

PUBLICATIONS AND WEBSITE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, November 20, 2013
Minutes

Present:

Members: Josh Ard; David Cohen; Stephen Conley; Francine Cullari; Jessica Fox; Jason Hanselman; Joseph Kimble; Richard Krause; Gerard Mantese; John Mayer; Marc Melamed; Ronald Richards; John Runyan; Lawrence Shoffner; John Tatum; Christopher Trudeau; Linda Watson; Roberta Wray; Tyra Wright.

Staff: Nancy Brown; Mike Eidelbes; Lynn Ingram; Linda Novak.

Absent:

Excused: Brian Draper; John Juroszek.

REGULAR MEETING

Meeting called to order at 4:33 p.m. by Francine Cullari.

1. September 2013 meeting minutes approved.
2. PWAC Goals in 2014 in SBM strategic plan—Nancy Brown
 - Continue to develop more electronic communication options, shifting away from print.
 - Continue to transition to online version of the directory with expanded listing and resource options and consider alternative formats for print directory.
 - Develop connections to resources to assist members making career transitions.
3. Website Subcommittee—John Tatum
 - Nancy Brown presented website statistics for the last four years, highlighting Google Analytics data from Jan. 1-Nov. 18, 2003. Among the highlights during that period:
 - The website welcomed 711,000 unique visitors who viewed more than 13 million pages.
 - Visitors viewed an average of 4.66 pages per visit.
 - Visitors spent an average of three minutes on each page.
 - The member directory page tops the list of most visited pages.
 - The member directory page gets roughly 50 percent of the traffic on the SBM website.
 - Nancy Brown presented digital publication statistics.
 - Approximately 16,000 people subscribe to the eJournal.
 - More than 11,000 people have opted out of the Michigan Bar Journal annual directory.
 - About 7,000 people have opted out of receiving the monthly Michigan Bar Journal.
 - Nancy Brown reported the Board of Commissioners in July approved enhancements to the online member directory, allowing members to add a picture, biography, and other information. Members who opt out of receiving the April directory issue will get a free enhanced online directory listing. Members can get a hard copy of the directory and an enhanced online listing for \$39.

4. Michigan Bar Journal—John Runyan

- Attorney Grievance Commission/Judicial Tenure Commission practice pointers column.
 - John Runyan asked for committee reaction on the first three columns. Francine Cullari responded the column needs to be the focus of the Bar and the Bar Journal.
- Trial practice column
 - Gerard Mantese reported the column has been a big success thus far. John Runyan suggested occasionally including a columnist with a judicial perspective.
- Theme issues status
 - May 2014: (Probate and Estate Planning): Marc Melamed reported the issue will include four articles. Two are expected by the end of month.
 - June 2014 (Environmental Law): John Tatum reported articles for this issue were scheduled to be written during the holiday break.
 - August 2014 (Business Litigation): Gerard Mantese reported he was about to send letters to potential authors.
 - November 2014 (Elder Law): Josh Ard reported this formerly open issue will focus on elder law.
 - January 2015 (Social Security): David Cohen reported he hasn't spoken to anyone in the Social Security section. Tyra Wright agreed to co-edit the issue.
 - February 2015 (Military and Veterans Law): John Tatum reported the section is currently forming and he has a volunteer to organize the theme issue.
 - March 2015 (Plain Language): Co-editors Joseph Kimble and Chris Trudeau reported there hasn't been an issue devoted to plain language since January 1994. They expect no problems in soliciting writers and developing topics.
 - June 2015 (Alternate Dispute Resolution): John Runyan will edit this issue.
 - January 2016 (Appellate Practice): Richard Kraus reported the Appellate Practice section holds a bench-bar conference that includes Michigan Supreme Court justices and Court of Appeals judges every three years and having a theme issue in advance helps publicize the event.
- Proposed theme issues
 - Ronald Richards reached out to the chair of the public corporation law section to gauge interest in a theme issue but did not get an answer. John Tatum suggested following up with the section again. Francine Cullari suggested starting by getting an article from the section for a general issue.
 - Jessica Fox spoke to Shenique Moss of the Young Lawyers section about the possibility of a theme issue and would make a presentation to the section council.
 - John Runyan advised scheduling a criminal law theme issue. Linda Watson will serve as editor and will contact the Criminal Law section about collaboration.
- Unsolicited articles
 - Linda Novak reported 12 articles have been approved and are ready for publication in three 2014 general issues (March, July, and October.) To date in 2013, she had received 28 unsolicited articles—18 were approved for publication, six were rejected, and four awaited approval.
 - Chris Trudeau raised the possibility of an article on the lawyer's role in health advocacy. Linda Novak said general issue space is filled on a first come, first served basis unless the topic is timely, in which case it can bump another article to a later issue.

- Tyra Wright reported she has a commitment to write an article from Richard Wagner on appropriate use of background checks in the hiring process.
- Richard Kraus reported an associate in his office helped found the Agricultural Law section and he would solicit an article from her on the topic.
- Roberta Wray reported she had not spoken to person she had in mind to author an intellectual property article.
- Bar Journal readership survey
 - A draft version of the survey can be found in the PWAC portal. Linda Novak reported a committee worked for several months to develop the survey. The survey is scheduled to launch in early 2014 and readers will have two weeks from the launch date to respond.
- Bar Journal writing awards
 - Francine Cullari suggested honoring Michigan Bar Journal authors in a manner similar to the short-story contest. Once every two years, winners would be picked in the “best general article” and “best theme article” categories. Joseph Kimble recommended highlighting the three best articles from the calendar year. The articles would not be reprinted. Linda Novak suggested honoring the winners in January or February. Roberta Wray and Josh Ard offered to draw up contest guidelines by the next PWAC meeting.

7. Annual Directory—Linda Watson

- Linda Watson reported further reductions to the size of the annual directory is on hold until it can be determined the number of people using the electronic directory.
- Linda Watson asked the committee to come up with possible cover ideas for 2014.

8. Other Print Publications—Lawrence Shoffner

- Lawrence Shoffner reported there is plan of action and timeline for getting the brochures updated, designed, and ready to print. The deadline for completion of the probate and real property brochures is April 1.

9. Other/new business

- Linda Novak reported a conversation with SBM general counsel Cliff Flood regarding a U.S. District Court proposal to publish case summaries in a Bar Journal sidebar every month. Those summaries appeared in the Bar Journal at one time, but they took up too much space.
- Josh Ard reported the Probate and Estate Planning section has developed an official publication and mailing list policy, and recommended it as a topic of future discussion.

Meeting adjourned at 5:46 p.m.