



Summer 2009

THE SIDEBAR

Southwest Louisiana Bar Association Journal



Among the many participants at the SWLBA 2009 Bench Bar Conference were Immediate Past President Kendrick J. Guidry (right) and Shane Hinch, who are reviewing the list of sponsors for “Cruisin on the U.S.S. Bench Bar”.



Participating in a panel discussion at the 2009 Bench Bar Conference are left to right, Judge Gene Thibodeaux, Judge Jimmie C. Peters , Judge Billy H. Ezell, Judge David Painter and Judge James T. Genovese, all of the Third Circuit Court of Appeal.

SWLBA 2009 Bench Bar Conference Is Great Success

By Paul P. Reggie, Esq., Chairman, 2009 Bench Bar Conference

The 2009 Bench Bar Conference was again held at The Houstonian Hotel , Club and Spa on April 16-19, 2009, and it was another huge success. We have had nothing but positive feedback from the attendees. The event started off Thursday evening with a happy hour and early registration social.

Without participation from the judges, this conference would not be possible. Thanks to all the judges who participated in Bench Bar. We hope to have many more in 2010. I want to thank the sponsors of the Bench Bar Conference. Without your financial support none of this would be possible.

If you were not able to join us this year, we hope you will consider joining us in 2010. Dates are set for March 18-20, 2010 again by popular demand at the Houstonian Hotel, Club and Spa. Plans are underway for another successful conference headed by 2010 Bench Bar Conference Chairman Robert C. McCorquodale.

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John B. "Spike" Scofield, of Scofield, Gerard, Singletary & Pohorelsky responds to a question during the Bench Bar Conference at The Houstonian .

MEMBERS OF LAKE CHARLES COMMUNITY AND MEMBERS OF THE BAR ARE HONORED

Attorney Michael Cox presented the Judge Albert Tate Jr. Chapter American Inns of Court Professionalism Award to his father and longtime attorney William 'Will' Cox at the SWLBA's annual Law Day ceremony on May 8, 2009.

The Young Lawyers Section of the Southwest Louisiana Bar Association also presented awards for its Law Day poster and essay contest to local students grades pre-k through five.

The SWLBA's Law Enforcement Award was presented by Sheriff Tony Mancuso to the widow of Capt. Warren McFatter who was, at the time of his death, chief of court house security for the Sheriff's Office. McFatter died last December from cancer. At the time of his death he had been a deputy for 27 years.

The SWLBA's Liberty Bell Award was presented to veterans' advocate Paul Labbe.

SWLBA adds Worker's Compensation specialty to lists of sections

The SWLBA proudly debuted its new Worker's Compensation Section at a well attended luncheon on March 23, 2009 at Pat's of Henderson. Chief Judge Sheral Kellar spoke at the luncheon

Section dues are \$25 per year. Interested members of the SWLBA should contact Section Chair Jeff Cole for further information.

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Bench Bar Conference

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Friday's golf tournament had to be cancelled due to severe weather. However, it was rescheduled and held at the Lake Charles Country Club. Thanks to sponsors from Outback and Graywood Country Club. The winners received gift certificates. Thanks to Judge Kent Savoie for spearheading the event .

The weather did not impact the tennis outing sponsored by Stockwell, Sievert, Viccellio, Clements & Shaddock. Thanks to that firm and Sonny Marks for arranging the event and for the fast foot work in locating indoor courts to accommodate the players. Conference attendees and their guests enjoyed an evening of cocktails and hors d'oeuvres at the Manor House on Friday. A Houston landmark, the Manor House is located on the grounds of The Houstonian and offered an elegant and refined atmosphere for our social.

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Bench Bar Conference

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Conference attendees were able to obtain six CLE hours, including professionalism and ethics. Louisiana Supreme Court Justice Jeannette Theriot Knoll discussed several cases decided by a 4-3 vote and questioned the outcome of similar future cases in light of recent changes in the Court's composition. We were thrilled and honored to have eight of the 12 Third Circuit Court of Appeal judges attend and participate as well as the many state district court and city judges who attended.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the outstanding ethics presentation made by Judge Sam Lowery of the Workers Compensation Court. For those who missed it, you missed one of the most colorful ethics presentations ever. Attendees also heard from three masters of the law, Spike Scofield, Maurice Tynes and Allen Smith. Many thanks.

News about our Members

Judge Ulysses Gene Thibodeaux, Chief Judge of the Third Circuit Court of Appeal was recently recognized for his work in the area of judicial and lawyer education with an award from the Louisiana State Bar Association which was presented June 12.

Shayna L. Sonnier was elected secretary of the Louisiana State Bar Association Young Lawyers Section for 2009-2010, Congratulations and thanks for all of your hard work.

SWLBA Announces Formation of the Southwest Louisiana Bar Foundation

By Paul P. Reggie, Esq.

It is with great pleasure that the SWLBA announces formation of the Southwest Louisiana Bar Foundation. The mission of the Foundation is to foster confidence in the law, lawyers and the judiciary and encourage altruism among the legal profession and the general public. The Foundation will support worthy causes of a charitable nature related to the legal profession and will help to remove barriers and provide access to the justice system.

All SWLBA members in good standing are members of the Southwest Louisiana Bar Foundation. There are no additional dues associated with Foundation membership. At the SWLBA general luncheon meeting on October 16, elections will be held to fill six (6) Foundation Board of Director positions. If you are interested in participating, please contact a member of the SWLBA Executive Council.

One of the Foundation's first projects will be to hire a coordinator to establish and run a pro bono program to serve the indigent population in Southwest Louisiana. We are excited about the opportunity to expand legal services to the poor in our area. As you may know, the Louisiana Bar Foundation administers the IOLTA program and accepts applications from legal services entities. The LBF is a grant-making and fund-raising organization and awards grants to other local bar foundations across the state. On a local level, the Southwest Louisiana Bar Foundation will function as a grant-receiving organization and a provider of legal programs and services to our community. The need for pro bono services in our area far exceeds the services that our new pro bono program will provide, which is why we will continue to encourage support of the other legal aid organizations in our community, such as the Southwest Louisiana Law Center and Acadiana Legal Services Corporation.

Special thanks to Theresa Barnatt for spearheading the creation of the Foundation and doing the legwork to get it off the ground, and to the Louisiana Bar Foundation for providing guidance and networking with other local bar foundations.

Young Lawyers Win Annual Softball Tournament

By Jonathan Johnson, Esq.

On May 2, the Young Lawyers Section of the SWLBA hosted and won the annual softball tournament held at the O.D. Johnson Softball Complex.

Participating in the tournament were teams from Robichaux, Mize, Wadsack & Richardson, the 14th Judicial District Judges Offices, Calcasieu Parish District Attorney's Office, Plauche, Smith & Nieset and the Young Lawyers Section.

The Young Lawyers met the judges in what was certainly a grudge match fueled by a year's worth of build up caused by last year's winner and this year's runner up. The game was tight but the Young Lawyers pulled away late in the tournament to secure the 2009 championship and an undefeated record throughout the tournament.

The District Attorneys team took third place.

The Robichaux team won the best jersey trophy and was certainly the crowd's favorite with a strong showing in this first year of competition.

We hope the 2010 tournament will be as successful as this one.

A big thanks to everyone who made this event possible including Scofield, Gerard, Singletary & Pohorelsky for sponsoring the Young Lawyers Team, Carl Rachal and Ginger Vidrine for paying the bar tab. We could not have done it without you.



Participating in a Judges' panel during the 2009 SWLBA Bench Bar Conference were Judges from the Third Circuit Court of Appeal including (from left to right) Judges John D. Saunders, Gene Thibodeaux, Jimmie C. Peters, Billy H. Ezell, David Painter, James T. Genovese and Shannon J. Gremillion.

Worker's Compensation continued from p.2

Activities planned for the year include a workshop for law office personnel at the Worker's Compensation Office, a review in the fall by section Vice Chair Mark Zimmerman of Third Circuit workers compensation decisions from 2009 and a happy hour social gathering. The new worker's compensation section is off to a good start. All attorneys who handle worker's compensation matters are urged to join the section and help promote its goal of furthering interest, activity, research and collegiality among worker's compensation attorneys.

SWLBA PROPOSED SLATE OF OFFICERS AND COUNCIL FOR 2010

The Nominating Committee of the Southwest Louisiana Bar Association recommends the following proposed slate for the 2010 Executive Council:

President Elect- Robert C McCorquodale

Treasurer: Cary W. Vercher

Secretary: Betty A. Raglin

Two (2) Members at Large:

John R Pohorelsky

Todd S. Clemons

Nominating Procedures for Additional Candidates

A President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer and two (2) members at large for the Executive Council are needed for 2010. The parties listed above are those recommended by the Nominating Committee. Additional nominations for these positions will be accepted until midnight September 30, 2009. The Nominating Committee will contact each additional nominee to determine if he/she is willing to serve. All nominations are to be mailed to Nominating Committee, SWLBA, Post Office Box 191, Lake Charles, La. 70602.

Thanks to 2009 Bench Bar

Conference Sponsors

The Captains: Baggett, McCall, Burgess, Watson and Gaughan ; Cox, Cox, Filo, Camel & Wilson, L.L.P.; Larry A. Roach, Inc.; Richard Law Firm, L.L.C.

The Chief Officers: Vernon, Bice, Palermo & Wilson, L.L.C.; Louisiana State Bar Association;; Lundy, Lundy, Soileau & South, L.L.P.; Mudd & Bruchhaus, L.L.C.; Plauche,Smith & Nieset; Ranier, Gayle & Elliot, L.L.C.; Scofield, Gerard, Singletary & Pohorelsky, L.L.C.; Stockwell, Sievert, Viccellio, Clements & Shaddock, L.L.P.; The Hanchey Law Firm, L.L.C.; Townsley Law Firm, L.L.P.

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The Sidebar is a publication of the Southwest Louisiana Bar Association. It is published quarterly.

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President-Elect-Paul P. Reggie

Treasurer-Robert C. McCorquodale

Secretary- Ginger Vidrine

Immediate Past President-Kendrick J. Guidry

At Large Members of the Executive Council

Betty A. Raglin

Carl J. Rachal

Cary W. Vercher

Shayna L. Sonnier

Jonathan L. Johnson

Chantell M. Smith

Todd H. Melton

Jeffrey M. Cole

Executive Director-Adel Murphy

Editor: Betsy Doucet

The Sidebar is a publication of the Southwest Louisiana Bar Association. We need and welcome articles from members of the Bar including judges, lawyers , Clerks of Court .

Articles can be emailed to Betsy Doucet at doucet-law@netcommander.com