



Mountainside Retreat:

State Bar of Nevada Annual Meeting Continued

“The Great Debate” in Vail

PINE AND ASPEN-DRAPED MOUNTAINS NEXT TO A BABBLING CREEK: this was the setting for the 2019 Annual Meeting, which took place June 26-29 at the gorgeous Hotel Talisa in Vail, Colorado. Participants had opportunities to network, attend educational sessions with world-renowned speakers and enjoy outdoor recreation in a lovely mountain retreat.

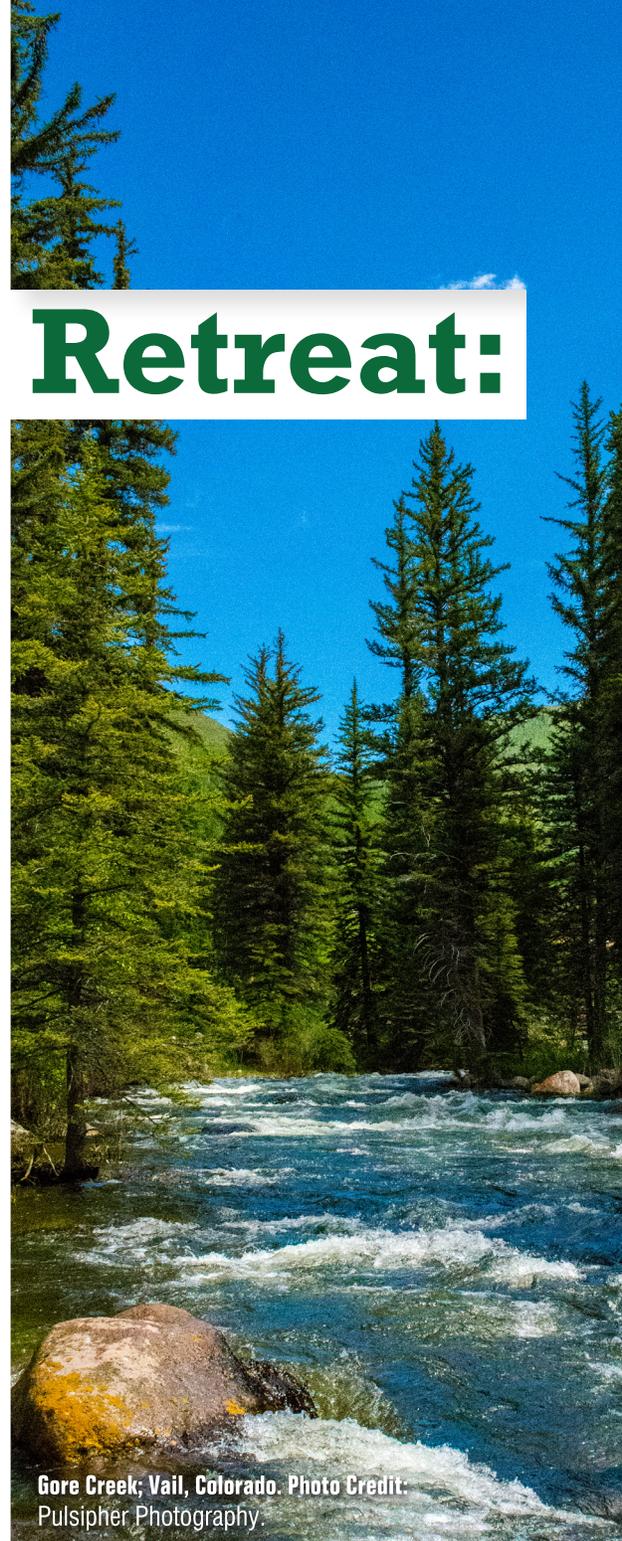
Speaker Highlights

The theme of this year’s Annual Meeting was “The Great Debate,” and the expert Annual Meeting presenters raised questions and explored answers relating to current trends in legal practice.

Thursday: Democracy, Duty and Demonstrations

On Thursday, June 26, the Annual Meeting officially began with an opening statement by Immediate Past President Richard Pocker, urging bar members to use their expertise for the betterment of their communities. “Ongoing debate is raging around us,” he said. “I plead guilty to the claim that I try to solve every problem by adding more lawyers. We have a unique set of skills, and we need to get involved.”

Pocker was followed by the opening speaker, Professor Lawrence Lessig, the Roy L. Furman Professor of Law and Leadership at Harvard Law School. He presented a session that explored how funding affects the U.S. political system using rapid-fire visuals to augment his presentation. “The nature of the way



Gore Creek; Vail, Colorado. Photo Credit: Pulsipher Photography



Nevada Supreme Court Chief Justice Mark Gibbons, Justice James Hardesty, Justice Lidia Stiglich, Justice Elissa Cadish, Justice Abbi Silver, and Nevada Court of Appeals Judge Bonnie Bulla and Chief Judge Michael Gibbons offered attendees “A View From the Bench” on Thursday, June 27.

[Right to left]: Senator Dallas Harris, Lt. Gov. Kate Marshall and Assemblywoman Shea Backus participated on a panel about the 2019 Legislative Session, moderated by Jon Ralston.



[our democracy] fails to represent us is not obvious,” he said. “Can we be convinced – as citizens – to put democracy first?”

Nevada Supreme Court Justice James Hardesty, State Bar of Nevada Bar Counsel Dan Hooge, and attorney Kristine Kuzemka next explored the question, “When does a lawyer have a duty to report?” in an interactive session that used cellphone technology to live-poll the audience when presented with hypothetical ethical situations.

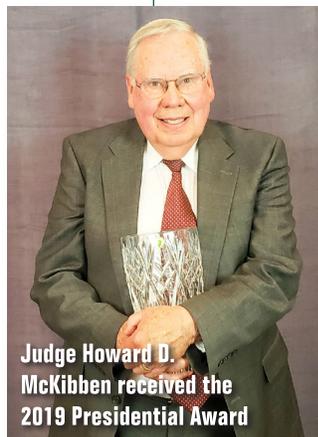
Two state bar sections hosted breakout sessions Thursday. The Intellectual Property Law Section asked whether the law has kept pace with pop culture in their session exploring the law regarding technology and business trends. The Litigation Section’s session, “What sets great oral argument apart?” featured experienced litigators speaking with Judge Bonnie Bulla and Judge Susan Johnson about how to provide courtroom presentations that stand out to members of the bench.

Dan Reimer, assistant general counsel for Denver International Airport, offered a fascinating lunchtime session looking at the real-time decisions made by the airport when protestors arrived to demonstrate at the airport in 2017. Reimer discussed how the team balanced the airport’s safety and security concerns against demonstrators’ First Amendment rights.

National expert Ronald Seigneur offered an overview of current trends in the cannabis industry, including current trends relevant to

Nevada, as the recreational marijuana market continues to grow. “The cannabis and hemp industries are million-dollar industries, in the highest tax bracket of any industry, and they need the help of lawyers,” he said.

After a break to celebrate the recipients of the State Bar of Nevada Membership Awards and to swear-in the bar’s Board of Governors, the day’s educational sessions concluded with a presentation by members of the Nevada Supreme Court and Nevada Court of Appeals. They discussed case processing in Nevada’s appellate courts and answered questions from bar members during a long question-and-answer session, which included queries such as, do justices hold pre-conferences on cases, how does the Supreme Court approach attorney discipline, do the bar and court have the resources to consider reciprocity with its discipline log, and how is the chief judge of court of appeals selected?



Judge Howard D. McKibben received the 2019 Presidential Award

Friday: Legislators and Lawyers

Friday, June 27, began with a fascinating session presented by Georgetown Law Professor and Fastcase founder Ed Walters, who demonstrated how firms can use data analytics to answer client questions, improve pricing for legal services, and more. “If we make the risk lower for clients of legal services ... more people will consume what we are selling,” he said.

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In addition, political journalist Jon Ralston moderated a panel of members from Nevada’s state legislators, who discussed the impact of having a majority of female representatives in the Legislature and updates from the 2019 session.

“Losing term limits allowed for a different crop of people to run, including younger and more diverse [candidates],” Lt. Governor Kate Marshall said. “The challenge of losing the institutional knowledge was met with a new group of people who don’t abide by the way things were done in the past, so it resulted in things like the Trust in Women Act.” The panel also included state Assemblywoman Shea Backus and state Senator Dallas Harris. The lively and candid panel discussion featured information mixed with humor.

Other Friday sessions included breakouts covering changes to the Nevada Rules of Civil Procedure, a review of ethics rules using notable national cases of lawyer misconduct, and methods to improve document management at law firms.



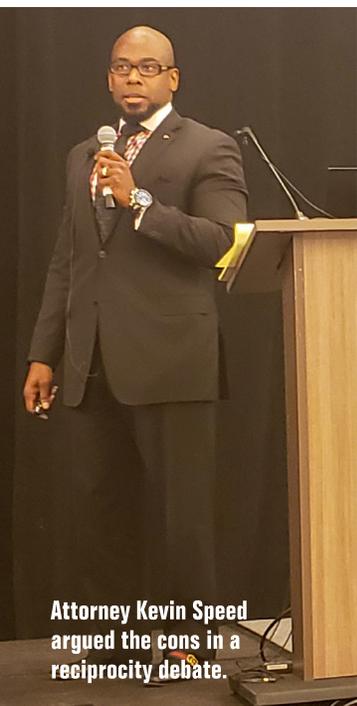
Saturday: The Great Debate

Embracing the Annual Meeting theme directly, attorneys Kevin Speed and Alex Velto started Saturday morning’s educational sessions off with a formal debate on the topic of reciprocity. Each side discussed the pros and cons of granting reciprocity to attorneys licensed in other states. The debate participants discussed concerns such as quality of service to clients, the ability to discipline attorneys, and the impact of attorneys from other states on Nevada’s legal market. Moderator Ann Morgan added an overview of the bar’s recent work regarding reciprocity, including the work of the taskforce, a membership survey and an ADKT submitted to the Nevada Supreme Court last December. Bar members will be able to read a summary of the pros and cons in the September issue of *Nevada Lawyer*.

The Annual Meeting closed with a presentation on diversity in the legal profession by speaker Steven Velkei, who asked “Does the future of diversity depend on straight,

white men?” During his presentation, he said, “It’s a numbers game. Most people of influence are straight white men. We need men to make change.”

Other sessions on Saturday included breakout presentations from the Bankruptcy Law Section, which explored Nevada’s financial landscape with respect to bank lending, and a session titled “Is that Agreement Enforceable?” presented by the Labor and Employment Law Section.



Attorney Kevin Speed argued the cons in a reciprocity debate.



Attorney Alex Velto advocated the pros of reciprocity during debate.

Membership Awards and Swearing-In Ceremony

It was the State Bar of Nevada’s honor to recognize hardworking volunteers who shape the growth of law practice in our state by contributing their time and effort toward improving the legal profession.

On Thursday, June 26, the state bar recognized the outstanding achievements of its 2019 Membership Awards recipients, including:

- **Presidential Award:** Judge Howard D. McKibben
- **Medal of Justice:** Dayvid Figler
- **Medal of Justice:** Bank of Nevada
- **Volunteer of the Year:** Mark Hinueber
- **Young Lawyer of the Year:** Amber Handy

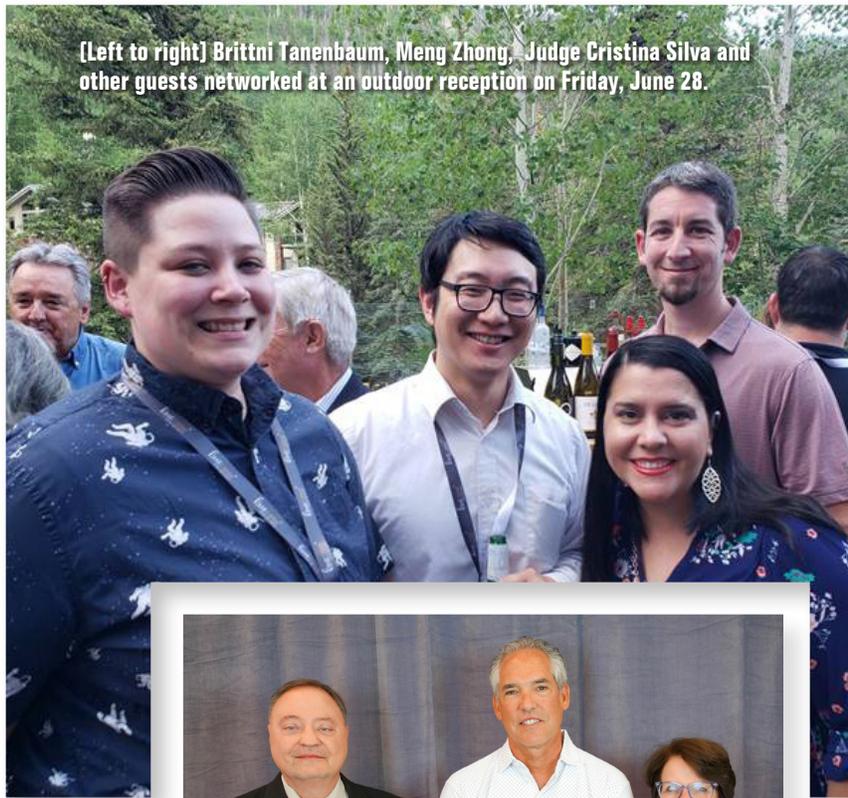


Nevada Supreme Court Chief Justice Mark Gibbons, Nevada Court of Appeals Judge Bonnie Bulla, and attorney Paul Ray addressed changes to the Nevada Rules of Civil Procedure.



Past Presidents of the state bar (left to right): [top row] Larry Digesti, Bill Curran, Rew Goodenow, Judge Bruce Beesley, Connie Akridge, Elana Turner Graham, John Mowbray; [bottom row] Dan Polsenberg, Frank Flaherty, Bob Dickerson, Rick Pocker and Bryan Scott.

(Left to right) Brittini Tanenbaum, Meng Zhong, Judge Cristina Silva and other guests networked at an outdoor reception on Friday, June 28.



Chief Justice Mark Gibbons (left) conducted the swearing-in ceremony for the Board of Governors, including (left to right) Kari Stephens, Richard Dreitzer, Catherine Mazzeo, Julie Cavanaugh-Bill, (back) Jeff Albrights (not visible), Gene Leverty and Joel Locke.



(Right to left) Attorneys Cyrus Whittaker and Vianca Trani attended a late-night reception with a guest, following the Trial Academy.



The 2019-2020 state bar officers include (left to right) President Paul Matteoni, President-Elect Eric Dobberstein and Vice President Ann Morgan.



Diana Ebron, with Bankruptcy Section members Connor Shea and Michael Brooks, and banker T. Ryan Sullivan.

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Nevada Lawyer previously covered the achievements of these award winners; readers may also find this information on the state bar’s website at <https://www.nvbar.org/state-bar-of-nevada-announces-recipients-of-the-2019-membership-awards/>.

The State Bar of Nevada’s newly elected and re-elected Board of Governors members were also sworn in on Thursday, June 27, during a ceremony conducted by Chief Justice Mark Gibbons. The state bar’s 2019-2020 officers were sworn in at the same time. For a complete list of new board members, see the listing on page 6.



Amie Aldrich, John Aldrich, Shea Backus, Marc McDermont, Justice Abbi Silver, and Justice Lidia Stiglich enjoy the beautiful Vail outdoors.



Diana Ebron, Sam Heidari and Karen Hanks take in the scenery.

Easy Choice: New Orleans in 2020

Missed the 2019 Annual Meeting? Join us next year in the Big Easy, New Orleans, from June 24-27, 2020 at the Roosevelt Hotel. In addition, many of the Annual Meeting’s seminars are now available for purchase as video presentations. Browse the selection at www.nvbar.org/clecatalog.



Catherine Mazzeo, Kari Stephens and Tracy DiFillippo enjoyed a stunning mountainside view.



Attorney Dayvid Figler received the 2019 Medal of Justice Award for his work in justice reform.

BACK BETTER THAN EVER: the Trial Academy

The Trial Academy, presented by the state bar’s Young Lawyers Section, continues to be a staple of the Annual Meeting, offering participants an opportunity to hone their trial skills by working in small groups with personal feedback from expert attorneys and practicing judges. These hands-on workshops are greatly beneficial to participants, who receive lessons on various aspects of a trial, and then get to put what they’ve learned into practice. **NL**