

**June 2003**

**Looking Back**  
by **Tod Aronovitz**

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In 1996, I was satisfied with my achievements as a trial lawyer in Miami and ran for a two-year term as a member of The Florida Bar Board of Governors because I wanted to voice my opinions on legal issues and the future of The Florida Bar. I had been active for years in local bar associations, trial lawyer organizations, and community programs, and believed that I could contribute to the Board of Governors. I had no aspirations for further Florida Bar or ABA service.

The first meeting I attended as a new board member was held at The Registry Hotel in Naples. I observed and admired the lawyers of the Board of Governors who devoted time away from their families and law practices, who addressed cutting edge legal issues, trends in the law, the direction of The Florida Bar, lawyer discipline, and issues involving the regulation of the lawyers and judges of Florida. Having enjoyed my service on the board, I ran for re-election and ultimately made the commitment and sought to become president of The Florida Bar.

Our entire board representing attorneys from Key West to Pensacola were diligent and enthusiastic all year long. Now that my term as president is winding down, I reflect upon the outstanding achievements this year of Board of Governors members including: 1) Jerry Beer (West Palm Beach)—chair of Budget Committee, responsible for recommending a budget which implements the approved programs of the Bar and monitored fiscal and budgetary policy; 2) Alan Bookman (Pensacola)—chair of All Bar Conference, a gathering at the Midyear Meeting of The Florida Bar of lawyers, judges, and journalists to review the Dignity in Law program; 3) Hank Coxe (Jacksonville)—chair of Article V Task Force, responsible for direct monitoring of legislative activity involving Article V, Revision 7, and co-chair with David Rothman (Miami) of Disciplinary Review Committee, responsible for reviewing the grievance agenda and making recommendations on disciplinary actions; 4) Jesse Diner (Hollywood)—chair of Legislation Committee, considered proposals for legislative or political action by The Florida Bar or other sections of The Florida Bar on pending legislative issues, and chair of Dignity in Law Review Committee, reviewed the progress of Dignity in Law public awareness program and made recommendations of continuation of program to BOG; 5) Terrence Russell (Ft. Lauderdale)—distinguished immediate past president who agreed to serve as chair of the Legal Needs of Children Committee 2003, which is making recommendations to implement the Final Report of the Legal Needs of Children Commission submitted June 2002; 6) David Welch (Ft. Lauderdale)—chair of Technology Task Force, diligently implemented a legal Web portal project to be known as *MyFloridaBar.com* soon to be recognized as an outstanding Florida Bar member benefit at no cost to our membership, and chair of Communications Committee which oversees all communications activities of The Florida Bar as well as the Dignity in Law

public awareness program; and 7) John Yanchunis (St. Petersburg)—chair of MultiJurisdictional Practice Commission, responsible for review of ABA Model Rules 2002 and other issues involving the multijurisdictional practice of law in Florida.

I take this opportunity to recognize a special Florida attorney, Juliet Murphy Roulhac, president, Young Lawyers Division of The Florida Bar. Juliet served with honor and dedication as president of the YLD. Her demeanor, leadership, and vibrance set an outstanding example for all young lawyers of Florida.

Soon The Florida Bar will be led by an excellent Coral Gables trial attorney: Miles A. McGrane III. It has been my pleasure to work side-by-side with Miles during this past year and I know that he has the experience as a former board member to lead The Florida Bar with distinction.

Our Board of Governors unanimously adopted a historic public awareness program—Dignity in Law—to address the vital role that lawyers play in the fiber of modern day Florida. I knew from the outset that addressing “lawyer image” issues was a daunting task. Abraham Lincoln said, “The probability that we may fail in the struggle ought not to deter us from the support of a cause we believe to be just.”

This program has succeeded in inspiring attorneys of Florida to stand up for our profession and to speak out to our law partners, young associates, friends, neighbors, and clients about the greatness of our profession. This effort could not have succeeded without the enthusiastic support of Francine Walker, director of Public Information and Bar Services of The Florida Bar; as well as Christine Barney, CEO, rbb Public Relations, Coral Gables, private public relations consultants, who diligently and enthusiastically created a message and delivered it to all Floridians speaking of the great work that lawyers and judges do in Florida every day for our clients, in our courtrooms, and in our communities.

It has been my honor to serve as president of The Florida Bar 2002-03. I have lived my life and served as your president following the thought of the great American writer Ralph Waldo Emerson, who stated “Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.” Each effort undertaken during my term as president was attempted in good faith and with great enthusiasm.

At the General Assembly held at the Annual Meeting last year, my family gave me a gold lapel pin bearing The Florida Bar insignia with lettering that says “President—The Florida Bar.” I have worn that gold pin this year and told all who inquired that it reflects my pride to be a Florida lawyer.