

THE WOMEN'S ADVOCATE A CATALYST FOR 2003

Women and the Law Section Newsletter
www.txwomenlawsection.org

Winter 2004

Vol. 26, No. 1



2003-2004 WAL OFFICERS AND COUNCIL

CHAIR

Judy L. Ney
12242 Brookvalley Dr.
Houston, Texas 77071
Office: 713/723-1937
E-Mail: judylneyjd@aol.com

CHAIR-ELECT

Teresa Oxford
Law Office of Teresa A. Oxford
519 S. Presa
San Antonio, Texas 78205
Office: 210/227-3200
E-Mail: teresaoxford@sbcglobal.net

VICE-CHAIR/MEMBERSHIP

D'Metria Benson
Law Office of D'Metria Benson
1920 Abrams Parkway, LB 398
Dallas, Texas 75214
Office: 214/320-4853

VICE-CHAIR/NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Lisa Smith
David Van Os & Associates, P.C.
1606 N. Alamo Street
San Antonio, Texas 78215
Office: 210/225-1955
E-Mail: lisa@vanoslaw.com

SECRETARY

Mara Aysa Blatt
500 E. San Antonio, 12th Floor
El Paso, Texas 79901
Office: 915/546-2240

TREASURER

Lisa R. Hernandez
Easley & Marquis, L.L.C.
5000 Legacy Drive, Suite 400
Plano, Texas 75024
Office: 972/578-9597 x131
E-Mail: lhernandez@easleyandmarquis.com

CHRONOLOGIST

Suzanne Duvall
Burdin Mediations
4080 Stanford Ave.
Dallas, Texas 75225
Office: 214/361-0802

IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR

Misty M. Ventura
Hughes & Luce
1717 Main St., Suite 2800
Dallas, Texas 75201
Office: 214/939-5462
E-Mail: VENTURM@HughesLuce.com

EMERITUS VOTING MEMBER

Louise B. Raggio, Dallas

COUNCIL TERMS EXPIRING 2005

Georgina Benavides, McAllen
Kathy Cannon, Austin
ronnie Harrison, Houston
Carolyn Moore, Lubbock
Carmen Samaniego, San Antonio

COUNCIL TERMS EXPIRING 2004

Ralph H. Brock, Lubbock
Avo Stevens Butler, Sherman
Sherry Wetsch, Houston
Jennifer Rustay, Houston

BOARD ADVISORS

Kim J. Askew, Dallas
Linda R. Butter, Longview

AROUND THE STATE

The Texas Women Lawyers will host its annual CLE on Saturday February 28, 2004 in El Paso. The day-long program on "Building Bridges" will offer 6.75 hours of CLE, net working opportunities and career advice from female attorney role models who involved in many aspects of the practice of law.

Sen. Eliot Shapleigh will speak on the "State of the Legislature and its Impact on Women. Education and Law will be a prominent feature of the day. Professor Shelli Soto and Dr. Robert Pallitto, both of the University of Texas, El Paso, will speak on affirmative action. Daisy Floyd, professor of law at Texas Tech University School of Law will speak about becoming a law professor. Politics and Law will follow. The Honorable Richard Barajas, 8th District Court of Appeals will discuss judicial ethics, and Patricia Madrid, Attorney General for the state of New Mexico, will speak on seeking statewide office. Immigration and Law will be discussed at mid-day. The Honorable Kathleen H. Olivares, Judge, 205th Judicial District Court, Texas, and Dr. Kathy Standr and Dr. Irasema Coronado, both of the University of Texas, El Paso, will discuss "Violence Against Women on the U.S.-Mexico Border." The afternoon will focus on Leadership and Law. The Honorable Kathleen Cardone, Judge U.S. District Court, Western District of Texas, and the Honorable Bea Ann Smith, Justice of the Third District Court of Appeals, will talk of becoming a judge and helping women on the bench. Ms. Sharla Frost, Esq. of Powers & Frost in Houston, will present a seminar on "rainmaking." Texas State Bar President Betsy Whitaker and Ms. Lisa Pennington, Esq., Managing Partner of Baker & Hostetler in Houston will discuss "Leadership: Getting There and Making a Difference." Ms. Gloria Allred, Esq., of Allred, Maroko and Goldberg, Los Angeles, California, will discuss "The Treatment of Women in High Profile Cases."

The "Building Bridges" program is approved for 6.75 hours of CLE and ethics credit, and will cost \$195 for non-members of Texas Women Lawyers. The charge for members is \$145. For more information, contact Jeanne Collins, Program Chair, Kemp Smith LLP in El Paso.

continued on next page

The SBOT Women and the Law Section is currently seeking nominations for the 2004-2005 year. If you are interested in being nominated, or would like to nominate someone, for an officer or council position with the SBOT Women and the Law Section please contact Teresa A. Oxford at (210) 227-3200 or teresaoxford@sbcglobal.net

With the New Year, the Bexar County Women's Bar Association Wills Clinic becomes a monthly event. This will mean that the BCWBA will be able to provide these services to approximately 20 low income elderly every month. Additionally, the

BCWBA's Elder Law Handbook has been updated and will be reprinted this spring. This free guide is printed in both English and Spanish, providing important information to services for the elderly.

The Bexar County Women's Bar Association is also pleased to announce that it will sponsor the Women and the Law Section annual meeting to be held in San Antonio on June 24, 2004 in conjunction with the State Bar of Texas annual meeting. We hope to welcome you all to San Antonio.

AROUND THE COUNTRY

The American Bar Association "Commission on Women in the Profession" meets on February 8 in San Antonio, Texas. This year, the legal issues to be discussed include: immigrant children's rights, indigent defense, guardianship and municipal law. Other topics affecting the profession of law include: marketing, racial and ethnic diversity, business development and leadership.

The ABA Commission on Women will launch its first Women in Law Leadership Academy on April 16-17 in Chicago, Illinois. The Academy's purpose is to empower women lawyers with less than ten years' practice experience, to enhance

their skills, to motivate them to stay in the profession, and to promote mentoring and networking. Registration information is available at www.abanet.org/women or call the Commission at 312-988-5715.

The 14th Annual Margaret Brent Lawyers of Achievement Awards Luncheon will be held at the Annual Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia on Sunday, August 10, 2004. The award is in recognition of women lawyers who have excelled in their field. For more information, call the Commission at 312-988-5715.

TEXAS TORNADO: LOUISE RAGGIO

By Carolyn Moore

During the summer, I read three books written by women about their lives. Only one, **Texas Tornado: The Autobiography of a Crusader for Women's Rights and Family Justice**, by Louise Raggio, really captured my attention because the author, in talking about her life, held nothing back, while demonstrating the meaning of commitment to her husband and to her sons and their families. The other two books, by Hillary Clinton and Queen Noor, skimmed the surface when talk-

ing about troubling aspects of their lives and neither wrote about receiving unconditional love from their parents.

Louise, an only child, wrote extensively about her parents' commitment to her. She said that her parents, who were desperate to have a child, gave her unconditional love. She credited their love toward her as helping her deal with all of life's challenges. She described her good fortune in having

a mother who insisted that her child have a good education, often giving extra assignments to Louise to study, learn, and recite. Louise often memorized various writings that her mother located so that Louise could participate in different programs presented in their small farming community located near Austin, Texas. While attending The University of Texas at Austin, Louise studied in a rocking chair specially equipped by her father. He designed and made a wooden circle to fit over the chair so that Louise would have a place to write on, as well as rest her books and arms on while studying.

In undergraduate school, Louise discovered that some aspects of her religious training, such as the age of the world, were in conflict with acknowledged scientific facts. Since she believed everything she had been taught about her religion, she asked her minister to explain the discrepancies she learned in college. He responded that young women should not be attending school. She left that particular religion and became a Unitarian Universalist, learning that religion and fact did not have to conflict.

Louise knew that her mother wanted her to excel in life and knew that her father would be happy with whatever she chose to do. She chose to excel. For example, after completing an undergraduate degree, she served as a White House Intern during the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt. She often cooked for the other thirty-nine interns, who were impressed with her culinary skills because none of them knew how to cook. She formed life-long relationships with some of those interns, particularly with James MacGregor Burns.

When Louise returned from Washington, D. C. to Texas, she began working, established new friendships, married, and reared a family. Louise recognized and dealt with her mother's less than loving attitude toward Greer Raggio, who swept Louise off her feet and convinced her to marry him even

though most people, including Louise, believed that she would marry another man. Louise never wavered in the special loving bond she and Greer created; however, she recognized how his upbringing, his jealousy, his unfortunate experiences in the military, and his being labeled, for a time, un-American, brought extra tension to their relationship. Nevertheless, she never failed to live up to her commitment as a loyal and loving wife, understanding that Greer, too, was committed to her, their marriage, and their three sons. Indeed, she wrote that Greer was most often the one individual who could help her the most during very turbulent periods, including the times she struggled with depression. Because Louise loved her sons and had seen the effects of her mother's attitude and comments to and about Greer, she wrote that she was determined to create a loving environment with the women her sons chose to marry.

Most family lawyers today recognize the name Louise Raggio and know about the contributions she has made to change laws in Texas to help women after she completed law school and began practicing law with Greer in Dallas. In her book, she commented that she spent much of her life "correcting some of the flaws, limitations, and omissions that govern the treatment of family members."

There is a quote in **In The World According to Mister Rogers: Important Things to Remember by Fred Rogers** that I believe sums up what Louise told us about her upbringing and also tells us how she has been able to accomplish so much in her life:

"I believe that infants and babies whose mothers give them loving comfort whenever and however they can are truly the fortunate ones. I think they're more likely to find life's times of trouble manageable, and I think they may also turn out to be the adults most able to pass loving concern along to the generations that follow after them."

STATE BAR OF TEXAS
P.O. Box 12487
Austin, Texas 78711-2487

NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION

U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 1804
AUSTIN, TEXAS