

A panoramic view of the Atlanta skyline under a clear blue sky with scattered white clouds. In the foreground, there are several multi-story residential or commercial buildings with dark roofs and light-colored facades. The skyline features various skyscrapers, including the prominent Bank of America Tower with its distinctive pointed top. A construction crane is visible in the middle ground.

60 Years and Onward: A Brief History of the Atlanta Chapter of the Federal Bar Association

JOYCE E. KITCHENS, HENRY M. QUILLIAN III, AND KEVIN A. MAXIM

The Atlanta Chapter traces its roots to 29 prescient attorneys who petitioned the Federal Bar Association on Aug. 1, 1957, for the privilege to form the Atlanta Chapter. Many of the founders already were or became legends in the Atlanta legal community. Like the FBA as a whole, over the years the chapter morphed from a group of attorneys with years devoted to government service to a larger portion of privately practicing attorneys. Women attorneys took on leadership roles early in the chapter's existence, a trend that continues. The Younger Lawyers Division (YLD) program has served as an incubator for chapter leadership, with many of the chapter's presidents having served as YLD chair. The chapter formally incorporated in 2008. The year 2017 is remarkable not only because the Atlanta Chapter is celebrating its 60th anniversary, but also because the chapter—for the fourth time—will welcome the FBA's Annual Meeting & Convention, this time at the Westin Peachtree Plaza in downtown Atlanta during Sept. 14-16, 2017.

Bev Bates is believed to be the Atlanta Chapter's most senior former chapter president, and he served in that role from 1971-1972. He was an assistant U.S. attorney when serving as chapter president. According to Bates, he "found the Atlanta Chapter to be an opportunity for closer association and friendship with federal agency attorneys; and professionally benefited from the example of several private attorneys." Bates said that one private attorney stood out, "Harold L. Russell, [of] Smith, Gambrell & Russell, ... made long-lasting contributions of time and advice to the chapter and encouraged similar commitment of his firm members and associates."

The Atlanta Chapter takes pride in having more than 300 members as of this writing, an executive committee of 10 attorneys, and an advisory committee of 17, which meets at least annually with the

executive committee. The chapter's advisory committee includes Chief Judge Thomas W. Thrash Jr. of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia, as an honorary member. The chapter's website, www.fedbaratlanta.org, offers information on our chapter's history, its members and leadership, and upcoming events, and it provides a portal through which our members and others can make reservations for our events.

The Atlanta Chapter is proud of its service to the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals and the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia. Essential to the chapter's success has been the courts' support, which has taken many forms over the years. In recent times, the chapter has benefited from an annual meeting among the district's chief judge, district executive and clerk of court, and incoming chapter president, who review the chapter year and plan for the future.

Also essential to the chapter's success is the support of James N. Hatten, district executive and clerk of court, and James P. Gerstenlauer, circuit executive for the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals. Both Gerstenlauer and Hatten have served on the chapter's executive committee for years. Gerstenlauer and Hatten provide the chapter with crucial support in terms of vetting ideas, running programs, avoiding decorum missteps, and in serving as liaisons for communications between our chapter and the judges of the respective courts.

In September 2007, the Atlanta Chapter hosted the Federal Bar Association's Annual Meeting and Convention at the Marriott Marquis. That convention, and the roughly contemporary presidency of Tom Lacy, affected the Atlanta Chapter and in ways that benefit the chapter to this day. The chapter had sometimes had trouble filling officer positions on its executive committee and grappled with a sometimes-challenging financial position. In a paradigm shift, Lacy called on younger friends from large firms to leverage the resources of their firms for lunches and events, which thereby lowered event costs, decreased the travel time necessary for many to attend, increased the visibility of the chapter in the eyes of large firm partners, and infused the chapter with motivated professionals in large and smaller firms alike who saw the chapter as an opportunity to help build their careers. That era of chapter success ushered in our members now cordially vying for leadership positions, as well as an improved financial outlook, which in turn created opportunities for the chapter's programing and outreach.

The chapter's premiere event is the annual Luncheon Honoring the Federal Judiciary. The luncheon coincides with the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals convening *en banc* in Atlanta. The chapter invites all federal judges then in Atlanta to the luncheon, including

the judges of the Eleventh Circuit, as well as the district, bankruptcy, and magistrate court judges in the Northern District of Georgia. A remarkable roster of speakers has entertained and informed the luncheon, including then-current Attorney General Michael B. Mukasey, former Solicitors General Paul D. Clement, Drew S. Days III, Kenneth W. Starr, former FBI Director Louis J. Freeh, former Chief Judge of the South Carolina Court of Appeals Hon. Alexander M. Sanders Jr., author John Grisham, former General Counsel for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Joseph D. Whitley, former Republican National Committee general counsel Ben Ginsberg, and former U.S. Ambassador to the European Union Stuart Eizenstat.

Since 1990, the Robert S. Vance Forum on the Bill of Rights has challenged lawyers and law students at Georgia's law schools to grapple with some of the most pressing current constitutional issues under the tutelage of the nation's premiere experts. The generous Michael and Ilene Shaw Younger Lawyer's Service Grant from the FBA Foundation enabled the chapter's YLD to invite the most knowledgeable lawyers in the nation to participate in the forum and to wrangle over perplexing legal issues. Many of our younger chapter members who have volunteered to manage a Vance Forum have proceeded to join the chapter officer ranks.

Each autumn, the Atlanta Chapter hosts an Annual Judicial Law Clerk Reception and Officer Swearing-In Ceremony. At the event, we invite all local federal judges and welcome their incoming and continuing law clerks. At the event a federal judge, typically the chief judge, swears in the incoming slate of the chapter's executive committee.

The Atlanta Chapter also annually hosts an installment of its Conversation Series. This series presents an informal question-and-answer interview with one of the more prominent and senior members of our legal community. The interview is conducted by someone of the interviewed person's choosing. Through this luncheon program, our chapter members have learned the fascinating histories of these leaders in our legal community, including personal challenges and successes, observations, and best of all, humorous anecdotes. Participants in the Conversation Series have included Phyllis A. Kravitch

and James C. Hill, senior judges of the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals; former Attorney General Griffin B. Bell; Horace Ward, Harold L. Murphy, William C. O'Kelley, and Robert L. Vining Jr., senior judges of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia; and attorney Miles Alexander.

In addition, the Atlanta Chapter hosts a variety of continuing legal education seminars for our members. Recent programs include a panel discussion on recent changes in the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, a Technology in the Northern District Courtroom seminar, a panel on developments in privacy and data breach law, a corporate counsel panel, a panel on our magistrate court and judges, and a panel on intellectual property litigation.

In recent times, our chapter's YLD reached out to the younger members of our legal community. The YLD events have included informal receptions with Hon. Charles R. Wilson of the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals; Hon. Steve C. Jones, Hon. Richard W. Story, and Hon. Amy Totenberg for the Northern District of Georgia; and with Hon. Alan J. Baverman, a magistrate judge of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia; and a social reception welcoming the private practice summer associates to town.

Members of the Atlanta Chapter have proudly served the FBA in its national setting. One of our advisory committee members, Joyce E. Kitchens, is a former FBA national president. Kitchens currently serves on the board of the FBA's Building Corporation. Another advisory committee member, Henry M. Quillian III, is the 2015 recipient of the Robyn J. Spalter Outstanding Achievement Award, served as the national general counsel for the FBA, and is currently on the board of trustees of the FBA Foundation. Advisory committee member Kevin A. Maxim served on the FBA's board of directors from 2014 through 2016. Other Atlanta Chapter members have recently served or are serving on the FBA's YLD board, including John Jett, Anna Howard, and Andy Tuck, and a number of our chapter members are fellows of the FBA Foundation.

Back in 1987, one of the chapter's earliest members, Robert Gerwig, compiled a 25-plus-page history on the occasion of the Atlanta

Chapter's 30th anniversary. In that history, Gerwig wrote: "Countless members have come and gone, but a preponderance of the evidence . . . suggests that the chapter has indeed exerted certain beneficial effects upon those who have experienced professional efforts and sociability contemplated 30 years ago by the founders." The Atlanta Chapter remains ever-mindful of the many who have come before us, and we are proud to fulfill their legacy by promoting professionalism and collegiality among north Georgia's federal bench and bar. ☺

Joyce E. Kitchens, a principal of Kitchens New Cleghorn in Atlanta, is a past national president of the Federal Bar Association. Henry M. Quillian is a partner at Taylor English Duma LLP in Atlanta. Kevin A. Maxim is a principal of The Maxim Law Firm PC in Atlanta and is the 2017 Convention Committee chair.