

 **Banack's Bencher News**

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TREASURER ELECTION: Congratulations to Frank Marrocco who was elected by Convocation as Treasurer on June 26, 2003. The election followed an aggressive campaign of Benchers entitled to vote. At a closed door session on June 12, 2003, the Bencher candidates had an opportunity to present their views and distinguish themselves from each other. With this election, a vacancy was created that has been filled by Mary Louise Dickson who will join Convocation when it sits in July.

ADIEU TO TREASURER KRISHNA: With the election of the new Treasurer, Treasurer Vern Krishna's 2 year tenure came to an end. As with so many other things, Professor Krishna made it publicly appear that the affairs of Convocation and the Law Society could be easily managed. However, the avoidance of any crisis and the effective governance of Convocation was the result of the Treasurer's enormous hard work, planning and persistence. The Law Society today is in a healthy financial position with a strong working capital reserve. A number of the significant accomplishments achieved as a result of Professor Krishna's insight and leadership include the landmark agreement providing for interjurisdictional mobility within Canada, the recent access to justice symposium, the establishment of interactive distance learning, the significant and successful role of the Federation of Law Societies' opposition to the money laundering legislation, and the newly established small firm/sole practitioner task force.

BENCHER/ELECTION ORIENTATION: A disappointing small turnout of 37% of the profession (compared with 42% in 1999) elected the members of Convocation. That percentage might be increased in the next election if voting by electronic means is adopted. The last month has been a busy one for all of the Benchers and especially those newly elected or recently appointed. A series of orientation and educational sessions have been well attended in order to facilitate the election transition so that Convocation can continue to govern the profession in the public interest as required by its Role Statement.

LAW SOCIETY MEDAL: In a special May ceremony, the Law Society's highest honour, the Law Society Medal, was awarded to Raj Anand, Barbara Jackman, Judith McCormack, Paul Perell and The Hon. Thomas Zuber. The Law Society has not yet found a method of permanently recording these awards, for public viewing in Osgoode

Hall. Perhaps that oversight will be addressed shortly.

LINCOLN ALEXANDER AWARD: David Lepofsky has been announced as the recipient of this award demonstrating his long-standing interest and commitment to matters of a public nature and the pursuit of community service on behalf of Ontario residents.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE SYMPOSIUM: On May 28th, the Law Society and the Law Foundation of Ontario sponsored a significant full-day symposium, attended by over 350 participants, entitled "Access to Justice for a New Century, the Way Forward". Dynamic speakers from Canada and around the world focused on access to justice issues affecting Canadians. In addition, a thought-provoking seminar was conducted, from which a blueprint may be developed to guarantee and promote access to justice in the future.

LAY BENCHERS: Lay Benchers provide an invaluable service to the profession by serving as full voting participants, contributing to every aspect of the governance of the profession. In May, 2003, Convocation honoured those appointed Lay Benchers who had completed their term of office. Those individuals who contributed in such a significant manner are Stephen Bindman, Gillian Diamond, Pamela Davinsky, Seymour Epstein, Robert Lalonde and Barbara Laskin. Messrs. Abdul Chahbar and Andrew Coffey were reappointed for a further term. In addition, Convocation welcomed the appointment of Lay Benchers Andrea Alexander (*Toronto*), Anne Marie Doyle (*Ottawa*), Paul Dray (*Limehouse*), Sy Eber (*Toronto*), Richard Filion (*Sturgeon Falls*) and Allan Gotlieb (*Thornhill*).

THE HONOURABLE MADAM JUSTICE MOIRA CASWELL: The sudden and tragic death of Justice Caswell saddened family, colleagues and friends. They have established a Memorial Fund, to honour her memory at Osgoode Hall Law School to create a permanent student award in her name to assist deserving Osgoode students. Should you wish to make a donation, please go to the Law Society's website at http://www.lsuc.on.ca/news/updates/jun1003_dono.jsp .

RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT: We were asked to provide input in respect of the existing rule governing law firm names and letterhead to determine if they should be made less restrictive and if so, what form the revised rules should take. Background information is available on the Law Society website at http://www.lsuc.on.ca/news/pdf/convmarch03_callinput.pdf.

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