility of putting together a membership directory.

Forty *Legally Speaking* shows have been taped and a new set is to be designed for the show taped at the El Paso Community College.

Kim Spivey was approved to fill the Director vacancy in District 12.

President Buchanan expressed his goals to strengthen the LAD relationship with the Bar and to establish a scholarship program.

President-Elect Sprinkle expressed her goals for her upcoming term, which include education through the Task Force and public forums, providing local associations with leadership development, and development of a speaker's bureau.

The Winter meeting of the Board was held on February 19-20, 1999, at the Doubletree Hotel-Campbell Centre in Dallas. The Public Relations Committee reported that the Texas Lawyer was provided with a press release regarding Legal Assistants Day. A legal assistant speakers' bureau was established. This bureau is to be used to solicit speakers for the Division seminars as well as local legal assistant association seminars and luncheons.

It was decided to provide members of the Bar Board with copies and information about the Division's *Legally Speaking* videos.

The Board voted to approve the Independent Contractor Agreement for the Executive Director for the fiscal year 1999-2000.

Javan Johnson, CLAS, of Longview was elected as President-Elect for 1999-2000. The following 1999-2000 officers were also elected: Kristine Farmer of Dallas, Parliamentarian, Rhonda Brashears of Amarillo, Secretary, and Deane Burks of El Paso, Treasurer.

A Scholarship Ad Hoc Committee was appointed to investigate the feasibility of implementing a scholarship program.

Kellie Early of Longview was selected as the 1998-1999 recipient of the Exceptional Pro Bono Service Award. Other 1998-1999 awards were determined as follows:

Chair of the Year - Nancy McLaughlin (Austin), Publications Committee Chair  
 Special Awards: Pat Hammer (Ft. Worth), Annual Meeting Committee Chair  
 Jo Ann Sims (Teague), Elections Committee Chair  
 Ellen Lockwood (San Antonio), Ethics Committee Chair

The Annual Meeting was held in Fort Worth on June 10, 1999 and the Outgoing Board met at the Radisson Plaza Hotel on June 10, 1999. In addition to President Buchanan's report, President-Elect Lisa Sprinkle reported that Ray Thomas, President of the Texas Young Lawyers Association, had reviewed the Profiling the Paralegal Profession video, and TYLA endorsed the video. Mr. Thomas prepared an endorsement letter for the Division's use in sending copies of the video to law schools in Texas. Mr. Thomas also traveled to El Paso to shoot two *Legally Speaking* videos. This year, the Division and the Bar's Legal Assistants Committee worked diligently to restore the means of communications between the two organizations. The Division adopted procedures to provide that the president of the Division would prepare a report or newsletter to send to the LAC in an effort to keep the LAC informed of the actions of the Division and the financial condition of the Division and its activities. President Buchanan advised the Board that the new chair of the LAC would be Xavier Rodriguez.

There was noted increase in membership during this fiscal year. The Outgoing Board appointed Ellen Lockwood, CLA, and Melinda Jackson as the Annual Meeting Committee Chairs for the 2000 Annual Meeting.

The Continuing Education Committee report was reviewed and discussed by the Board, and discussion was had regarding the upcoming Legal Assistant University (LAU) to be held in San Antonio in September.

The Ad Hoc Committee on District Realignment gave their report, and recommended that no redistricting be done at this time.

## Legal Assistants Division Board of Directors 1998 - 1999

### Officers:

President:	Ronald J. (Jim) Buchanan
President-Elect:	Lisa Sprinkle, CLAS
Treasurer:	Barbara Howell, HPLA
Secretary:	Melissa Sherman, CLA
Parliamentarian:	Kristine Farmer

### Directors:

Barbara Jacoby Howell, HPLA	District 1
S. Kristine Farmer	District 2
Melissa D. Sherman, CLA	District 3
Connie Gray, CLA	District 4
Debra Crosby	District 5
Jan Bufkin, CLA	District 6
Rhonda J. Brashears, CLA	District 7
Leigh Burton, CLA	District 8*
Sherry Dockery French	District 9
Martha Maze, CLA	District 10
Kim Mosley	District 11
Kimberly Spivey, CLA	District 12**
Melinda Hicks	District 13
Javan Johnson, CLAS	District 14
Mike Sinder	District 15***
Deane Burks, CLAS	District 16

\*Appointed prior to the Fall Board Meeting to fill vacancy that was declared at the June Board Meeting

\*\*Appointed at the Fall Board meeting following the resignation of Jo Mandy Smithers

\*\*\*Monica Salazar Flores resigned in December 1998; Mike Sinder was appointed in February 1999 to complete the fiscal year 1998-1999 as District 15 Director