

President's Message

ASHLEY L. BELLEAU

Success Is Not Achieved Alone

AS MY YEAR as your President draws to a close, I reflect on how far we have come in realizing the Vision that the FBA be recognized as the “premier bar association serving the federal practitioner and judiciary.” Our team has substantially increased the

Association's VRV—Visibility, Relevance and Value!

The FBA acted to break the log jam of judicial nominations and confirmations by co-sponsoring a program in Washington, DC focusing on the entire process. Further, members of the FBA went to Capitol Hill and met with influential Senators about the twin judicial crises of vacancies and funding, and how each impacts the justice system and the taxpayer. The FBA increased its VRV by penning an op-ed on the costly impact of judicial vacancies. That op-ed was published in newspapers around the country, including the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Atlanta Constitution Journal*.

These efforts have not gone unrecognized. Senator Leahy read the op-ed on the Senate floor entering it into the Congressional Record. After giving the FBA report at the Judges-only session of the Fifth Circuit Conference, Chief Justice John Roberts personally extended his thanks to me for the FBA's work on behalf of the judiciary. These successes could not have happened without the efforts of Larry Westburg, Chair of the Government Relations Committee, the members of the GRC, and Bruce Moyer, our Government Relations Counsel. Thank you all.

The FBA also proved there is no task too big or too small that our fellow attorneys and legal professionals are not willing to champion on behalf their colleagues. With the able assistance of Judge Jay C. Zainey of the Eastern District of Louisiana, the FBA is implementing SOLACE programs within FBA chapters across the country. This successful program has brought fulfillment to many volunteers who seek to do something meaningful for their colleagues in need.

The Sections and Divisions have grown stronger. We established a Civil Rights Section, and by the time you read this message the National Council may have established a new Law Student Division. Thank you to all the Section and Division chairs and especially to Kent Hofmeister, past president and Chair of the Sections and Divisions, for your excellent leadership in these endeavors.

The FBA also appreciates the Circuit Vice-Presidents who help lead our advocacy issues on Capitol Hill, and work with chapters across the country to strengthen

their relationships with the judiciary. Moreover, the Circuit Vice-Presidents work closely with the Membership Committee under the able leadership of Jonathan Hafen. Through their efforts, the FBA has established a new chapter in Roanoke and has another in the pipeline. Thank you West Allen, Chair of the Circuit Vice-Presidents, and to each of the Vice-Presidents for outstanding work this year.

We improved our public face by updating the FBA's website, expanding its content, capability and relevance. The website is the center of communications with members and potential members of the FBA. The website and our presence across an array of social media—Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter—are key components to meeting the needs of the FBA and its members. I expect these efforts will further increase the FBA's VRV and grow membership. The modernization of the Association's communication capabilities is due to the leadership of our Executive Director, Jack Lockridge, and everyone on his staff. I thank each of them for their solid commitment to make the FBA Visible, Relevant and Valuable.

In addition to improving the FBA's external face we have also focused much of the year on “internal scrutiny” of the FBA's organization. The Board and the National Council vetted and approved proposed amendments to the FBA Constitution and Bylaws, which have been more than three years in the making. I thank the National Council and the Board for spending countless hours debating and discerning the path the FBA should follow in coming years.

My frequent travel on behalf of the Association would not have been possible without the unflagging support of my husband, Michael, our children, Patrick and Elizabeth, and my partners at Montgomery Barnett. And as ever, I remain grateful to the New Orleans Chapter for its steadfast support and especially for hosting the memorable 2010 Annual Meeting and Convention.



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written. The courts complained that such was tantamount to a waste of time in that the court was not enlightened by the verbal presentation of the barrister.

One response is that judges can deftly move those appearing before the court away from a line-by-line recitation of filed memoranda. Incisive questioning should cause the oralist to abandon the prepared text to concentrate on court-raised issues. As judges control all aspects of trial, so too the same applies to arguments during motion practice.

Increasing oral arguments on motions will invariably lead to greater attorney comfort and confidence. The trials should follow. **TFL**

Michael A. McGlone is a partner in the New Orleans office of Kean Miller. He has extensive experience in admiralty and maritime law, maritime litigation, marine insurance, personal injury defense, collisions, allisions and federal and

state appeals. McGlone is a member of the editorial board for The Federal Lawyer.

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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I especially thank Fern Bomchill, our incoming 84th President, and Bob DeSousa, our President-Elect, for their unwavering support, both professional and personal, throughout this active year. The Association is in good hands.

Finally, I thank all of you for affording me the opportunity to serve as your 83rd National President

and to be a part of the FBA's championship team! I am sure you will join me in anticipating a bright future for our Association.

Ashley L. Belleau

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