

# INDIAN LAW SECTION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## 2004 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE BOARD OF BAR COMMISSIONERS AND THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE INDIAN LAW SECTION

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Indian Law Section of the State Bar of New Mexico I submit the following report of the activities of the Indian Law Section for 2004.

The board of the Law Section held five meetings in 2004 and an annual meeting in April of 2004 in conjunction with the annual reception.

The following committees were created in 2004 by the board:

1. Annual Reception Committee: Joan Kozon again chair this committee and due to her thorough and persistent leadership our reception was again a well organized event. It was held in conjunction with the Federal Bar Indian Law Conference at the Marriott in Albuquerque on April 16, 2004.

2. CLE Committee: Rosemary Maestas-Swazo was chair of this committee. The CLE was a cooperative effort with the School of Law, the Indian Bar Association and the CLE office of the state bar. It was held on October 9, 2004, a Saturday at the State Bar Center.

3. Indian Law Insert Committee: Several people were involved with the Indian Law Insert, which will appear in the Bar Bulletin in the spring of 2005. Due to the determined work of Larry Ruzow and Aaron Frankland, there are articles ready for print and the insert should be reaching completion shortly.

4. Nominating Committee: Karl Johnson took on the responsibilities of chair of the nominating committee in 2004. Robert Gruenig, our young lawyer representative, took a seat on the board, as did Helen Padilla, General Counsel for the Indian Affairs Department of the state and Levon Henry, director of DNA Legal Services, who was previously a member of the board has agreed to come back to serve a few more terms.

The board has decided that the Student Writing Competition that the section has sponsored for several years was not serving the purpose of providing aid to law students in New Mexico that plan to practice Indian Law. The board is now looking at providing bar exam scholarships for one or more people who plan to practice Indian Law in New Mexico. In the future the board will consider the possibility of having some form of fund raiser that would be specifically for raising money for the scholarship fund.

The Annual Reception and meeting were held for the last two years in conjunction with the Federal Bar's Indian Law Conference. This is a time when practitioners of Indian Law from all over the country convene in Albuquerque. However, the attendance was minimal and so the board is considering holding its Annual Reception and meeting in conjunction with Indian Law CLE's that should be offered each year.

The board had only one resignation during the year and that was quickly filled by the Young Lawyer's Division member of the board. Two new members will join the board in 2005, as we lose our immediate past president, Steffani Cochran and Joan Kozon, who has been on the board for two years.

The board will be working on how to institutionalize the production of a newsletter, since that is one of the most important services we can offer our membership, according to surveys we have conducted. The board was not able to produce a newsletter in 2004.

The board appears to be healthy with strong interest among the board members in assuring that the board and the section continue to find ways to serve our membership with the limited funds we have available to us. I want to commend all of the board members for their interest, work and support on behalf of the section in 2004.

I also would like to extend the appreciation of the board to the staff of the State Bar of New Mexico for the work they did during the year to help the Indian Law Section.

Christine Morganti has been there to answer our questions and to help us move forward. Tony Horvat has helped us to coordinate our activities and has provided us

with support throughout the year. Keith Thompson had to jump in and start supporting us immediately after beginning work with the bar. Veronica Cordova has provided training and technical support on the web page. Rob Koonce was especially helpful to our CLE committee and we thank him. Also I want to thank Joe Conte for his willingness to assist us and to be a visible part of the State Bar experience.

Respectfully Submitted,

*J. Pamela Ray*

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2004 Chair

Indian Law Section