

Message from the Outgoing Chair



The older I get, the more often I am reminded how “time flies.” It truly seems like just last week (it was really June of 2011) that I settled into my role as Chair-elect of the Section and just yesterday (it was really June of 2012) that I took over as Chair. To say that even now, as another year has gone by and my term has come to an end, the time has gone by in a flash is an

understatement.

Of course, a big reason for this has been the people I have been fortunate enough to work with as Chair. Whether Past Chairs Al Feliu, Mairead Connor, Don Sapir and many others; our new Chair Jon Ben-Asher; the other officers this past year (Ruth Raisfeld and Willis Goldsmith); our Executive Committee members; or, perhaps most importantly, our NYSBA Liaison Beth Gould, to a person they were endlessly supportive, immensely helpful, and a pleasure to work with. From this vantage point, I have been constantly reminded of the collegiality that marks our Section.

On a more substantive note, I firmly believe the Section had yet another outstanding year. We hosted

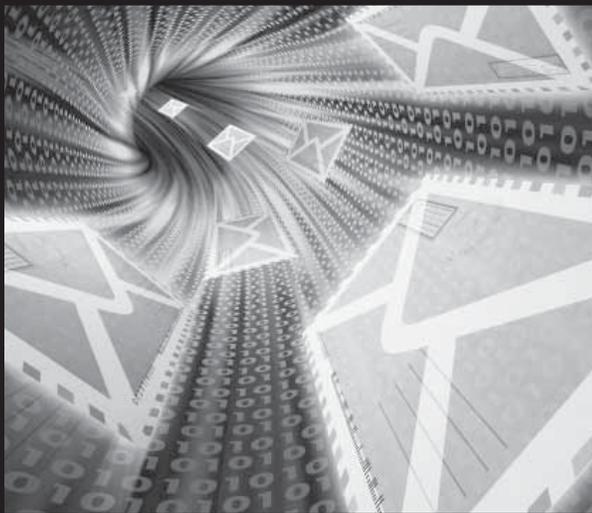
very successful CLE programs both in conjunction with our Fall Meeting and the Bar’s Annual Meeting, as well as several stand-alone programs. We continue to make strides with respect to Committee activities. We will soon have completed a Handbook for new Committee Chairs. Our mentoring program has had a great start and we enter our second year with a new group of mentors and mentees. And our Diversity Initiatives are really “paying off,” not only in terms of NYSBA recognition, but far more importantly in the addition of new members from very diverse backgrounds, especially on our Executive Committee.

I suspect like most Chairs at the end of their terms, I reach this point with mixed emotions. In many ways, I am sorry to see this time come to an end. But at the same time I am excited about the promise that accompanies the next wave of leadership as it takes over.

In closing, my thanks to all who helped me this past year (those named above and so many others), and “best wishes” to Jon, Willis, Ron Dunn, and Sheryl Galler as they prepare to take the Section to even greater heights.

John Gaal

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