



# Denton County Lawyer

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[www.dentonbar.com](http://www.dentonbar.com)

## Scalawags Unite for an Outstanding Bench/Bar III

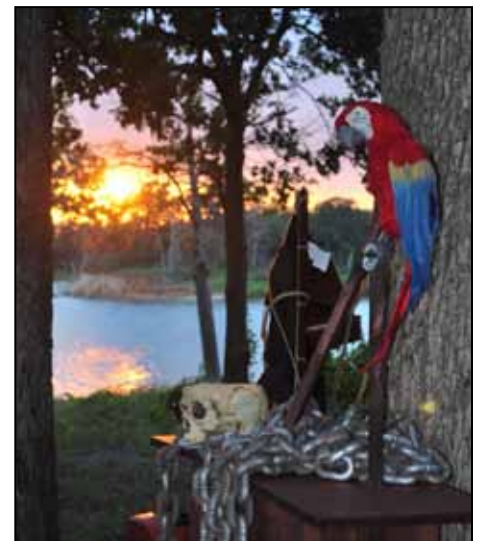
By Kimberly Killebrew, Attorney at Law; Duane L. Coker & Associates, P.C., [www.cokerlegal.com](http://www.cokerlegal.com).

The 3rd annual Bench/Bar Conference—with a Pirates of Denton County Bar theme—was a huge success thanks to all of our sponsors and fabulous committee members! Andrew Passons planned the annual golf tournament in which five teams participated for some great prizes and each player got a great gift bag donated by Westlaw. During the tournament, Fon Laughlin and Amie Peace used a Model T golf cart to help relieve the golfers' thirst. Fon Laughlin received *The Best Use of a Golf Cart* award on Sunday for her efforts and bringing out the cool golf cart made by her Mom and Dad!

Rae Wilhite and Ria Sherman tirelessly manned the registration table all weekend and sold over \$800 in

raffle tickets to help raise money for next year's Bench/Bar!

Each participant in the conference received 8.75 hours of CLE credit. Amanda Coffey, with the help of Travis Biggs, made sure the AV worked for all the speakers while Captain Jack Sparrow, aka Andrew Lloyd, served as moderator during the CLE. Some of the favorite speakers based on the surveys were Chad Baruch with his Marbury vs. Madison speech and Rick Hagen's topic on how to select a Pirate jury. Mark Bennett impressed the attendees with his personality colors topic as well; and last but not least, Duane Coker increased everyone's knowledge about pirates and maritime laws before dinner on Friday.



Travis Biggs and Leah Harbour, planned a Casino Party that rivaled any Vegas hotel. Huge gift baskets, spa certificates, a stay at the Aria in Vegas, and concert tickets were among the fabulous Casino prizes donated by Becky Solis, Michelle Houston, Phillip and Jackie Herr, Tony Ross, MacKoy/Hernandez/Qualls, Ed Burkett, Jim Turnage of Forensic DNA and Drug Testing and Forensic Counseling. Beth Nielsen was our decorations sub-committee member who came up with

*Scalawags Unite continued on page 5.*

*Pirates of the Denton County Bar Bench/Bar Conference was brought to you by the efforts of these Scalawags: (front row) Amie Peace, Fon Laughlin, Travis Biggs, Kimberly Killebrew, (middle row) Ria Sherman, Vicki Isaacks, Michelle Houston, Amanda Coffey, Beth Nielsen, Inga Lloyd, Andrew Lloyd, Andrew Passons, (back row) Rae Wilhite, Phillip Herr, and Duane Coker.*



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# From the President

For any of you out there in Bar Land who have seen the movie *This is Spinal Tap*, you're familiar with the scene in which Nigel (played by Christopher Guest) explains to the director of the rockumentary that unlike standard amplifiers, which have volume levels from 0–10, he's had special ones made that "go to eleven."

Of course, he's not quite bright enough to realize the amp could be just as loud and only go to 10, and the confusing conversation that follows is, in my opinion, one of the funniest scenes in a really funny movie. However, his statement has become a common phrase in popular culture—and among fans of the movie—to refer to anything being pushed to its utmost abilities. Something being taken to the next level.

I think it's time to take our Denton Bar to "eleven!"

While hard work is in store (we can't just replace our current 10 with an 11), it is a much easier job than it

sounds. This is primarily because levels 1–10 have already been firmly laid by a group of industrious, motivated, and incredibly capable board members and officers that preceded our current group. It's also made less onerous because our current group, as demonstrated by the ferociously great job they did at our Bench/Bar conference this year, are already operating at an eleven.

Our board has met and started working on ideas and putting early plans in place to take the Denton Bar to the next level. Here are just a few.

1. We're planning one of the most exciting years of activities that I've seen since joining the Denton Bar over a decade ago. Many of you came up to me at the May bar luncheon and requested "more parties." While these requests were often accompanied by a wink and a smile, I think they were also a sincere acknowledgment of one of the things that makes practicing in Denton a pleasant experience as well as one of the mission



*Duane L. Coker, President*

statement goals of DCBA—the great collegiality of our bar. We're going to work to promote and further that collegiality by offering great opportunities for everyone to get together and get to know one another this year.

2. Our Membership Committee has set a goal to increase our bar membership to more than 400 members this year. This is about a 25% increase. I raised that goal by challenging them to hit it by the end of September,

*President's Letter continued on page 6.*

## DCBA Officers

**President,** *Duane L. Coker*  
**Immediate Past President,**  
*Dena A. Reecer*  
**President-Elect,**  
*Theodore D. Ogilvie*  
**Vice President,** *Amie Peace*  
**Treasurer,** *Travis Biggs*  
**Secretary,** *Vicki Isaacks*  
**CLE Director,** *Julia Kerestine*

## DCBA Directors

*Leah Harbour, Brent Hill, Fon Laughlin, Andrew M. Lloyd, Virginia Moore, Jill O'Connell*

## DCBA Committee Chairs

**Courts Committee,**  
*Theodore D. Ogilvie*  
**Library Board of Governors,**  
*Andrew M. Lloyd*  
**Social Committee,** *Brent Hill*  
**CLE Committee,** *Julia Kerestine*  
**Communications Committee,**  
*Andrew M. Lloyd and Jill O'Connell*  
**Fee Dispute,** *John Rentz*  
**Pro Bono,** *Cynthia Burkett and Vicki Isaacks*

**Membership,** *Travis Biggs*  
**Awards,** *Dena A. Reecer*  
**Planning Committee,**  
*Duane L. Coker*  
**Local Rules,** *Theodore D. Ogilvie*

## DCBA Sections

- Trial Lawyer's Association
- Family Law Section
- Greater Denton County Young Lawyers Association
- Real Estate, Trust, and Probate Law Section
- Criminal Law

## DCBA Membership

**Your DCBA Membership includes**

- Free and discounted CLE programs
- Monthly luncheon & happy hour
- Networking opportunities
- Listing on the bar website, including photo, two practice areas, and a link to your website.

For more information see our website: [www.dentonbar.com](http://www.dentonbar.com).



## Swashbuckling Good Times had at Bench/Bar 2012

By Heidi Whitaker, Attorney at Law, Brotherton Law, [www.brothertonlaw.com](http://www.brothertonlaw.com).

If you did not attend the Pirates of the Denton County Bench/Bar III at Tanglewood Resort in Pottsboro, you missed out on a swashbuckling weekend! This was my first Bench/Bar and it made me regret having missed previous ones. The committee combined entertainment, relaxation, and education into one rollicking event.

Many attendees started the weekend with the Friday morning golf tournament. As can be seen in the thank you section, Fon Laughlin and Amie Peace attempted to be everywhere at once to increase the fun. After lunch, the attorneys and judges sailed on into CLE topics including reimbursement claims and S-corps, an update from Justice Gabriel on the Second Court of Appeals, tips for dealing with title company underwriters' requirements and family law, personality types and the impact on negotiation or relations in a case, and, of course, civil and family law case updates. Saturday morning included more great topics. One text back to the office was that a particular topic had made the whole trip worthwhile. Then another speaker imparted analysis and tips that will be very useful in the near future. Even with so much packed into the schedule, there were plenty of questions and interesting comments. Duane Coker's presentation on pirates and the law regarding shipwrecks in Texas added another dimension to Friday evening. Andrew Lloyd is

definitely the man to see if you need something translated into "pirate-speak!"

While the attorneys gained knowledge and practice tips, family members frolicked in the pool, relaxed at the spa, and tested their clubs at the driving range. Outside the lecture hall, representatives of Westlaw, LexisNexis, Forensic DNA and Drug Testing, Super Media, and other vendors were on hand to answer questions. Most had snacks of one kind or another and trinkets to capture our attention. Several of the vendors gave away door prizes on Saturday, including gift cards and a GPS tracker.

Friday night saw many folks testing their luck in the casino. There were definitely some hot dice on the craps table! Several shooters kept the action lively. Poker, black jack, and roulette also had good crowds. At the end of the gambling, winners cashed out for tickets with which they could win one of the nifty gift baskets or other prizes. There were many smiling faces as the prizes were handed out.

Andrew Lloyd did not stop at volunteering himself to make the Bench/Bar a great event. His brother provided games including a Jacob's ladder, jousting, and obstacle course for part of our pirate games on Saturday afternoon. Judge "Ski" and Judge Barnes presided over the pirate competitions and for some reason

*Swashbuckling continued on page 6.*



## Claiming Credit For Your Service The Benefits to All of Us

By Virginia A. Moore, Attorney at Law; [www.vamlawfirm.com](http://www.vamlawfirm.com).

Attorneys chafe at the concept that mandatory pro bono may someday become a condition to practicing law. The fact is that all of us provide pro bono service as part of our normal practices. Our hesitation to report that service may reflect a suspicion that the Texas voluntary reporting program may become a tool to justify a mandatory program or it could be that many of us haven't considered the benefits of doing so. Documenting the substantial generosity of Texas lawyers actually provides the best argument that regulation is unnecessary.

Under our state's guidelines, the following are all considered reportable pro bono service:

- One-on-one legal representation of the "poor," whether through a formal clinic, legal aid appointment, or even by providing free or reduced fee representation to a low-income person contacting your office seeking help.
- Leadership, support and participation in pro bono bar programs, including our Denton County Bar pro bono programs:
  - Adoption Day
  - Texas Lawyers for Texas Veterans
  - Wills for Heroes
- Providing transactional legal services for non-profit organizations in your community such as schools, churches, and social service agencies.

- Participation in local and/or state bar or other leadership programs designed to:
  - Train or mentor other attorneys to provide pro bono service;
  - Establish and implement programs to address the needs of low-income persons;
  - Recruit volunteers and assist in fundraising for local pro bono programs; and
  - Oversee and manage alternative dispute resolution programs designed for and accessible to low-income clients within the county.
- Serving as a Board member of an organization that does any of the above.

The only requirement for reporting is that the service be provided at no cost or at a substantially reduced fee. No definition of "low-income" or "poor" is specified, and attorneys are free to decide for themselves based on their own consciences what constitutes pro bono work within their practices.

### Benefits to be Gained by Reporting Pro Bono Hours

#### For the Lawyer

Lawyers reporting more than 75



hours in a year become eligible for admission to the Pro Bono College of the State Bar. Among the tangible benefits associated with admission are a free subscription to the Texas Bar CLE's Online Library and recognition at the annual State Bar convention. The intangible benefit of being a person of generosity to those less fortunate is, as always, priceless!

#### For our Denton County Community

Beyond the obvious benefit to a low-income client receiving free or reduced fee legal services in a time of need, pro bono reporting also raises public awareness, involvement and funding of legal programs—which in turn serve as resources to us for those clients we can't assist personally, including Legal Aid of Northwest Texas and Texas Law Help.

#### For the Denton County Bar Association

Our Denton County Bar Association has won State Bar Awards on

numerous occasions, making it one of the top bar associations in its class in the State. The esteemed "Award of Merit" is based on several weighted criteria, one of which is graded in part on pro bono service of our membership. Reporting your hours will allow our Bar the opportunity to bring recognition on a state and local level to the considerable pro bono involvement of our membership.

### For the Profession

Perhaps the best benefit of reporting pro bono services is the enhancement of the public image of our profession. The dramatic fall in perceived esteem accorded lawyers over the last century can be overcome and reporting your pro bono services can be an important step.

Please consider reporting your pro bono hours and applying for membership in the Pro Bono College of the State Bar of Texas.

### How to Report your Pro Bono Hours

Voluntary reporting of pro bono hours is easily handled through an online portal at the State Bar webpage.

1. Browse to [www.texasbar.com](http://www.texasbar.com).
2. Click [Log in to My Bar Page](#).
3. In the left column, select [Report Pro Bono Hours](#).

Consider reporting as you go through the year to avoid a "guess-timate" at year end. The reporting year runs from January through December, so now's the time to start writing your service down!

### Questions?

For complete information, please see State Bar of Texas Pro Bono Policy—FAQ 2009.

*Scalawags Unite continued from page 1.* some great decorations for the pirate theme. Anthony Lloyd of Built for Fun donated three inflatables that the team members used for a portion of the team building, of which Judge Barnes' team took 1st place! Gayle Clift was in charge of guest diversions and thanks to Evan Clift who donated craft supplies and taught participants how to make bracelets, wine glass wraps and ceiling fan pulls. Vicki Isaacks and crew helped make the casino night and Saturday night luau awesome by donating skills, time, firewood, generators, power boat, printer and photo paper.

The island adventure would not have been the same without the extremely creative treasure hunt designed by Andrew Lloyd, music by Travis Biggs and the impressive smoke and fire effects donated by Aaron Lloyd with Pyrotechnico. Travis got *The Best D.J.* award for his talents. The annual poker tournament led by Judge Shipman was well attended and Judge "Ski" Podgorski won *The Winning Hand* trophy while Kelly Davis got honorable mention for coming in 2nd place after her 1st place win last year.

Amie Peace, Phillip Herr, Inga Lloyd, and Debbie Henry went above and beyond the call of duty and helped out wherever and whenever needed!

On Sunday, attendees won over 200 prizes including a Kindle Touch, donated by DepoTexas. Thanks to Texas Land & Cattle, Texas Roadhouse, Cartwright's Ranch House, University Lanes, Kolache Haven, Hastings, Giuseppe's,

McAlister's Deli, The Chestnut Tree, Claire Henry, The Abbey Inn, Brunswick Bowling, Davanti Aveda Spa & Salon, Yogurt Fusion, Best Buy, Rave Theater, Cinemark Theater, Spa Synergy, Beth Marie's, Mellow Mushroom, and Applebee's for donating many awesome raffle prizes as well.

Last but not LEAST, this conference would not have happened without Michelle Houston and her hard work with registration, coordination, creativeness and ability to make everyone feel welcome and part of the group—one of the key reasons to attend Bench/Bar. Attendees came away with a better sense of camaraderie, and that makes all of us better lawyers and Judges. The committee members did much more than is mentioned here but I tried to hit the highlights to summarize how wonderful they all are!!

Big thanks go out to three top sponsors this year: SuperMedia, DCAP, and Coye Conner, Jr. And we couldn't have put on such a great conference without the donations from Lloyd Law Firm; Koons Fuller; NAK; Wood, Thacker, & Weatherly; HBWV; Content Solutions; Davis Mediation Center; Isaacks & Isaacks; State Bar of Texas; Sherry Shipman; Coffey & Peace; Lewis & Passons; Carlock, Gormley, Hight; Goranson Bain; LexisNexis; Cheryl Isbell; LP Dynamics, Inc; CokerLegal; Jeffries Electric; Ross Law Offices; Elsey & Elsey; Kerestine Law; Salad Stop; Jackson & Hagen; and Judge Jonathon Bailey!!!!

Sincerely, we Denton pirates  
ARRRRRRRE thankful!



*President's Letter continued from page 2.*

and they didn't blink. While our committee, headed by Leah Harbour, has hit the ground running, they need your help. Leah will be looking for committee members; contact her if you're interested in helping out. Promoting membership in the DCBA is one of the easiest jobs in the world. Our bar offers more (much more) to its members than any other similarly sized bar. In fact, we offer more than most of the largest bars in the State. We're currently working on flyers and promotional materials to help members, and prospective members, fully understand what they're getting for their money. I'll also work to keep everyone up-to-date at our monthly bar luncheons by singing the praises of our bar at each meeting.

3. Our bar works hard in the community by leading projects like Adoption Day, Wills for Heroes, Texas

Lawyers for Texas Veterans and by working hand-in-hand with the most successful county-supported mediation program in the state—DCAP. It's time to take that community stewardship to the next level by putting into place a vehicle for those in our community who wish to financially support such efforts. The DCBA board will be working this year to establish the Denton County Bar Foundation, which will be a non-profit organization that will work hand-in-hand with DCBA by providing fundraising support for these projects.

These are just a few of our plans to get the DCBA to the next level. We have lots of other ideas and great people working on them. We're always interested to hear yours. Please feel free to contact me or any of our board members if you want to help out on any of our projects, or if you have the idea that will get us to "eleven!"

*Swashbuckling continued from page 3.*

most of the participants in those contests were on their teams! There were lots of laughs and smiles among all participants, including the less represented teams. Those who tried the Jacob's ladder certainly developed their own unique method of reaching the top. The obstacle course challenged but the pirates even pushed through injury to overcome.

Saturday evening found the attendees out on a scenic cruise to Sundance Isle where the teams followed cryptic clues on a treasure hunt and enjoyed a luau. Travis Biggs provided music and Andrew Lloyd's other brother provided pyrotechnics with smoke and flames. After the feast, some brave souls participated in the annual poker tournament. Next year, I'll try karaoke in the hospitality suite.

If you dread having to get your CLE hours, make it fun by coming to the next Bench/Bar. Between the judges and attorneys in attendance, there was plenty of opportunity to meet people. The committee worked so hard to ensure topics and activities for everyone. A special thank you to Kim Killebrew, as without her efforts chairing the committee, this conference would not be possible. Kim has been the chairperson of the Bench/Bar all three years and has always hosted the hospitality suite in her room. Kim has worked tirelessly to ensure that the Bench/Bar is bigger and better every year.

As a result, this conference was a weekend well worth the time. Kim, do you have room on your committee for one more?



**Please Join  
Us!**

**Thursday, June 7, 2012**  
5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

**Texas Woman's University**  
Hubbard Hall  
1600 Bell Avenue, Denton

Our journey began 60 years ago, when 11 lawyers decided that legal advice and aid should be available to anyone, regardless of ability to pay. From that vision came Legal Aid of North West Texas, the fifth-largest legal services program in the United States. Please join our Chief Executive Officer, attorneys, staff, board members, volunteers and members of the community in celebrating the vision of our founders while learning more about our firm and the work that we do in Denton and its surrounding counties.

Please RSVP to Jane Fritz  
fritzj@lanwt.org or 817.339.5309

# From Our Sponsors

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# Announcements and Events

## DCBA in 2012-13

### June Bar Luncheon

**Date:**

Friday, June 1, Noon  
Meal included

**Location:**

Oakmont Country Club  
1901 Oakmont Drive  
Corinth, Texas 76210

**Program:**

*Arrest and Prosecution of  
Criminal Child Abuse Cases*

**Speaker:**

Rick Daniel

### July Bar Luncheon

**Date:**

Friday, June 22, Departure time to  
be announced.  
Box Lunch included

**Location:**

WinStar Bus

**Program:**

*Grievances: Taking the High Road*

**Speaker:**

Bob Eames

**Note:**

July CLE will be combined with  
the June 22, 2012 WinStar Trip.

### Announcing

DCAP will now be charging for DCAP Mediation reschedulings or cancellations that fall within 10 days of the scheduled date of mediation, starting immediately.

DCBA would like to express our condolences on the passing of Michelle Beecher's father, Andrew Moreau, on May 14. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the American Heart Association and the American Kidney Association.

Mark and Linda Lewis are proud to announce that their daughter, Amy Kathleen Lewis, received her Juris Doctor from the University of Oklahoma School of Law on May 12. Amy is first in her class.

## Monthly Meetings

### Collaborative Professionals

DCCP will meet at **12:00 PM** on Tuesday, **June 5**, at Oakmont Country Club, 1901 Oakmont Dr. in Corinth.

### Family Law

Family Law will meet at **12:00 PM** on Thursday, **June 21**, in the Central Jury Room, 1450 E. McKinney St. in Denton.

### Paralegals

DCPA will meet at **12:00 PM** on Thursday, **June 28**, at Oakmont Country Club, 1901 Oakmont Dr. in Corinth.

### GDCYLA

GDCYLA will gather for their monthly:

- Meeting at **11:45 AM** on Thursday, **June 7**, at Greenhouse, 600 N. Locust St., in Denton.
- Happy Hour at **5:00 PM** on Thursday, **June 14**, location to be determined in Denton.

### REPTL

REPTL will meet at **11:45 PM** on Wednesday, **June 27**, at Oakmont Country Club, 1901 Oakmont Dr. in Corinth.



# Denton County Bar Association

## 2012-13 Membership Application

### Required Information (for directory, membership, and website use)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Texas Bar Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Facsimile: \_\_\_\_\_  
Firm/Company: \_\_\_\_\_  
Business Address (including City & Zip Code): \_\_\_\_\_  
Email/Web Address: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Keep my email private.  
Texas Board Certifications (TBLS): \_\_\_\_\_  
Law School/Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
List All Other Degrees: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are younger than 37 years OR have practiced in Texas for less than 5 years, please check here ☐

Primary Areas of Practice\* (select two):

*\* Having two areas of practice listed in the web directory is included in the fee for bar membership. If you would like three to five areas of practice listed, there is an additional \$75.00 posting fee. Choose from the following:*

- |  |   |  |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative & Public | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction             | <input type="checkbox"/> Family                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Utility        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ADR                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Finance                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Labor-Employment            | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Antitrust               | <input type="checkbox"/> Creditor-Debtor          | <input type="checkbox"/> Government/Administrative | <input type="checkbox"/> Law Office Management       | <input type="checkbox"/> School Law            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appellate               | <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Care               | <input type="checkbox"/> LGBT Law                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Securities Law        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aviation                | <input type="checkbox"/> Elder Law                | <input type="checkbox"/> Immigration               | <input type="checkbox"/> Litigation: Commercial      | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security Law   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bankruptcy              | <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment            | <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Litigation: Personal Injury | <input type="checkbox"/> Taxation              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business                | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental            | <input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual Property     | <input type="checkbox"/> Military                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborative Law       | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethics-Legal Malpractice | <input type="checkbox"/> International             | <input type="checkbox"/> Oil & Gas                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Wills-Trusts-Probate  |
|  |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Workers' Compensation |

### Optional Information

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Attorneys in Firm: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Licensed in Texas: \_\_\_\_\_  
Other State Bar Admissions/Dates/License Numbers: \_\_\_\_\_  
Do you speak a foreign language? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, what language: \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to post your photograph on the DCBA website, email your photo to Michelle Houston at [mhouston@dentonbar.com](mailto:mhouston@dentonbar.com). The website will be updated periodically throughout the membership year.

### Application Certification

I, the undersigned, do hereby make application to the Denton County Bar Association for membership and, in making such application, I certify that I am validly licensed to practice law or am a law student of an accredited law school, that I promise to uphold and support the By-Laws of the Association and the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct in all respects and to the best of my personal and professional ability, that all information provided by me in this application is true and correct.

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Application Submission

Please mail this application along with a check made payable to **Denton County Bar Association** in the amount of **\$195.00** or **\$150.00** (licensed in Texas less than two years) to DCBA at 512 W. Hickory, Suite 202, Denton, TX. 76201. Please DO NOT include Collaborative Law, Family Law, Criminal Law or REPTL (Real Estate, Probate and Trust Law) Section dues with your DCBA payment. The DCBA membership year runs from May to May and dues are not pro-rated.

If you have any questions about the DCBA, please call the Denton County Bar Association at 940-320-1500; Duane Coker President at 940-566-6649, [duane@cokerlegal.com](mailto:duane@cokerlegal.com) or visit our website at [www.dentonbar.com/membership.shtml](http://www.dentonbar.com/membership.shtml).