

**STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN
2007-2008 ANNUAL REPORT
STANDING/SPECIAL COMMITTEE**

Committee Name:

Publications and Website Advisory Committee

Jurisdictional Statement:

Provide editorial guidance concerning the *Michigan Bar Journal*, the State Bar of Michigan website, and other regular State Bar publications for the general membership or public. This committee may have more than 15 members. Members of this committee may serve continuously for more than two successive three-year terms.

Officers and Membership:

Chairperson:

Frederick M. Baker, Jr., Lansing

Vice Chairpersons:

Francine Cullari, Grand Blanc; *Michigan Bar Journal*

John L. Tatum, Bloomfield; Website / Electronic Publications

Linda M. Watson, Birmingham; *Michigan Bar Journal* Directory

Members:

Elizabeth A. Baergen, Saint Clair Shores

David M. Cohen, Farmington Hills

Stephen D. Conley, Jackson

Stephen C. Cooper, White Lake

Brian C. Draper, Lansing

William J. Fleener, Jr., Lansing

Jason T. Hanselman, Lansing

John O. Juroszek, Lansing

Joseph Kimble, Lansing

Robin K. Luce-Herrmann, Detroit

Gerard V. Mantese, Troy

Gary M. Maveal, Detroit

Frederick W. Melamed, Huntington Woods

Marc D. Melamed, Farmington Hills

John R. Runyan, Jr., Detroit

Stephan A. Savickas, Grand Rapids

Elmer E. White, Ann Arbor

Commissioner Liaison:

Katherine Kakish, Detroit

State Bar Liaisons:

Nancy F. Brown, Lansing

Linda M. Novak, Lansing

Committee Activities:

If you are reading this, then probably you are aware of the dramatic changes we have made to the State Bar website since its redesign last year, because we are now putting annual reports on the website, where you can access them all year long. The transfer of our web hosting to a Michigan-based provider was pretty close to undetectable, and we have added the Google search tool to make the entire website searchable, and thus more useful and accessible to our members.

More is in store: We recently secured approval from the Board of Commissioners to enter into an agreement with Heinonline, under which we will license Heinonline to make every issue of the *Bar Journal*, since its inception, available online to subscribers. In exchange, we will be provided with a database that will enable our members to search the entire *Bar Journal* on our website, free of charge. This service to our members is just another in a continuum of innovations that has made it possible for our members to do real research at no cost using the resources we have added to the website, of which we are (we hope pardonably) proud.

Our short-story contest and August 2007 short-story issue were well received by members, over 40 of whom submitted entries, so we have scheduled another for 2009. We have also issued a call for member art with which to illustrate our cover and articles, which we hope will prompt member entries of the same quality as the short stories we received.

After surveying our members (both by mail and electronically), and receiving over 5,000 responses (an extremely high percentage, we are told), we have set about redesigning the directory issue to make it more user friendly and relevant to our members' needs, based on the responses we received. Though we will continue to provide all of the information currently found in this year's 912-page directory by putting any information we remove from the book online at the State Bar website (where it will be Google searchable), we plan to slim down the book that you keep at your desk to make it less unwieldy and more convenient to use by including only the information that you told us you use and want. This will reduce the annual cost of producing and mailing the book to almost 40,000 members, help contain the cost of this important member benefit, and enable us to come a lot closer to the goal of someday providing a directory that is a self-sustaining, and thus truly free, member benefit.

We have continued the theme issue approach to the *Bar Journal*, using primarily articles produced by our members, providing a forum to our sections and, by increasing the number of general issues, to individual members, as well. The willingness of our members to invest the time and effort required to produce articles of publishable quality and relevance to the membership as a whole epitomizes the professional spirit of our organization, and our hat is off to all who contributed articles this past year.

We have added features to (and completely redesigned) the e-Journal, and continued to expand the number of section publications and newsletters that we publish from the Bar's Townsend Street headquarters. In all we do, we strive to be more efficient, to provide our members with more services at less cost, and to mail you the best bar journal in the country once a month. You can help by providing your comments, complaints, and suggestions, which we welcome. With well over 200 years of collective experience among the members of our committee in publishing the *Journal* and producing the Bar's publications (I can't reveal how much experience staff has – I fear it would be ungentlemanly!), we have gradually acquired the thick skins required to be responsible for the most visible and most used services the Bar provides to all of its members, so we can take it if you have a criticism. But we don't mind kudos, either, so to each of the members of this hard-working committee, and to our staff, all of whom are listed in the masthead and the staff directory of the *Journal*, and all of whom really are like part of an extended family, I extend thanks for another year of diligence, hard work, and outstanding results. We hope you have found our contributions useful. That is our goal.

Chair/Co-Chair Contact Information:

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