

FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
STATE OF NEW MEXICO

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October 16, 2009

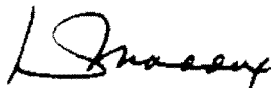
TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE LEA COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

I am writing to you to encourage your attendance at the Western Heritage Museum on Monday, October 26, 2009. We are honored to have Supreme Court Justice Petra Maes make a special trip to Lea County to recognize and encourage the significant pro bono activities here.

There will also be a CLE program at 4:00 p.m. followed by a reception with Justice Maes.

The Supreme Court is making a special effort regarding pro bono service in New Mexico and many of you have made significant sacrifices in contributing your time and skill. This reception honors you and your efforts.

Please join me at this important event.



Judge Don Maddox

From the Lea County Bar Association

Contact Kathy Moran 575-393-0505 ext. 112

October 20, 2009

For Immediate Release

NEW MEXICO SUPREME COURT JUSTICE TO VISIT LEA COUNTY

New Mexico Supreme Court Justice Petra Jimenez Maes will be in Hobbs **Monday October 26th** to deliver remarks to local attorneys and other invited guests in honor of New Mexico Pro Bono Week.

The New Mexico Supreme Court has proclaimed October 25th through the 31st as "New Mexico Pro Bono Week." Pro bono refers to legal work provided by lawyers at no fee to low income individuals in their communities, most often in civil law areas such as family law, housing, employment and consumer issues.

"Access to justice is a fundamental and essential right in a democratic society," said Chief Justice Edward L. Chávez. "With over 20% of New Mexicans qualifying for legal aid services and the poverty rate on the rise during this recession, pro bono services are critical to providing low income individuals the representation they require to gain access to justice and protect their rights and liberties. Over half of New Mexico attorneys reported donating a total of nearly 250,000 pro bono hours in 2008. We applaud those lawyers who, by donating their time, have made a real difference in the lives of many New Mexicans. I encourage each lawyer in New Mexico to participate year round in pro bono assistance. Our republic cannot be a complete democracy if its poorest citizens are effectively denied access to its system of justice."

Justice Petra Jimenez Maes will be in attendance at a celebratory reception hosted by the Lea County Bar Association and will recognize the pro bono efforts of local attorneys. The event will take place at the Western Heritage Museum on the campus of New Mexico Junior College. Judge Don Maddox, who chairs the local pro bono committee offered the following comment, "A visit by a member of New Mexico's highest court provides a unique opportunity to highlight the importance of the issue of equal access to the justice system, and the Lea County Bar Association looks forward to welcoming Justice Maes on behalf of the entire community."

The event is by invitation; members of the press are welcome.