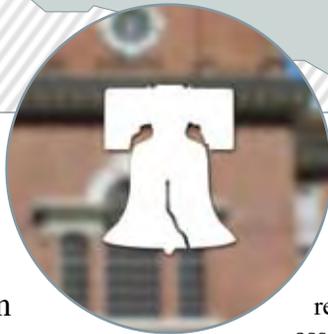


Connected by Bars

PHILADELPHIA, LYON LAWYERS RENEW TIES

By Enid Adler



It's been 14 years since Michael Scullin and I initiated the twinning program between the Philadelphia Bar and the Barreau de Lyon in France. Once again, at the beginning of December 2011, we made the annual, now biennial, trip to Lyon for the opening events of the Lyon Bar Year. Over the years, our bar has hosted yearly two or more recent Lyon law school graduates, who spend about six months in a Philadelphia law firm or with a local judge.

This year we witnessed the signing of a new twinning agreement between the Barreau de Lyon and the Bar of Burkina Faso. This was signed by the Batonnier of the Lyon Bar, Myriam Picot, and the Batonnier of Burkino Faso, Issouf Baadhio, and followed by a reception at the offices of the Barreau. The Lyon Twinning Program encompasses many bar associations of cities and countries in Europe but also, for example, from Tunisia and now Burkina Faso. Philadelphia is

the only American bar association that has this arrangement with Lyon. We have been instrumental in expanding this relationship from one of just our two bar associations to one of a full-fledged business and cultural arrangement between Philadelphia, Lyon and the Rhone-Alps Region.

The ceremony of the new signing agreement at the offices of the Lyon Bar was the beginning of a full schedule of events for all visiting bars. As in the past, there was a seminar on a topic of mutual interest. This also serves as a CLE for Lyon lawyers. The subject was "Business and the Law." It was interesting that two of the panelists were U.S. academics, one of whom serves with me in the American Bar Association Center for Human Rights.

Topics in prior years included the concept and practice of pro bono for lawyers in various countries and the controversy of class actions in the legal profession.

Earlier in the day, I was a guest at the formal law school graduation ceremony. Unlike our American tradition where only members of the judiciary wear robes, this is the traditional courtroom garb of all lawyers in civil law countries and also in some common law systems. So, I got to wear the obligatory



black robe for this event. I was seated up front with Lyon's Batonnier, Batonnier-Elect, former or ancient Batonniers and our friends from Burkino Faso. This is a very solemn occasion. Sitting on the judges' dais were members of the Bar Council in their red robes with leopard-spotted ermine collars. As is customary and a sign of respect, we all rose when they entered. The 150-plus graduates wore their black robes for the first time as an official sign of becoming a lawyer. Each one carried white gloves, wearing only one on the left hand until he or she came forward to individually raise the right hand to repeat/take the lawyer's oath. A small group of us, joined by Michael and his wife, were treated to a marvelous lunch at the restaurant at the Lyon Opera House. The view was spectacular, overlooking the elegant Hotel de Ville (City Hall) and the rooftops of the city.

Friday evening, as is the custom, we attended the gala reception for the opening of the Bar year. The location this time was at Sucrier, a restored warehouse in a newly developing area at the confluence of the Rhone and Saone Rivers. This

was a sugar factory and now houses an avant garde art collection on multiple floors. As has become a custom, I was picked up at my hotel by Andre and Danielle Boyer. Andre was the Batonnier in 1997 at the time of the beginning of our Twinning Program. He has headed previous Lyon delegations to Philadelphia. In speaking with then-Batonnier Designe (who took office in January 2012) Philippe Meysonnier, he indicated that he planned to head a Lyon Bar delegation to the Philadelphia Bar in 2012. This group will include Thierry Bonnet and Jean-Michel Raynaud, both leaders in the Lyon Twinning Programs.

Lyon is known for its gourmet restaurants; so the concluding event was a gastronomic lunch on Saturday.

Over the years, Michael and I have made many friends in Lyon. So it was that we were invited for dinner on the day of our arrival to the home of Christian and Agnes Leroy. Christian was the director of the Twinning Program in 1997 and for many years to follow. When the Lyon delegation next returns to the U.S., it will be our turn to shower them with Philadelphia hospitality. ■

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