

MAY 2005 PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Helping CASD Members is Time Well Spent

by Robert J. Francavilla

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As I sat down to write this article, it occurred to me that I have passed the first third of my term as President of CASD. My first thought is, "Where has all the time gone?" On further reflection, however, I realized that whatever time has passed, it is time well spent.

My first goal leading up to the start of 2005 was to make the best use of the wealth of experience that makes up the CASD Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. These folks fill the various committee positions and are what really makes CASD happen. And we had a fantastic group for 2005 – they have all worked really hard. Of course, our CASD staff led by S.J. Kalian, Chris Van Orshoven, and Necole Sneed hold it all together and produce the results.

Once committee chairs were put in place and goals were outlined, the year was off and running and it was time for everyone to swing into action. All of the CASD committees got off to a great start, beginning with membership, chaired by Ken Sigelman, Alexys Kalafer, and Alex Scheingross. It is the goal of the Membership Committee to increase the membership in CASD and in so doing to increase the strength of our organization and also to fully define and implement membership criteria. Thanks to Ken, Alexys and Alex, great progress toward achieving these goals is being made. The Events Committee, chaired by Sherry Bahrambeygui, has a whole host of things planned for this year, including the always successful Annual CASD Golf Tournament organized by the very able Joel Bryant, the Past Presidents Reception, the Red Boudreau Trial Lawyers Dinner, and the CASD Evening With the Trial Stars. With Sherry at the helm, those events promise to be very entertaining as well as successful. In fact, by the time you read this article you will have participated in the Golf Tournament and will have enjoyed at least one of our famous after-work Mixers and the first List Serve party, both capably organized by Rebecca Lack Mowbray.

The Communications Committee is rolling along without a glitch, thanks to Kerry Hoxie's wonderful work on *Trial Bar News* and Jon Williams' and Rebecca Mowbray's efforts to keep our web site up to date. The Communications Committee also has formed a Media Response Panel comprised of about 20 of our Past Presidents and experienced members who are available to respond promptly to requests for speakers and to also respond to items in the broadcast or print media.

The Legislative Committee, chaired by Scott Levine and made up of Marc Stern, Josh Gruenberg, and Jon Williams, is in place to keep us up to date on all legislative issues. Feel

free to contact any one of them if you have any questions about what is happening on the legislative front.

The Awards Committee, once again chaired by Richard Huver, is in place and tirelessly reviewing and investigating nominations for outstanding trial and outstanding advocacy results. If you or any one you know gets a great result, please submit it to this committee for consideration for an award. The Awards Committee provides a much deserved way to honor the outstanding achievements of our members. Forms for nominating members are available on our web site.

Also, please remember to recommend our members for mention in the **Member Accomplishments** section of *Trial Bar News* or the *Members Helping Others* section inaugurated in last month's issue. Simply send an e-mail to Kerry Hoxie at khoxie@aol.com.

Last is perhaps the most valuable of our member benefits -- the Education Committee, chaired by Wayne Hughes and co-chaired by Brad Hallen and John Rice. It has started off with a bang and is sure to continue providing wonderful, up-to-the-minute educational seminars for our members. Wayne and company have already planned and carried out several great seminars and labs, including the amazingly educational and popular, "What's New In Tort And Trial", a Tuesday night lab on "How To Survive The Defense Medical Exam", and a new feature seminar called "How Did They Do That?", which takes members in a step-by-step process through a recent successful trial by the trial lawyer who presented the trial and a panel of experts to provide a "how to" analysis. Be sure to check the Calendar of Events in the center of each month's *Trial Bar News* and the constantly updated Calendar of Events on our web site. You can also register on the web site for any of these programs.

In addition to numerous upcoming labs, Judge Robert Trentacosta will be presenting a seminar entitled "Effective Evidence Presentation for Trial Lawyers". Judge Trentacosta is a former president of this organization and is an outstanding trial lawyer in his own right. He is also a dynamic speaker who will give us the ins and outs of trial evidence from both the trial lawyers' and judges' perspective. This is an absolutely can't miss program. Wayne, Brad and John also promise several more seminars on interesting, timely and useful topics for the remainder of the year. Stay tuned for more information on those as they develop.

As if the stuff listed above wasn't enough, we also know about the fee cap initiative that has reared its ugly head in the past several months. This dreaded initiative reminds me that the purpose of our association, according to our mission statement, is to, among other things, (1) seek justice for all, (2) preserve the Constitutional right to trial by jury for all consumers, (3) prevent injury from occurring through concerted efforts to secure safe products, a safe work place, a clean environment, and quality healthcare, and (4) to educate the public concerning the United States justice system, the rights of the individual within the system and the legal profession.

With the foregoing in mind, it is our collective responsibility to ensure that neither this nor any other fee cap initiative ever passes. It is clear to me that such an initiative severely undermines each and every purpose this organization pledges to uphold. We simply cannot

allow that to happen.

Making sure all of our members' needs are met and doing all that I can to keep the doors of the courthouses open to injured victims everywhere is surely time well spent.

Thanks for all your help in making my experience as President of CASD better. Let me know what else I can do to help all of you in protecting the rights of your clients.