

Marty Prendergast Triantafillou: 48th President of the Michigan Lawyers' Auxiliary

It is with excitement and anticipation that I accept the duties of the 48th President of the Michigan Lawyers' Auxiliary (MLA). My involvement with the Auxiliary began with my marriage to Saginaw attorney Gust Triantafillou in 1983. Gust has maintained a general law practice since 1966.

I had been teaching vocal music in Southfield, Michigan, and I looked forward to my new life in a new city with a certain amount of trepidation. A friend, Karyl Scorsone, invited me to a luncheon/meeting of the Saginaw County Lawyers' Auxiliary. That was the beginning of a long association with caring, accomplished women who introduced me to the legal, cultural, and social fabric of our community. I enjoyed working on the many charitable causes sponsored by the organization, participating on almost every committee. I was dazzled by the energy, dedication, and fun of fellow committee members, and I was honored to be elected President in 2001–2002. Since 1994, I have been a delegate from Saginaw to MLA, serving as Membership chair in 2000–2001 and recording Secretary in 2002–2003.

It is a pleasure to make the trip from Saginaw to Lansing for our state level meetings, since our route takes us through the town where I grew up: Owosso. I attended St. Paul's Catholic School for 12 years, where my father was the coach during my early education. He and my mother (a nurse) had both attended the school, so it was quite the family tradition. My three younger sisters and I enjoyed our frequent trips to Lansing when, later, my Dad became the Director of Ingham County Social Services. I pursued a degree in music education at Central Michigan University, graduating in 1961 and after completing 25 years of teaching in Southfield, retired in 1990.



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Gust and I have one child, Danny, who is in his 4th year at Northern Michigan University in Marquette. He is enjoying our family pastimes of skiing and sailing in the great Upper Peninsula, spending part of the summers with us at our cottage in East Tawas.

As Danny was growing up in Saginaw Township, I became very involved at his schools, accompanying and presenting music programs, being Den Mother during his Cub Scout years, and P.T.A. President at Heritage High School for three years. My interests have also led me to associations with the Saginaw Symphony Board, Saginaw Township School Board, PEO, and organist at the Greek Orthodox Church.

In June, the MLA sent me to the State Bar Leadership Conference held on Mackinac Island. The meetings were most helpful and enjoyable, giving me the opportunity to meet officers of the Bar and acquaint them with the goals of the Auxiliary.

The county auxiliaries send representatives to MLA, convening four times a year at the State Bar building to share the progress of charitable, educational, and social activities of their respective groups.

The objective: "to create a better citizen awareness of the law," is the driving force behind the auxiliary efforts. Locally, each group organizes Courthouse Tours, The Late Show, charitable fund raising for community agencies, lively social gatherings, and the participation of students in Law Day celebrations.

The statewide Law Day Committee Chair, Mary Ann Farris, for seven years, has undertaken the daunting task of coordinating the many activities at the local level, with culminating awards and recognitions at the Michigan celebration of Law Day. Increased participation, the creation of new activities to reach all students, and heightened public awareness of the event are all direct results of this highly energized, committed individual. Experienced leadership on the board will also come from Marjorie Deline, Maggie Frankland, Jeanne Skilton, and Judy Weldy, all past MLA presidents, and Fran Anderson, Audrey Gray, and Marjorie Rhead, former American Lawyers Auxiliary presidents.

On October 1st, our new board was installed. President-elect Sharon Wilson (Lansing), Treasurer Marjorie Rhead (Midland), Recording Secretary Nancy Sheldon (Lansing), and Corresponding Secretary Kathleen Horn (Saginaw) complete the Executive Committee.

For information on organizing or promoting an auxiliary at your local bar association or to find an existing group in your area, please contact me at: martytriant@newedgetech.net. I look forward to hearing from you. ♦

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