

The Rundown Volume 8

Hello,

This is the eighth 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.

Recently Karen and I had the opportunity to visit Michele and Elliott Zide at their home in Vermont. The visit was not entirely social. As most of you are aware, Elliott is the immediate past president of the AJA, and is in charge of rewriting our bylaws. Those bylaw changes will shape our organization in the future. Elliott and I had a very good discussion about the final draft of the bylaws were emailed to the listserv last week and will be available on the AJA website shortly, so there can be an informed discussion of the changes before the vote of the membership at our annual conference in Seattle.



Rather than discuss bylaws, I want to take a moment and talk about my meeting with Michele. Michele is the president of the American Judges Foundation (AJF) our sister organization. The AJF exists, in part, to provide educational support for the AJA. Some of you have gone to the wonderful fundraisers that occur in conjunction with our annual conference. My personal favorite was in San Diego, where we went for a harbor cruise on the High Spirits (pictured on the left), the sister ship to President Franklin D.

Roosevelt's presidential yacht, Sequoia. We watched the Southern Pacific coast, enjoying not just the views, but the music, food and friends.

This year's AJF event will be at the Seattle Art Museum. Please, if you are going to the conference, think about joining us and our invited guests Seattle's Mayor Ed Murray, Microsoft General Council Mary Snapp, and the Executive Directors and Presidents of both the Washington State Bar Association and the King County Bar Association. This event will offer the opportunity to stroll among great art while having conversations with interesting people. You can sign up now for the fundraiser by going to this link:

<http://amjudges.org/conferences/2015Annual/AJF-Fundraiser-Reception.html>.

The money raised at these fundraisers is used to support AJA educational functions such as the publication of our white papers. Recently, the success of the fundraiser allowed the AJF to create the Charles Whitebread Chair, which funds the annual lecture at our conference on Supreme Court decisions. The Whitebread lecture is currently presented by Erwin Chemerinsky. As anyone who has attended a lecture by Professor Chemerinsky knows, the lecture is both very informative and quite entertaining.

I want to return to my conversation with Michele. She told me that the AJF has completely revised its bylaws and embarked upon a major campaign to raise money and increase its

membership. She also said the AJF needs help in accomplishing these ambitious goals. She then asked me if I was in AJF member. I responded that I thought I was as I had gone to many AJF for events, but that I wasn't certain. It turns out I was not. Going to those fundraisers did not make me a member of the AJF. So, under her watchful eye I registered as a member of the AJF. Now I ask you, are you a member of the AJF? If not, why not take the time to go to this link and join the AJF: <https://apps.ncsc.org/ajfcontribution/>. All contributions to the AJF are tax-deductible, and more importantly the money will be used to help make us all better judges.



As I said in the beginning the trip wasn't entirely social, but as I write this latest issue of the rundown, I am looking out the window at Elliott and Michele's backyard with Stratton Mountain rising in the background (pictured to the left). It is a picture-perfect late summer day and I am about to end this my conversation with you so that Karen and I can go for a walk down by the pond.

Tomorrow we are all driving down to New York City to see the new Broadway play Hamilton.

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

P.S. If you have any thoughts or comments, please feel free to contact me at JudgeMackenzie@justicespeakersinstitute.com.