

## 2009 PRESIDENT'S REPORT LYCOMING LAW ASSOCIATION

Officers and members of the Lycoming Law Association in 2009 were as follows:

**President, Jonathan E. Butterfield; Vice President, Michael H. Collins; Secretary, J. Howard Langdon; Treasurer, Brian J. Bluth; Past President, Tammy L. Taylor; Members at Large: J. Michael Wiley, Julie Steinbacher, Thomas Waffenschmidt, Patricia L. Bowman.**

We continued to be ably served by our Executive Director, Jessica Engel.

These officers and committee members were elected at the annual meeting, convened on January 12, 2009, and followed by a banquet at DiSalvo's, featuring guest speaker The Honorable Barry Feudale, Sr. Judge from Northumberland County and renowned for his piloting and skydiving, as well as his legal acumen. Attorney William Knecht was presented with the first Honorable Thomas Wood Equal Access to Justice Award. Attorney Gary Weber was presented the "Above and Beyond Award" by the LLA for his extraordinary service as LLA web master and photographer. James F. Cendoma, T. Max Hall, Jr., William E. Nichols, and the Honorable Clinton Smith were presented with 50-year LLA membership awards.

On January 19, 2009, the Executive Committee continued a recently inaugurated custom of having a half day board retreat, where a tentative agenda for the year was mapped out.

In February, your President and Vice President Michael Collins attended the Conference of County Bar Leaders in State College, gaining valuable insights into the conduct of business by other county bar associations, and accepting, on behalf of the Lycoming Law Association, a County Bar Recognition Award.

On May 1, 2009, the LLA celebrated Law Day, with gratifying participation by local students and assistance from the Lycoming Paralegal Association. Primary elections for two open Common Pleas judgeships were held in May, and, prior to the elections, the LLA followed past practice in polling its membership on candidates' suitability for the job of judge. The LLA membership's views mirrored those of the electorate, who nominated LLA members Marc Lovecchio and Joy Reynolds McCoy as both Republican and Democratic candidates, avoiding the need for a November judicial election.

President Barack Obama proposed to the lawyers and bankers of the country that they volunteer to be available for consultations with members of the public who were adversely affected by the economic crisis which befell the nation at the end of 2008. Governor Rendell endorsed the President's proposal, and referred it to the Pennsylvania Bar Association, who enlisted the aid of county bar associations. Consistent with its reputation for pro bono service, the LLA made its office available several times a week over the course of the summer, with volunteer LLA lawyers and bankers available for free consultations with the public. This was in addition to the normal pro bono activity of a large number of LLA members, who accept referrals from North Penn Legal Services.

A special PBA House of Delegates meeting was convened in October, to consider amendment of the Pennsylvania Constitution. LLA representatives were in attendance, and LLA member Clifford Rieders was instrumental in securing overwhelming support for the proposal that the PBA begin by determining what amendments to the Constitution would, in the view of the PBA, be appropriate.

On the social scene, your President sought to inaugurate the combination of Williamsport's First Friday artist galleries with an LLA social event, at the offices of Murphy,

Butterfield & Holland, featuring a display of the works of the firm's artist clients. A good time was had by all, but it remains to be seen whether other firms will follow in my footsteps. The annual picnic took place in July, at Gray's Run, and was a success. In August, the LLA hosted a night at the Williamsport Crosscutters.

Over the course of the year, progress continued in the production of a video documentary of the life of the Honorable Malcolm Muir, a project funded in part by the LLA.

The LLA successfully concluded, by consent decree, a lawsuit brought against paralegal Deborah Berrigan, who was alleged to have crossed the line into practicing law without a license.

The Fee Dispute Committee had a busy year, and Chairperson Robert Elion presented proposed rules to the LLA Executive Committee, which were adopted, and which refined and standardized the mediation process for fee disputes.

An Ad-hoc Strategic Planning Committee was convened, and devoted its attention primarily to considerations of alternative funding sources, in the event that technological advances diminish the income of the Lycoming County Law Reporter at some point in the future.

The LLA was fortunate to have an intern from Lycoming College, Jessica Campbell, working from September to December, and one of her projects was to look into funding sources for other county bar associations. This is a matter which needs to remain on the agenda of future LLA Executive Committees.

The Eat and Earn CLE lunches at the Ross Club continue to attract substantial attendance from LLA members, providing a convenient, cheap, and pleasant method of securing CLEs.

The LLA gained rental income by making its office available to PBI for presentation of video CLE seminars. Our Executive Director, Jessica Engel, secured a grant from PBA for purchase of equipment to present the video seminars.

On December 11, 2009, the LLA hosted a reception for six new members of the Bar and the LLA, at the Old Corner Hotel, following a ceremony in the courthouse. This brought LLA membership to 202.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan E. Butterfield  
President