

President's Message

JAMES S. RICHARDSON SR.

The FBA's National Convention

THIS MONTH'S ISSUE of *The Federal Lawyer* contains the official program of the next annual convention of the Federal Bar Association, to be held in Huntsville, Ala., from Sept. 17 through Sept. 20. I strongly urge all members of the FBA to attend. The obvious question is "Why?"

First, the convention is the annual meeting of the FBA, as defined in the association's constitution and bylaws. The business of the association is transacted at the annual convention. The Board of Directors will meet on Wednesday, Sept. 17, and the National Council will meet on Saturday, Sept. 20. For those of you holding offices in the FBA as chapter leaders, section and division officers, or committee chairs, this is your meeting. All these meetings (with the exception of executive sessions of the Board of Directors) are open to all members, and you are invited to attend and observe the association's governance at work.

The Foundation of the FBA will also hold a meeting at the convention. This meeting is open to all members and provides insight into the operations of the Foundation.

In addition, the convention offers members the opportunity to obtain nine hours of general continuing legal education or 12 hours of continuing education in government contract law, including a few hours for professionalism and ethics. This is an excellent time to bring yourself current on subjects of your practice or perhaps explore an area of practice that interests you but is not normally within your purview. I would not be surprised that attorneys who practice in the area of government contracts will find this convention of major interest, because one full track has been designed solely for that area of the law.

Chapter officers and members are offered training in the responsibilities of association offices. The morning of Saturday, Sept. 20, will be devoted to helping chapter members network and learn about proven chapter programs. In the past, this session has included such topics as membership development, public relations, and program planning. Although this session is not a substitute for the Chapter Leadership Training Program held in April of each year, chapter officers and members will find much that is helpful for developing and leading their chapter.

The convention is an excellent time for establishing or refreshing networks with other attorneys. As many of you know, the FBA consists of 87 chapters, including chapters in Alaska, Hawaii, the Virgin Is-

lands, and Puerto Rico. The luncheons and other social activities provide members with many opportunities to interact with colleagues from around the country and share experiences.

The social events that are planned include two unusual opportunities for attendees: The reception on Thursday, Sept. 18, to be held in the Huntsville Botanical Gardens, provides an opportunity to see one of the largest freestanding butterfly collections in the hemisphere. The reception on Friday evening, Sept. 19, at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center will allow attendees to view the center's extensive displays of space exploration and artifacts of the race to control space during the last half of the 20th century. The center contains exhibits—such as a full Saturn V rocket—that are beyond even what is housed in the Smithsonian's Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.

Activities of the chapters and other FBA entities will be recognized at luncheons during the convention. At Friday's luncheon, the Younger Lawyers Division will honor outstanding younger federal lawyers; these awards are presented to young lawyers nominated by their agencies for their accomplishments. At the Saturday luncheon, the association will present awards for excellence in leadership, newsletters, and section, division, and chapter activities.

Many members of the FBA seem to be of the opinion that the convention is an event that is geared to association leaders. However, as you can see, the meeting includes many activities for individual members. This is an outstanding opportunity to learn about the FBA and everything that we do throughout the country. I strongly urge you to review the information in the issue and then register online at www.fedbar.org/H08_home.html or submit your completed form found in this issue by mail. We look forward to seeing you in Huntsville. **TFL**



A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "James S. Richardson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.