

December 31, 2002

Mary T. Torres, President
Board of Bar Commissioners
State Bar of New Mexico
5121 Masthead NE
Albuquerque, NM 87125

Dear President Torres,

On behalf of the Board of Directors for the Indian Law Section (“ILS”) I submit the following 2002 Annual Report for your consideration. On October 17, 2002 the ILS Board of Directors held an organizational meeting to fill existing vacancies on the Board. The Board made five appointments during this meeting, electing the following people: Steffani A. Cochran, Joan E. Kozon, Douglas R. Nash, Lawrence A. Ruzow, and Lynn H. Slade. The Board subsequently elected me to serve as Chair, Pamela Ray to serve as Chair-Elect, and Joan Kozon to serve as Secretary. I believe that the Board reflects a diverse range of experience, knowledge and talents reflective of the State Bar’s commitments to promote and support the needs of all members; to improve the relationships between the legal profession and the public; and to foster and maintain high ideals of integrity, learning, competence and public service.

To use efficiently the time and efforts of its members, the Board created committees that reflect the various activities within the jurisdiction of the Section. Board Members were appointed to chair the following committees: (1) Continuing Legal Education Programs; (2) Webpage; (3) Newsletter; (4) Writing Competition; and (5) Annual Meeting. To further promote legal education within the State of New Mexico, the Board approved a \$1,000.00 donation to meet the special needs of a Pre-Law Summer Institute student who is a New Mexico resident, and a \$1,000.00 donation to the UNM School of Law with the condition that the donation be used to assist the library in acquiring materials related to Indian law or to sponsor the NALSA Moot Court team, or to some other interest that furthers the practice of Indian law.

The Board has worked diligently since October to select activities for the upcoming year that would serve the Section’s purposes and below you will find a brief description of each.

- (1) Continuing Legal Education Program: The Board has agreed to sponsor a CLE Program during 2003 in partnership with the Indian Bar Association. While a topic has not been agreed upon to-date, the Board seeks a program that will encourage communication, and allow its participants to analyze the issues and solutions to jurisdictional and other problems facing tribal and non-tribal communities in a global effort to upgrade the quality of administration of justice in Indian country, for Indian and non-Indian citizens alike.

- (2) Student Writing Competition: Of the many objectives served by the Indian Law Section, a writing competition was agreed upon as an appropriate forum for the discussion of Indian law issues and other matters pertaining to the practice of law; to share experiences, knowledge, and ideas; and to provide members with the opportunity to stay informed about Indian law developments and their practical ramifications. To this end, the Board agreed to sponsor its Annual Indian law Student Writing Competition. An announcement was sent out to faculty members at law schools throughout the U.S., the National Native American Law Students Association (NNALSA), and to all section members for distribution. Entries must relate to an Indian law issue of national interest and must be received no later than January 31, 2003. The Board approved three monetary prizes for the top articles and would like to publish the top entry either online and/or in the *Bar Bulletin*. The Board will announce all winning entries on May 15, 2003.
- (3) Tribal Court Handbook: To educate citizens and attorneys about how to approach or handle legal matters and disputes involving Indian land, tribal courts, or Indian individuals, the Board will seek avenues to increase the availability of the *New Mexico Indian Tribal Court Handbook*. Our purpose remains the same as stated in the 1991 introduction, "The importance of this handbook is that it helps take some of the mystery out of practicing in tribal courts. * * *" The Indian Law Section first published this Guide in 1991 and updated it in 2001. We believe that the publication helps advance the cause of justice in New Mexico and the respect for the role of tribal courts in that purpose. The Center for Legal Education published the Handbook and the Board anticipates that it will continue working with the Center to update the existing information and to explore avenues that would increase availability.

Although this Board is newly reconstituted, its members are eager to breathing new life into the Section. The Board's focus this year shall be upon promoting the values of the legal profession such as our commitment to the public good; to help members keep current in this practice area; to set a high standard of professional conduct for others to follow; to respect and protect the image of the legal profession; and to remain committed to our responsibilities to public service and to the improvement of administration of justice. We look forward to serving our membership this year and invite the Board of Bar Commissioners to participate in our activities whenever time permits. If you have any questions, please call me at (505) 827-6907. May you have a safe holiday season on behalf of the ILS Board of Directors.

Respectfully Submitted,

Steffani A. Cochran

Cc: ILS Board Members
Maggie Gombos, Director
Membership Administration and Support Division
File

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.daneprairie.com>.
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.