



Take Your Pick

THE ABILITY OF LOCAL BARS to present programs that are important to the community is limited only by one's imagination.

The programs can be done with relatively little drain on financial resources, a factor important to all of us.

One of the annual projects of the Conference of Local Bar Associations (CLBA) is the drafting, publishing, and distribution of the pamphlet *So You're 18*, intended to reach those approaching adulthood. The publication describes the laws that apply to those aged 18 and older. In recent years we have provided the pamphlets to interested courts for distribution to teens receiving their driver's licenses. This has been well-received.

VSBA President Manuel A. Capsalis has attended many of the sessions in Arlington and personally presented the pamphlets to new drivers.

Another excellent program that many bars could adopt was developed by 2008–09 CLBA Chair William T. Wilson, who practices in Covington and is a member of the Allegheny, Bath, Highland Bar Association. On May 29, Bill oversaw a *So You're 18* program for Allegheny High School juniors and seniors cosponsored by the local bar and the CLBA. On the panel were representatives of the state bar staff, a general district court judge, the local bar president, the sheriff of Allegheny County, a Covington police patrolman, a local private attorney, and an Allegheny County assistant commonwealth's attorney. Each speaker

presented a legal issue such as driving under the influence, guns and hunting, and immigration and voting rights. The forum was followed by a question-and-answer session. The CLBA can furnish your bar association the necessary materials and an outline of prior programs.

Another program worth replicating is Campbell County's National Adoption Day Ceremony, now in its fifth year. It is run primarily by the Campbell County Bar Association and volunteers from the courts and supporting agencies. CLBA member and Campbell practitioner G.W. Nolley said that the program is presided over by a chief circuit court judge with a juvenile and domestic relations judge assisting. The adoption agencies recognize each adoptee and adopting family, as well as other participants. The session concludes with the families standing before the court, the court acknowledging the adoptions, and the execution of an appropriate decree. A reception with food and gifts for the children follows. G.W. points out the positive effect of the proceeding — not only for the adoptees and families, but also on the court personnel, the supporting agencies, and the lawyers. The scene of many hard-fought battles with few leaving unscarred becomes instead the place for new beginnings.

A program simple in concept but with rich benefits comes out of Luray. CLBA Immediate Past Chair George W. Shanks has been associated with the Page County Bar Association's sponsorship of a bus trip for high school

seniors to the U.S. Supreme Court. George also led a trip to the Supreme Court of Virginia that included lunch with Chief Justice Leroy R. Hassell Sr. AS WE PROMOTE THESE LOCAL BAR PROGRAMS, we also have to recognize that all programs are vulnerable to changes we cannot control.

ADDED THOUGHTS:

In a December 2007 column I wrote about the Legal Information Network for Cancer (LINC) and Phyllis C. Katz, who helped create it. http://www.vsb.org/docs/valawyer_magazine/vl1207_clba.pdf. Katz recently received the Virginia State Bar's 2008 Lewis F. Powell Jr. Pro Bono Award for her work with LINC and other similar efforts. She is a worthy recipient of that award.

For those who are interested, Edward L. Weiner did play hockey at the Verizon Center in Washington, D.C., in February, despite being sick for several days before. (See my column in the April 2008 *Virginia Lawyer*, http://www.vsb.org/docs/valawyer_magazine/vl0408_clba.pdf.) Reports indicate he did not score but took several shots to the torso in order to stop the other team from scoring. The event was very successful, netting more than ten thousand dollars for the Recurrent Respiratory Papillomatosis Foundation.

AND, FINALLY, the CLBA will lose a valuable member in Tracy A. Giles, who goes off to serve other professional efforts. He will be missed.