

Keep up the Good Work! (How Does it Feel?)

by Hugh E. McKay

A year ago, the one thing I dreaded about becoming CBA president was the President's Page. Turns out I actually enjoyed writing these pages. As to their usefulness to you, the good news is I have often received feedback stating, in pertinent part, "... right on target." The bad news is this feedback has consistently been from members with new puppies or parakeets.

So this page is my last hurrah... First and foremost, hurrah to you for being a committed member of one of the greatest bar associations in the country. In our increasingly neurotic profession, here in a community facing many challenges, the CBA plays an evermore important role in maintaining and improving the quality of practice in our legal community and the quality of life in our larger community. Over the past year I have come to appreciate how well our CBA members perform on both fronts. So hurrah to you! Some other hurrahs are called for, lest we take for granted what makes us a great bar association.



Over the past year the energized dedication of our section and committee leadership has been outstanding. Kudos to Hon. Ronald Adrine, Rob Anderle, Rob Barr, Karl Bekeny, Henry Billingsley, Subodh Chandra, Inajo Davis

Chappell, Paige Christopher, Paul Corrado, Michael Cyphert, Pam Daiker-Middaugh, Brian Darling, Michael Diamant, Paul Edwards, Jim French, David Gallup, Karen Giffen, Matt Goldman, John Goodman, Joseph Gross, John Hallbauer, Jay Hanson, Morris Hawk, Marv Karp, Julie Lady, Jim Lawniczak, Jonathan Leiken, Scott Lewis, John Liber, Bob Linton, Stuart Lippe, Jim McCrystal, George McGaughey, Karen Neilsen, Mike Owendoff, Alan Parker, Steve Petras (a classic "power of one" story sparking the International Law section's resurrection), Sarah Polly, Carole Rendon, Susan Grody Ruben, Shawn Russell, Patrick Saccogna, Kathleen Sasala, Beth Sebaugh, Jennifer Seme, Eric Simon, Halle Terrion, Adam Thurman, Bob Triozzi, Tracey Turnbull, Michael Ungar, Karen Visocan, Dave Wallace, Rob Ware, Leonard Young, Deborah Yue, and John Zanghi. Special thanks to Jim Robenalt for his tireless leadership of the JCRC, working with our very dedicated Judicial Selection Committee, to cross a watershed this year in facilitating informed voting for judges. Apologies for leaving out the many others who worked so hard on committees, sections and especially our outstanding CLE programs.

Thanks to many other unsung heroes like Mike Shapero, who for years without fanfare has counseled in our Homeless Assistance Program and this year took all those at the shelter where he worked to see "The Pursuit of Happiness" [sic]; or Judge Marilyn Cassidy who took her

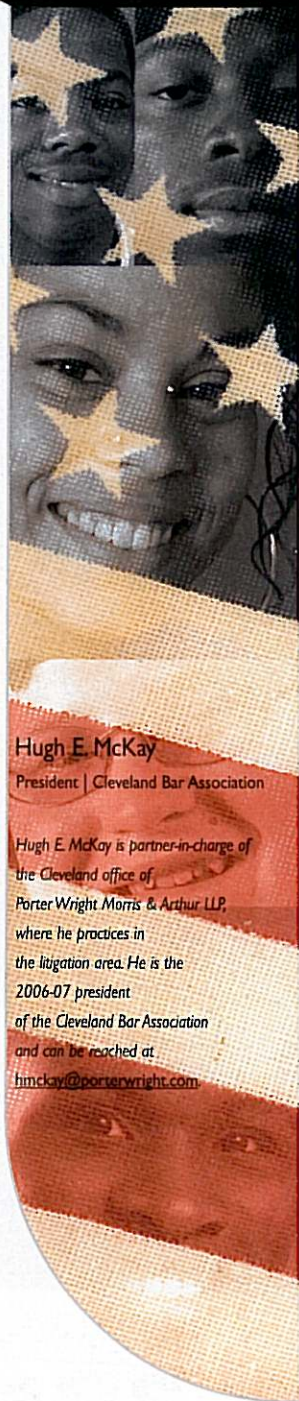


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Hugh E. McKay

President | Cleveland Bar Association

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from the president

swearing-in ceremony to East High to involve and pay tribute to her 3Rs students; and countless other CBA members who have gone the extra mile for our profession and our community.

The CBA Board has been actively and effectively engaged this past year. Thanks to Teresa M. Beasley, Tim Bender, Richard Berris, Subodh Chandra, Inajo Davis Chapell, Steve Cheatham, Diane Citrino, Ben Gray, Hon. Lillian Greene, Pam Hultin, Mary Karp, Jim Lawniczak, Larry Lindberg, George McGaughey, Geoff Mearns, Karen Neilsen, Lisa Reid, Carole Rendon, Hon. Michael Russo, Jen Seme, and Kelly Tompkins (my bridge-building mentor). There were no potted plants on our Board (some days I wished the relentless Ben Gray would get involved in a really long trial out of town.) Suffice to say our Board was proactive, thoughtful, vigilant and served you well. Special thanks to our excellent public representatives, Joe Roman, Brian Powers and Kevin Donahue, for stepping up to serve as uniquely effective public representatives.

Our leadership team members Kerin Kaminski, Mike Brittain, Ginger Mlakar and Larkin Chenault have been outstanding and a pleasure to work with. Kerin's important work leading the Scope and Correlation Committee, her commitment to continuity and her critical and creative thinking have been invaluable and she will be a great president. Mike has been a thoughtful and wise sounding board. Ginger gets a gold star for going far above and beyond the call of duty in discharging her treasurer's duties brilliantly. Larkin, as always, is a first class executive director. The CBA leadership is in excellent hands for the future.

I must thank my family for putting up with seeing me too little over the past year, and my very able assistant, Gail Sikula, for putting up with seeing me too much.

The CBA staff has been outstanding. Donnie Long, Alla Leydiker, Alan Skerl, Ann Zimmerman, Ryann Jagger (creator of our great graphics), Samantha Pringle, Gael Dunn and the rest of the staff work tirelessly behind the scenes to make our bar association one of the best.

The Cleveland Bar Foundation with its blue ribbon Board has been a great partner of the CBA. Neal Rains and Jan Roller's leadership has taken our Foundation to a whole new level of effective support

for the CBA's programs. And thanks to the work of many, and your support, the "Rock the Foundation" event is now going to be an ongoing major annual bar and community event. The Foundation rocks and is on a roll.

Over the past year and a half, Mary Groth has been my "significant other" (and my wife is grateful). Mary has worked tirelessly to advance the CBA's pro bono and community service efforts. The logistics involved in the launch of The 3Rs program alone were daunting and would have been overwhelming to a lesser mortal (like me). Mary worked literally day and night, often seven days a week, and always stayed cool while serving as my right hand (or brain) and the flak catcher on the countless moving parts of The 3Rs. Meanwhile, Mary effectively served as the nerve center for our numerous other important pro bono and community service initiatives. Our bar and our community are very lucky to have her and I cannot thank her enough.

The "honor roll" of 3Rs participants is set forth later in this Journal. Special thanks to the folks at Legal Aid and Cleveland-Marshall for their early, active and abiding support of The 3Rs, and to the lawyers at our banks and corporations for stepping up in a big way. And to our planning committee of Karen Thompson, Amy DeLuca, Mary Lou Prescott, Tony Sias, Louise Dempsey, Melanie Shakarian, Neil Murphy, Scott Lepene, Judge Pat Hemann, Alicia Moore, Duane Olderman, Gayle Gadison and Kevin Burtzlaff who kept the faith through countless meetings as we created the program. And to Dr. Eugene Sanders—The 3Rs could not succeed without your blessing and support and we thank you for being a great teammate and leader.

The 3Rs' great success is especially due to you. No other bar in the country has ever stepped up to invest in an urban school district with such a major commitment of sweat equity by so many. Lawyers and law students from every corner and sector of our legal community came out and kept coming back every month to positively impact the lives and futures of thousands of students. (And the legendary Shaw High Mock Trial team has been resurrected!) We were reminded every month that stereotypes are dangerous, the schools and students are not.

Thanks to the commitment to continuity on the part of Kerin, Mike, Neal Rains, The CBA Board, and the Foundation Board—and you—we are now "institutionalizing" The 3Rs to make it a bar program rather

than a president's program. Carter Strang and Pam Daiker-Middaugh—with their years of teaching experience—have agreed to chair and co-chair our new standing 3Rs Committee, while our original 3Rs planning group will stay actively involved. With your ongoing commitment we will keep making The 3Rs even better as we move forward.


We can be proud of the national recognition the CBA has received this past year, but we need to keep the faith over the long term. In many areas we have made a good start, but we can do better. The Mock Trial program is outstanding, and Jones Day's mentoring of the MLK team has been an inspiring, winning partnership. Going forward, we need many other firms to follow this great lead by adopting a Cleveland high school to coach in the Mock Trial competition. Pair up with your 3Rs school and let's ratchet up the friendly competition and get even more involved next year for the good of these very talented students.

Our outstanding Diversity Action Committee programs need to be more aggressively utilized. Take on a minority summer intern next year if not this summer; take advantage of the minority clerkship program; support the Diversity Circle. In matters of diversity we need to act like we mean it.

Our partnership with the outstanding people at Legal Aid has continued to blossom. Take advantage of our great relationship with Legal Aid and get more involved with their user-friendly programs.

We have recharged the CBA's focus and effectiveness in serving as an honest broker on larger community issues such as regionalism. Our legal community is only going to be as strong as our larger community, so we need to step up to help effect positive change in the larger community. To enhance our credibility in this role, hopefully we can accomplish the long overdue unification with the Cuyahoga County Bar Association.

We Clevelanders take much for granted and often see our glass as half empty, but as Cleveland lawyers we should take pride in being part of one of the greatest legal communities anywhere. Thanks to you, this has been a great year for the Cleveland Bar Association. We are stronger than ever and, as one 3Rs student reminded us, "It seems like being a lawyer is a good thing." You prove her right. Keep up the good work!

/s/ Like a Rolling Stone 



Summer Activities for Young Lawyers



Jennifer L. Seme

Chair | CBA Young Lawyers Section

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The Young Lawyers Section is committed to meeting the needs of the membership. As I mentioned in earlier articles, YLS plans educational programs, promotes volunteer and pro bono services and provides networking opportunities. This summer is no exception. As the bar year comes to a close, I would like to acknowledge the members of the Executive Council and announce YLS events scheduled through the summer months.

I want to take a moment to thank members of the YLS Executive Council for their extraordinary support and dedication. As my term as chair comes to a close I extend a heartfelt thank you to the following incredible lawyers for their commitment and friendship: Rocco Debitetto, Dustin Rawlin, Rebecca Hegyes, Shannon McEanene, Kevin Dunn, Bethany Fabian, Siegmund Fuchs, Brad Harrison, Aubrie Knight, Matthew McCracken, Sara Menefee Santoli, John Porter, Matthew Young and our two student representatives, Markus Apelis and Terrence Doyle. Due in no small part to the hard work of these individuals, the membership grew from 280 members at the end of June 2006 to 320 and is growing even more by the end of March 2007. I have no doubt that the membership will only continue to grow under the leadership of these amazing individuals.

Through the course of the past year, YLS encouraged members to actively participate in volunteer programs. While a number of our members serve on volunteer boards and planning committees, few actively partake in pro bono service. A new initiative will hopefully lead to unprecedented pro bono service by the membership.

Many of the large law firms sponsor clinics with the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland. The volunteer lawyers process basic requests for assistance quickly, often referring the citizen to a lawyer or simply providing advice. These efforts relieve the Legal Aid staff allowing them to spend more time actually serving clients who qualify for counsel with legal aid. Former CBA President David Kutik's public service project, Our Commitment to Our Community, furthered the outreach of the clinics, but there is still much to accomplish.

The Young Lawyers Section Executive Council staffed a Legal Aid Brief Advice Clinic for the first time in March. The event was a huge success. Shortly thereafter additional dates were scheduled to staff upcoming clinics on a bi-monthly basis. The scheduled dates are June 9 and August 25. If you are interested in volunteering, please feel free to contact me at CPIS4@cuyahogacounty.us.

Mark your calendars for the biggest YLS social event of the year. The YLS Annual Social is scheduled for June 14, 5:30-7:30 p.m. in the VIP Room at the Velvet Dog. Cocktails and appetizers provided courtesy of Cefaratti Group. Visit the CBA website for additional information and to RSVP. I hope to see you there! ☺