



# The Permian Basin Docket Call

## **FALL SEMINAR A GREAT SUCCESS**

The 7th Annual Fall Seminar was held at Odessa Country Club in Odessa, Texas on October 7, 2005. Approximately 74 legal professionals attended the seminar, which included speakers from the bar, bench, and academic communities. Judge Stacy Trotter presided over the event. Justice Strange was sworn in before lunch by Texas Supreme Court Justice Phil Johnson, who also presented an appellate update. Texas Bar

President Eduardo Rodriguez was the Keynote Speaker and presented awards to Vivian Wood and Jackie Sue Barnes as well as the Connell Ashley Award to Roy Bell. Other speakers included, Associate Dean Shannon from Texas Tech Law School and Professor Osler from Baylor Law School as well as 11th Court of Appeals, Chief Justice Wright; 238th District Court Judge Hyde; Associate Judge Wilson; and Texas State Senator Seliger.

## **JUSTICE RICK G. STRANGE TAKES OATH OF OFFICE**

Rick Strange, a former shareholder in the law firm of Cotton, Bledsoe, Tighe and Dawson in Midland, Texas was sworn in on Friday, October 7, 2005 at the Odessa Country Club in Odessa, Texas, as an Associate Justice of the Texas Court of Appeals, 11th District of Texas, in Eastland, Texas.

Rick Strange, a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene and the University of Texas Law School, was sworn in by Texas Supreme Court Justice Phil Johnson.

Justice Johnson was in attendance at the Seminar because he had just given an appellate update speech

to more than 70 legal professionals who attended the seminar.

Justice Strange, a 45 year old Midland lawyer and a Floydada native, realized his goal of becoming a judge when Governor Perry appointed him to fill a vacancy on the Eastland Court of Appeals. Strange will join Chief Justice Wright and Justice McCall on the court.

Jim Wright was appointed to the Chief Justice's position to fill the vacancy left by the retirement of William "Bud" Arnot III, 55, formerly of Abilene, who left the court in late July to join a Houston law firm.

## **2005 Holiday Dinner**

MCBA has set December 9, 2005 for the Holiday Dinner and Silent Auction at the Midland Country Club in Midland, Texas. All legal professionals and their families are invited. Dinner will cost \$32.50 per person. The evening's activities will include dinner and a silent auction as well as holiday piano music provided by Phyllis Maddox.

Proceeds from the silent auction will be donated to a local charity to help with holiday needs for those less fortunate in the Midland Community. Items are needed for the Silent Auction, so please consider donating an item to this event. You may get more info from Mike Willson at 685-8567.

Strange was quoted in the Midland Reporter Telegram as stating, "I have enjoyed trying lawsuits for the last 20 years and I look forward to this as an opportunity to help resolve problems and help the judicial system move along." Strange and his wife Carole have two daughters, Katie, a Hardin-Simmons freshman, and Susan, a Trinity School junior.

Justice Wright and Strange have an Investiture Ceremony scheduled for October 19, 2005 at 3:00 p.m. at the Eleventh Court of Appeals Courtroom, 100 West Main Street, Third Floor, Eastland, Texas.

**LAA/PB Job Bank**  
see webpage: [www.laapb.org](http://www.laapb.org)

## West Texas Bench Bar Plans

MCBA and ECBA are considering hosting a West Texas Bench Bar Conference in April 2006. We would like to hear from the members on those who would be interested in attending such an event. Please answer the survey questions on the dues notice included in this newsletter and return it with your dues' check. Anyone who has ideas or wants to help with this event should contact Mike Willson at 685-8567.

### Texas Bar Law Practice Management Information

The bar would like to make you aware of a special website that has been created by lawyers/technologists from around the country to help other lawyers and law firms affected by Katrina. This is the same group that was also very effective in providing quick help to lawyers after the 9/11 attacks.

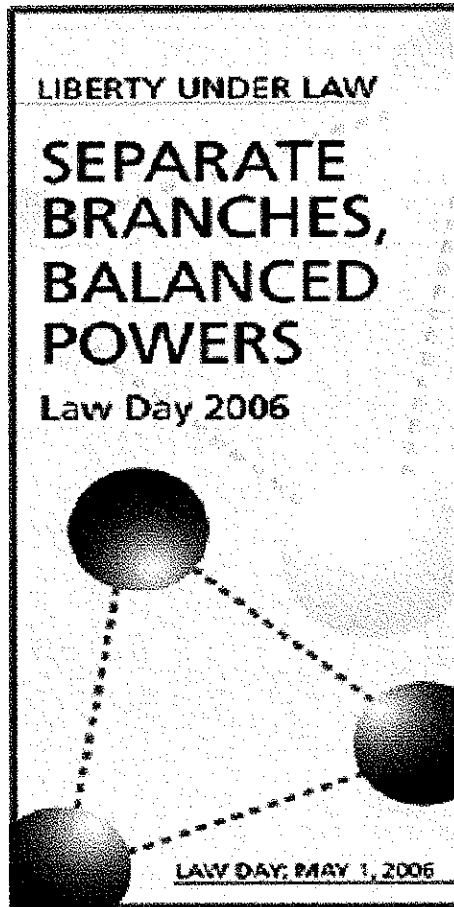
It is a specialized resource consisting of a volunteer database and related articles focused on providing legal technology, practice management and disaster/data recovery assistance.

Please let your members know that this resource exists and help us spread the word to those who need our help at this time.

The website is: [www.helpkatrinalawyers.org](http://www.helpkatrinalawyers.org)

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## 2006 LAW DAY ESSAY CONTEST ANNOUNCED



The 2006 Law Day Essay Contest hosted by MCBA and MCYLA has begun. Notices went to all area high schools on October 1, 2005. The contest runs until March 3, 2006. All 9th through 12th grade students are eligible to submit one typewritten essay of 500 words. The awards are \$1,500.00 for first place, \$1,000.00 for second place, and \$600.00 for third place. Honorable Mention awards of \$125.00 also may be awarded. Awards will be presented at the May 5, 2006 Law Day Luncheon at the Midland Center in Midland, Texas. You may get more information from Mike Willson at 685-8567. A copy of the contest rules and entry form are included with this newsletter.

## Presidents' Column

I am excited about the 2005-06 bar year for Midland. We have several new things planned, including a web site, *The Permian Basin Docket Call*, a bench bar conference, and several great programs.

The 7th Annual West Texas Fall Seminar was a success. We are planning interesting monthly lunches with CLE for this year as well as a bench bar conference in April 2006.

The MCBA Holiday Dinner and Silent Auction are set for December 9, 2005 at the Midland Country Club. We need items for the auction.

*The Permian Basin Docket Call* has returned, like a phoenix, but MCBA needs your help for ideas, articles and information.

The byline for this column is plural because I want to give other local bar presidents an opportunity to write for *PBDC*. If interested, please contact me.

MCBA Dues' notices are included with this newsletter. Please fill out the dues' notice and survey and return it by December 1, 2005.

Dues are \$35.00, which is an increase from 2004, but the increase will pay for this newsletter, the web page, and the other programs. Dues paying members will receive *PBDC*, a CD of information, and notices to all events. Please send in your dues today.

*Michael Jay Willson*

## Laywers and Judges Needed to Help Conduct Dialogues on Freedom in Local High Schools

Michael Willson, an attorney with the law firm of Cotton, Bledsoe, Tighe & Dawson, a Professional Corporation hopes to conduct a Dialogue on Freedom program in one of the local high schools this Fall and seeks assistance from those lawyers who might be interested in participating in the program in Midland, Odessa, or their local community.

Dialogue on Freedom is a program sponsored by the American Bar Association, and created by United States Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy. The program

is a national program exploring American values and civic traditions through classroom dialogue between lawyers or judges and high school students. The program was created to focus classroom conversation on American values by exploring hypotheticals developed by Justice Kennedy.

As part of the program, students are asked to identify three books and three movies that they believe best express what America means to them. The students also are asked to identify three historic events that they believe have been the most important milestones for freedom.

Many schools nationwide conducted dialogues as part of the Law Day celebrations and information about their lists of books, movies, and events is published on the American Bar Association's web page, abanet.org.

Lawyers or judges interested in conducting a dialogue in one of their local high schools can get information from the Dialogue on Freedom site located on the American Bar Association's website, abanet.org, or they may contact Michael Willson at 685-8567 for more information.

**2005-06 DUES: \$35.00 DUE BY DECEMBER 1, 2005.**

**FILL OUT FORM BELOW & SEND WITH CHECK TO: P.O. BOX 1061, MIDLAND, TEXAS 79702.**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ TEXAS BAR #: \_\_\_\_\_  
FIRM or EMPLOYER: \_\_\_\_\_  
MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ FACSIMILE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE CHECK IF YOUR ADDRESS IS A NEW MAILING OR EMAIL ADDRESS.

1. Would you attend a West Texas Bench-Bar conference, if one were offered by Midland County Bar Association and/or Ector County Bar Association? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_
2. Would you attend a West Texas Bench-Bar conference if one were offered in April 2006? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_
3. Where would you want to go for a West Texas Bench-Bar conference? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Would you attend a West Texas Bench-Bar conference in Ruidoso \_\_\_\_\_ Cloudcroft \_\_\_\_\_ Fort Davis \_\_\_\_\_?
5. What do you think it should cost to attend a West Texas Bench-Bar conference? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What other activities or programs do you want to see presented by the local bar? \_\_\_\_\_

# Law Day A Huge Success

The Midland County Bar Association and the Midland County Young Lawyers Association held their annual Law Day Luncheon on May 5, 2005 at the Midland Center, Midland, Texas. The keynote speaker was The Honorable Robert Junell, United States District Judge for the Western District of Texas.

Law Day was created by President Eisenhower in the 1950s to foster public understanding appreciation of the rule of law and the American justice system. Judge Junell gave the keynote address highlighting the 2005 Law Day theme, "The American Jury – We the People in Action". Judge Junell spoke about the history of juries, their value to the judicial system, and the need for such service in our democratic society.

Both the MCBA and MCYLA presented awards to high school students who had completed essays on the Law Day theme, "The American Jury – We the People in Action". Rebecca Gandy, a Midland High School sophomore, was the First Place winner of a \$1,250.00 cash prize. Kelsey Clark, a Midland High sophomore, won Second Place and a \$750.00 cash prize. The Third Place winner was Blake Morgan, a Trinity School sophomore who received a \$500.00 cash prize. Meredith Thagard, sophomore at

Midland High School; Elizabeth Eiland, sophomore at Trinity School; Taylor Davis, sophomore at Midland High School; and Bailey Brown, sophomore at Midland Christian School, each were awarded Honorable Mentions and received a \$100.00 cash prize for their essays. Judge Junell presented these awards as well as Awards of Merit to the 43 students from Midland and Greenwood who participated in the essay contest.

Mayor Canon proclaimed May 5, 2005 as "Law Day" in Midland, Texas as well as proclaiming May 2-6, 2005 as "Juror Appreciation Week". The Honorable L. Stuart Platt gave the invocation. More than 150 people attended Law Day in Midland, including several judges PBLSA and local officials.

## **Midland Young Lawyer News**

Midland County Young Lawyers Association ("MCYLA") had its first event this year at The Shack, a local club and restaurant just outside of Midland, Texas. Elections were held and Brian Ferguson was elected President. Sean Guerrero was elected Secretary and Treasurer. MCYLA is planning several events for this year, including A Newcomers' lunch, Kids in Court nights, and either Power Reading Club or Texas Bar President Rodriguez's new Pipeline Project. You can contact Brian at 684-9900 or at [bferguson@mywpower.com](mailto:bferguson@mywpower.com). You can contact Sean at 685-8536 or [sguerrero@cbtd.com](mailto:sguerrero@cbtd.com).



## **Dollars for Scholars**

The Permian Basin Legal Secretaries Association is affiliated with Legal Secretaries International, Inc. The organization consists of legal secretaries and legal assistants. The purpose of our organization is continuing legal education within the organization.

Our community service project each year is to award one or more scholarships for the continuing education of high school seniors who are interested in pursuing a career as an attorney, legal assistant or legal secretary.

If there are no students with this goal who apply for the scholarship, we award the money to the student who we feel is most deserving. The criteria for judging the applicants are grades, content of letter from the student, letters of reference and financial need.

In order to continue the scholarships, we need to replenish our Scholarship Fund. We respectfully request a donation to the Scholarship Fund of the Permian Basin Legal Secretaries Association.

Any amount contributed will be greatly appreciated. If you choose to make a contribution, please make your check payable to Permian Basin Legal Secretaries Association and mail it to P.O. Box 1382, Midland TX 79702-1382. If you have any questions, please call Ann Bostick at the above number.

# The Wine Corner

*by David Lauritzen*

Usually, wine articles are written by wine experts. I am not. However, I do really like wine. I also like ice cream, camping, watching television and drinking beer. However, I was not asked to write an article on any of those subjects, so wine it is.

The beautiful thing about "wine" is that it is such a varied subject. We've got sweet wines, dry wines, red wines, pink wines, white wines, bubbly wines, grape wines, dandelion wines, honey wines, kosher wines, and even non-alcoholic wines. Surely, there is something available for everyone.

However, since I can't possibly talk about all the available wines in the world, my plan (right now) is to discuss three different wines per article. I am going to talk about a low cost wine, a higher priced wine, and a Texas wine. I figure since we live in Texas, I should talk about some of our local product. (If we lived in Wisconsin, I'd be talking about Wisconsin wines - all three of them.)

Like anything, wine appreciation is highly dependent upon personal preference. Two people can drink the same wine, from the same bottle, under the same conditions, and while one may think he has just discovered heaven on earth and resolve to buy a case immediately, the other may decide to buy a bottle for its potential as varnish remover around the house.

Consequently, I thought it would be

a good idea to discuss my personal preferences to give you, the reader, a better idea of whether my opinions on wine would lead you to go out and buy a bottle or avoid it like the plague.

I first prefer dry wines (very little residual sugar) as opposed to sweet wines. I also prefer red wine over white wine. I am very tired of having oak flavors in my wine - I figure if I have an oak craving, I can go out and chew on a board. I don't particularly care for flavored wines.

Having said that, I will note that by far the best selling wines in America are sweet (white zinfandel) and oakey (many California chardonnays and cabernet sauvignons). And, I've got to confess that I have had and enjoyed sweet wines, oakey wines, and flavored wines. Actually, I can't say with certainty that I've enjoyed a flavored wine unless I've had some previous drinks to fortify me for the experience. But hey, if you like Guava Raspberry Wine, got for it.

Ultimately, what I am saying is that the enjoyment of wine depends upon the drinker. There is nothing particularly magical about it. If you really groove on the \$2.00 bottle of Bulgarian merlot that you got out of the bargain bin at Pinkie's, there is nothing wrong with that (and don't worry, the rash is probably just a temporary reaction).

Conversely, I have had some expensive "fine" wines that I thought

were pretty nasty. I am going to write about wines that I think most everyone will enjoy. Having said that, let's look at the wines.

At about \$10.00, this issue's budget entry is Bonny Doon Winery's Pacific Rim Dry Riesling. Using grapes from Washington State, California, and even Germany, this is about as close as you're going to get to a dry version of a traditionally sweet wine. Almost clear in color, it smells a little bit like mint and honeydew melon.

Intended to be served chilled, it's a great summer wine. It's very refreshing to the taste with a nice tartness that lasts well after you've swallowed. Definitely a strong suggestion of fresh green apples. This would be a great wine to match with anything spicy, such as Thai food, Creole, or even Mexican food. Me, I can just drink this on its own out on the back porch. Very tasty stuff.

## **Katrina/Rita Legal Relief Fund**

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita displaced people, destroyed homes, and devastated lives. These people now have legal needs. Please consider a donation to: Texas Bar Foundation, Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation, Alabama Law Foundation, Baton Rouge Bar Foundation, and Mississippi Bar Foundation. Please check [www.texasbar.com](http://www.texasbar.com) for more information.

# Announcements

## Save the Date

El Paso Bar Association  
presents  
10th Annual Civil Trial Seminar  
January 27 & 28, 2006  
Bally's Resort & Casino  
Las Vegas, Nevada

To make your hotel reservations, call 1/800/634-3434 and tell them you are with the El Paso Bar Association to get the rate of \$155 per night with a 2-night minimum stay with single/double occupancy.

To get additional information please contact Nancy Gallego at 915/532-7052 or at [nancy@elpasobar.com](mailto:nancy@elpasobar.com)

## New Handout

The Texas Young Lawyer's Association is proud to announce the release of a new family law client handout. The handout is entitled, "What to Expect in Texas Family Law Court".

The booklet is hot off the press and ready for distribution. It is written for the public, so feel free to distribute to clients as a resource.

Free copies are available either from the TYLA office at 1-800-204-2222, or at TYLA website at: <[http://www.tyla.org/family\\_law.html](http://www.tyla.org/family_law.html)>

### MCBA Officers:

Pres., Mike Willson, 685-8567 or [mwillson@cbtd.com](mailto:mwillson@cbtd.com)  
Pres. Elect, Alan Brown, 683-3351 or [abrown@lynchchappell.com](mailto:abrown@lynchchappell.com)  
Vice President, Rick Strange, [rick\\_strange@msn.com](mailto:rick_strange@msn.com)  
Sec./Treas. Nyria Jackson, 686-0080 or [njackson@wrightlawfirm.com](mailto:njackson@wrightlawfirm.com)

# Calendar of Events

## October 2005 - November 2005

**10-19-05:** LAA/PB Luncheon, Petroleum Club, 11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.; \$12.50 per person. Speaker, Ms. Jeanne Morales, speaking on the upcoming changes in Bankruptcy Law.

**10-23-05:** Legal Assistants Day

**11-16-05:** LAA/PB Luncheon, Petroleum Club, 11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.; \$12.50 per person

**11-17-05:** MCBA Luncheon, Midland Center, 11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.; \$10.00 per person. 1 Hour of MCLE, approval pending.

## December 2005 - January 2006

**12-9-05:** MCBA Holiday Dinner and Silent Auction, Midland Country Club, 7:00 p.m. to midnight; \$32.50 per person

**12-14-05:** LAA/PB Christmas Luncheon, Petroleum Club, 11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. \$12.50 per person

**1-18-06:** LAA/PB Luncheon, Petroleum Club, 11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.; \$12.50 per person.

**1-26-06:** MCBA Luncheon, Midland Center, 11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.; \$10.00 per person. 1 Hour of MCLE, approval pending.

## February 2006 - March 2006

**2-15-06:** LAA/PB Luncheon, Petroleum Club, 11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.; \$12.50 per person.

**2-23-06:** MCBA Luncheon, Midland Center, 11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.; \$10.00 per person. 1 Hour of MCLE, approval pending.

**March 31 - April 1, 2006:** Spring Seminar and TAPA Conference hosted by LAAPB