

UpFront

By Naseem Stecker and Samantha Meinke

SBM Employee Receives Award for Preservation of Michigan History

State Bar of Michigan Director of Member Services and Communications Nancy F. Brown received the Governor John B. Swainson Award at a May 31 ceremony in the state Capitol rotunda in Lansing. The award is given by the Michigan Historical Commission to government employees who have gone "above and beyond" their official job duties to help preserve the state's history. Brown, who has worked at the State Bar for 36 years, was nominated for her role in overseeing and nurturing the Michigan Legal Milestones program. The 26-year-old program, established during the State Bar presidency of George T. Roumell Jr., highlights significant decisions, trials, events, and people who have made an impact on our history, landscape, and laws. Michigan Court of Appeals Judicial Assistant Jennifer Boardman and U.S. Department of Defense Logistics Data Analyst Joann Germinder also received 2012 Swainson Awards. ■



Left to right: SBM Executive Director Janet Welch, Michigan Historical Commission member Michael Ranville, SBM Director of Member Services and Communications Nancy Brown, SBM Manager of Media and Public Relations Naseem Stecker, and SBM Media Specialist Samantha Meinke.

Photo by Tammy Allen for the State Bar of Michigan

Landmark Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act is State Bar's 37th Michigan Legal Milestone

A historic civil rights act endorsing equality and inclusiveness will be the subject of the State Bar's 37th Michigan Legal Milestone dedication on August 28 at the Capitol in Lansing. The noon program will highlight the 1976 Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, which prohibits discriminatory practices in employment, education, housing, public service, real estate transactions, and the use of public accommodations because of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, or marital status.

A panel of speakers will discuss the history and significance of the act and its impact on the state and the nation. The ceremony will close with the unveiling of a bronze plaque commemorating the act. For more information about the Michigan Legal Milestones program, visit <http://www.michbar.org/programs/milestones.cfm>. ■



Photo by Tammy Allen for the State Bar of Michigan

SBM Practice Management Resource Center Hosts iPad Seminar

The SBM Practice Management Resource Center hosted a seminar called "Order in the Court: Trial by iPad" on June 18 at Lansing Community College's West Campus Auditorium. Speakers taught attorneys to incorporate technology into everyday practice and the courtroom, build a case using the iPad, prepare for trial using the iPad, and make iPad-based presentations. ■



Seminar speakers included, from left to right, Brett Burney, Hon. David McKeague, Diane Ebersole, Bonnie Kipp, Amy Brummel, JoAnn Hathaway, and Alex Deaconson.



Bonnie Kipp and Hon. David McKeague discuss the logistics of presenting a case electronically.

Conference Addresses Air Quality Regulatory Issues

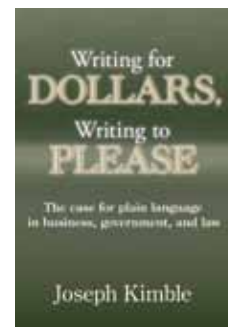
"The Evolving Environmental Regulatory Landscape" was the theme of a conference in Lansing recently. More than 40 people attended the event. Bruce Sypniewski (at left in photo), an Environmental Protection Agency regional deputy director, participated in a panel moderated by Kurt Kissling of the SBM Environmental Law Section's Air Quality Committee (pictured with Sypniewski). The conference was the third of its kind and was jointly organized by the Environmental Law Section and the Michigan Manufacturer's Association. ■



Courtesy photo

Law Professor's New Book Argues for Plain English to Save Billions of Dollars

Thomas M. Cooley Law School professor and *Michigan Bar Journal* Plain Language column editor Joseph Kimble's latest book, *Writing for Dollars, Writing to Please: The Case for Plain Language in Business, Government, and Law*, argues that billions of dollars could be saved if government, business, and attorneys replaced "legalese" and "official-ese" with plain English. The book also debunks the myth that using plain language leads lawyers to create unprofessional, legally inaccurate documents. To the contrary, Kimble conducted a 2009 survey, which found that jargon-filled language in official documents probably contributed to the global financial crisis; another survey found that the vast majority of consumers are far more likely to trust companies using straightforward, plain language in their documents. ■



Photos courtesy of Thomas M. Cooley Law School