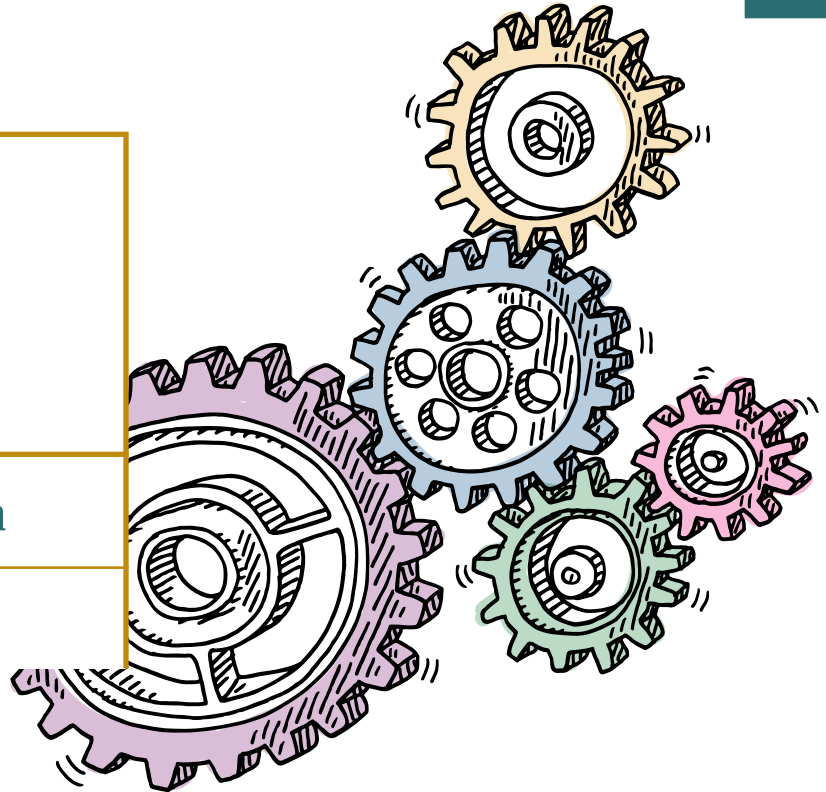


Master Lawyers

Theme Introduction

By J. David Kerr



This theme issue of the *Michigan Bar Journal* is published in cooperation with the SBM Master Lawyers Section, the largest section of the State Bar. The section is comprised of approximately 17,200 Michigan lawyers, roughly 40 percent of the Bar's membership. Just as demographics show the general population in Michigan is getting older,¹ the Bar's membership is aging also,² meaning the section will continue to grow for years to come. Membership in the section is automatic at age 60 unless declined, and is voluntary beginning at age 50 with payment of a fee.

The section is supported by the State Bar and seeks to serve its members and facilitate their public service efforts. I compare it to a sleeping giant being awakened.

This issue features five articles written by or of interest to master lawyers. Charles M. Russman, a member of Bodman PLC, offers a concise and informative primer on Social Security and Medicare, subjects on which everyone has an opinion but few have the facts.

Jon H. Kingsepp, a solo practitioner with offices in Rochester and Metamora, describes his experience and the enormous risks and rewards of transitioning to solo practice from his previous position as litigation group leader in charge of 30 trial attorneys at Howard & Howard.

Victoria A. Vulelich, a professor at Western Michigan University Cooley Law School, writes about transitions of a different sort. She examines how changes in technology and business structures and the breakdown of jurisdictional boundaries have created opportunities for lawyers.

Saginaw lawyer William Jungerheld, celebrating 50 years in the practice of law, provides an inspiring article about his pro bono work for Legal Services of Eastern

Michigan. Bill's article should motivate all of us, regardless of age, to redouble our efforts to meet our obligation under Rule 6.1 of the Michigan Rules of Professional Conduct to render public-interest legal service.

Finally, Diane Ebersole of the State Bar's Practice Management Resource Center delivers useful advice for attorneys faced with a temporary inability to practice law or planning to wind down their practices in the event of death or permanent disability. ■



J. David Kerr has 50 years of experience practicing in the areas of estate, business, and Medicaid planning; trust and estate settlement; asset protection; and trustee and estate litigation. He is a member of the Member Advisory Board for the National Network of Estate Planning Attorneys, past president of the Michigan

Forum of Estate Planning Attorneys, and current chair of the SBM Master Lawyers Section.

ENDNOTES

1. Michigan State Housing Development Authority, *Michigan Senior Housing Market Study* (August 29, 2012) <https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mshda/Demographics_404592_7.pdf>; see also McBride, *U.S. Population Distribution by Age, 1950 through 2050* <<http://www.calculatedriskblog.com/2009/08/us-population-distribution-by-age-1950.html>>.
2. See State Bar of Michigan, *Statewide and County Membership Demographics 2014-2015* <<http://www.michbar.org/file/opinions/statewidedemographics2014.pdf>>. All websites cited in this article were accessed September 11, 2015.