

WHAT is the PROBLEM?



I look forward to working with all of you toward the continued advancement of our profession. And it is *our* profession and *our* organization.

The problem is not that there are problems. The problem is expecting otherwise and thinking that having problems is a problem.

—Theodore Rubin

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MORE THAN A DECADE, THERE WERE THREE CANDIDATES IN THIS YEAR'S RACE FOR PRESIDENT-ELECT.

It was a hard-fought campaign, and many people who had not paid attention to the State Bar of Texas started to pay attention. That is a good thing. I hope that interest remains beyond one election and that every attorney takes time to learn a little more about the State Bar of Texas. Read the State Bar Act, visit the website, find areas that interest you, and, yes, look for places where the State Bar can improve. I have been a volunteer in the organized bar for many years. At first my involvement was negligible, but as I became more interested and believed that there were places where I could make a difference, I became more involved. I believe this is the simple version of longer stories for every volunteer—there was a need, a lawyer responded to that need, and as that lawyer saw more need, the volunteer time became greater. The vast majority of volunteers truly want to make the legal profession and the bar better for lawyers, for our clients, for the public, and for Texas.

At Annual Meeting, many lawyers and public members were recognized and applauded by their colleagues for their contributions to projects, sections, committees, and other aspects of our legal community. Groups recapped the year and began to map the future. I hope that many of you were able to attend—it is indeed a time and financial commitment to be present—but if you were unable to be there, I hope that you will become involved in some other way throughout the year.

Last year President Buck Files publicly committed to that which he had long been privately committed—*Esprit de Bar*. He and many others have been and remain dedicated to working together to strengthen our legal profession. I, too, am equally committed. I look forward to working with all of you toward the continued advancement of our profession. And it is *our* profession and *our* organization. Every single Texas attorney is included when I say this, although I recognize that there are members who disagree.

It is my hope that negative sentiment toward our bar changes. There are many things that we could improve upon or, perhaps, do differently. There always should be. That is what enables progress. We have dedicated board, committee, and section members and hard-working volunteers who put their best forward as practitioners impacting our community. What are the greatest issues facing our legal community? What is on the horizon that our organization can get in front of before it becomes a crisis? What can we do to address those issues? These are the questions I want us to be able to answer and work toward solving. I am at the helm for only one year. Perhaps this year will be only the beginning of the next great progression of the bar. It is not just up to me. It is up to all of us. Are you in?

LISA TATUM
President, *State Bar of Texas*