

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Thank You to All Our Members

BY PAUL MATTEONI, ESQ., PRESIDENT,
STATE BAR OF NEVADA

A special thanks to the many contributors and authors who provided input for this month's content related to Gaming law practice. Over the years, I have been involved with many of our gaming practitioners. They are truly multi-dimensional in their practices. Gaming law is not a branch of law in and of itself. Instead, it is a collection of several areas of law. Gaming practitioners are often confronted with issues pertaining to administrative law, regulatory law, corporate issues, contract matters, intellectual property, constitutional law and many others. Those members who undertake work in the gaming area typically work with casino owners, lottery operators, racetrack owners and others with gaming operations. Often these practitioners represent their clients before state and local regulatory bodies, as well as the National Indian Gaming Commission and other federal agencies. As we are all aware, our State maintains strong

historical ties to the gaming industry, and gaming has been critical to our economic development. Those members working in Gaming law have assisted our State in its growth and development.

As my time as President comes to a close, I am eternally grateful to all our members who have been of great assistance. The support and input from our members has been invaluable. Having served on the Board of Governors for nearly a decade, I am well aware of the time and dedication put forth by your elected Board members. They continuously strive for the betterment of *our* Bar and are committed to moving our organization forward—through the 2020s and beyond.

As for the past year, it has certainly been a “Tale of Two Extremes.” At the outset of my term as President the tasks and obligations were typical of the historical work being performed by the Board and Executive Committee. Budget issues, personnel matters, disciplinary

hearings, strategic plan, etc., etc.—and all was running smoothly. And then came March 2020—and it certainly came in with a Bang. Each of our work experiences and private lives have been affected and changed by the COVID-19 experience. The term “remotely” immediately became part of our daily vocabulary. Video conferencing, e-notarizations and many other adjustments have become the new norm. It appears obvious that many time-held traditions as to “how we practice law” are being revised or completely overturned. Whether it be transactional work, family law, probate, litigation or other legal arenas, we will all be adjusting to new methods and norms. These changes and adaptations are difficult and take courage. Our members continue to persevere.

Interestingly, the State Bar of Nevada came into existence in 1928. Prior to its formation, there existed a start-up organization—the Nevada Bar Association. In other words, the last time a pandemic affected our State (1917-1918), our historic organization had not yet been born! So, the past few months have been untested waters for the Board of Governors and the State Bar. We have addressed many unique issues and problems, including the decision to cancel the Annual Conference, addressing disciplinary matters in a “no-contact” environment, creating new website content such as up-to-date Court procedures and COVID-19 updates, and countless

other matters. It is with all sincerity that I hope to be the only president of the State Bar to ever address these types of issues.

In addition, I am proud of the efforts to support our members through these unsettling times. To date, the State Bar has offered multiple seminars, CLEs and presentations related to COVID-19, which have been attended by hundreds of members. Virtually all these helpful presentations have been at no charge to our members and have covered a wide array of issues. The State Bar has been dedicated to assisting our members through these challenging times as we recognize the major impact of the pandemic on the legal profession.

As I say my “goodbyes,” I must offer my greatest thanks and appreciation to my predecessors—the former Presidents of the State Bar. They each left an indelible impression on *our* Bar. As the 95th President of *our* Bar, I can only hope that I have moved the organization forward and left it a small bit better for the effort. In addition, I must express my gratitude to

my immediate predecessor, Richard “Rick” Pocker. As Immediate Past President, his leadership qualities were exemplary. I thank him for his friendship and the path he laid for me to follow. Also, I would be remiss if I did not thank my wonderful wife, Jacqueline, for her love and support over the many years. Lastly, I thank Kimberly Farmer and the staff of the State Bar. Our members are fortunate to have a group of individuals dedicated to assisting each of us and improving the practice of law in Nevada. The State Bar staff continued to work remotely throughout the “stay-at-home”

directive to ensure our members had the assistance and support they required.

I leave the State Bar to the direction of your new President—Eric Dobberstein. He is an outstanding individual and will continue to steer our organization forward with new ideas and a steadfast commitment to our profession. To him, I wish all the best.

Please continue to support *our* State Bar of Nevada and protect our profession. It has been an Honor and a Privilege to serve.

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