Pro Bono Week 2013

Governor Tom Corbett and both houses of the General Assembly have again proclaimed the last week in October as “Pro Bono Week in Pennsylvania”. Pro Bono Week is a nation-wide effort to highlight the difference pro bono lawyers make in their communities, recruit more pro bono lawyers and acknowledge the partnerships that form the basis for many of the private bar’s successful pro bono efforts.

The American Bar Association National Pro Bono Week celebration is intended to have a local focus and highlight and celebrate the good work of attorneys to address those needs in their individual communities. Goals for the celebration include:

- Recruiting more pro bono participants,
- Increasing legal services to poor and vulnerable people,
- Mobilizing community support for pro bono and legal services,
- Fostering collaborative relationships – which are key in Dauphin County with MidPenn Legal Services, other legal service programs, the Dauphin County Bar Association, the members of the bench, the local law schools, the Paralegal Association, government programs and our elected officials, and
- Recognizing your pro bono efforts!

Pennsylvania and Dauphin County are recognized national leaders in the five-year-old ABA Pro Bono Week celebration. For example, last year, we had the greatest number of video vinettes from Dauphin County pro bono attorneys (and a few judges, too). Many thanks to Pro Bono Intern Ryan Crumlish for his filming talent and all the lawyers and judges who participated.

This year, Dauphin County Bar Association members should recognize this Table Tent:

The Pro Bono Table Tent Reminders were featured at the Dauphin County Bar Association’s Annual Luncheon to welcome new members. At the Luncheon, President Judge Todd A. Hoover reminded the membership that participating in pro
bono service is part of what it means to be a “Dauphin County lawyer”. In addition, retired Legal Services attorney and now Pro Bono Attorney of the Year Stephen R. Krone offered his advice and guidance to all members taking pro bono cases. Finally, Bar Association President Jonathan W. Kunkel devoted his entire newsletter message to the importance of pro bono service.

Next, the Table Tents were a fixture at every table for Bar Association events in October. All Bar Association members and visitors were thus reminded to participate in pro bono before year-end.

Most importantly, during the week of October 21 to 25 each of the Dauphin County Commonwealth Court Judges displayed the Pro Bono Table Tent Reminders from their bench. The Table Tents were viewed by many in the legal community during this important trial week.

Next year, you may see the Pro Bono Table Tent Reminders at a law firm office near you…. So, Have YOU done your pro bono this year?