

INDIANAPOLIS BAR ASSOCIATION

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Handing Over the View from the Front Row *President's Message*

By Kevin P. McGoff, Bingham McHale LLP and IBA President

A year ago, I wondered how I would ever do 26 of these columns. As I finish the last one, I have found that I have enjoyed this task of the IBA President as much as any other part of the job.

Of course, attending numerous receptions and enjoying a free meal from a front row seat at the luncheons was okay, too. But sharing a few thoughts in this space every couple of weeks never developed into a millstone, as some cautioned me.

I have tried to recap our year along the way, so I'll spare you a laundry list of things that went well for the IBA this past year, which also allows me to leave out discussing the few that I wish could have gone better. I know Dan Buba is already putting pen to paper on his first column, so I will lay off the future as well. I am sure he will ably give you a preview of 2008 when his version of this column debuts in a few weeks.

Addressing a full house in the Supreme Court chambers when Judge Patrick Sullivan retired; a front row seat for the C.J.'s State of the Judiciary; having the podium at our luncheons; and accepting the Professionalism Award on behalf of the Association at the ABA meeting this summer all come to mind as highlights for me.

There were some lighter moments, like the evening when two chaps, who shall remain nameless, shared their well-worn map of San Francisco with a group of us, marked with each establishment they had patronized during their daylong pub-crawl. I witnessed these fellows pay for their good time at the hands of their wives, appreciating that they made the rest of us guys look good on the home front, knowing that we missed out only because of a meeting, not because we would have declined to participate had we been asked to tag along.

The ex-president of the IBA does not get completely kicked to the curb on December 31st. While it is not as good a deal as Bill Clinton's – there is no speaking tour or granting of free staff for life – I have heard that the post of Immediate Past President is the best job in the organized bar. I will give you a report when I see you on the street.

I told President Buba that he could count on me for one role this year, and he requested that I chair the Legislative Committee, which I am happy to do. We need to keep an ear to the ground as the Indiana General Assembly meets this year. There is talk again of imposing a tax on legal services, as other sources of money must be found to solve the property tax issue. The implications and impact on our clients and our practices are potentially significant.

In a true show of confidence, Alicia Gooden and the organizers of the 2008 Bench Bar have asked me to speak, in a Saturday

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Disclaimer

morning slot no less. My friend Gary Klotz has given me a spot on the Metro Bar program in L.A. this spring. So, I'll be around. In fact, I have one last seat at the front table on January 31 for Dan Buba's installation as the 130th IBA President.

As I have been winding down, a few people have asked what I enjoyed most about serving as President. In thinking about the answer, it occurred to me that there are usually a few intangible benefits that come our way when we undertake a project. Something that never occurred to us at the outset that develops as an opportunity because of who we met or something we did. The so-called Law of Unintended Consequences is usually cast in a negative light, but such is not always the case.

Serving as President of the Bar has afforded me the opportunity to meet a lot of people, in Indy and across the country. There are so many people with whom I have crossed paths that contributed to the IBA achieving a successful 2007, that I should know better than to name a few. But I have had the good fortune to develop close friendships with others in the chairs and on the staff.

Over the course of the past three years, I have put in a lot of time and logged many miles with Julie Armstrong, Kari Hartman, Chris Hickey, Gary Klotz, Dan Buba, John Kautzman, and Cynthia Ayers. I have come to know their spouses, significant others and families. Amid our work for the Bar, we also managed to have a pretty good time. Developing these and other friendships along the way, an unintended consequence of being the Prez, was hands down the best part of the job. There was no close second.

It has been a distinct privilege to serve as your President. There are many to whom I am grateful for allowing me this opportunity: an understanding spouse, Patty; supportive partners at Bingham McHale; each member of the IBA's able staff; and all of the members who made a contribution to the Bar in 2007. Thanks for the opportunity, for your friendship, and most of all for the hard work of many, which made this a great year for me and for the IBA.
