

The Rundown Volume 5

Hello,

This is the fifth release of the Rundown, a series of broadcasts aimed at explaining some of what the American Judges Association (AJA), and I as your president, do on behalf of the members of the Association.

I'm writing this on the airplane flying back from the midyear meeting in Fort Myers, Florida, as I wanted to give you my impressions of this important and valuable meeting. The educational program focused on coping with judicial stress and preparing for retirement. If you weren't able to attend the meeting you will be able find the materials online at the conference section of the AJA website: <http://aja.ncsc.dni.us/conferences/>

As valuable as the educational sessions were, what made this midyear meeting so important was the work done by the Executive Committee and board of governors. During the meetings proposals to amend our bylaws and increase our outreach were the focus of attention. The basic structure of the AJA as reflected in our bylaws dates back to the 1950s and is in need of serious change.

Last October, at our annual meeting, the AJA decided to explore making these changes. The first tentative steps towards this change were taken at this midyear meeting. I will be reporting to you in detail about these proposed changes in the next issue of Court Review. Please take a moment when you receive your issue to read the president's column. After, if you have any thoughts about how we can improve the AJA, send them to me and I will pass it on to the appropriate committee.

The Board of Governors also decided that in 2016 the midyear meeting should be in Santa Fe, New Mexico and the annual meeting in Toronto, Canada. Judge Russell Otter, the chair for the Toronto conference, has promised that it will be better than the spectacular conference we have set for October 4-7, 2015 in Seattle.



Of course not everything was education and important work. As those of you who have read the other editions of the rundown know I think there should be time for fun. So, after the conference ended, my wife Karen and I talked Susan and Kevin Burke into renting a car and spending the day on Fort Myers Beach. Of course, being from Michigan, we didn't expect it would be 95 degrees on the beach. Still, by wading into the Gulf of Mexico and with plenty of breaks at different beach bars, we had quite a good time. We ended the day at Nemo's beachfront restaurant watching the sunset. If you're in Fort Myers Beach and have the time I can think of no better way to spend the late afternoon and early evening then by eating their mahi fish tacos, listening to the music and watching the setting sun behind the peer.

If you are a member of the AJA and have not attended one of our conferences I urge you to consider coming to one of our upcoming conferences. We try to be the voice of the judiciary - a task that would be that much easier if you add your voice to ours.

That is it for now. I hope to write again soon. Thanks and be well. Brian