It is mid-September as I drive along and realize that my due date for this article passed last week. So I must stop at a roadside rest area and write this, or else either The Pennsylvania Lawyer magazine will have a blank page or Executive Director Barry Simpson will have to write two columns!

I have been on the road a good bit. Here are some recent highlights of various PBA activities:

• Outgoing Chair Ken Milner put on a great conference for the Solo and Small Firm Practice Section. … Co-chairs Sharon Lopez and Mike McDonald headed a Membership Development Committee retreat that brought up many new ideas. … I was pleased to attend a retirement dinner for Gerry Lawrence as he finished his term on the Disciplinary Board.

• The PBA executive officers attended the ABA’s 2014 Annual Meeting in Boston, getting together with bar leaders from across the country, including those of the Mid-Atlantic Conference of Bar Associations.

• I was privileged to present a national Law-Related Education Teacher of the Year Award from the American Lawyers Alliance to Andrew G. Merritt, a teacher at State College Area High School who has some great ideas for bringing history and government to life for his students.

• In early August, the PBA Young Lawyers Division held their annual Summer Meeting/ New Admittee Conference at Toftrees in State College. YLD Chair Lars Anderson continued the tradition of good, thought-provoking sessions. … Wyoming County welcomed me to their bar lunch to talk about what the PBA is doing. Thanks to Kelly Carrubba and Thomas Daniels for the invitation to address their gathering. … And, as I write this, the PBA Zone 5 President’s Dinner is coming up in a couple of days, followed by the Mid-Atlantic Conference of Bar Associations’ meeting beginning Oct. 1.

• Finally, we have completed the details for the 2015 Midyear Meeting in Jamaica at the beautiful Hilton Rose Hall Resort. We’ve sharpened our pencils and have a great value program for you. And a plus: You won’t have to travel on Super Bowl Sunday, as the Jan. 27-31 meeting ends on Saturday.

As I noted in my last column, the summer is for planning and putting final touches on programs. Your elected leadership and staff have met every two weeks by conference call and a number of times in person to plan and polish.

The veterans’ initiative is really coming together. Originally, you will recall, it was to be an extension of the great YLD “Wills for Heroes” program. But so many of you said that you wanted to participate but were not comfortable doing wills and asked if we could accommodate you. So we put our heads together and said we could. An extended program has been developed to complement the “Wills for Heroes” model and provide a way to honor those brave men and women who have served our country.

We now have a dual approach to serve the vets who have served us. The first is through “Wills for Heroes,” so well run by our young lawyers. The second is through our new “Lawyers Saluting Veterans” program. In this new initiative, find your own niche and fill it by choosing what service you are able to provide for a veteran. It might be as simple as writing a letter or looking over a lease or other legal form that is confusing to him or her. Or maybe you
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according to past readership surveys of PBA member publications, the “People” column is consistently one of our most read. If you’re a PBA member and you want the legal community to know about your appointment, promotion, recent speaking event or other law-related news, why not submit it for consideration as a “People” item?

The most frequent types of “People” announcements we run are for appointments/elections, awards/honors, being published, firm moves and speaking engagements. We do not run prospective notices, particularly for speaking or meeting events, as these are subject to change, and we do not include lawyer “best of” announcements. Given the PBA’s large member base, we also monitor for how frequently individuals are listed in the column. Photos are welcome, black and white or color. If provided electronically, photos should be high resolution, minimum 300 DPI (dots per inch).

Email “People” column notices to editor@pabar.org or mail to the Pennsylvania Bar Association, Attn: People, People Column, 100 South St., P.O. Box 186, Harrisburg, Pa. 17108-0186.

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have the time and ability to help in a more substantial way. Be creative, then let us know about it. I call upon each of you to volunteer for this “mission.”

We only require acknowledgment of malpractice insurance and a little other information for you to become part of this program. The PBA will provide sign-up sheets. Staff will compile the information you report on the type of project or projects done and the time given and will provide a nice certificate for you to place in your office to let others know that you are proud to do your part in saluting a veteran. (Staff has produced some great artwork for us!) We will also recognize you in our publications with a list of all who volunteer their efforts.

What better way to express our gratitude to the veterans of our armed forces than to do something good, something really meaningful for them? Yes, it will cost you some time out of your day, and yes, you will lose some billable hours. But think about where you would be if others had not put their lives on hold for years, had not put themselves in harm’s way for us.

Do you want to feel good about yourself? Do you want to make someone else feel good? Do you want to say thank you in a very meaningful way to someone who doesn’t ask for thanks but who deserves it?

Let your initiative inspire others! Sign up. Salute a veteran. Do your part to make the PBA the national leader in providing legal services to our vets.

Francis X. O’Connor
PBA President