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Message from the President

Frank Flaherty, Esq., State Bar of Nevada President



IT'S YOUR BAR

I attended a very productive meeting on March 28, 2012, at the Northern Nevada Bar Center. Justice Hardesty and I, along with the chairs of several sections of the State Bar of Nevada, were connected via video link to the state bar office on Charleston Boulevard where several more section chairs, state bar staff, then-President Connie Akridge, then-Chief Justice Nancy Saitta, and Justices Cherry and Douglas were meeting. We had a far-ranging and blunt discussion about improvement of the bar, both in its mission and in its service to its members – YOU. The meeting was so successful that conversations lingered on, in both north and south, after the official portion of the meeting concluded. The chair of one section was earnestly explaining a particular idea to the group in the north, but somewhat qualified his effort by stating to me “Look, it’s your bar, but I think...”

It would be incorrect to say that I “pounced” on this comment because it really was a very collegial meeting, but I did seize upon it to impress upon the group that it is really “their bar,” *i.e.*, YOUR BAR. This is not a novel notion, but it is certainly one worth repeating. In fact, it is entirely appropriate that my first column to you as president is an echo of Connie Akridge’s first column. I am happy to report that the bar has made great progress in the initiatives identified by Connie in her July 2011 column.

The bar continues in its efforts to make the Annual Meeting a great place for you to network and attend quality CLE programs. Kudos to Connie and again to the Annual Meeting Planning Committee and the many sections and members of the bar – YOU – who collaborated to make this year’s Annual Meeting such a success. We plan to continue to rely on the bar’s sections to identify and develop CLE content that is meaningful for the membership. The Board of Governors continues to struggle with the location of the Annual Meeting. We believed that many of you who practice in the south would find San Diego a desirable location because it is within driving distance from Las Vegas, and that those of you from the north and other parts of the state would find it

easily accessible via air travel, and the turnout this year indicates we were correct.

Next year, we will be holding the Annual Meeting in the state of Nevada, which as many of you know, is a somewhat novel approach for us. Historically, or at least using recent history as a guide, meetings held in the state have not been well attended. However, we are hopeful that our new focus on content and partnership with the sections will make next year's Annual Meeting as successful as this year's. The meeting will be at Harvey's and Harrah's in Stateline, Nevada (Lake Tahoe) from July 25 through July 27. Aside from the continued focus on the content of the CLE offered at the Annual Meeting, we have moved the meeting from June to July to ensure a more "summer-like" experience at Lake Tahoe, which admittedly can sometimes be a bit "cool" in June. Thus, July at Tahoe will be a great place to get quality CLE and cool off, without getting "too cool."

The other initiative that Connie forecasted in her July 2011 column was the creation of a program to replace the "Bridge the Gap" CLE program that so many of us attended as a prerequisite to practice in the Silver State. Bar staff and many of you worked very hard on Bridge the Gap for many years, but we could never overcome the shortcomings generated by its one-size-fits-all approach. The solution again involved you; specifically, those of you who have been appointed as mentors by the Nevada Supreme Court.

Officially, the mentoring program, or Transitioning Into Practice (TIP), is still in its pilot program phase, but the feedback received thus far has been very positive, especially as compared to the feedback we received over the years from many of you who attended Bridge the Gap. On behalf of the entire bar, I would like to thank those of you who stepped up and volunteered to be mentors. We think this is going to be a great program, and by demonstrating commitment and professionalism to our new admittees, YOU are making it great.

Finally, Connie advised you that the bar has outgrown its Las Vegas office. The board, especially its Facilities Committee, and bar staff have made great strides since July 2011 in locating a new facility for your Las Vegas office. We are very confident that we will soon have a facility that is energy efficient, technologically current and a great place for your industrious bar staff to work. We are confident that just like the Northern Nevada Bar center, we will have ample space for CLE and other training, as well as space available for you and your occasional needs (*e.g.*, mediations, larger conferences). There will also be ample parking.

In sum, the Board of Governors and state bar staff continue to move the bar forward by reconnecting with the membership – you. We certainly cannot do it without you, and I want to thank all of you who have donated countless hours to the bar and its mission, and thus by extension, to the improvement of the legal profession and enhanced service to the public in Nevada. Please keep up the good work, and encourage your colleagues to join you in service to your bar. ■