



By Richard K.
Leefe

Make a Difference: Proud of the LSBA and Its Work

As my term as president of the Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) winds down, I want to thank all of you for the opportunity to serve in this office. It has been a true pleasure to travel Louisiana and talk with our practicing members and the judiciary. It has allowed me to obtain a feel for the thoughts and positions of a large representation of the Bar. No one's perception should be ignored; this is an association of all of its members and each one has concerns and suggestions.

I thank all of you who have taken the time to talk to me and all comments have been taken to heart. I acknowledge that I have not had time to address every issue that has come to me or to which it has been suggested I consider. For that, I apologize. I wish I had been able to answer all your questions and concerns.

As Larry Shea steps in as our president in June, I ask that you give him the same friendship and support I have felt during my term. He deserves your support. Remember, he will be giving his time without compensation, but with a true desire to make the practice of law in Louisiana better for all. I have come to know Larry well and know his dedication and willingness to do this job. Larry has no trouble devoting the time it takes to be the leader of the Bar in this state, and he has a willingness to listen, an important element of getting the job done in a way that is best for the Bar.

I want to express my thanks to all the presidents who have gone before me for laying such a great foundation and starting many initiatives which I have been able to continue. Thanks to all the presidents who have helped me, including my predecessor, John Musser, who included me in so much during my time as president-elect.

To the LSBA staff, I want to give sincere and heartfelt thanks. I do not think our membership fully knows all that the staff does. I do know that the staff members do their jobs with dedication. This very *Journal* is a shining example of the work of the LSBA — but only one of many. I do want each member of this association to know that the LSBA

is blessed to have a truly wonderful Executive Director, Loretta Larsen, who guides the LSBA, and has guided me, in a masterful way. She is great at her job, which is not an easy one. All those events, programs, operations, functions, committees, communications, day-to-day business, and on and on would not take place or work so smoothly without her efforts and leadership of the staff.

I owe a special thanks to our Supreme Court who could not have been more friendly or helpful to me. I owe very special thanks to Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson, who is, and has been, a great friend to the LSBA and who constantly expresses her concern for our members and the need to make the practice better for them and the public. The Chief has been a friend and partner to me in making an effort to move the practice forward in a way that increases respect for the profession from the public, making it better for those practicing and living in this state.

When I began my term last June, I wrote in my message that I hoped each of our members would be involved with the LSBA. We each have a duty to participate and, if not, to not criticize those who do. I believe we have seen an increase in participation. If you are not willing to give your time to make a difference, please recognize that those who serve on committees, work on projects, serve in the House of Delegates or on the Board of Governors and do the work of the LSBA are doing so without benefit to themselves other than a feeling of having done their part and meeting others who are making a difference. You should be one of those

members. With every member who does participate, the load is spread over a larger base and we will move forward with greater speed. With your input, the LSBA will have a wider perspective.

The LSBA has recently installed a video-conferencing system that allows participation of all of those around the state. To serve on a committee or participate in planning a program or presentation, you do not have to travel to New Orleans. We have a beautiful Bar Center in New Orleans, but you don't have to go there to be a part of it. In fact, you don't even have to leave your office to appear live at a meeting. We want you to take an active part.

In 2012, when I was the secretary of the LSBA and editor of the *Louisiana Bar Journal*, we published the final President's Message of Jimmy Davidson, in which President Davidson expressed his concern over the direction of our country. Whether you agreed with him or not, or screamed that he should not be expressing his concern, do not lose sight of the fact that Jimmy gave the time to be president. He had to spend a great deal of time away from his family and practice, as others have and Larry Shea will. He put in his time to reach the position of president and earned the right to speak his mind. You can do the same. Give your time and work to make the LSBA the association you want. Make a difference. Earn the right to say what you think in a way that makes a difference.

I am proud and honored to have served as president of the LSBA. I am proud of the LSBA. I am proud of its work. I hope I leave it a better organization for its members, the state and the public. Thank you for this year.



Attorney Registration and Fee Payment Moving Online for FY 2014/2015

The Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) announces that, effective with the 2014/2015 fiscal year, it will move to an Internet-based model for the collection of LSBA dues and Louisiana Attorney Disciplinary Board (LADB) assessments, as well as for filing the Attorney Registration Statement. This new collection method will allow payment of fees either by an ACH electronic check or credit card, enabling members to make filings 24/7, even when the Bar Center is closed or if mail service is disrupted due to inclement weather.

"This change will facilitate efficiencies related to online filing while still providing assistance and guidance from LSBA staff members," said LSBA President Richard K. Leefe. "This new system is another step forward in our ongoing efforts to utilize technology to create easier access for Louisiana lawyers."

Filing electronically should be a quick and simple process, utilizing the online member accounts that participants have relied on for years to register for CLE seminars and to access Fastcase. If an attorney has not yet set up a member account, one can easily be created at: www.lsba.org/Members/memberaccts.aspx. This webpage also allows members to edit their existing accounts and to reset a lost or forgotten account password.

After member data is confirmed but before the payment/filing process begins, members will be advised that they also need to go to www.LADB.org to complete the Louisiana Supreme Court Trust Account Disclosure and Overdraft Notification Authorization Form and will be asked to confirm that they understand this requirement.

The collection schedule will be the same as in prior years. An initial notice will be mailed in mid-May in the form of a 4x6 postcard, which will provide instructions

to go online to www.LSBA.org to complete the registration process, and also go online to www.LADB.org to complete the Trust Account Form.

Once the Attorney Registration Statement has been electronically filed (including any necessary changes and/or updates) and payments have been made, an email confirmation will be sent. The filing and payment deadline will remain July 1. The LSBA will continue to mail delinquency and ineligibility notices to those who fail to meet the deadlines.

Members who elect to pay by electronic check will continue to pay the following fees:

- ▶ LSBA dues (practicing more than three years): \$200;
- ▶ LSBA dues (practicing three years or less): \$80;
- ▶ LADB assessment (practicing more than three years): \$235; and
- ▶ LADB assessment (practicing three years or less): \$170.

However, processing fees of 3% plus a .20 transaction fee will be passed along to those choosing to pay by credit card. Total amounts including credit card processing fees are as follows:

- ▶ LSBA dues (practicing more than three years): \$206.20;
- ▶ LSBA dues (practicing three years or less): \$82.60;
- ▶ LADB assessment (practicing more than three years): \$242.25; and
- ▶ LADB assessment (practicing three years or less): \$175.30.

Although the LSBA anticipates a smooth transition, Bar staff members will be available to answer questions and provide assistance to members. All questions and concerns should be directed to:

- ▶ Email — processing@LSBA.org
- ▶ Telephone — (504)566-1600 or (800)421-LSBA; ask for Payment Processing.