



STATE BAR OF TEXAS
Council of the
General Practice, Solo, and Small Firm Section

Winter 2011-2012

Chair

Joyce Stevens
4381 W. Green Oaks Blvd.
Suite 108
Arlington, Texas 76016
817.478.1033
jestevens@sbcglobal.net

Chair Elect

James Mosley
P.O. Drawer 707
Borger, TX 79008
806.273.2857
james@mgjm.com

Vice Chair

Kevin Mutscher
P.O. Box 1118
Brenham, Texas 77834
979.836.3636
dmutscher@bettsfirm.com

Secretary-Treasurer

Brandon Earp
304 Walnut Street
Bowie, Texas 76230
940.872.8700
b.earp@earplaw.com

Immediate Past Chair

Thelma Clardy
100 Crescent Court
Suite 700
Dallas, Texas 75201
972.298.6001
thelclardy@aol.com

Terms Expire 2012

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Website - <http://www.gpsolo.com>

Dear Section Members:

This year is going by too fast, but it is good to have the heat of the summer behind us. It is now that time of year to start reviewing our firms' practices for the year to determine those things that worked well and those things we should consider changing. Is our current advertising cost effective? Do we have a system to keep in touch with former clients? Are we regularly receiving referrals? These items are just a few of the areas I like to review on an annual basis to consider new ideas to keep my practice growing. The economy has hurt everyone and we are no different. We need to continually find ways to serve our clients and build our practices.

Speaking of growing our practices, the General Practice Institute is scheduled for April 20, 2012 at Baylor Law School. This is an excellent program for the general practitioner and an opportunity to network with our peers. Put it on your calendar and make plans to attend. Mike Rogers, Professor of Law at Baylor, is currently scheduling the topics and speakers. The Institute has always been an invaluable CLE session, and I am certain this year will be equally stimulating.

I have just returned from the Council of Chairs meeting in Austin. We in Texas have excellent sections providing informational updates for various areas of the law and none better than the GPSOLO section. Please take the time to read the articles in our digest written by scholars of high esteem. I am always amazed at the quality of their work.

Many of you are members of the Family Law Section and may have received the letter from Thomas L. Ausley, Chair of the Family Law Section. He pointed out a project by the Texas Supreme Court's Task Force on Uniform Forms. I want to repeat some of the points made in his letter because, while the forms at this point will be provided to pro se litigants to handle their family law cases on their own, this could be the beginning of more forms in other areas of practice. Initially they planned to provide forms for uncontested divorces with children. They are now considering forms for contested divorces as well. We have all had clients hire us to help enforce or correct judgments that have been entered by pro se litigants. This letter does not allow room to cover the many problems that arise from pro se drafted documents and final orders, but it is an area that should not be encouraged. The Family Law Foundation has named a five-member team of consultants to work in opposition to the Task Force project. We will continue to follow this troubling development and lend our support to the Family Law Section.

I wish all of you a wonderful holiday season and a healthy and prosperous new year.

Joyce E. Stevens
Chair, General Practice, Solo and Small Firm Section
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