

At Sidebar

HON. CRAIG GARGOTTA

To René!

FIVE YEARS AGO, Joryn Jenkins, then editor in chief of this journal, wrote a column entitled “To Craig!” as a way of announcing her departure as editor in chief and the beginning of my tenure as editor in chief. Now I have the privilege of doing the same for René Harrod, who has served as deputy editor in chief the past year and has also been on *The Federal Lawyer’s* editorial board for three years. René will become TFL’s next editor in chief starting with the October 2008 issue.

René has already demonstrated her abilities as a writer and editor for *The Federal Lawyer*. She was instrumental in getting Cornell Law School to contribute Supreme Court previews of important upcoming cases on the Court’s docket. Readers of this journal have also benefited from Cornell’s year-end discussion (published in the August issue) of notable Supreme Court decisions this year. In addition, René also serves as a director on the FBA Board of Directors and is the president of her local chapter. She is well qualified to take over the position of editor in chief and will distinguish herself in that capacity.

I would also like to commend the Editorial Board for the superb job its members have done these last five years. Although we have changed members on an infrequent basis, all who served as members of the

Editorial Board did so in an exemplary fashion. Even though I sometimes unduly receive more than my fair share of praise for the content and appearance of *The Federal Lawyer*, our readers should know that on most occasions the Editorial Board is responsible for the scope of each issue, many of the articles contained therein, and review of the articles. As I have explained previously, our board meets telephonically once a month to plan out and work on upcoming issues. It is based on that meeting as well as countless e-mails that we perform our work. Regrettably, I have not met most of my board face to face but have had to rely on telephone calls and e-mail communications to work with them. If I had one regret about my position, it would have to be that I will not have the chance to tell each board member in person how much I have appreciated their work on *The Federal Lawyer* and how much their service has meant to me.

Two members of our board require special attention. First, in my opinion, Henry Cohen’s work as TFL’s book review editor is unequaled in any other publication. Every issue is packed with book reviews of a caliber that is nothing short of first-rate. Our book reviews cover a multitude of subjects—history, constitutional law, fiction, politics, and even baseball—and they do so in a fashion that makes it impossible for the reader who reads the review to be unable to decide whether the book is worth reading. Moreover, the authority that reviewers utilize in writing their reviews—let alone the competent and interesting style they use—demonstrates that our reviewers are some of the best.

The second member of the board that must be singled out is Michael Newman, TFL’s judicial profiles editor, who has done a wonderful job in getting volunteers to write about our federal judiciary. The Federal Bar Association’s relationship and support of our federal judges is one of the most important functions our association performs, and, by providing profiles of our judges, we can continue to foster that relationship. I encourage you to read the profiles published in each issue: you will not only gain insight into the judge being profiled but also recognize how many of our judges are great public servants. Mike’s stewardship of our relationship with our judges has allowed the FBA to have the privilege of working with our judiciary on some of the most important issues in law: sentencing guidelines, Indian law, changes in procedural rules, and security and staffing in our courts.

Everyone I have mentioned at this point is a volunteer, but we are fortunate to have one person who is



Judge Gargotta with his wife, Susan, and sons, Randy and Colin.

an FBA employee and does a masterful job of putting each issue of the magazine together. I have had the unique perspective of being one of the first persons to see each issue, and with every issue, I am amazed at what a great job our managing editor, Stacy King, does each month. Stacy takes all of the submissions for each issue, assimilates them into a logical format, selects the art, does the layout, coordinates the pictures, verifies the accuracy of the content, and then produces a professional journal that many FBA members consider one of the primary benefits of being an FBA member. Stacy is a consummate professional who is well organized and unfailingly polite and helpful. She always has a good idea about the topic being discussed and possesses the unique ability to make a tough—if not unpopular—decision. Most important to me, she has become a good friend in addition to being a confidante and a resource. I will miss our weekly, if not daily, telephone calls and e-mails.

I made the decision to step down as editor in chief even before I had learned that I was to become a bankruptcy judge. I knew that five years was enough time to serve, and that it was time to bring in fresh ideas and talent. A publication such as ours takes on, to some degree, the vision and guidance of its leader, and it is time for a change. I am excited at the prospect of what René will do for *The Federal Lawyer*, and I know that you all will find the upcoming issues to be an improvement over what we have done.

Thank you for allowing me to serve the FBA in this capacity. I should extend my thanks to the national presidents who have placed their confidence in me: Kent Hofmesister, who selected me; and Joyce Kitchens, Tom Schuck, Robyn Spalter, Bill LaForge, and Jim Richardson, who kept me on as editor in chief. Finally, I would like to thank my family for its support (my wife, Susan, and our children, Randy and Colin), my dear friends at the San Antonio Chapter, and my former colleagues at the U.S. Attorney's Office in San Antonio. I now look forward to being a judge in Austin and working with the Austin Chapter and the judges there. **TFL**

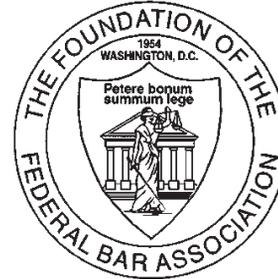
Hon. Craig Gargotta is a U.S. bankruptcy judge in the Western District of Texas.

Editorial Policy

The Federal Lawyer is the magazine of the Federal Bar Association. It serves the needs of the association and its members, as well as those of the legal profession as a whole and the public.

The Federal Lawyer is edited by members of its editorial board, who are all members of the Federal Bar Association. Editorial and publication decisions are based on the board's judgment.

The views expressed in *The Federal Lawyer* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the association or of the editorial board. Articles and letters to the editor in response are welcome.



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