



Equal Times®

BEXAR COUNTY WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION

DECEMBER 2010

From the President

By Christine Reinhard

Wow! I can't believe a year has flown by, but time flies when you're having fun. And I have certainly had fun this year. I hope you too have enjoyed the many events and activities the BCWB has held, and will plan to join us again next year. Remember to bring a friend along too!

As is fitting as well as tradition (being an Aggie, tradition is important!), my last message will focus on the wonderful people who have made my job as President easy. I first must recognize the terrific women with whom I have served as Officers and Directors of the BCWB. I am deeply honored to have worked with each of

you this year. You put in tireless hours that often were or are not recognized. At the same time, you represent this organization so very well, and I know you will continue to do so long into the future. Kudos and thanks to each and every one of you!



I cannot forget two women who served as Directors part of this year, but moved away from San Antonio, **Laura Rodriguez** and **Toti Walia**. I truly enjoyed working with you throughout the years and even more so getting to know you both as friends. You are definitely missed, but we wish you well (con'd on p. 5)

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Reminder – Please Vote by December 3rd!

By Laura C. Mason



Please make sure to cast your vote for our Officers and Directors for the 2011 calendar year! Official ballots have been mailed, and contain voting instructions. Completed ballots must be RECEIVED by 5 p.m. Friday, December 3, 2010 in order to be included in the tally.

The slate of Officers is as follows:

- President-Elect: Emma Cano
- Vice President: Suzanne Oliva
- Treasurer-Elect: Marissa Helm
- Secretary: Danielle Hargrove

We have 7 vacancies on the Board of Directors. The candidates for the Board of Directors are:

- Lorie Blount
- Gaylia Brunson
- Maurleen Cobb
- Monica Lerma
- Julia Mann
- Katherine Patton
- Jamie Rose
- Brenda Ryan
- Larissa Sanchez
- Hella Scheuerman
- Nada Ismail Taha
- Brittany Wild

We have a wonderful slate of candidates – please remember to vote! If you have any questions, please contact Laura Mason, Nominating Committee Chair at 210-299-2324 or via e-mail at lmason@obht.com.



Membership Renewal! Read All About It!

By Natalie L. Hall

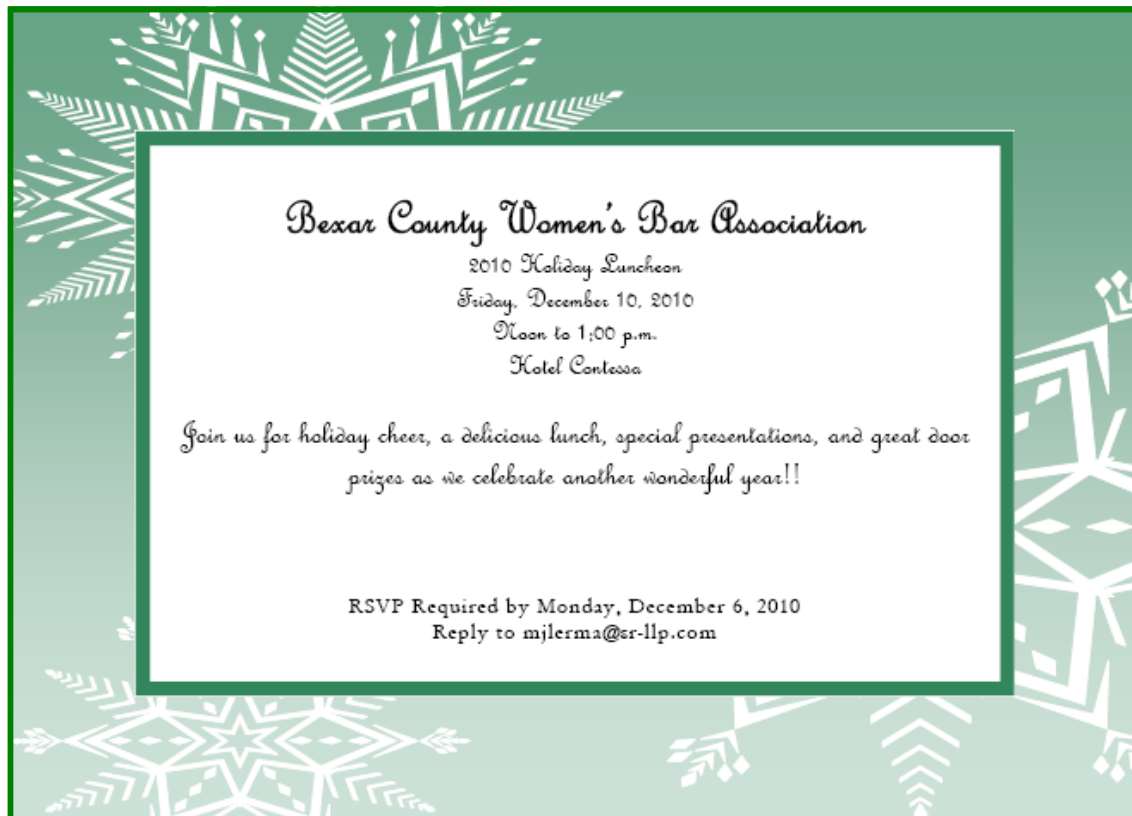
Dear BCWBA Members!

It is time to renew your membership for 2011 and/or join the BCWBA! You will be receiving your 2011 membership renewal form in the mail and you can return it to us for processing. You can also renew your membership online! Simply go to www.bexarcountywomensbar.org. Log in (if you forgot your login information, it will be e-mailed to you by clicking that option) and click “about us” and then choose the appropriate renewal or membership application (i.e. attorney, student...). You can pay your dues by credit card or send in a check.

Please note that after polling the BCWBA members, we have decided to increase our membership dues for the first time in over five years! While the increase is nominal, the dues increase will help the BCWBA continue to support so many amazing efforts. The amount going to the Foundation is also being increased from \$10 to \$15. Below are the current dues.

Law Student/St. Mary’s WLA Member	\$0
Inactive Lawyer, Non-Lawyer Friend, Legal Assistant or Paralegal	\$35
Attorney Licensed 0-12 months	\$15
Attorney Licensed 1-3 years	\$55
Attorney Licensed 3 year or more	\$65

Please don’t delay! Renew your BCWBA membership (or join for the first time) today!



Community Service Corner

By Michelle Weekley



It's the most wonderful time of the year! Yep, Christmas time is upon us and even though we may be pretty busy with our own family preparations, there is still a way for you to help make a difference in the lives of others.

Come join Bexar County Women's Bar on December 14th from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. to help wrap Christmas presents at Seton Home. Seton Home is a residential facility that provides housing and supportive services for pregnant and parenting teens and their children. Many of the resident teens are homeless or have been placed at the facility through Child Protective Services. Each year, the San Antonio community donates gift items for the teens and children residing at Seton Home. However, Seton Home needs help making those gifts extra special. By wrapping and decorating the gifts, volunteers, like us, serve as Santa's elves and ensure needy children in our area are not forgotten over the holiday season. Bring your favorite snack or appetizer, and any extra supplies you may have at home to wrap the presents. You can RSVP to Hella Scheuerman at hschc@allstate.com.

Or what about doing something for our service men and women? Did you know that you can write letters and send holiday cards to our American Service members, their families and veterans all over the world? Anyone can send a card and you can send as many as you would like! Send all letters and cards to: Holiday Mail for Heroes, PO Box 5456, Capital Heights, MD 20791-5456. The deadline for this year is December 10th. If cards are not postmarked by this date they cannot be delivered.

What about our furry little friends? Well you can be both fashionable and philanthropic by buying a t-shirt or other pet-inspired clothing from iRescueRover.org. Your donation will help feed a shelter dog for a week. Or become a member of the ASPCA at aspc.org where for as little as \$20 you can help feed an abandoned dog or cat for 3 weeks. Or grab the kids and you can help with dog-walking duty here at our very own Humane Society!

This year, many sick children will have to stay in the hospital this Christmas. You can help make the situation a little less scary with the nonprofit Quilts for Kids, which helps provide handmade quilts to young patients across the country. Through this program (sponsored by Downy) it makes it easy for you to get involved in its do-good efforts by offering free quilting kits at downy.com. What a wonderful way for you and your children to make a difference in a sick child's life.

Have any old glasses you don't know what to do with? You can donate them to New Eyes for the Needy, which distributes glasses to needy individuals. You can even help sponsor a collection drive via neweyesfortheneedy.org. (con'd on p. 7)

From the President (con'd)

in your new home towns!

Each BCWB activity, event, or communication this year has been brought to life by outstanding Committee Chairs and Members. If I miss anyone in my recognition below, please accept my apologies in advance. A huge heartfelt "thanks" is due to the following (and in no particular order):

Shannon Schmoyer (my super law partner!) and her Retreat Committee, for putting on a fabulous two-day retreat full of CLE.

Regina Stone-Harris, for her patience and for distributing an outstanding newsletter each month.

Connie Basel, for bringing us into the 21st century through our improved website.

Priscilla Camacho, for arranging a wonderful President's Party.

Marissa Helm, for rejuvenating our annual Fox Tech Law Day Lunch and Poster contest.

Monica Lerma, for coordinating our terrific luncheons throughout the year.

Hella Scheuerman, for bringing in a gubernatorial candidate as a luncheon speaker.

Jamie Rose and **Tiffanie Clausewitz**, for organizing a delicious Central Market CLE.

Michelle Weekly and her Community Service Committee, for enlightening us about the community service opportunities available in and around San Antonio.

Graciela Alarcon-Cigarroa and her Elder Law Handbook Committee, for updating and producing a new edition of the much needed Elder Law Handbook.

Beverly Smith, **Nishma Shah**, and **Teresa Reyes Bonar**, for setting up terrific mentor-mentee events.

Natalie Hall, for enlivening and drumming up new members.

Danielle Hargrove, for ensuring our investments have grown in this crazy economic year.

Rodney McGee, for being our often lone male and continuing to support the BCWB.

Kim Tindall, for jumping in to help with every BCWB event possible.

Elsa Marie Garza, for supplying us with pictorial mementos for years to come.

Monica Trollinger, for her guidance and giving me big shoes to fill!

Of course, I would be horribly remiss if I did not give a special shout out to the two outstanding Autumn Affair Co-Chairs we had this year, your 2011 President **Laura Mason** and Director **Tiffanie Clausewitz**. I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed working with both of you. You led a fabulous Committee (*merci* to each Committee member too!), and held a beautiful and memorable event. It simply would not have happened without your hard work, dedication, and passion. Thank you so much for being the magnificent Aggies and friends you both are!

Last but certainly not least, I must thank my wonderful husband, **Zane Reinhard**. Although he rolls his eyes and sighs every time I say yes, he always has been supportive and there for me. As many of you may have witnessed, he himself has given countless hours at Bench Brunch/Autumn Affair over the years. I could not have a more outstanding and terrific partner in life. I love you honey!

Don't forget to join us for our Holiday Luncheon on December 10th and best wishes for 2011!

A Tribute to My Helen

By Margaret Jones Hopson



My life and that of my family changed forever on September 15, 2009, the day I learned that my precious daughter, Helen, my first born, had passed away just days before her 23rd birthday. “Honey, she’s gone,” my mother said, speaking of Helen – news no mother should have to deliver to her child about a beloved granddaughter. “Gone where,” I asked, unable to grasp what my mother was telling me. “It’s Helen, she’s passed away.” For a moment I went blank, only to quickly be assaulted by pain like I had never known. That pain was made greater by finding out the unthinkable; my beautiful, vivacious, sweet, intelligent daughter had taken her own life.

From almost the moment I learned of my beloved daughter’s passing, I resolved that I would not let her death be for naught. My beautiful girl, who had so often been there for others, never indicated that she was distressed – certainly not to any degree that would raise concerns. I knew that the only way to assuage the pain of not having the opportunity to help my own daughter would be to find a way to try to help others.

It took almost a year for my family to decide just how we would put our need to help others in Helen’s memory and thanksgiving for her life into action. The younger generation took the lead, deciding that we should support the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) the nation’s leader in suicide awareness and prevention initiatives as well as programs aimed at those who have lost a loved one to suicide.

In January, we are hosting an Out of the Darkness Community Walk to benefit the AFSP in my home town, Laredo, Texas, where Helen was raised as a little girl and where she is buried. I am currently in second place in fundraising, out of over 70,000 people participating in walks such as ours nationwide. My goal is to be the top fundraiser, and to serve the AFSP on the national level.

Donating on-line is safe and easy. Simply search for my name on www.outofthedarkness.org and click “support this participant.” If you would rather donate by check, please make the check out to AFSP and mail it in with the offline donation form.

I firmly believe that the first step to attacking the problem of suicide is to dispel the stigma that surrounds suicide and emotional health issues. While it is not easy to speak of my precious Helen falling victim to suicide, failing to take action would be to reduce Helen’s life to the manner in which she passed away, which I refuse to do.

Thank you for considering donating to the walk, and helping to bring suicide out of the darkness. I leave you with the words I read at Helen’s memorial service, and invite you, during this holiday season, to reflect on how fortunate we are to be blessed with the gift of children and the capacity to love as only a mother can.

A Mother's Love

A mother's love is something that no one can explain. It is greater than human understanding, for it is given of God, just as the privilege of motherhood is given of God.

All children are gifts from God. Helen was the first of three priceless treasures God gave to me. From the first time I gazed into her beautiful blue eyes, right after delivering her, I knew that I was captivated by something larger and more wonderful than I had ever known, larger than life itself.



Margaret's favorite photo of Helen

A mother's love never fails or falters. Nothing can destroy it, nothing can take it away. Though my heart is breaking, my love for Helen is greater than any pain, than any grief, for I know that I was privileged to bear and raise this beautiful girl, and even death cannot dampen my love for Helen.

Because our children are a gift from God, I believe it is not ours to question how long we get to hold that gift. Some flames burn so bright, they burn out quickly. Helen was that kind of beautiful vibrant flame, whose warmth and light drew others unto her. Your presence here today is evidence of that, and I thank you for being here to help celebrate Helen's life.

Though Helen is gone from this world, my love for her glows with all the beauty of the rarest, brightest gems. Nothing can diminish a mother's love. Nothing can extinguish it.

My heart will be filled with this splended, miraculous love, not only for Helen, but for Elizabeth and Steeves, all the rest of my days. When I come to the end of my days, I will be reunited with my precious girl, for today she does not leave us, she has simply gone ahead. 9-19-2009

Community Service Corner (con'd)

And last, but not least! Want an easy way to help stamp out hunger? Go to HuddleToFightHunger.com. Every time you watch a video, download recipes, or join celebrities in a special online community, Kraft Foods will donate a meal (up to 20 million) to Feeding America, a national hunger relief organizations.

And there you have! There is still plenty of time to help out before the end of the year. Some with a simple trip to a place like Seton Home, or with just the click of your mouse on your computer. Help make a difference in another's live and it will make your Christmas all that much more merry! Merry Christmas!