

I graduated from the University Of Texas School Of Law and returned to Corpus Christi where I launched my law practice in 1984. There were not many women attorneys in Corpus Christi – less than 100. The legal community was still dominated by male attorneys. The women were engaged in diverse areas of law. Several of us would enjoy fellowship over lunch. We all enjoyed the networking. I thought that we should formalize the fellowship and networking. Over casual conversation I found that others had the same thought. I called a meeting with some of the women (Portia Bott, Edna de los Santos, Evelyn Huerta, Judge Hilda Tagle, Judge Rene Haas, Jeanne Chastain, Anne Kollmorgen and Shirley Selz) and, over lunch, discussed our interest in organizing our association. There was great enthusiasm around the table.

It was at this lunch meeting that we decided to call a formal meeting of all women lawyers in Corpus Christi and the surrounding area. The meeting was set for June 11, 1986 at the beautiful and brand new home of Judge René Haas. (See letter of invitation describing our objectives for that meeting.) Portia Bott and I prepared the draft of that initial letter of invitation to the first organizational meeting. I circulated the draft of the letter among the eight other women and on May 30, 1986, I mailed out the letter of invitation which was undersigned by the nine of us.

The nine of us met on June 5, 1986, at Howard's Bar-B-Que to map out details of our organizational meeting scheduled to take place on June 11th. I chaired the organizational meeting (see text of my remarks to the group and the Agenda). Among the reports presented was the organization of women lawyers in Bexar and Travis Counties. (Bexar County women had organized in 1982.) One of the primary fruits of the June 11<sup>th</sup> meeting was our decision to conduct a survey to assist us in determining what the objectives of our organization should be.

If I counted correctly, some 48 women attended the meeting of June 11, 1986. I believe that anyone who attended the June 11<sup>th</sup> meeting will attest to the great excitement that permeated that meeting. A steering committee, chaired by Brenda Baker, prepared the survey forms and these were mailed out on

September 22, 1986. (See names of members of steering committee in cover letter dated September 22, 1986. Deadline for responding to survey was October 1, 1986). Edna de los Santos undertook the task of creating a list of all women lawyers in the greater Corpus Christi area. She identified some 88 women lawyers. (See Edna's letter dated November 5, 1987.) Edna de los Santos also served as chair of the By Laws Committee, which produced the Association's initial set of By Laws. (See Edna's handwritten note dated July 22, 1988 regarding preparations of the By Laws and see copy of initial draft of By Laws and final copy of the initial By Laws of the Association.)

The Association's first year as an organization started September 1, 1988 and ended August 31, 1989. Our first set of officers was: Judge Hilda Tagle – Chair; Marisela Saldana – Vice Chair; Deanie King – Secretary; Cheryl Whited – Treasurer. The Standing Committee Chairs were: Jeanne Chastain – Community Leadership; Beverly Jones – Membership, and Maxie Houser – Program. (See Association's very first Member Directory.) The officers for the Association's second year (September 1, 1989 – August 31, 1990) were: Marisela Saldana – President; Deanie King – Vice President; Maxie Houser – Secretary and Carol Bailey – Treasurer. Chairs of the Standing Committee were: Karen Lynn – Community Leadership; Melody Cooper – Membership; and Edna de los Santos – Program. (See copy of my letter dated August 28, 1989 regarding the commencement of our work for the Association's 1989-1990 year.)

Third set of officers for the year September 1, 1990 – August 31, 1991 were: Deanie King – President; Lanette Smith Joubert – Vice President; Beverly Jones – Secretary; Constance Luedicke – Treasurer. Chairs of Standing Committees: Maxie Houser – Membership; Quen Garza – Leadership; Maxie Houser – Program (see notice of meeting dated August 7, 1990.)

See Edna de los Santos' letter dated January 23, 1990 regarding the Association's project of preserving (through oral history – interview) the story of Louisa Hugg.

Melody cooper wrote the story about Louisa Hugg – appeared in Corpus Christi Lawyer February, March, April, etc. 1990.