

Comments from the Chair

FALL 2005

by Jennifer Conkie

I am very excited to report that our third year got off to an excellent start with the Annual Launch Event on September 14, 2005. This popular gathering was held at the Law Courts Inn again, as an "after work" wine and appetizers event, with live jazz music and a witty, wise presentation by novelist and senior lawyer Anne Shields on "The Getting and Giving of Advice". Our vice-Chair, Stella Frame, chaired the evening, with help from our Secretary, Debra van Ginkel, and the great members of the Events Planning committee, without whom none of these events would be possible.

This year, the Executive is proud to announce our first Signature Event, a luncheon to be held January 27, 2006 at the Fairmont Waterfront Hotel, featuring the Rt. Hon. Beverley McLachlin, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. She will speak to us on the subject of "Why We Need Women in Law". The luncheon will be followed by a dessert buffet and reception with the Chief Justice. It is sold out, with 360 people attending.

Thanks to the hardworking committee for this event, co-chaired by Carol-Anne Finch Noyes and Valerie Shapiro, for handling planning and logistics for this event.

I have posted a weekly informal report on the WLF Listserv all Fall, discussing subjects ranging from the activities of the BC Forum, to the formation and early work of the National Forum, to a look at our neighbours to the south, and what the ABA Commission on Women is doing and some of the women leaders there. I have shared news about award recipients, such as this year's winner of the Tarnopolsky Award for human rights work, and have put out the call for QC nominations. Reporting on the address I gave at a recent CLE on "Women in Litigation", I sparked quite a vibrant conversation on the Listserv among many of our members, and I promise to return to that theme in the coming months of my term.

Get Connected!

Forum membership is open to CBA members only. For membership information call the CBABC office at 604-687-3404 or visit the CBABC website for a Section enrolment form.

We hope you'll make the Forum your meeting place of choice. Ask your friends to join and we'll see you in the coming months.

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Mentoring Committee

The Mentoring Program has continued with a successful second half of the year. There were 22 new mentoring pairs matched in 2005 in Vancouver as well as 5 new mentoring pairs in Victoria.

A common theme amongst our mentees is the request for mentoring on the issue of balancing motherhood and practicing law. In order to address this need, the Mentoring Committee decided to hold a series of workshops on this issue.

Our first half-day workshop was held in June and titled "From Burn-out to Balance" with Lisa Martin, the author of "Briefcase Moms", as our keynote speaker. A copy of Lisa's book was included with the workshop. Lisa's talk was followed by an excellent panel of 3 senior lawyers who talked about how they managed to juggle a legal career with parenting. The next portion of the workshop was focused on defining success as women and lawyers, presented by Linda Robertson. The workshop was very well received.

On September 27th, we once again held our popular event "Ten Hot Tips From Ten Hot Mentors". This evening was a huge success, with 40 women attending. Ten senior women lawyers shared some of their personal stories as well as excellent "tips", focusing on networking or any other topic they wished to discuss. The ten mentors had insightful and often humorous advice for all of the women lawyers present that evening. There was lots of wonderful collegiality and much fun. The evening was very inspiring for everyone who attended.

On November 10th, we held the second workshop in our work-life balance series. Linda Robertson repeated the workshop she gave on "Defining Success as Lawyers and as Women". Attendance was good, once again, and participants left with a wealth of information from Linda, and thirsty for more.

On November 29, we held our Celebration evening for our mentoring pairs at the Sutton Place Hotel, to celebrate the end of another great year of mentoring. We had a great turnout of women, including some women who were interested in participating in the Mentoring Program in the coming year. We invited a number of the mentoring pairs to talk about their mentoring relationship, what works for them and how they have benefited. Six women talked about the enormous benefits that each received from the mentoring relationship, both from the mentee's perspective as well as the mentor's perspective. The event was also a great opportunity to make new connections and to connect with old friends.

The Mentoring Committee will be matching new pairs for 2006 in December, with the Orientation for the new mentoring pairs to take place early in the New Year. It has been a successful second year for our Mentoring Program, with many well attended events.

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Education Committee

The June 2005 Leadership Luncheon was a successful conclusion to the education committee's trilogy of workshops including Networking Skills by Susan Van Dyke, Van Dyke Marketing & Communications; Personal Marketing Plans by Allison Wolf, Marketing Manager at Harper Grey Easton, and Communication Strengths for the Practice of Law facilitated by Gerrie Waugh from Capilano College.

For the June luncheon, our feature speaker was Joan Brockman, lawyer, author of *Gender in the Legal Profession: Fitting or Breaking the Mould* (UBC Press, 2001), and a faculty member in the School of Criminology at SFU. Joan's topic, "A Thick Layer of Men?" was based on surveys she conducted of women and men lawyers on issues of bias in the legal profession in 1990-1992 in B.C. and Alberta and expanded in Alberta in 2003. She left all attending with provocative thoughts on women's progress in the legal profession.

For its premiere event, the Education Committee is currently planning for a Professional Development Program for women lawyers on Friday, April 28, 2006. The working theme is "Success in the Practice of Law". The morning sessions will feature success stories from women in a variety of legal practices. After a networking luncheon, the afternoon sessions will be divided into "tracks" for participants. Topics for the track sessions will

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include: Case File/Time Management, Personal Finance for Women Lawyers, Practice Management, Marketing Your Practice Niche, and Alternative Career Paths.

If you have any topic ideas or other suggestions for the education committee, please contact Yuki Matsuno at 604-738-1392. We welcome all suggestions.

Events Committee

This has been a particularly active and successful committee of the WLF this year. On June 23, 2005, we held our 2005 AGM of the WLF and A Summertime Soiree at the Law Courts Inn. There was great food, live jazz, door prizes, no-host bar and lots of networking and good will. We were fortunate to have as our keynote speaker and guest of honour, Sue Parish, Q.C. who spoke to us with humour and eloquence on the topic of ambition.

We've had two fantastic potlucks this year, which are proving to be a big hit. The potlucks are purely social events designed to allow our members to become better acquainted, exchange laughs, stories, ideas and share experiences about the practice of law. The Spring Potluck Networking Event was held in early June 2005 and generously hosted by now Madam Justice Miriam Gropper. The theme was Greek and it was very well attended and enjoyed by all. We'd also like to thank Watson Goepel Malady for their generous contribution to this event.

Our Fall Potluck Networking Event was held October 20, 2005 at Jennifer Conkie's lovely home with great success. The theme this time was Fall Harvest with lots of yummy food, wine and great company.

Our Spring 2006 Potluck will take place at Kerry-Lynne Findlay's place. Stay tuned for further information.

As always, the Events Planning Committee would be delighted to have new committee members join us. Please contact Valerie Shapiro or Michelle Pockey if you are interested in joining our fun planning team!

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Michelle Pockey, Co-Chair

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Communications Committee

The Communications Committee has set some exciting goals for this year – ones that, when achieved, will truly highlight the value and effectiveness of this vital subsection.

We are printing a brochure which will be for wide distribution at the luncheon with Chief Justice McLachlin in January and at all future major WLF events.

We are creating a framework for the proper management of our Listserv which includes adopting a usage protocol, circulating a user-friendly version of it to our members, sending out a series of usage tips to our subscribers, posting topics of discussion to the Listserv to increase the participation of subscribers, and having a Listserv monitor in place to follow closely the operation of the Listserv.

Our most challenging and potentially rewarding goal for this year is to develop effective strategies for connecting with our members outside the lower mainland, as well as increasing significantly the number of members from firms outside of the lower mainland. We want to identify what are the needs of those members and potential members and meet those needs so that the WLF can fulfill its purpose throughout this diverse province.

If you have any thoughts as to how this committee and the WLF as a whole can best serve its members and enrol new ones, please contact Angiola De Stefanis with your valuable ideas.

Angiola De Stefanis, Chair

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What is a "listserv"? A listserv is an automatic mailing list server. When e-mail is addressed to a listserv mailing list, it is automatically broadcast to everyone on the list. The result is similar to a newsgroup or forum, except that messages are transmitted as e-mail and are therefore available only to individuals on the list. Source: www.webopedia.com

Marketing Committee

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The marketing committee operates with a two-fold mandate: promotion (both of events hosted by WLF and of the mission statement of the WLF) and building a database of firms/companies willing to sponsor events.

The committee maintains a spreadsheet of firms/companies which have donated in kind or cash to various WLF events. We would like to build on this database to include more non legal sponsors such as hotels, spas and popular stores, so that door prizes at events like the Launch and the Spring Finale are 100% donated. Our legal sponsors are Counsel Network, CBA, and various law firms (in kind and cash).

We are now 5 members strong and have appointed a UBC liaison to promote the WLF and its events on campus. The new committee is looking forward to achieving many exciting goals this year:

Promotional Materials: Inventory promotional materials (including stationery, bookmarks etc.) and keep in one place; and brainstorm other formats of promotional materials.

Sponsors: Grow the database of sponsors and streamline thank you letter and promotional letter process.

Advertising of Events: Streamline notice process so that all notices are drafted and vetted and sent out by Marketing and Communications; and build list of legal and other publications with deadlines and advertising costs for the purposes of promoting events hosted by WLF.

Increasing Membership: 4-tier pricing for events (including options for non-CBA and non-WLF members); raise profile of WLF on UBC campus; keep costs down of WLF events.

Request For Boardrooms

Do you have an available boardroom? Please contact [Michelle](#) or [Valerie](#) if your firm can volunteer boardroom space for education or networking events.

We welcome and encourage women lawyers into our membership. Please feel free to contact:

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