



PBA President
Gretchen A. Mundorff

The fact that we are turning away 50 percent of those who qualify for legal services in Pennsylvania is unacceptable and should make all of us feel ill.

Can you imagine what an impact we could have if every PBA member undertook one new pro bono case this year? We have the power as a community of lawyers to change lives.

Operation Warm Heart

It's snowing as I write this column. The National Weather Service has issued a severe winter storm warning, which seems to be the weather du jour for most of January for those of us who make our homes in the beautiful Laurel Highlands. The snow is falling in big flakes now and coming down diagonally on strong gusts of wind. There is a bitter, bone-chilling cold in the air, but as I sit here looking out I am not the least bit cold. In fact, I am feeling warm and toasty all over and have an especially warm feeling in my heart. I just returned from my local Rotary Club meeting, during which we discussed our successful Operation Warm campaign benefiting many local families in need through the purchase and distribution of new winter coats and accessories. During the meeting we passed around thank-you notes we had received from appreciative families. One will remain indelibly etched on my mind and is what is making me feel so cozy warm. A woman wrote that because of Operation Warm, her children no longer have to shiver with cold while waiting for the school bus this winter. The thought of children without appropriate warm winter clothing shivering at a school bus stop makes me feel ill.

Driving back to my office from the Rotary meeting, I thought about all the groups in my community that help provide for the needs of those who are less fortunate. There is our local food bank, which provides physical nourishment. And there are the many service clubs such as Rotary that provide everything from food and clothing to service dogs for the blind, baby layettes and support services for teen mothers, counseling services for families in crisis and tutoring services for at-risk students. I thought about the local church group that has opened a youth center for the children of working parents

who have no adult at home at the end of the school day. My mind turned to my own women's group at my church, which provides meals for families in need after the funeral of a loved one. I felt warm knowing that I live in a community of caring people who provide not only for the physical needs of those less fortunate but for their mental and emotional health as well. I was moved by the knowledge that many of these community volunteers have no professional expertise and obtain no career advancement or personal gain from their volunteer work other than the self-satisfaction that they have helped someone. These volunteers come from all walks of life. They are young. They are old. They are employed. They are retired. They are a community of people with warm hearts helping other people.

We in the organized bar are a community of lawyers who help people. But unlike the non-lawyer volunteers who are working in every community to make life better for those less fortunate, we possess special knowledge and unique skill sets that enable us to address the legal needs of the poor in our communities. Because of our knowledge, training and expertise, we have the ability to make such a difference in people's lives. Indeed, the impact that we can make as volunteer lawyers can be felt for a lifetime by those we help. It occurred to me that just as we need to provide warm clothing for people to sustain their physical health, we as lawyers need to clothe people with access to justice by providing needed legal services. Can you imagine how naked the poor of our communities feel when they cannot obtain needed legal services and have no access to justice? I imagine that they feel just as disenfranchised, invisible and cold as the child who shivers at a school bus stop without the appropriate warm winter clothing.

→ page 8

→ from page 2

The good news is that we, as a community of lawyers with warm hearts, have the capability to do something about the plight of the poor in our communities and to address their legal needs. The need is so great. I have been told by our legal services providers across Pennsylvania that for every two persons who apply and qualify for legal services, one will be denied those services due to a lack of resources (people) to provide the necessary legal services to them. The fact that we are turning away 50 percent of those who qualify for legal services in Pennsylvania is unacceptable and should make all of us feel ill.

The PBA has been involved in providing pro bono services to our communities in a myriad of ways for a long time. For example, through our Legal Assistance for Military Personnel Program (LAMP), the PBA has been answering the call of our service members and veterans since 2002, to date helping more than 2,000 individuals and families at no cost to those requesting aid. The Wills for Heroes Program, an outreach of the PBA Young Lawyers Division supported by the PBA Pro Bono Office, has produced wills, living wills and powers of attorney for thousands of first responders across the state. In Pennsylvania, acknowledged as the leading state in the country for this effort, there was a Wills for Heroes Program event taking place somewhere during every weekend last fall.

The PBA Board of Governors requires that each PBA governor work on at least one new pro bono case each bar year and certify that he or she has done so. These and other programs like them that are operating at the county level are wonderful, but they are not enough, and we all need to do more. That is why I have made pro bono work one of my core presidential initiatives this bar year, and I have requested that each member of our House of Delegates certify to the PBA that he or she has worked on at least one new pro bono case during this bar year. I am happy to report that our delegates have heeded the call to service and are providing pro bono legal services to the poor and certifying that they have done

so. I have also challenged county bar leaders to create pro bono service programs and projects in their own counties. Many have done so, and I applaud their efforts.

Now I am asking each one of you to undertake at least one new pro bono case during this bar year and to verify on the PBA certification form that you have done so. You can obtain a certification form from our PBA website, www.pabar.org, or by calling our PBA pro bono coordinator, David Trevasik, at PBA headquarters, 1-800-932-0311, Ext. 2236.

On Jan. 7, Chief Justice of Pennsylvania Ronald D. Castille joined with me and the PBA in calling upon the state's 70,000 attorneys to volunteer more of their time and money to help ensure that Pennsylvanians with limited financial means receive needed civil legal representation. In noting that the commonwealth is "dealing with a civil legal aid crisis," the chief justice reminded us of our professional obligation to provide pro bono service and urged our financial support of local and statewide civil legal aid programs. Certainly the time has never been more critical for lawyers to provide pro bono legal services to the poor and underserved of our commonwealth. I am proud to have Chief Justice Castille join in the call for all PBA members and all Pennsylvania lawyers to embrace this opportunity to do more to help those less fortunate.

Can you imagine what an impact we could have if every PBA member undertook one new pro bono case this year? We have the power as a community of lawyers to change lives. Please join us in providing necessary legal services to the poor who simply cannot afford to retain a lawyer and will be denied basic access to justice without your help. Together we can make such a difference in the lives of so many, one lawyer at a time, one warm heart at a time. ♦



Gretchen A. Mundorff
PBA President



Executive Editor, **Marcy Carey Mallory**
Editorial Director, **Donald C. Sarvey**
Editor, **Geoffrey S. Yuda**
People Editor, **Patricia M. Graybill**

Contributing Writers

Gertrude Block; Amy Kenn; David J. Milkstein, Esq.; Nevin J. Mindlin; Gretchen A. Mundorff, Esq.; David L. Narkiewicz, Esq.; Barry M. Simpson, Esq.; Victoria White, Esq.; Thomas G. Wilkinson, Esq.

Design: Kelly Vanek

Cassidy Communications, Inc.; Bethlehem, Pa.

Display Advertising: SAGE Publications, 415 Horsham Road, Horsham, Pa. 19044; Phone & Fax: (267) 282-5468; Mobile: (215) 939-7842; e-mail: diane.diamond@sagepub.com

Classified Advertising: Sarah Germak, 1-800-932-0311; Fax (717) 238-2342; Sarah.Germak@pabar.org.

Views expressed in *The Pennsylvania Lawyer* do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the Pennsylvania Bar Association. The appearance of a product advertisement herein does not constitute an endorsement of the product by the Pennsylvania Bar Association. *The Pennsylvania Lawyer* welcomes editorial submissions from members of the bar. Letters to editor from readers on all topics concerning the legal profession are welcome. The publisher reserves the right to select letters to be published. Letters may be edited for length and style. Editorial items and correspondence should be mailed to the Pennsylvania Bar Association, 100 South Street, P.O. Box 186, Harrisburg, Pa. 17108-0186. Telephone 1-800-932-0311. E-mail address: editor@pabar.org. Unsolicited manuscripts will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.

The Pennsylvania Lawyer is distributed to all PBA members as a membership benefit. Subscriptions are \$30. To join the PBA, call 1-800-932-0311. *The Pennsylvania Lawyer* is underwritten in part by the Pennsylvania Insurance Fund.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

President: Gretchen A. Mundorff, Esq.

President-elect: Matthew J. Creme Jr., Esq.

Vice President: Thomas G. Wilkinson Jr., Esq.

Immediate Past President: Clifford E. Haines, Esq.

Chair, House of Delegates: Dana Baiocco, Esq.

Secretary: Penina K. Lieber, Esq.

Treasurer: Francis X. O'Connor, Esq.

Chair, Young Lawyers Division: Lisa M. B. Woodburn, Esq.

Chair-elect, Young Lawyers Division: Hope Guy, Esq.

Immediate Past Chair, Young Lawyers Division: Timothy S. Burns, Esq.

ZONE GOVERNORS

At Large: Emmanuel O. Iheukwumere, Esq., Philadelphia (215) 854-4055;

Cheryl L. Young, Esq., Norristown (610) 313-1671

Unit County: Jessie L. Smith, Esq., Harrisburg (717) 214-3447

Zone 1: Audrey C. Talley, Esq., Philadelphia (215) 988-2719

Zone 2: William Z. Scott Jr., Esq., Lehigh Valley (484) 895-2306

Zone 3: Sam A. Austin, Esq., York (717) 846-2246

Zone 4: Charles F. Greevy III, Esq., Wilkamsport (570) 320-7100

Zone 5: David E. Schwager, Esq., Wilkes-Barre (570) 824-3511

Zone 6: Anne N. John, Esq., Uniontown (724) 438-8560

Zone 7: James P. Miller, Esq., Smethport (814) 887-5633

Zone 8: John J. Bagnato, Esq., Johnstown (814) 536-0735

Zone 9: William H. Pugh V, Esq., Norristown (610) 275-2000

Zone 10: Alberta Beardsley, Esq., Kittanning

Zone 11: Ann B. Wood, Esq., Clearfield (814) 765-5537

Zone 12: Hal D. Coffey, Esq., Pittsburgh (412) 553-6300

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Chair: Stephanie F. Latimore, Esq.; **Vice Chair:** David L. Narkiewicz, Esq.; **Members:** William L. Arbuckle III, Esq.; Karen M. Balaban, Esq.; Thomas L. Cooper, Esq.; Chester C. Corse, Esq.; Joseph A. Curcillo III, Esq.; Frederick N. Egler Jr., Esq.; John W. Flannery, Esq.; Jeanette Hsin Ho, Esq.; Hon. Thomas King Kistler; Lawrence B. Mansfield, Esq.; Seth A. Mendelsohn, Esq.; Hon. Robert J. Shenkin; Karen Jackson Vaughn, Esq.; Thomas G. Wilkinson Jr., Esq.; **Board of Governors Liaison:** Lisa M. B. Woodburn, Esq.

PBA Staff — Executive Director: Barry M. Simpson, Esq.; **Deputy Executive Director:** Francis J. O'Rourke; **Communications Director:** Marcy Carey Mallory; **Controller:** Lisa L. Hogan, C.P.A.; **County Bar Services Director:** Nicole R. Antos, Esq.; **Legislative Director:** Nevin J. Mindlin; **Management Information Systems Director:** Alan Trosky; **Meetings Director:** Wendy Loranzo; **Member Services Director:** Elizabeth A. Kramer