



## President's Column

### Expanding Diversity

By Ted Roberts



One of the lesser known, but critical roles of THLA is as a member of the San Diego County Bar Association's Ethnic Relations and Diversity Committee, or ERDC. This Committee was "reborn" so to speak, a little more than a year ago when THLA and the Lawyers Club of San Diego officially joined the ethnic minority bar associations, thus expanding the focus of the committee from strictly race and ethnicity to diversity on a wider scale. This was achieved with no small effort on the part of the Bar Association, individual members, the committee chair, and the boards of THLA and Lawyers Club.

In the year that has passed, ERDC has been active in promoting diversity within the SDCBA, with the full support of the President and board. During law week, THLA participated in the Unity Breakfast, including prominent mention in the keynote address by one of our own, District Attorney Bonnie Dumanis. In addition, THLA has stood side-by-

side with other ERDC members in opposing the "racial privacy" initiative, welcoming three minority judges to the San Diego bench (including our own Ted Weathers), and in being recognized at events sponsored by the San Diego La Raza Lawyers, Earl B. Gilliam Law Association and Lawyers Club of San Diego.

*"It has not been an easy road gaining acceptance and a voice in the debate over equality for minorities within the legal community. "*

Officers of these organizations also attended, and were recognized at, THLA's dinner. As a result of THLA's participating in the ERDC, the board of directors of the SDCBA have issued a letter of support to THLA, supporting passage of the bill AB 205, California's expanded Domestic Partnership statute, the first time the board has

undertaken such a discussion in support of our community's issues.

These gains should not be taken for granted. It has not been an easy road gaining acceptance and a voice in the debate over equality for minorities within the legal community. Much remains to be done, but I can state from my own experience that the board and staff of the local bar association, the state bar, and many of the individuals active in the ERDC are solidly behind THLA and its mission to represent the interests of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons.

I hope that you as an individual and we as an organization will take an active role in supporting the programs and activities of the ERDC, and that more people of color will be encouraged to join and participate in THLA. Watch the calendar section of this newsletter for information about upcoming ERDC events, and make your presence known.

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**WEBSITE**  
 www.thla.org

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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**Schedule of Events**

**October 2, 2003, 6 pm**

**THLA Board Meeting**

All THLA members are welcome! Contact Jonathan Schneeweiss at 619/279-3333 for more information.

**October 16, 2003, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.**

**Student Welcome Reception - Hosted by USD Law**

Warren Hall's back patio on the USD campus  
 Admission is free. For details, contact James Pontes at pontesjd@tjssl.edu.

**October 23, 2003, 6 p.m.**

**Seminar on Immigration Law for GLBT**

At the Center

MCLE Credit will be available.\*

Admission is free.

For information, contact Jonathan Schneeweiss at schneeweissj@aol.com, or 619/279-3333.

\*THLA certifies that this activity conforms to the standards for approved education activities prescribed by the rules and regulations of the State Bar of California governing minimum continuing legal education and THLA is an approved MCLE provider.

**November 6, 2003, 6 pm**

**THLA Board Meeting**

All THLA members are welcome! Contact Jonathan Schneeweiss at 619/279-3333 for more information.

**THLA COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

**PRESIDENTS**

TED ROBERTS.....619/699-5111  
 ANDREA KIMBALL.....619/236-1414

**SECRETARY**

RANDY CLARK.....619/699-5084

**TREASURER**

GARY HOLT.....619/692-9254

**AMICUS**

DARIN WESSEL.....619/515-1155

**ANNUAL DINNER**

TED ROBERTS.....619/699-5111  
 JAMES PONTES.....PONTESJD@TJSSL.EDU

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BARBARA COX.....619/525-1413  
 CALIFORNIA WESTERN SCHOOL OF LAW  
 STEVE HARTWELL.....619/260-2353  
 UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO  
 BRYAN WILDENTHAL.....619/297-9700  
 THOMAS JEFFERSON SCHOOL OF LAW

**LAW STUDENT LIAISONS**

DAVE SHERMAN.....619/295-0665  
 RICK LONGMAN (CWSL)....RICKLONGMAN@COX.NET  
 VACANT (USD).....  
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**MEMBERSHIP**

ANDREA M. KIMBALL.....619/236-1414

**MONTHLY PROGRAMS**

DREW WOODMANSEE.....858/720-5100  
 JONATHAN SCHNEEWEISS (CHAIR).....619/279-3333

**NEWSLETTER**

JUSTI RAE MILLER (EDITOR).....619/865-2640  
 VACANT (CHAIR).....

**PUBLIC RELATIONS**

VACANT.....

**SOCIAL**

JAMES PONTES.....PONTESJD@TJSSL.EDU

**WEBMASTER**

STEVE KAFTAL.....619/865-7798...STEVE@KAFTAL.COM

## *IMMIGRATION LAW SEMINAR FOR GLBT*

### *\* MCLE \**

THLA has joined forces with The Gay & Lesbian Immigration Rights Task Force and the San Diego Center to present a seminar on Immigration Law for gays & lesbians and their partners. The program will discuss the current state of immigration law after recent the legalization of gay marriage in Canada, the Supreme Court's decision in Lawrence v. Texas, and California's expanded Domestic Partnership law. Topics to be discussed include the Diversity Lottery, which grants residency permits to immigrants from underrepresented countries via a lottery system. This year's lottery begins on November 1, 2003. The program will be held at the Center on October 23, 2003 at 6 pm. MCLE Credit will be available. For information, contact Jonathan Schneeweiss at [schneeweissj@aol.com](mailto:schneeweissj@aol.com), or 619/279-3333.

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## *THLA'S ENDORSEMENTS FOR SDCBA BOARD*

THLA is pleased to announce the endorsement of candidates Brian Funk and Heather Rosing for election to the San Diego County Bar Association board. Watch for your ballots in the mail.

I am proud to announce the opening of my new law office in the Gaslamp Quarter of downtown San Diego.

**John Richard Smith**

Attorney at Law

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437 J Street  
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San Diego, CA 92101

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Fax: 619-595-1588  
[jrsimmigration@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jrsimmigration@sbcglobal.net)

**Immigration Services**

*Se habla español.*

I provide immigration services and advice in the following areas:

- contract research services for non-immigration practitioners
- representation in removal proceedings
- immigration-related federal court litigation
- family immigration services
- naturalization and citizenship services
- asylum representation — including g/l/b/t claims

—John Richard Smith

*Member of the State Bar of California since June 10, 1999 – No. 201774.*

*Member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association since November 15, 1999.*

## ***THLA Fall Reception***

The fall reception for THLA attorneys and San Diego area law students will be held on Thursday, October 9, 2003. This year's event will be hosted by the University of San Diego School of Law, and held on the back patio of Warren Hall on the USD campus, beginning at 6:00 pm. Admission is free. For details, contact James Pontes at [pontesjd@tjssl.edu](mailto:pontesjd@tjssl.edu).

## ***Welcoming the New Chief of Police***

Councilmember Toni Atkins invites members of the L/G/B/T community to meet and greet our new Chief of Police, William Lansdown at the San Diego LGBT Community Center, 3909 Centre Street, Hillcrest, October 9, 2003, 5:30-7:00pm. Please call 619/236-6633 to RSVP.

## ***The Lavender Law Conference***

The National Gay and Lesbian Law Association and National Lesbian and Gay Law Foundation, and the Lesbian and Gay Law Association of Greater New York will present this year's Lavender Law conference on October 17-19 at the Fordham Law School center in New York, NY. The keynote speaker will be Paul M. Smith, who successfully argued the Lawrence v. Texas case before the U.S. Supreme Court. Conference information is enclosed with this newsletter, or at [www.lavenderlaw.org](http://www.lavenderlaw.org)

## ***Volunteers Needed***

THLA is pleased to have been chosen to host Lavendar Law 2005. Volunteers are needed to serve on the host committee. Please contact Ted Roberts at (619) 699-5111 to find out about volunteering.

## ***KUDOS***

Congratulations to long time member THLA Ted Weathers, who was appointed to the Superior Court bench by Governor Davis in June. Judge Weathers is the first openly gay judge to be appointed in San Diego, and previously served as a Superior Court Commissioner. THLA extends its warmest congratulations and support to Judge Weathers and his family.

## ***Newsletter Submissions Welcome***

THLA encourages all members to submit articles, ideas, upcoming events or announcements to the THLA newsletter! Please submit to Ted Roberts at [TRoberts@sempra.com](mailto:TRoberts@sempra.com) or by calling him at (619) 699-5111

***Send us your articles!!***



**Tom Homann Law Association**  
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**San Diego CA 92103**

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## ***AMERICAN ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS UPHOLDS RESOLUTION SUPPORTING LEGAL PROTECTIONS FOR CHILDREN OF GAY & LESBIAN PARENTS***

The Texas chapter of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) proposed a new resolution to overturn last year's supportive policy statement that voiced support for second-parent and joint adoption by lesbians and gay men. On Wednesday, October 1, 2003, the AAFP delegates rejected this attempt.

The supportive statement remains intact, and continues to call on the Academy to "establish policy and be supportive of legislation which promotes a safe and nurturing environment, including psychological and legal security, for all children, including those of adoptive parents, regardless of the parents' sexual orientation." The Texas chapter's resolution would have eliminated the words "sexual orientation."

By upholding its own resolution, the AAFP representing more than 94,300 physicians and medical students nationwide remains in the company of a growing number of medical, psychological and child welfare organization to issue supportive statements on behalf of same-sex couple and their children, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Psychoanalytic Association, the American Psychological Association, the Child Welfare League of America and the North American Council on Adoptable Children.

- Editor's note: This article was pulled from an email distributed by the Family Pride Coalition. You can visit their website at [www.familypride.org](http://www.familypride.org)