

A FOND FAREWELL

This will be my last President's Post, a feature I added to the newsletter when I took office almost two (2) years ago. I felt then and now more than ever that your President should speak out on issues relevant both locally and beyond, if for no other reason than to stimulate debate. Certainly, following the results of the last Presidential election, the need for open discussion and frank dialogue has become even more paramount. That said, this, my final Post, is more personal.

Serving as your President for the past two (2) years has been the greatest honor to date of my fifty (50) year legal career. Note the use of the term "to date", because I am not retiring and who knows what the future may bring.

When I took office on July 1, 2015, our long-serving Executive Director, Sandy Garvin, had informed us that she was retiring and the desperate search for a replacement was already under way. I have been amazingly lucky during my two (2) years as your President, beginning with our good fortune in finding a remarkable, greatly over-qualified successor to Sandy in our current Executive Director, Nancy Low-Hogan, Ph.D. Nancy deserves most of the credit for what we have achieved since she came on board a month into my term.

We also faced other significant problems which happily were resolved when we hired Manuela Gomez and Sabrina Charles-Pierre, as Assigned Counsel Coordinator and Program Coordinator respectively. The Board of Directors followed Nancy's sage advice and replaced both our antiquated computer system and phone system with 21st Century-ready hardware. As some of you may know, we are in the process of installing a tremendous software program designed specifically for Bar Associations. When the new system is completely installed and up and running later this year, it will be fully interactive, allow you to pay dues and CLE costs online, make use of individual member portals to keep track of your CLE credits and a host of other wonderful features that will make your Bar Association not only "user friendly" but much more responsive to your needs.

My two (2) terms were not all "Wine and Roses". Change is difficult and we made many changes in a variety of areas during my terms as President. Although the Board of Directors anguished over some of these decisions, in the end, there was unanimity because we knew it was in the best interests of you, the membership.

Amongst my proudest accomplishments were the creation of The Natalie Couch Award and the presentation of the first one to Phyllis Frank, and convincing Preet Bharara to be our guest of honor at last year's Annual Dinner.

As your President, I followed in the well-worn path of countless prior occupants of this office who served over the 125-year history of the RCBA. Because I truly loved the job, I believe I brought to it my personal enthusiasm and love for the RCBA. I will leave office feeling confident that the RCBA is headed in the right direction and that I leave the organization at least a little bit better than when my term began.

Let me close with a heartfelt "Thank You" to all of you for granting me the great privilege of serving as your President.

Robert B. Marcus, Esq.