

President's Message

JUANITA SALES LEE

Farewell and Thanks

In preparation for the transition, and in celebration of my last column, I want to take this opportunity to thank the members, officers, and staff of the Federal Bar Association for the opportunity to serve as the 2008–2009 president of the FBA. My year of service began with

anticipation and ends with great expectations. The incoming president, Lawrence Baca, the officers of the association, and the members of the Board of Directors are poised to lead us through the challenges ahead and to do so in the excellent tradition to which our membership is accustomed.

As many of you know, health issues have been my companion throughout this year, preventing me from traveling, presiding, and working. However, the thoughtfulness and patience of my colleagues won the day and propelled me throughout the year. I am grateful to so many who provided so much. I found great minds and writers to assist me in writing many of the president's messages for the journal, and my fellow FBA officers attended events in my stead. In my opinion, life and leadership are good.

I appreciate the assistance of Jack Lockridge, the association's executive director, and his talented staff, who worked tirelessly to plan and conduct the business of the association and the various national continuing legal education programs. In the same vein, I am grateful to the Foundation of the FBA for ensuring that our philanthropic mission was exercised in the appropriate manner for our members' benefit. Every member should visit the new FBA headquarters in Arlington, Va., just across the river from Washington, D.C. The Federal Bar Building Corporation should be lauded for its foresight and stewardship in selling the building on M Street in Washington and purchasing a more utilitarian space for the association's operations. Members visiting the Washington, D.C., area are invited and welcome to use the FBA facilities as an office away from home.

I could not travel to represent the FBA as often as I was invited to do so. However, the events that I attended were of the highest caliber and provided the attendees with great CLE programs or recognized service to the community, or both. In my opinion, these programs are characteristic of the excellent CLE and service programs that our chapters present year in, year out. The Indian Law Conference, sponsored by the association's Indian Law Section, was held in Indian country for the first time. The conference boasted more than 600 attendees and nationally recognized speakers. I spoke at an inspiring

pro bono awards ceremony sponsored by the Chicago Chapter. The Chicago Chapter's program is a prototype for others to emulate. It provides an excellent opportunity to recognize those who provide pro bono assistance, a service that is sorely needed in many jurisdictions. I attended the Minnesota Chapter's Federal Court Practice Seminar and addressed attendees at the Judge Jack Mason Memorial Luncheon. Later this month, I will discuss developments in federal employment and labor law at a program co-sponsored by San Joaquin Chapter of the FBA and the Fresno County Women Lawyers Association.

In my first column as president, I sought member input in a survey, which would help guide the FBA and its Board of Directors in its governance and decision-making. Many of you responded by completing the membership survey that was e-mailed to approximately 13,000 members. The association's leadership is responding to various suggestions. An in-depth explanation of the survey results was sent to members by e-mail earlier this month.

Later this year, the FBA's Web site will be redesigned and will have the following capabilities: an online membership join, online dues renewal, online event registration for national CLE programs, a membership directory, real time updating of member information (changes to address, telephone number, e-mail address, etc.), and online ordering of specialty items and publications. In addition, we will implement a new online product: "FBA Find a Lawyer" will be available to the public for searching for attorneys in a particular field or in a particular geographical location. Members will pay a nominal fee to have their names listed in "FBA Find a Lawyer."

I count it a blessing to have served as your president this year and to have made the acquaintance of so many of you. If you're ever in Alabama, please look me up for a down-home, Southern meal. Y'all come! **TFL**



Juanita Sales Lee