



New York State Bar Association

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To: Executive Committee
From: Thomas E. Myers
Re: Vice-President's Report - Fifth Judicial District
Date: June 19, 2012

A. Introduction

"Each such Vice-President shall visit the various local bar associations within the judicial district and federations of such bar associations on frequent appropriate occasions, shall arrange meetings for the President with representatives of such local bar associations within the Vice-President's judicial district, and shall perform such other acts within the judicial district on behalf of the President as the President shall specifically require." NYSBA Bylaws, Art IV, § 3C (excerpt).

B. Description of Fifth Judicial District, its Local and Specialty Bar Associations

The Fifth Judicial District consists of six counties in Central New York (Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Oneida, Onondaga and Oswego). Approximately 45% of the population is located in the Syracuse area in Onondaga County; Oneida County has the second largest population and includes the Cities of Rome and Utica. The county seats for Onondaga, Oneida, Herkimer, and Jefferson Counties are readily accessed by car on the I-81 and I-90 axis. For Lewis and Oswego Counties, state highways off the I-81 and I-90 axis lead to Lowville and Oswego. In good weather, you can travel by car from one end of the District to the other in approximately three hours. In the winter, there are days when one cannot, and should not try to, travel to places in the District.

The county bar association in Onondaga County has @1500 members; the Oneida County Bar Association has @ 340 members. Each of these county bars has an Executive Director, an active Board of Directors, a website, a platform for pro bono services, a high school mock trial competition, a classroom speakers' program, a periodic newsletter, and a young lawyers committee. Each is an accredited CLE provider with extensive CLE programming, and each has recently started periodic, "Happy Hour", get togethers. Under local bylaws, the NYSBA Fifth District Vice-President is ex officio, a nonvoting member of the Onondaga County Bar Association Board of Directors in Syracuse.

In the other four counties (Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis and Oswego), the county bar associations have no employees. Volunteer attorneys and judges handle all county bar association work in these four counties. Oswego County with @144 members includes the Cities of Fulton and Oswego; Jefferson County with @100 members includes the City of Watertown. Herkimer County and Lewis County have small populations and relatively few resident attorneys and judges. The six county bar associations in the District have diverse selection procedures for the NYSBA House of Delegates. Thus, not all county bar leaders in the District are members of the House of Delegates.

The Fifth District has two women's bar associations, the Central New York Women's Bar Association and the Mid-York Women's Bar Association. The District also has several, active, specialty bar associations, namely, the CNY Bankruptcy Court Bar Association, a Catholic Lawyers Guild in Syracuse, the NDNY Federal Court Bar Association, the Rome Bar Association, and active subgroups of the NYS Academy of Trial Lawyers and the NYS Trial Lawyers Association.

C. 2012 Events

Without listing innumerable CLE programs, pro bono activities, and board/committee meetings, the following are some significant local bar association events in the Fifth Judicial District during 2012:

January 3:	Memorial Service: Oneida County Bar Association, Utica.
January 19:	Memorial Service: Onondaga County Bar Association, Syracuse.
February 9:	Reception for new NDNY Judges and Magistrates, Syracuse (multiple joint sponsors).
February 17:	Founders Day: Oneida County Bar Association, Utica.
April 5:	Finals: Onondaga County Mock Trial Competition: Onondaga County Courthouse, Syracuse. Hon. Deborah Karalunas, JSC, presided; winner = Jamesville-DeWitt High School (17 high schools from Onondaga and Madison Counties participated during six weeks of competition).

- April 19: Finals: Oneida/Herkimer/Madison County Mock Trial Competition; Alexander Pirnia US Courthouse, Utica. US District Judge David N. Hurd presided; winner = New Hartford High School (8 high schools from the three counties participated during six weeks of competition).
- April 23: Admission Ceremony: Jefferson County Bar Association, Black River Valley Club, Watertown (sponsored by NDNY Federal Court Bar Association).
- April 28: Regional Mock Trial Competition: Oneida County Courthouse; Hon. Daniel Wilson, Rome City Court, presided; winner = Jamesville-Dewitt High School (125 students from 7 counties participated).
- May 1: Law Day: Oneida County, Utica. Hugh R. Jones Award to Gail N. Uebelhoer, Esq.
- May 3: Law Day: Onondaga County, Syracuse, Liberty Bell Award to Ms. Agnes McCrea.
- May 4: Law Day: Oswego County Public Safety Center, Oswego.
- May 16: Catholic Lawyers Guild Spring Luncheon, Genesee Inn, Syracuse.
- May 16: Elder Law Fair, Onondaga County Bar Association, OnCenter, Syracuse.
- May 22: Law Day Luncheon: Jefferson County Bar Association, Black River Valley Club, Watertown (comparative law presentation on military court procedures).
- June 5: Reception for Hon. Erin P. Gall JSC and Hon. Patrick F. MacRae, JSC, Oneida County Bar Association, Utica.
- June 8: Tri-County CLE/Golf Program – Turning Stone Resort with luncheon meeting of District county bar leaders.
- June 11: Summer Dinner Meeting, Oswego County Bar Association, Oswego Country Club.

- June 14: Oneida County Courthouse Re-Dedication Ceremonies (100 years), Oneida County Bar Association, Utica (cosponsored by NYSBA Trial Lawyers).
- June 21: Annual Reception for Newly-Admitted Attorneys in Fifth District, Community Foundation, Syracuse (multiple joint sponsors including NYSBA Young Lawyers Section).
- August 15: Annual Summer Bar Outing: Jefferson County Bar Association, Café Mira, Adams, NY
- August 16: 11th Annual Daniel F. Matthews Golf Outing, Pompey Country Club – all proceeds to Onondaga County Bar Association VLP pro bono program.
- August 17: Annual Golf Outing, Lewis County Bar Association, Turin Highlands Country Club, Turin, NY.
- September 7: End of Summer Golf Outing, Oneida County Bar Association, Stockbridge Golf and Country Club, New Hartford.
- September 20: 50 Year Lawyers Luncheon, Onondaga County Bar Association, Drumlins Country Club, Dewitt.
- October 3: Red Mass, Catholic Lawyers Guild, Cathedral, Syracuse (12:10 pm).
- October 3: Arbitrator Training: Fifth Judicial District Part 137 Fee Arbitration Program, Onondaga County Courthouse, Syracuse with video feed to Oneida County Courthouse, Utica.
- October ____: Annual Clambake, Oswego County Bar Association Ancient Order of the Hibernians, Oswego.
- October 18: 137th Annual Dinner, Onondaga County Bar Association, The Links Country Club, East Syracuse.
- December 7: Annual Holiday Dinner: Oswego County Bar Association, The Foundry, Oswego.
- December 11: Annual Holiday Party: Oneida County Bar Association, Ft. Schuyler Club, Utica.

On June 8, 2012, county bar presidents in the District, and their 2013 successors, were invited to an informal luncheon meeting at the Turning Stone Resort following a joint CLE program. Onondaga President Mary John and Oneida Vice President Joseph DeTraglia attended with their Executive Directors, Jeff Unaitis and Diane Davis. The following topics were discussed:

1. Oneida County's plan to organize a U.S. Supreme Court admission trip;
2. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's visit to Cooperstown on August 11, 2012;
3. arbitrator recruitment and training for the Fifth Judicial District/Onondaga County Bar Association Part 137 Fee Arbitration Program;
4. use of a single, uniform questionnaire by all bar associations reviewing judicial candidates for Supreme Court Justice in the District;
5. county bar association cooperation in joint CLE programming; and
6. regional cooperation in connection with the NYSBA Report on Quality Mandated Representation approved by the HOD in March 2012.

SUMMARY

1. Participation in activities and events organized by county and specialty bar associations in the Fifth Judicial District continues to provide professionally enriching experiences for attorneys in Central New York;
2. The NYSBA Vice President can support these local activities by attending, and encouraging other attorneys and judges to attend, these local events and by facilitating regional communications, as well as promoting NYSBA activities and initiatives;
3. Despite geographic separation, unique historical missions, and primarily local focus, there are some topics of common interest for local and specialty bar associations in the Fifth District, e.g. joint CLE programming, the District wide fee arbitration program, etc.; and
4. NYSBA and the NYSBA District Vice President should respect the independence and unique mission of local and specialty bar associations.