

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Many Highlights and Joys During 10 Years With Board of Governors

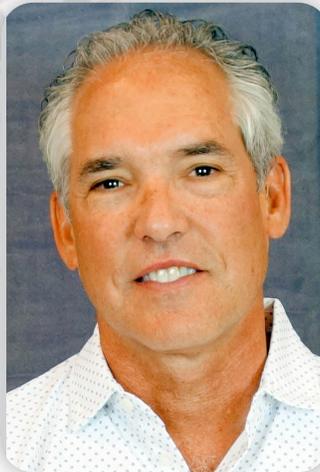
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**“Don’t cry because it’s over.
Smile because it happened.”**
—Dr. Seuss.

That’s a great quote to begin my final column for the State Bar of Nevada as I end my last month as president of this wonderful organization. One of my only regrets from this time is that my parents did not live long enough to see me elected and navigate this past year during the pandemic. As you all know a lot has happened in the last 12 months, and our world has changed significantly.

From the pandemic to the civil justice unrest to the insurrection at the capitol, this has been a year to remember. I hope everyone has received their COVID-19 vaccine and has booked their room to join me on the beach in Coronado, California, to have a cool drink and receive a warm handshake or a heartfelt – and long overdue – embrace at our Annual Meeting.

While I wind down my term as part of the Board of Governors, I wanted to share some of the highlights and joys I have experienced throughout the past 10 years. The first thing that comes to mind is the blessing I received to have been able to serve this board, allowing me to meet and make new friends. Thankfully, I will be able to stay in touch with many of those who have become part of the past presidents’ club, including Gene Leverty, Bryan Scott, Larry Digesti, Rick Pocker, and Paul Matteoni. These gentlemen have been great mentors, and I received more than I have given to our organization and from these friends. The support they provided has come in the good times and the difficult times, as I have experienced



both in our profession, society, and my personal life.

These 12 columns have been both a blessing and a curse. Each month I say, “I’m going to not wait to get my article done,” and then I’m scrambling the last minute to collect a thought to turn in to Executive Director Kimberly Farmer and Communications Director Jennifer Smith-Pulsipher. Some might say my articles brought controversy and wonderful sentiments. I have received both constructive criticism as well as thankful comments, and even a book of quotes from a member I had never known until he reached out to me in response to one of my articles. So, I thought for my final article I would share some of his collection:

**“The trick to practicing law
without becoming insane is to
do right, without being right.”**

—Mark Mausert, Esq.

When I decided to run for the board, I wanted to learn and see how our bar association works. Not only did I get to see the operations up close, but I got to be a part of an organization and a profession that I am proud of and happy to have been able to play a part in. Throughout the past 10 years, the board was able to start the Solace program to help members in need. We started the Transition Into Practice (TIP) program as a replacement for the outdated Bridge the Gap seminars, allowing us to better train new lawyers. We found a new building that provided a sound investment for our organization, while also expanding the facilities to allow for training and CLEs. We have also been able to increase member benefits while keeping the licensing fees at the same rate since 2006. We reduced

the significant backlog of discipline and ethics cases to a more manageable level. We modified CLE requirements for substance issues and to support mental health, in order for more of us to understand and survive our journey in this profession.

We helped bring the National Mock Trial competition to Nevada. We approved the personal injury specialization program as well as the workers’ compensation specialization with the Nevada Justice Association (NJA). We are currently working with the NJA to present revisions to the arbitration and short trial programs. We added more individual sections, enabling our members to connect with other attorneys in the same practice areas. We revised the Attorney’s Oath to remind each of about our duty to conduct ourselves in a civil manner. We not only looked at protecting the public by making discipline more efficient and consistent, but we also had the rules changed to require our inactive members who choose to continue practicing law to continue obtaining Continuing Legal Education credits. We also worked with the Nevada Supreme Court to roll the CLE Board’s operations into that of the State Bar office to save costs and to make it more user-friendly for members.

In order to allow more board members to work together or become an officer, we modified board members’ term limits to allow governors to serve four, three-year terms as opposed to four, two-year terms. We also looked at controversial issues such as mandatory malpractice insurance, reciprocity, a uniform bar exam, mandatory trust audits, and the unauthorized practice of law. We managed and transitioned with our Board of Bar Examiners to administer the bar exam virtually in July 2020 and February 2021. We shifted our Annual Meeting from an in-person event to a virtual one in July 2020, and we are thankfully able to return it to in-person this year.

**“Even if you are on the right
track, you will get run over if
you just stand there.”**

—Will Rogers

We have been able to increase access to the Nevada Lawyers Assistance Program. We also established a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Blue Ribbon Committee to bring our social and justice issues to the forefront of our mission, and

to help everyone to be included and represented in the legal community.

“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that really matter.”

—Martin Luther King Jr.

And finally, we were able to establish a practice management group to assist our members who are just starting out or those who need some guidance on how to run a successful practice. For this goal, we created the Handle|Bar practice management and incubator programs, along with practice management forms.

I can rest well at night when I leave office knowing that you all are in good hands with President-Elect Ann Morgan and Vice President Paola Armeni, as well as the up-and-coming executives Julie Cavanaugh-Bill and Richard Dreitzer. As I have learned, it is much better to give than receive, and I would encourage everyone who is reading this to get involved to serve our organization, present your ideas, and help all of us to be better than when we started. I know I am a better man than when I started, and I hope my adversaries in the future will see a positive change.

“Always do right. It will please some people and astonish the rest.”

—Mark Twain

On that note, I will leave this column with one final thought and prayer to my wife, Yvonne, who has been with me for the past 35 years. I would never have been able to accomplish half as much without her. And of course, my sons have brought many years of joy and heartache, but I cannot live without them, as any parent knows. Peace and joy to you all. Shalom.

“If we cannot now end our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity. For, in the final analysis, our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this small planet.

We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children’s future. And we are all mortal.”

—John F. Kennedy

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Annually, more than \$600 million is held in Nevada lawyer trust accounts. These financial heroes have agreed to pay favorable rates on all IOLTA accounts under deposit.

Leadership institutions pay premium rates.

The Nevada Bar Foundation grants more than 97% of the interest earned on these dollars to statewide legal service organizations serving more than 37,000 Nevada families.

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Bank of George
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Bank of the West
Chase

CIT

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City National Bank

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First Security Bank of Nevada

Heritage Bank

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