

Ernie Janzen



Looking Back and Moving Forward

As I approach retirement, I am amazed at how quickly time has passed. I recall so many dreams and aspirations from my teens and early adulthood. Some have been fulfilled in full measure; others have simply proven to be totally unrealistic and beyond my capabilities.

This will be my last opportunity as President of this organization to bend your ear in this column. Time has flown quickly; there are still so many things to accomplish. I appreciate the kindness of our readers who have taken the time to read my ramblings, as writing was never one of my dreams.

I look with satisfaction at so many things that have transpired during the past two years.

Concurrent with my presidency, our long-term Secretary Stan Nicol resigned. Finding a new Secretary/Executive Director, therefore, became the first order of business. Wayne Braid announced himself willing, and has proven himself most able. With his help and endless energy, we have accomplished a great deal over the past two years.

We have been able to progress to a much more amicable relationship with our fellow professionals.

We moved our offices to a more efficient and modern environment. Our

staff members are much appreciating the attractive, air-conditioned offices.

Our profile with various community agencies and legal and government bodies has been enhanced through continuing contact with the appropriate officials.

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As President, I have also been privileged to represent the BC Notaries at the International Union of Latin Notaries (UINL), the pre-eminent world body that meets every three years for discussions relating to international matters affected by our profession. The 2001 meeting was held in Athens, Greece. My wife Agnes and I extended our stay for a few weeks to spend time in that area of the world. I also represented our Society at the US National Notaries Association, and participated in a number of their sessions.

The Notary Foundation of BC is a member of the International Organization of Lawyers Trusts (IOLTA), the group organized as Interest on

Lawyers Trust Accounts Association for North America. BC Notaries belong to the North American group and the Canadian IOLTA group. This worthwhile organization presents a unified body for negotiating interest rates to be earned on trust funds held in Notaries' and lawyers' trust accounts at the various banks. These funds are utilized to fund legal aid and provide grants to many organizations that provide legal assistance to underprivileged groups.

We are making progress in our efforts to gain additional powers to provide more legal services to the public. We are confident that in the long run, the wisdom of allowing non-contentious legal work be done by us as professionals will prevail, and that we will be able to give the public greater access to personal, non-contentious matters such as incorporations and probate.

And so I look back at both my life and my two years as President with a great deal of satisfaction. To my colleagues, I thank you for participating wholeheartedly in a great profession. To our many readers and clients, I thank you for your support, and I solicit your continued support as we Notaries work to provide affordable non-contentious legal services to the people of British Columbia. ▲