

LAW

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Linnet C. Harlan, Chair

As some of you have noted, in the last two years, the Section has cancelled or postponed three programs-the MCLE and Ski weekend in Lake Tahoe, the first China program and the recent EU program. Since programs are such an important part of the service the Section provides its members, you might like to have a betunderstanding of how and why programs are cancelled or postponed.

The first useful piece of information is that we are always looking for programs our members will find informative and beneficial. At the same time, we on the Executive Committee can only go by our own practices, experiences and gut instincts in deciding which programs might appeal to our members. So a

decision to move forward with a particular program is always an educated guess. Sometimes, as in the case of the MCLE and Ski Weekend. we are wrong. By not signing up for the program by the deadline, our members "voted with their feet" and let us know that this type of program was not something they wanted to attend. We had structured the cancellation with the ski resort so the registered attendees would not be forced to pay a cancellation fee and so the registered attendees would have a month's notice of the cancellation so they could make other plans. But some of our members will still inconvenienced and for that we apologize.

Another piece of useful



information is that sometime events beyond our control influence the cancellation or postponement of a program. This was the case with the China program that was originally scheduled for May, 2003. As the program date approached, the SARS epidemic worsened. The majority of our speakers were to come from China, and they were having a difficult time obtaining visas. Also, even though we knew interest in China was high, very few members registered for the program. Presumably they were concerned about the possi-

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Special points of interest:

- Invitation to Annual Meeting Reception
- Empty Seas Seminar: October 1, 2004
- EU Program September 15.

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bility of being in a room with speakers who might carry the SARS virus. After much discussion among the ExCom, we decided to postpone the program until China had the SARS epidemic under control. When the program was held in November, 2003, it was one of the most successful programs we have presented.

We also have been experimenting with co-sponsoring programs with other organizations—as in the program we are co-sponsoring on the European Union with the British American Business Council. benefit of this co-sponsoring is that our speakers have the opportunity to present their expertise to a larger audience and the attendees have the potential for wider networking. The obvious downside is that the more participants in planning a particular program, the greater the potential that something will happen that makes postponing the program more likely. With respect to the EU program, certain technical difficulties arose regarding the presentations of key speakers, including the President of the EU. The BABC felt that postponing the program was necessary, and, given their concerns, we concurred. The program has been rescheduled for September 15.

In no instance does the ExCom readily decide to postpone or cancel a program. There are always a number of factors that we consider, and the ExCom makes a decision to post-

pone or cancel only after great debate. In every instance, we postpone or cancel only when we believe it is the preferred decision given all the circumstances.

Of course, we could always play it safe and present programs only at the Annual Meeting and the Section Education Institutes. While, from time to time, a slotted speaker has had an emergency that required substituting one speaker for another, I do not remember ever canceling a program at those two events.

At the same time, our excellent programs have always been a hallmark of the Section. Speakers want to address the audiences we draw. And the excellent speakers draw interested and lively attendees. For example, the U.S. State Department has specifically requested that we present our program on International Custody Disputes at the Annual Meeting so they can send a speaker. In

addition, we will have a speaker from the Iranian Embassy who will provide a perspective not usually available to U.S. audiences. Similar examples occur in our stand-along programs, and we are loathe to deny our members the benefit of these excellent speakers by being too cautious in deciding whether to present stand-alone programs.

We understand that you are busy, and that potential attendees are inconvenienced when a program is postponed or cancelled. We also believe you, our members, are best served when we balance the possibility of cancellation or postponement against our desire to present outstanding, innovative programs.

Sincerely,
Linnet C. Harlan, Chair

You are Cordially Invited To

The ILS Networking Reception
Portola Plaza Hotel
Monterey Bay
October 8, 2004
5-7 p.m.

Please come and meet other members of the Section.

More details are provided in the "Special Events" section on page 6

Ross Meador's Adventure to Vietnam

ROSS MEADOR, ROGERS & MEADOR

programs to Vietnamese executives break into the US market. on "Essential Business Methods Currently, one of the most exciting for Exporting to the United States." The invitation was extended by the Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) a quasi-governmental organization that promotes business and trade throughout the country. Vietnam Resource Group.

were joined by Chris Runkel and Vietnam. Bob Bannerman, who head the Thanks to Ross for sharing these pic-US Commercial Service in Ho Chi tures from Vietnam. Minh City. They provided two

In early April of this year, Ross three-day training programs, one in Ho Meador, an Executive Committee Chi Minh City and the other in Hamember of the ILS was invited by noi. The attendees were serious and to Vietnam to present training hungry for information on how to

business opportunities in Vietnam is in the woodworking and furniture industries. Vietnamese manufacturers are rushing to fill the void as Chinese furniture exports dwindle due to US antidumping petitions. According to Wood & Wood Products magazine, The training was organized by the Vietnam is on its way to becoming a "wood products giant." Ross is help-For the training program, Ross ing with the organization of a delegaand the Vietnam Resources Group tion of US woodworking companies to





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