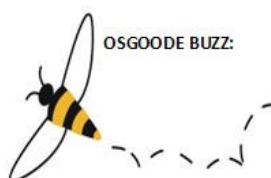




March 1, 2019

Volume 7 | Issue 127

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GOVERNANCE

Try, try again. Last November Convocation passed only 5 of 6 Task Force recommendations. The sixth recommendation dealing with a Bencher Code of Conduct and Declaration of Adherence was tabled. Benchers resisted the expressed obligations and expectations for Benchers and management. The Code contained a compliance and enforcement process. There was also a requirement that Benchers sign a declaration acknowledging the obligation to comply with the Policies. This is just another example of the Law Society mandating what should be expected of an honourable legal professional. After a second kick at the concept, modified since November, a majority of Benchers now voted in favour of the new requirements (despite some recognized deficiencies/controversies), likely to avoid the skeptical wrath of voters in the coming election. (See lsuc.on.ca). Bencher Sid Troister correctly, but to no avail, pointed out the recurring flaw in the general methodology of report preparation, drafting and deliberations by Convocation. Once again Convocation identified but ducked important concerns that are to be studied and may be returned to Convocation in the future. Sadly that protocol has not often resulted in renewed, further consideration in other situations. Would you send a client an opinion letter with a notation that you will study the matter further and get back to them with revisions, if needed, to achieve the correct outcome?

ANNUAL FEE - MARCH 4, 2019

This is the deadline for the payment of Annual Fees that were due on January 1, 2019. The option to pay online is available using the Law Society Portal in the Fees & Payments Tab. If you fail to pay by March 4, 2019 you will be charged a \$150 late fee and will be subject to administrative suspension.

ANNUAL REPORT - MARCH 31, 2019

Don't forget to file by the due date. If you miss the date, you must file by May 30th or face a \$200.00 late filing fee and may be subject to administrative suspension.

BENCHER ELECTION --- APRIL 30, 2019

Check out the candidates at <https://candidate-list-2019.pdf>. Make sure you consider who can best represent your interests in Convocation. This matters because an enormous number of important issues will be decided for the profession in the coming years. Turnout for Bencher elections has steadily declined from 56% in 1987 to ONLY 34% in 2015. The voting pool of eligible voters has increased to almost 48,000 but if the downward trend in participation continues that will likely favour incumbents and disadvantage first time candidates. The key to any successful Bencher election is "getting the vote out".

23 Bencher candidates are running on a platform to eliminate the Law Society's mandatory Statement of Principle affirmed in our annual reports. To identify these candidates and learn more about their position visit <http://stopsop.ca>.

BENCHER ACCLAMATION - JACK BRAITHWAITE

The profession will be well served by the re-election of Jack. He was the only nominated candidate in the Northeast electoral region as of the close of nominations. His unchallenged candidacy is a reflection of the effective, thoughtful and independent leadership Jack has provided to Convocation as a multi-term, elected Bencher. Congratulations Jack.

RYERSON LAW SCHOOL

Even though the Ontario government rejected Ryerson's proposal for a law school last November, the school which received approval of the Federation of Law Societies of Canada and our Law Society, is searching for a Dean. It appears that the law school will try to make a go of it without government funding, however, that may be a bigger hardship if students are not eligible for the Ontario Student Assistance Program. If the unfunded school is successful, that might be a warning to other professional schools that could see funding reduced or discontinued, by a cost cutting government.

FAMILY LAW LICENSING

Since December 2017 the Law Society has been developing a framework that will permit paralegals and others (not legally trained) to serve the public with certain family legal services. The key will be the scope of permissible activities. An initial draft scope is actively being considered by a Working Group of Convocation. Consultation is ongoing, but once finalized the defined scope will form the basis of the training to be required. If you were not aware of the important changes in this area of the law, the train has already left the station. Non-lawyers will in the near future be licensed to provide some family law services to clients. How about your areas of practice? Perhaps you should be asking Benchers candidates where they stand on out-sourcing legal work to non-lawyers.

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**Larry Banack
Banack Resolutions, Inc.
Bay Adelaide Centre
333 Bay Street, Suite 900
Toronto, ON M5H 2T4
email: larry@banackresolutions.com
Phone: (416) 477-6880**

Banack Resolutions, Inc., Bay Adelaide Centre, 333 Bay Street,
Suite 900, Toronto, ON M5H 2T4 Canada

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