

**Louisiana State Bar Association
PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE
10 a.m. ♦ October 25, 2002
Louisiana Bar Center ♦ New Orleans**

M I N U T E S

The Public Information Committee meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chair Mary E. Mouton. The following members also participated:

Anderson O. Dotson
Craig M. Freeman, by phone
James D. Hollier, by phone
Timothy A. Maragos, by phone
Melanie M. Mulcahy, by phone
Packard R. Phillips
Elizabeth S. Schell
Michele C. Norris, LSBA Communications Director
Loretta Larsen Topey, LSBA Executive Director
Dennette L. Young, LSBA Graphic Designer/Print Manager

Business was conducted in accordance with the following agenda.

I. Introduction of Members

Members attending in person or those participating by phone introduced themselves.

II. Disaster Response Plan

Melanie Mulcahy and Tim Maragos discussed implementation of the new Disaster Response Plan in the wake of Isidore and Lili and then again following the Amite train derailment. They stated that the plan worked remarkably well and that 44 calls have come into the hotline, which were referred to volunteer lawyers. Melanie is addressing the issue of some lawyers who signed up are not actually available to assist.

The hotline remains open and we don't know how long FEMA will have their response line open. A temporary employee had been answering the phones at the LSBA. She will leave on October 25 and Amanda will take over receiving disaster response calls as of Monday, October 28, 2002 (she is an LSBA employee). LSBA will keep a check list so that once a disaster happens again we can keep what worked and disregard what didn't work.

Tim discussed the need to approach leaders of law firms to encourage their employees to do the work they've volunteered for – ideas included publication of articles in Bar Briefs, Bar Journal, Disciplinary Board Magazine, and local bar

association newsletters. Tim Maragos offered to write for the Lafayette Bar Association, Mary Mouton will write for the Disciplinary Board Magazine and the Bar Association will take care of Bar Briefs.

The volunteers don't have to be young lawyers – discussion regarding importance of recognizing volunteers for the work they are doing. We need to name the attorney as well as their firm to encourage volunteerism. We need to let people know this is an ongoing effort. Other ideas for improvement included:

- Keep distribution list updated at the Bar Association and add volunteers to this list.
- List of numbers of legal aids societies and elder societies and other local societies -- Amanda needs these numbers and a handbook to answer calls correctly. We need to state in publications that attorneys from a specific community are assigned to and are helping people from that community.

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III. Service to Seniors

Press release was distributed statewide to Louisiana media regarding Young Lawyers' Service To Seniors handbook, with the help of Charlotte McDaniel and Mary Mouton.

IV. Law School for Journalists

Jimmy Hollier spoke with a representative from the ULL Department of Communications about holding a Law School for Journalists. Loretta Topey will contact the Louisiana Press Association and Mary Mouton will call the Lafayette Bar Association to determine whether they may be interested in participating. Based on their feedback, we will determine whether we will hold an event in Lafayette.

V. People's Law School

Craig Freeman spoke with LSU about holding the School for Non-Lawyers as part of LSU's community program. The class would be a series of 3 two-hour classes held over a two or three week period. LSU would include it in its course catalog and the program gets some publicity in The Advocate. Craig proposes teaching basic classes on how the legal system works, family law, tenant law, etc. and would arrange for volunteer lawyers to teach these classes. Charlotte McDaniel offered to teach a constitutional law class. Classes would begin in the Summer of 2003; February 7, 2003 is the deadline for application.

Materials for these classes should be supplied from the instructors through the LSBA Classes should NOT conflict with the LSBA Annual Meeting and Summer School in June. Loretta will forward dates to Craig Freeman.

VI. Judicial Merit Selection

The Board of Governors will discuss on November 9, 2002 and adopt a statement.

VII. Next Meeting

Next PIC meeting will be Friday, January 10, 2003 in New Orleans at 10 a.m.

VIII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11 a.m.