



President's Report

Robert Hooper

One of the priority items to come out of the HLA Members Survey was that the membership wants us to work to improve the public image of lawyers. Indeed, if you search for lawyer quotes, you will have no trouble finding negative characterizations:

- “The trouble with the law is lawyers” (Clarence Darrow)
- “It is better to become a mouse in a cat’s mouth than a man in a lawyer’s hands”(Unknown, Spanish Proverb)
- “The first thing we do, let’s kill all the lawyers” (Henry VI, Part

II, Act IV, William Shakespeare)

I decided to survey the Trustees with respect to their involvement in the community. The result was heart-warming. It produced the following list of organizations to which 10 members of the Board of Trustees have given their time in the last few years:

- Active Lives Campaign (Haldimand Community Centre)
- Ancaster Soccer
- Artaban
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada, Hamilton, & Ontario
- Brant United Way GenNext
- Calvin Christian School of Hamilton
- CCLA
- Child Advocacy Project, Pro Bono Ontario
- Children’s Aid Society of Hamilton
- City of Hamilton Media Advisory Committee
- Courage To Cope
- Dundas Dynamo Basketball
- Emmanuel Christian Reformed Church
- Government of Canada Round Table On Security
- Greater Hamilton Food Share
- Haldimand Soccer
- Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclu-

- sion, Governing Council
- Hamilton Chief of Police Advisory Committee
- Hamilton Justice Education Network
- Hamilton Muslim, Jewish and Arab Dialogue Group
- Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital Community Advisory Board
- Highway Clean-Up
- Holland Christian Homes
- Imagine Canada
- Interval House
- John Howard Society
- Juvenile Diabetes Research
- Live Different
- Living Rock
- Mayor of Burlington Civic Engagement Committee, Inclusivity Committee
- McGillivray Community Homes
- Mission Services of Hamilton
- Muslim Youth of North America Advisory Committee
- North American Spiritual Revival
- Ovarian Cancer of Canada
- Reach Forth
- Redeemer University Women’s Basketball Program
- Sanctuary Ministries
- Settlement and Integration Services Organization
- Shalom Manor
- Special Investigations Unit (SIU)
- St. Augustine’s Basketball Program
- St. Augustine’s Church
- St. Joseph’s Hospital Volunteer Association
- St. Vincent DePaul Society
- Star (Skills Through Activity and

In This Issue

President’s Report.....	1
Executive Director’s Report.....	4
Librarian’s Report.....	6
Bencher News.....	8
“We Will Comply With the Rules”.....	10
Real Estate News.....	14
Family Law News.....	16
Estates and Trusts News.....	18
The Collapse of the Refugee System.....	20
Criminal Law News.....	26
Memory Book Update.....	30
The Benefits of Written Advocacy.....	34
Intellectual Property News.....	36
Classifieds.....	40
Calendar of Events.....	41

continued on page 3



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CONTRIBUTION DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

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- Recreation)
- The Hamilton Arts Council
 - The Meeting House
 - United Way, Burlington Lawyer's Council
 - Walk With Me Canada
 - Wesley Urban Ministries
 - William Voortman Fund

This list shows the hard work and dedication that lawyers put into the communities in which they live, serve, and practice. This is the positive image of the Hamilton Bar.

I would be remiss if I did not also note several major projects spearheaded by members of the HLA.

Mr. Justice Clément Gascon addressed the Hamilton Legal Community at the 16th Annual Sopinka Luncheon. Over the past 16 years, the Sopinka Luncheon has raised over \$2,000,000 for the United Way of Burlington and Hamilton; all money donated by lawyers in this community.

Lawyers in the community recently staged the 2017 Hamilton Lawyers' Show, Witness for the Prosecution. Funds raised by the Lawyers' Show are placed with the Hamilton Community Foundation in the "Lawyers Legacy Fund for Children" which now approaches \$500,000. The fund has given money to programs focusing on children in our community including the John Howard Society, the Autism Society of Ontario, McMaster Children's Hospital, Nelson Youth Centre, YMCA, and the Hamilton Academy of Performing Arts.

Last fall, the HLA's New Lawyers Subcommittee embarked on a Lawyers Who Care campaign and raised in excess of \$12,000.00. They invited three charities to the HLA lounge to discuss the mandate of each group, then donated the money to one of the charities.

As I write this article, we celebrate

Bring Your Child to Work Day. The HLA organized a program for Grade 9 students to show them the inner workings of the Sopinka Courthouse and to hear from lawyers in the community as to what it is like to practice law. Many lawyers volunteered their time to make this day interesting and enjoyable for the students.

I am hopeful I have illustrated that the image of lawyers should be a positive one. We are a group of selfless, humble, generous, and helpful individuals who change our communities every day. The downside is that we sometimes forget to promote positive images of lawyers.

Earlier I noted the line from Henry VI which most people think is a negative comment toward lawyers; in fact, it is positive. It comes from Dick the Butcher who wanted to kill all the lawyers as he thought disrupting law and order would allow him to overthrow the king. A quote that is often used to demean our profession was meant by Shakespeare as a compliment to lawyers and judges who instill and maintain justice in society.

We need to carefully and repeatedly enhance the image of lawyers whenever possible. Don't be afraid to discuss the work you've done, the donation you've made, the free time you've given to a community event. Be positive about your colleagues, have an air of civility, and do not self-deprecate or comment negatively on fellow lawyers. Take pride in your honourable profession and the deeds that you do in the community. Happy Holidays, and best wishes for 2018. ■

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