



The Board of Trustees of the Federal Bar Association for the Eastern District of Washington has several items on their agenda for 2009.

### **I. Hemovich Dinner**

First, we are asking you to “Save the Date” of September 24, 2009, for the Hemovich dinner at the Spokane Club. The Board will be accepting nominations for the Mike Hemovich Award, which honors a member of the Eastern Washington Federal Bar who exhibits characteristics of professional excellence, and who demonstrates superior compassion along with understanding of the law and practice. See below regarding the detailed nominations information for the Mike Hemovich Award. Your submittals must be received by August 1, 2009, and should be sent to the Federal Bar Association, Eastern District of Washington, care of John Nelson, Foster Pepper, PLLC, W. 422 Riverside, Suite 1310, Spokane, Washington 99201.

### **II. District Bar Conference**

Your District Bar Conference will be held on Friday, September 25, 2009, at the beautiful Davenport Hotel. The conference is scheduled to commence with registration at 12:15 p.m. and the program to start at 1:00 p.m. Our keynote speaker this year is Michael J. Berrigan. Mr. Berrigan is currently a Principal Deputy Chief of Defense Counsel, Office of Military Commissions, United States Department of Defense. Mr. Berrigan retired after 20 years of active duty service with the Judge Advocate General Corp U.S. Army. Mr. Berrigan assists in leading more than 50 military and civilian attorneys and 50 intelligence analysts, investigators, paralegals, and other support staff responsible for representing detainees selected by the U.S. Government to be prosecuted by military commission, to be tried at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Mr. Berrigan will provide an insightful and dynamic discussion regarding constitutional issues and practical matters surrounding the Guantanamo Bay detainees.

The program also includes a State of the Court address, panel discussion regarding Alternative Resolution in Federal Court, and Board elections.

The Conference is complementary to all of you who register for your annual Federal Bar Association membership and pay \$40 annual dues. Washington State Bar Association CLE credit is pending.

### **III. FBA Is Seeking Comments Regarding Issues You Would Like Addressed With The Judiciary.**

In conjunction with the Federal Bar Conference, the Federal Bar Association Board is tentatively planning to meet with the Federal Judges on the morning of September 25, 2009. The agenda will be matters raised by practitioners of the Eastern District Federal Bar for issues on which you seek discussion, input, and response from the Judiciary. Please submit comments and topics for discussion, to Jane Ewers, Turner, Stoeve & Gagliardi, P.S., 421 W. Riverside Avenue, Suite 960, Spokane, Washington 99201. The FBA Board will prepare an agenda for discussion with the Judges, based on issues presented by the FBA members. We are intending that this will become an annual meeting held in conjunction with the Federal Bar Conference, to facilitate communications between the Judges and the Federal Bar Association.

**Be sure to register for the September 25, 2009, District Conference and CLE and to pay your Federal Bar Association dues today. The Conference Registration and Membership Renewal Form is attached.**

As we get closer to September 24 and 25, 2009, we will be providing further detailed information to you on the upcoming events. In the meantime, please mark your calendars.

### **IV. STEP Program – Pro Bono Assistance**

The STEP Program in the Eastern District of Washington is seeking *pro bono* legal assistance for individuals participating in the program.

In a cooperative effort, the U.S. District Court, the U.S. Probation Office, the U.S. Attorney's Office, and the Federal Defender's Office are committed to providing an alternative program for individuals on federal supervision who have substance abuse/addiction problems. The program offers a blend to treatment and sanction alternatives to effectively address offender behavior, rehabilitation, and safety of the community. The primary goal of the STEP program is to assist the participants to remain drug and crime free in the community through the implementation of an effective community supervision model. The program offers meaningful, timely, and effective coordination of supervision and treatment services, which will provide improved accountability and more immediate responses to non-compliance.

Participants in STEP may face civil disputes, which can present significant collateral challenges to their rehabilitation efforts. Such disputes may include, for example, child custody, landlord-tenant, divorce, debtor/creditor, drivers license, and employment related legal issues. Confronting and resolving such issues can be difficult without legal assistance and can present obstacles in the STEP participants' efforts to move forward.

The program is seeking members of the Federal Bar Association who are willing to occasionally assist STEP participants on a *pro bono* basis in addressing civil legal issues they may be facing. The program envisions that, as legal issues arise, STEP participants can be referred to an attorney(s) to whom they can reach out for assistance. The program's request is fully supported by the Bar Association's Board -- we respectfully ask that each member seriously consider taking advantage of this unique opportunity to support the STEP Program and to assist the participants in their laudable, but difficult rehabilitative efforts. For those members who are willing and able, please submit your name, area of practice in which you are willing to provide *pro bono* assistance, and contact information to: Mary Lou Johnson, Esq., Career Law Clerk for Senior Judge Wm. Fremming Nielsen at **Mary\_Lou\_Johnson@waed.uscourts.gov**.