



Linda R. Crump

“You Had to Be There”

I couldn't believe it when Gene actually woke me up at 3:20 a.m. so we would not miss the lunar eclipse. We joked about it with friends the night before and then to my surprise at 3:30 a.m. he called our dear friends the Wagners for their wake-up call to watch the eclipse. Sleepy eyed I went barefooted to the front porch looking for the best view of the full moon through all the tree tops. The debris on the porch from the trees out front felt like thorns under my feet - just the wake-up call I needed to pay attention to our mission so early in the morning. The front porch didn't pan out so we ventured to the back and at the very edge of the deck there it was. The brilliant light from the full moon lit the back yard but there was not even a faint shadow of the Earth to mark the beginning of the eclipse. We went back in and tried the Weather Channel to make sure we had the right time and date. Not even one mention of the lunar eclipse came across the networks as we flipped channels. We darted in and out to see if anything had started and then around 3:50 the first dark shadow cut off the very top of the full moon. If I was really going to do this I needed to trudge back upstairs for my glasses to make sure I saw everything. We chased the event from the back to the front of the house for the best view beyond the tops of the trees. The newspaper delivery person was surprised to find me in the middle of the street staring up into the heavens. She was unaware that during her early route she was missing the full lunar eclipse. We hung out for a little while and she went back to her route and I decided to call it a night since the moon was almost fully covered by the shadow of the Earth. However, I had come too far to call it quits so I went back out until the mission was over and the entire moon turned a deep glowing brownish red.

I must admit that the next day I questioned my decision

when I struggled to get out of bed but the news pictures and stories could not do justice to experiencing the lunar eclipse. It's always better to experience the real thing than to just listen to someone else tell you about what you would have seen or heard if you had been there.

Speaking of having been there, serving as president of the Nebraska State Bar Association has been a tremendous experience. I'm thankful for the opportunity I had to represent the great lawyers of this state and the cost of crazy hours and missed sleep is a small price to pay for the privilege it was to serve the legal profession. It has been a special privilege to get to know and learn from the individuals that served just before me like John P. Grant, John Sennett and Bill Dittrick. Likewise I know that you will be well served by the incoming leaders Wayne Mark, Bob Hillis and Mike Kinney.

This October you have the opportunity to experience another great Annual Meeting at the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln, Nebraska. The theme this year is Voices for Justice and the general session will feature Morris Dees from the Southern Poverty Law Center along with a panel presentation of the famous trial of Chief Standing Bear moderated by our own Charles E. Wright. As usual there will be an array of CLE Seminars from very specialized areas of practice to others for every area of practice. The social events are a great time to meet your colleagues and to spend time honoring the judges, the legacy classes and the award winners. It's a great time to experience one of the joys of our profession by learning together, sharing ideas and having fun.


As I look back on this year and all of the great experiences

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I've had I want to thank the entire staff at the Bar Association. Our Executive Director, Jane Schoenike continues to provide important leadership for our association and she has also assembled a very talented team of professionals that know how to run the day to day operations along with any new issues that present themselves in our changing world and state. During this year we have worked with a new Chief Justice, Michael Heavican, who has been very open to meeting with the leadership of the Bar Association to talk about the work we do and our work with the court system. Dr. Liz Neeley and Amy Prenda have provided research, writing and organizational support for the task force (co-chaired by Dan Fullner and J.P. Grant) examining the structure and administration of the court system in Nebraska. Thanks to all the lawyers and judges that have worked so hard to take a critical look at the system and to recommend ways to be more efficient without sacrificing the core values of the justice system.

One of my goals this year was to form a Leadership Academy to encourage future leaders and to diversify the leadership of our association. It was an honor to be the second woman to serve as the president and the first person of color to serve. However, I don't want to be the only person of color to serve in this role or the last woman. Our profession is very diverse and we need to make room at the table for the diverse

group of talented professionals that are ready to serve. I want to thank the lawyers and judges that have served on the leadership academy steering committee and all those that so willingly served as presenters at the seminars. There is one special person that I need to thank for making the academy happen and that's Sam Clinch. Sam is a can do person and if you ever have a chance to work with him take this advice – do it. The first class of participants demonstrated that we have very talented individuals that are ready to step up and take active roles in the profession. They are putting on a seminar on diversity during the annual meeting. The new class will hold their retreat during the annual meeting. This will be a great opportunity to meet these colleagues.

Finally, thanks for a wonderful experience, now set your alarm clock, request a wake-up call, get out there and experience all that you can. The next eclipse is just around the corner. 



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