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Shawn lives in East Vancouver with his wife and two young daughters, a labrador retriever puppy, and a cat with whom he has a conflicted relationship.

The theme for this issue is “Promoting the Rights of Individuals”.

Coincidentally, and a lot of our readers might not be aware, but the tagline on some (not all) of TLABC printed material/collateral is “Lawyers helping people”. It’s brilliant. It encapsulates the core of our mission – “protecting the rights of British Columbians” along with our mandate to provide learning and development for our members in their chosen areas of law as trial lawyers.

The public perception of lawyers has been, for a long time, the stuff of sarcastic jokes and loud eye rolling. That is until individuals need help with legal matters, at which point THEIR lawyer quite often becomes their hero, or at the very least the exception to the rule in their view. And for as long as this continues to be true, it is incumbent on the profession to make some concerted effort to positively influence public perception to the benefit of the profession itself, but also to the benefit of the public who is very much reliant on lawyers in so many aspects of their lives. With this thought in mind, please read Advertising and Referrals – Guidelines and Pitfalls by Michael Thomas and Drummond Lambert.

What our tagline misses, and what is so fundamental to the profession’s ability to promote the rights of individuals, is the importance of “Lawyers helping lawyers.” How do we at TLABC do this? Well by networking, sharing information, and by divvying up the load on thought leadership in a way that is instructive and supportive of our members and their peers in the profession – see Bob Nigol’s piece on Structured Settlements and Disability Assistance in British Columbia, or Ian Aikenhead’s Legislative Watch column. We also have excellent articles on Mediation by Rose Keith; Powers of Attorney by Trevor Todd; Engaging Technology to Enhance Client Connections by Jessica Spraggs and Thomas L. Spraggs; Medical Malpractice by Lindsay McGivern; and a thoughtful column by Magal Huberman on helping clients to understand their rights, to name a few.

Lawyers also help lawyers through the Lawyers Assistance Program BC. To say that being a lawyer can be rewarding is true. But to say that being a lawyer can also be stressful, is an understatement. And so this issue also includes an article by LAP BC’s Executive Director, Derek LaCroix. His fundamental point: when lawyers take care of themselves first, they are better able to best serve and promote the rights of their clients. Check it out. I hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as we enjoyed putting it together for you. ✓

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