Lucas County Law Library—Abundant Resources for Toledo Attorneys

by Cynthia D. Jones, Director

Background and History: 1870 – 2010

“...for the advancement of legal knowledge and the better and more convenient discharge of professional duties...”

(Part of the mission statement from the Toledo Law Association’s Articles of Incorporation, November 17, 1870)

The Toledo Law Association was incorporated on November 17, 1870, by David R. Austin, Henry S. Howe, Emory D. Potter, Jr., Isaac P. Pugsley and Joshua R. Seney, for the purpose of creating a subscription/membership law library to serve the bench and bar of Toledo.

Shares were sold at $50 each to raise $10,000 capital to purchase legal texts, furnishings and related items for the library. In addition, members paid a $12 per year subscription fee to support the library. In 1991, dues were raised for the first time since the library’s inception, to their current level: $25.00 annually for new attorneys; those licensed in the state of Ohio for up to five years, and $50.00 for those in practice more than five years.

By 1888, the Ohio State Legislature passed a bill mandating the establishment of county law libraries. Following the bill’s enactment, The Toledo Law Association began formally serving the legal community of Lucas County through its Law Library.

The ensuing years saw more legislative changes for county law libraries throughout the state of Ohio, and nationwide. The most significant change to date impacting Ohio county law libraries occurred on January 1, 2010. On this date, pursuant to ORC 307.51 creating County Law Library Resources Boards, all county law libraries became county agencies, governed by their respective LLRBs; in turn, the LLRBs form the statewide Consortium of Ohio County Law Libraries.

Each County Law Library Resources Board consists of five (5) members who must be residents of the county they serve. Terms are for five years, and appointments are made as follows:

- One appointee from the county Prosecutor’s office
- One appointee from the Court of Common Pleas
- One appointee from the Municipal Courts
- Two appointees from the Board of County Commissioners

While some of the private law associations throughout Ohio, including the Toledo Law Association, continue to offer memberships that confer additional benefits, the official role of these associations is to serve in an advisory capacity to the County Law Library Resources Boards in support of their local county law library.

Present:

The mission of the Lucas County Law Library is to provide its stakeholders with access to legal resources and materials. Stakeholders include government agencies in Lucas County, the private bar, and members of the public.

Now, as in the past, the law library exists primarily to serve the needs of the legal community throughout Lucas County; however, as a County agency, the library does have limited hours for the public (e.g. pro se litigants). Currently public hours are Tuesday and Thursday, 1:00 – 3:00.

Also as in the past, and as noted previously, the Toledo Law Association (TLA) continues to offer membership to interested Ohio licensed attorneys. While it is not required, membership in the TLA provides additional benefits, among these being 24/7 access to the law library, the ability to check materials out of the library and remote access to Lexis Advance; statutory members (e.g. Judges, City attorneys, attorneys with the Prosecutor’s office) may also avail themselves of these additional benefits at no cost. Attorneys who decline TLA membership are still welcome to use the library’s resources, including electronic databases, during the normal business hours of 8:30 am – 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday.

All those doing legal research will find abundant resources available at the Lucas

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Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation Encourages Attorneys to “Bank on Justice”

by Marissa Weldon, Esq., Associate Director for Legislative and Media Relations, Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation, Inc.

As the single largest funder of Ohio’s legal aids, in part, because of interest on lawyers’ trust accounts (IOLTA) and interest on trust accounts (IOTA), the Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation (“the Foundation”) is encouraging attorneys to “Bank on Justice” by choosing a Prime Partner Bank for their IOLTA account, or by encouraging their own bank to become a Prime Partner Bank. The Foundation recognizes Prime Partner Banks for their commitment to ensuring that all Ohioans have equal access to justice, demonstrated by higher interest rates on IOLTA and IOTA accounts; support for Ohio’s legal aids by volunteering or serving as board members; donating or making in-kind contributions to legal aid; and, promoting equal access to justice in Ohio.

“Banking on Justice” is another opportunity for lawyers to support their local legal aid and access to justice,” said Foundation executive director Angela Lloyd. “Many lawyers already support their legal aid through volunteering or donating, and we want to encourage them to continue to do so. This is simply another way to support the cause.”

G. Scott McComb, CEO of Heartland Bank, a Prime Partner Bank, agreed: “The more lawyers that open accounts with Heartland, or another Prime Partner bank, the more funds are available to help the cause. We consider the Prime Partner program our way of helping those less fortunate have equal access to the legal system, while still being able to provide our normal service on deposit accounts.”

The Foundation encourages all attorneys required to maintain an IOLTA account to “Bank on Justice” by choosing a Prime Partner Bank for their IOLTA account, or talk to their banker about becoming a Prime Partner Bank.

Find more information about “Banking on Justice” at https://www.olaf.org/iolta-and-iota/bank-on-justice-prime-partners-program/

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Future:

Throughout its history, the Lucas County Law Library has provided excellent resources and services to its constituents; however, not being content to “rest on its laurels,” the library will continue to grow and evolve. New staff members have been added, and projects completed with more to come. The future will see a new law library webpage incorporated into the County’s new website, a refinement of the collection with input from users and more robust electronic offerings, as well as more trainings and programming for both attorneys and the public, and more community outreach. Stay tuned!

For more information, or to arrange for a tour of the library, please contact any staff member by calling 419-213-4747.

The TBA's Most Prestigious Award — The Robert Kelb Distinguished Service Award

The TBA's highest honor, the Robert Kelb Distinguished Service Award is presented annually at the Holiday Luncheon by the Board of Directors to a member who has unselfishly served the Toledo Bar Association and its members.

The recipients are persons who consistently devote time and talents in service to the Toledo Bar Association through work on its various committees.

Past recipients are too numerous to include all, but a few of the recent honorees are: Judge Arlene Singer; Mag. Vernelis Armstrong; Laurie J. Pangle; John D. DiSalle; Michael J. Todak; Jerome Phillips; Paul E. Accetola; Christopher F. Parker; Mag. Paul Jomantas; Steven P. Collier; Yolanda D. Gwinn; Catherine Garcia-Feehan; James F. Nooney; Alan Dills; and Kenneth I. White, Sr.

The TBA Board of Directors will accept nominations for the Kelb Award until October 13, 2017.

Submit nominations in writing to Brad Lagusch, blagusch@toledobar.org, or Toledo Bar Association, 311 N. Superior St., Toledo, Ohio 43604.