



2025 - 2026

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Letter from the SCBA President



Marisa

On May 1, 1957, in Moscow's Red Square, twenty thousand soldiers in neat rows marched past Lenin's Mausoleum while missiles rolled through on flatbed trucks. Every May 1st, the Soviet Union threw the biggest parade on earth to deliver one message: the state is supreme.

Charles Rhyne was distressed. He was 45 years old, the youngest president in American Bar Association history, and Eisenhower's personal legal counsel. For years the American news media splashed Soviet May Day parades across the front page. Rhyne wanted to answer back on the exact same day, with the exact opposite argument, but not with missiles. He was intent on delivering our uniquely American message: rule of law.

He drafted a presidential proclamation and up the chain it went until it hit the desk of Sherman Adams, Eisenhower's chief of staff, where it stopped. Adams, of course, was known around Washington as "The Abominable No-Man."

Weeks passed and May 1st was approaching. Rhyne went to see Adams, who pulled the document from his desk and handed it back. "The President will not sign a Proclamation praising lawyers."

Lucky for us, Rhyne disagreed. Rhyne walked straight to the Oval Office and handed it to Eisenhower himself. As the President stood there reading, Adams burst in yelling, "Do not sign that paper praising lawyers!"

Eisenhower held up one hand and a hush fell. He finished reading. Then he looked up. "Sherm, this Proclamation does not contain one word praising lawyers. It praises our constitutional system of government, our great heritage under the rule of law, and asks our people to stand up and praise what they have created. I like it and I am going to sign it." And he did.

That May, Time magazine put Rhyne on its cover, with Lady Liberty over his right shoulder and a law day proclamation banner over his left. On the cover, he was labeled "Bar Association President Rhyne." As an aside, Adams resigned later that same year. He was caught accepting an expensive vicuña coat from a businessman under federal investigation. The Abominable No-Man was brought down by outerwear.

It was no accident that Eisenhower understood this better than his chief of staff. As Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe, he had watched up close what happens when the rule of law collapses entirely. The difference between a missile parade and a nation built on the rule of law was not an abstract civics lesson to him.

This year's Law Day theme is "The Rule of Law and the American Dream." Here in Texas, we have extra reason to celebrate because 2026 marks the 150th anniversary of the Texas Constitution. Let's all show up on May 1st with bar members and a stubborn belief that law is how free people govern themselves. We hope to see you there.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR HONOREES!

LAW DAY 2026

MAY 1, 2026 | 5:30 - 7:00P | CASCADES COUNTRY CLUB

Honoring those who have made significant contributions to Smith County with their leadership, community service, legal professionalism, and ethical standards.



OTIS CARROLL, JR.
Justinian Award



PATRICIA COPLAN
Award of Excellence



BARBARA SKEEN
Cristy Arcscott Liberty Bell Award



NICHOLETTE WILKERSON
SCYLA Outstanding Lawyer



SRAV MURALIDHAR
Volunteer Attorney of the Year



LEATHA KOPECH
Legal Professional of the Year

JOIN US IN CELEBRATING THESE OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONALS!



LAW DAY TICKETS ON SALE NOW

**Bring friends and family to celebrate justice,
the rule of law, and our legal community!**

**Friday * May 1 * 5:30 - 7:00p
Cascades Country Club**

Purchase Your Tickets Today!



Law Day Tickets

Tired of doom-scrolling?
Waiting for court giving you a case of the Mondays?
Perk yourself up by using your phone for good!

VOTING IS OPEN UNTIL APRIL 30!

**STATE BAR of TEXAS
ELECTIONS
2026** APRIL 1-30

TEXASBAR.COM/ELECTIONS

RAY THOMAS **SARAH CLOWER KEATHLEY**

It's time to vote for your State Bar leaders. Learn about the candidates and cast your vote before April 30.

And, early giving for East Texas Giving Day is now open. Support your Bar Foundation and 332 other regional nonprofits!



Donate thru ETGD!

**EAST TEXAS
GIVING DAY**





SMITH COUNTY
TEXAS

From the Honorable Sara Maynard, County Court at Law 2

In Smith County, approximately 40% of family law case filings are from self-represented litigants. This is a significant shift in that docket, and an increasing challenge in processing these cases efficiently and effectively. On behalf of the Settlement Week committee of the Smith County Bar Association & Foundation, it is my sincere hope that Settlement Week will offer the opportunity to resolve some of these cases expediently.

We are in need of volunteer mediators for 1-2 hour sessions during the week of **May 11-15**, with self-represented litigants. Even if you have never mediated a case, please sign up. We will schedule experienced mediators to for cases in the morning, and allow less-experienced mediators to “shadow” them (if needed). Additionally, there will be a one hour FREE CLE during the first week of May to help prepare for these abbreviated mediations.

This should help to alleviate backlog in the family law docket (benefitting the attorneys), offer younger lawyers an opportunity to expand their practices in a new area, and proceeds will benefit the Smith County Bar Foundation.

To request a mediator application, please email Beth at ed@smithcountybar.com.



The Smith County Bar Foundation is proud to work with Tyler Junior College's Paralegal program and Lone Star Legal Aid to present People's Law School.

Many thanks to our incredible professors:

Alex Castetter
Christina Davis

Leigh Hunt Goodson

Monique Hammond

Hon. Jim Huggler

Kenneth Hughes

Hon. Reeve Jackson

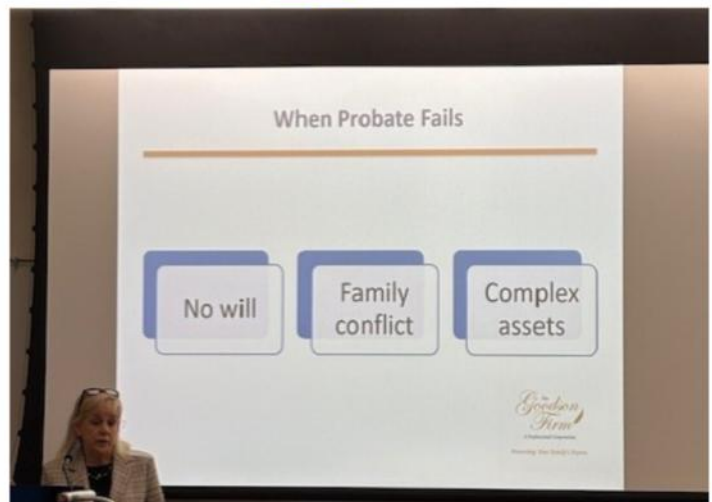
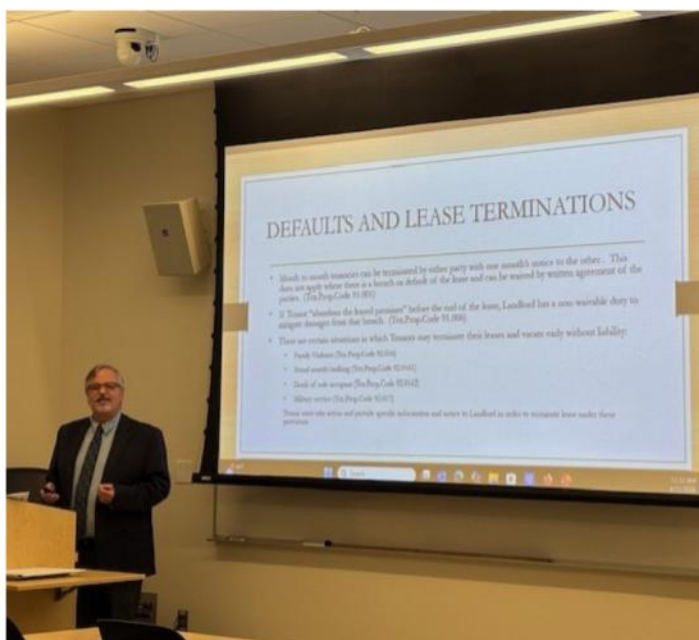
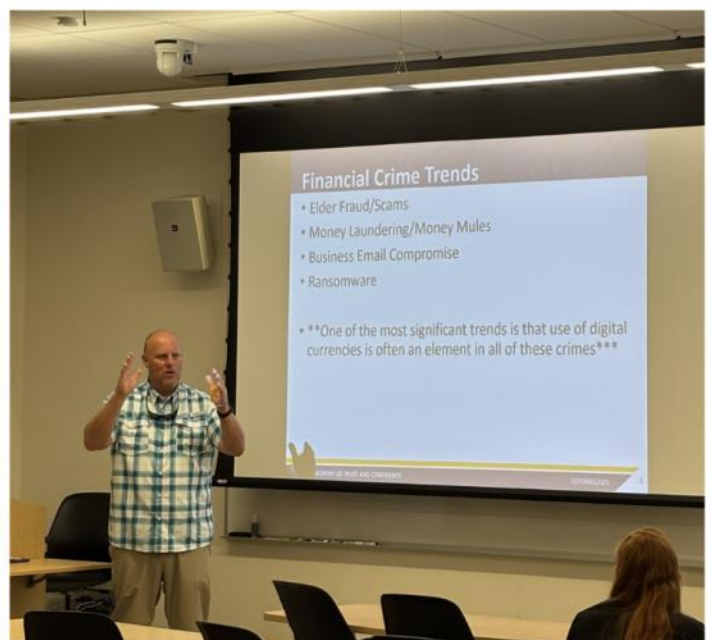
Hon. James Meredith

Danny Noteware

Meme Thomas

2026 People's Law School

April 11, 2026
Tyler Junior College





2025-26 SCBA MEMBERSHIP

HELP US FILL THE PAGE - INVITE A FRIEND TO JOIN!

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Shred Day

Tyler

April 18

8am-12pm

BBB Tyler Offices

6115 New Copeland Rd.



In Partnership With:



***The State Bar of Texas cordially
invites you and your family
to the
New Lawyers Induction Ceremony
Monday, April 27, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.***

***Bass Concert Hall
2350 Robert Dedman Dr.
Austin, Texas***

Refreshments will be provided

***Alyson A. Martinez, President
Texas Young Lawyers Association***

***Santos Vargas, President
State Bar of Texas***



Texas Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers is an association of groups of lawyers and law students across Texas supporting each other in recovery from a wide variety of issues.

Join us for our 34th Annual Convention, June 5-7, at the Hotel Viata in Austin, which will feature personal stories of recovery, as well as discussions on addictions and mental health issues in the legal profession, wellness experiences and more!

More information and registration can be found at
<https://www.txlcl.org/>

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ATTORNEYS, BANKERS AND CPAS HAPPY HOUR

APRIL 30 | 5 TO 7 P.M. JAVI'S - TYLER | FREE FOR MEMBERS!

register here!



Join TXCPA East Texas in Tyler for a FREE ABC Happy Hour at Javi's, bringing together Attorneys, Bankers, and CPAs from across the community. This relaxed networking event is designed to spark meaningful conversations, build strategic relationships, and strengthen cross-industry collaboration.

Members are encouraged to invite colleagues from the legal and banking professions to join the conversation.



REGIONS

PRIVATE WEALTH MANAGEMENT

IS PLEASED TO HOST

TikTok, Tweets & Texas Ethics: Navigating Social Media Pitfalls

Presented by Maya Brill, Wealth Strategist

WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 2026 | 3:30PM - 5:00PM
HOLLYTREE COUNTRY CLUB, HOLLYTREE ROOM
6700 HOLLYTREE DR.
TYLER, TX 75703

APPROVED FOR ONE-HOUR OF TEXAS ETHICS CLE CREDIT
LIGHT HORS D'OEUVRES & DRINKS WILL BE SERVED

SEATING IS LIMITED, PLEASE RSVP
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YOUNG PROFESSIONALS SUMMIT

TYLER AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

"A CLEAR VISION FOR GROWING AND SUCCEEDING PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY IN TYLER"

MONDAY, NOV. 16, 2026
MAYFAIR BUILDING
11:00AM - 5:00PM

NETWORKING HAPPY HOUR IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING

AGENDA:

REGISTRATION & LUNCH

CHET GARNER "THE DAYTRIPPER", KEYNOTE

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

"TYLER TOMORROW" PANEL

"BUILDING A CAREER WITH PURPOSE" PANEL

NETWORKING HAPPY HOUR



CHAMBER MEMBER: \$120

NON-MEMBER: \$150

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OR CONTACT GRANT INGRAM - GINGRAM@TYLERTEXAS.COM**



Thank you for your continued participation with and support of the SCBA.

Visit
www.smithcountybar.com
 to renew your membership
 or join a section!

Important SCB Dates

SCBF Board Meeting

April 8, *Wilson Elser conference room*, 12 - 1p

2-hour CLE

April 10, *Cotton Belt Building & Willow Brook Country Club*, 10:30 am—1p

People's Law School

April 11, *Tyler Junior College*, 9a-noon

SCYLA Board Meeting

April 16, *Hager Firm conference room*, 12 - 1p

SCBA Board Meeting

April 23, *Genecov Room*, 12 - 1p

LAW DAY

May 1, *Cascades Country Club*, 5:30p - 7:00p



The SCBF is a 501/c/3, EIN 81-0585550

Mission Statement

Furthering justice and promoting the rule of law by providing resources and education to the community.

Interested in including the SCBF in your estate planning? Have non-cash assets and would like a charitable deduction? Give me a call - we can help!

beth@smithcountybar.com

[Click here if you would like to honor someone with a gift to the Foundation.](#)

Thanks to all for honoring your loved ones

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