A Time for Gratitude and Thanks

As I write this President’s Message, I am in my fifth week of working from home. When we began remote working due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I truly did not believe it would last as long as it has. With no definitive end in sight, I alternate between gratitude that my family and friends are healthy and an intense longing for life to return to normal.

While I am eager to return to my office and socialize with colleagues, friends and family in person, I am grateful for the little things that bring a sense of normalcy to my days. Daily video conference calls with my colleagues, online board meetings with my fellow Palm Beach County Bar Association (“PBCBA”) Directors, PBCBA CLE webinars, virtual happy hours and check-ins with loved ones, and family time with my husband, Matt, make me feel grounded and calm.

In an unexpected turn of events, I’ve also gained appreciation for my daily commute from Jupiter to Boca Raton, which was a source of headaches and frustration before the pandemic. Now I miss that opportunity to ease into and out of my work day by catching up with family and friends or listening to audio books during my drive.

My hope for all of our PBCBA members is that you have newfound gratitude for the little things in life and are able to find a silver lining in these unprecedented circumstances. The PBCBA Board of Directors and staff also hope you’re doing well and staying safe during this health crisis. Whether you are working from home or social distancing in other ways, we want to know how you’re doing, what you’re grateful for, and how you’re spending your days to keep mentally and physically well. Please share your stories and pictures with us on the PBCBA Facebook page and include #PBCBAStayWell (www.facebook.com/pbcba1922/).

As mentioned earlier, attending PBCBA CLE webinars makes me feel connected to our legal community. The PBCBA has an amazing webinar scheduled for May 1, 2020 from 12pm-1:30pm, which features the keynote speaker that was going to present at our annual Law Day Luncheon. During the webinar, Bruce Hennes will discuss crisis management for lawyers and their clients. I was privileged to hear Bruce speak at the American Bar Association’s 2019 Bar Leadership Institute, and his insight on crisis management and communication was entertaining, fascinating and, at times, counterintuitive to how most lawyers approach a crisis. The lessons I learned from his damage control playbook still resonate with me today.

Before signing off on this President’s Message, I want to highlight outgoing PBCBA Director, Lee McElroy, and his contributions to the PBCBA. Lee is a past president of the PBCBA Young Lawyers Section and has served as a Director of the PBCBA since 2013. Lee is a partner with the Downey | McElroy firm and a fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel who practices in the areas of probate and trust litigation, trust and estate administration, guardianship law, and fiduciary litigation. Lee received his law degree from the University of Tennessee and then served in the United States Navy Judge Advocate General’s Corps for three years. Despite Lee’s status as a diehard Volunteer fan, I consider Lee a friend! When he terms off in June, I can say with certainty that our Board will not be the same without him. Lee has been a calm voice of reason as the PBCBA and our legal community navigated ups and downs over the last seven years.
We are eternally grateful for his service so next time you see Lee at a PBCBA event, please join me and the Board in thanking him for a job well done.

Don’t forget to check the PBCBA website (www.palmbeachbar.org) frequently for updates pertaining to the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit and our legal community. These updates, as well as updates to postponed or rescheduled events, can be found under Latest News and Upcoming Events.

As always, I encourage you to reach out to me and the rest of the Board with any ideas, comments or concerns. We can be reached at pbcba-bod@palmbeachbar.org. PBCBA member highlight submissions for yourself or others should be sent to memberhighlights@palmbeachbar.org.

Until we get to see one another again, please stay well and continue to take care of yourself, your family and your friends.