

TLR CENTENNIAL YEAR BANQUET SPEECH BY GWEN DAWSON
(3/26/22)

- I am Gwen Dawson, chair of the Texas Law Review Association, a not-for-profit entity that supports the Texas Law Review.
- We had planned to start tonight's program at 7:15. For anyone keeping score, please don't count against us time spent taming this unruly audience.
- We began planning the Centennial Celebration more than four years ago. Our heartfelt thanks to the more than 300 TLR alumni who served on the Outreach and other planning committees. You helped make this evening and weekend special. Please stand so we can show our appreciation.
- Our extensive planning efforts seem to have succeeded. o More than 1,000 people reserved seats for this Banquet, almost double our previous attendance record. This includes alumni from 64 volume years, including every year since 1961, as well as one from the class of 1958.
- We have many other Centennial-related activities besides this Banquet. Most of the last 60 volumes have scheduled mini-reunion gatherings of their colleagues this weekend. More than 700 TLR alumni have posted pages in our virtual scrapbook. And two Centennial-related articles published in the latest issue of TLR and others in TLR Online have been receiving rave reviews.
- By the way, if you're interested in the dinner ingredients, the menu appears on the inside front cover of the Program Book.
- We are not only celebrating Volume 100; we are also recognizing the Boards of Volumes 98 and 99, whose third-year banquets were cancelled due to COVID. I hope you will understand that, for good reason, this program will be a bit longer than that of our typical TLR Banquet. We hope that, nonetheless, you will enjoy the evening.
- We are dispensing with naming most of the honored guests here because of the length of the program. But we want to acknowledge our appreciation for your presence.
- The TLRA Board works hard every year to support TLR's finances. Will all Board members please stand so we can show our thanks.

- Two of our Faculty Advisers are here. Please stand so we can show how much we appreciate all you do for TLR.
- We are honored by the presence of 23 federal and state judges in the audience. We thank you for your extraordinary service to the State and Nation. Please will all of you stand so we can show our appreciation.
- We are also joined by 36 members of the Texas Law faculty and administration. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication to make our law school the greatest place to get a legal education. Please stand so we can show our gratitude.
- Also with us is a longstanding member of the “Texas Law family,” Custis Wright, the spouse and beloved partner of the incomparable Professor Charles Alan Wright, about whom you will hear much more later. Mrs. Wright, please stand to be recognized. Thank you so much for joining us.
- Finally, I want to recognize two special guests. We are honored to be joined tonight by UT System Chancellor J.B. Milliken and his wife Nana [“nayna”] Smith. Both work tirelessly to keep UT at the forefront of the great public universities. Please stand and be recognized.
- Tonight we celebrate TLR’s 100th birthday. We know that our alumni in the audience share the feeling that our TLR experience made a difference in our lives. We hope that after tonight’s program, you will have an even deeper understanding of TLR’s history and importance.
- Now I invite to the podium our beloved Dean, Ward Farnsworth. Dean, you are admired and respected by students, faculty, and alumni alike. You have been a consistent TLR supporter and friend. Although this is your last TLR Banquet as Dean, we hope that, as you return to fulltime teaching, you will continue your active involvement with TLR.