

# Not Your Regular Law Magazine

BY DANIEL J. SIEGEL

**W**hat you hold in your hands is one of the most unusual legal magazines in the country. Unlike most of its brethren, *The Philadelphia Lawyer* does not contain a wealth of law review-type articles; rather, the magazine strives to publish a wide range of material, including fiction, poetry, book reviews, profiles, interviews, and of course, lots of “legal stuff.”

As the new editor of *The Philadelphia Lawyer*, I view my primary role as maintaining the high quality for which this publication has been known for decades since its birth as *The Shingle* in the 1930s. Thus, I follow in a long line that is in many ways a “Who’s Who?” of the Bar.

Faced with such a legacy, it is easy to wonder what can I hope to accomplish that hasn’t already been done – and done very well.

The answer to the question is simple. It’s “relevance.”

Those who know me know that I am not one to participate actively in Bar politics, or to virtually attend every meeting of the Board of Governors. In fact, when my former partner, Ed Chacker, served as Chancellor, he pondered what he could do to be an excellent Chancellor. My answer was, “Many members, perhaps a majority, neither know nor care who the Chancellor is. What they care about is that the Bar Association provides services and does things that are relevant to them and their practices.” That is why I was pleased that Ed’s year at the helm focused on initiatives such as mentoring, which was designed to improve the quality of lawyering, something relevant to all of us.

In recent years, the Bar has been fortunate that many of its leaders have understood the need for relevance. For example, Alan Feldman recognized that the Association should help members with the business of law so that they could be more effective in the practice of law, and created the Law Practice Management Division. While the division is now a committee, I am pleased to serve as co-chair and encourage all of you to participate in our programs. Similarly, current Chancellor Rudy Garcia has helped members save on the cost of legal research

by offering the Fastcase research service free to those firms who have 100 percent membership in the Association.

As editor of *The Philadelphia Lawyer*, I have come to realize that relevance is truly a relative term. Because we are not a law review, the magazine is not the place to publish in-depth scholarly articles replete with too many footnotes. What we are, however, is the place for articles of all sizes focusing on

everything from practice tips to the esoteric. Our relevance is best achieved, I believe, by providing a panoply of articles so that there is something in every issue for every member.

My goals as editor are simple. First, I pledge that every issue will be well-written and provide information relevant to all members. This may mean articles on new initiatives like Fastcase, or about programs to help achieve greater diversity in the Bar. In this issue, for example, we highlight the Association’s challenge to the Philadelphia lobbying law, but balance it with articles on many other topics.

Second, I want to increase the number of “department pieces,” short articles that offer insight into an area of practice or a change in the law that impacts our members and their clients. To that end, I have recruited and will continue to recruit authors to write these timely articles. In fact, if you are interested, please email me ([dsiegel@danieljsiegel.com](mailto:dsiegel@danieljsiegel.com)) or

Jeff Lyons ([jlyons@philabar.org](mailto:jlyons@philabar.org)), our managing editor, and one of the two people (along with Mark Tarasiewicz, associate executive director of the Bar Association), who are truly responsible for the consistent quality of this magazine.

Third, I want to work not only with our exceptional Editorial Board (take a look at the list, it truly is a “Who’s Who” of the Bar), but also with each member. If you have an idea for a story, or want to write an article, or merely have a comment, let Mark, Jeff or me know. We really want to know and will help you get your idea in print.

Finally, becoming an editor, for reasons known to very, very few, has never been a passion of mine – and I will explain why in my next column. Trust me, it’s an amazing story, one of the





most important in my life, and one that I hope will inspire others. I would be lying, however, if I didn't admit that I am pleased to be your editor, and look forward to hearing from you, both positive and negative, and with many ideas for new stories and other ways to make *The Philadelphia Lawyer* even better. In short, let us all make sure that this publication, like the Philadelphia

Bar Association, of which we are all proud to be members, remains relevant this year and for decades to come. ■

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