



Connecting Women in the Law

Spring 2011 Newsletter

Upcoming Events

WLF Education Day
"Build Your Blueprint for Success"
8:00 am to 2:00 pm
Friday, May 13, 2011
Four Seasons Hotel
791 West Georgia Street
Vancouver, British Columbia

WLF Annual General Meeting & Speakers' Panel
5:30 pm
Wednesday, June 8, 2011
Law Courts Inn
Fifth Floor, 800 Smithe Street
Vancouver, British Columbia



THE CANADIAN
BAR ASSOCIATION
British Columbia Branch

Remarks of the Chair

by Carol Anne Finch-Noyes

The Women Lawyers Forum (WLF) supports women in the practice of law through programs and events focusing on mentoring, education, and networking. Our fourth focus is recognition.

This spring edition of the WLF newsletter highlights several topics including recognizing women who have achieved professional excellence. Our WLF Awards Luncheon in February honoured two remarkable women lawyers, Margaret Ostrowski, QC (with the WLF Award of Excellence) and Joan Gordon (with the Debra Van Ginkel, QC Mentoring Award) for their many contributions which have influenced and supported women practising law in British Columbia. Our distinguished luncheon speaker, the Honourable Associate Chief Justice Anne MacKenzie, shared with humour and personal examples her career experiences as a lawyer with the Department of Justice, as a judge with the Provincial and Supreme Courts, and in her position as Associate Chief Justice – all while parenting three children and balancing a busy personal life.

At the WLF Senior Women Lawyers' dinner in January, the Honourable Pat Carney, PC, retired Senator for British Columbia, was our featured speaker. Her career paths have included journalism, business, education and politics. Senator Carney was recently recognized by Equal Voice (a group dedicated to electing women), at an Ottawa event marking International Women's Day, as





WLF Members: Achievements and Recognition

Kerry-Lynne Findlay, QC (our first WLF Chair) was elected the Member of Parliament for Delta-Richmond East.

Anne Giardini, QC received the Canadian Corporate Counsel Association's Robert V.A. Jones Award which honours writing and scholarship.

Jan Lindsay, QC will receive the Canadian Defence Lawyers' Lee Samis Award of Excellence for distinguished service.

WLF Programs & Events

We offer programs that are designed to encourage and support women lawyers in the area of practice enhancement and professional and personal development. The Forum offers members a large variety of mentoring, education, leadership and networking events.

See the CBA PD resource site at cba.org/pd for further event information.

Write Us

Are you interested in writing an article for the WLF Newsletter or do you have any comments or feedback?

If so, please contact the CBABC WLF Marketing and Communications Committee Co-Chairs, Janine F. Jones and Vanessa Gauthier.

one of ten women who have changed Canadian politics. During her 25 years in Parliament, she was the first woman to hold three senior economic cabinet posts as National Energy Minister, Minister of International Trade and President of the Treasury Board; and, in her cabinet positions she was largely responsible for negotiations for the Atlantic Accord and the Canada-U.S. Free Trade agreement.

Achieving personal and professional success was the topic at the first WLF National Leadership conference, which I had the opportunity to attend and learn from, in January in Toronto. The conference speakers introduced leadership strategies and tools such as effective, non-defensive communication, projecting personal leadership and, developing a personal strategic plan. Creating a "blueprint" for success is the focus of the upcoming CBABC WLF Education Day on May 13 with workshops on: defining success as women and as lawyers; setting boundaries and having difficult conversations; and, building a foundation for professional success by establishing priorities and seeking new challenges.

Finally, the theme of recognizing the accomplishments of women lawyers will be addressed by a dynamic speakers' panel at the WLF "Kick-off to Summer" networking reception and AGM on June 8 at the Law Courts Inn – we look forward to seeing you there!



2011 Women Lawyers Forum Awards Luncheon Honours Outstanding Women Lawyers

by Nicole Byres

On February 25, 2011, the WLF held a luncheon at the Sutton Place Hotel to honour the newest recipients of the WLF Award of Excellence and the Debra Van Ginkel, QC Mentoring Award. Carol Anne Finch-Noyes, Chair of the WLF, welcomed nearly 200 members of the bar, family and friends to this event.

Margaret Ostrowski, QC was awarded the WLF Award of Excellence. This award recognizes women lawyers with distinguished career achievements who have also made outstanding contributions to women in the legal profession as a change agent, leader and mentor. 'Strength in Working Together' was the theme of Margaret's remarks, which started out with the observation that while it is easy to break one stick, it is difficult to break many.

Margaret credited her father with inspiring her to believe in the ability to overcome adversity, and also commented on attributes, such as determination and doggedness, she thought had assisted her in accomplishing her goals. Margaret recognized her family and the many supportive women she had met and worked with throughout her career, whom she fondly referred to as "Great Sticks."

Joan M. Gordon was awarded the Debra Van Ginkel, QC Mentoring Award. This award, named after the late Debra Van Ginkel, QC, recognizes women lawyers who have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to mentoring other lawyers. In Joan's remarks, she related the story of how Debra Van Ginkel had persuaded





L-R: Kerry-Lynne Findlay, QC, Margaret Ostrowski, QC, The Honourable Associate Chief Justice Anne MacKenzie, Joan Gordon and Maryam Sodagar

her to volunteer as a mentor, and how that experience had unexpectedly enriched her life as well.

Joan observed that the WLF Mentoring Program reflected the value of reciprocity, a value that, in her experience, women often exhibited in their relationships. She further noted that mentoring relationships fostered by the WLF Mentoring Program were based on mutual trust, respect, support, guidance, confidentiality, and the sharing of professional and personal experiences. Echoing the theme of Margaret Ostrowski's remarks, Joan quoted from Helen Keller, "Alone we can do so little, but together we can do so much."

The Honourable Madam Justice Anne MacKenzie, Associate Chief Justice of the B.C. Supreme Court was the WLF's honoured guest speaker. After recounting some memorable milestones in her career, Madam Justice MacKenzie provided the following advice:

- **Persevere.** A career is about persevering - not giving up and not giving in to those moments or days or even weeks when you feel discouraged, disillusioned, or full of self-doubt. Borrowing lines from the London Blitz, and Woody Allen respectively - "Keep calm and carry on" and "90% of success is showing up."
- **Concentrate on the essentials.** You can't do everything at once so focusing on what you believe to be the essentials at any given time will lead to more balance.

Executive Chair

Carol Anne Finch-Noyes
carolanne.finchnoyes@gov.bc.ca

Vice Chair

Nicole Byres
nmb@cwilson.com
(604) 643-3173

Secretary

Sara Fisher
sara.fisher@inac.gc.ca
(604) 775-5013

Treasurer

Kathryn Sainty
(604) 660-2800

Past Chair

Linda Robertson
linda@LindaKRobertson.com
(604) 986-4406



L-R: CBABC President Stephen McPhee and Nicole Byres

Members At Large

Barbara Devlin
bdevlin@ahbl.ca
(604) 484-1705

Lana Li
lli@kmslawyers.com
(604) 331-8309

Marina Morgan
(604) 926-7734

Kate Saunders
kts@bht.com
(604) 641-4997





Front L-R: Daria Batkin, Linda Robertson, Sara Fisher, Maryam Sodagar, Deborah Taylor, Wendy Lee, Barbara Devlin and Lana Li

Back L-R: Janine Jones, Carol Anne Finch-Noyes, Kerry-Lynne Findlay, QC, Margaret Ostrowski, QC, The Honourable Associate Chief Justice Anne MacKenzie, Joan Gordon, CBABC President Stephen McPhee, Vanessa Gauthier, Nicole Byres and Marina Morgan

Committee Co-Chairs Education

Vivienne Stewart
vstewart@railtownlaw.com
(778) 328-1570

Events Planning

D. Wendy Lee
dwl@kkbl.com
(604) 891-3608

Daria Batkin
dariapol@gmail.com

Mentoring

Julie Fisher
julie@lawyerswest.ca
(778) 588-7049

Deborah Taylor
dtaylor@lklaw.ca
(604) 484-3069

Marketing & Communications

Janine Jones
jjones@lawsonlundell.com
(604) 631-9169

Vanessa Gauthier
vgauthier@lklaw.ca
(604) 484-3072

- **Seek out mentors for inspiration and support.** Mentors and supporters make a genuine difference, and women lawyers who mentor and share their experiences with other lawyers are “treasures.”
- **Define your own path.** Choose a career path that is meaningful for you, while keeping yourself open to the many possibilities available – don’t be bashful, seize the day and say “yes.”
- **Set boundaries.** Being a lawyer is a tough job: expectations are high, the issues complex and the hours long. Setting boundaries helps us to achieve balance between all of the demands and enables us to pay attention to the other important responsibilities we have to our families, communities and ourselves.

Madam Justice MacKenzie concluded by recognizing the work of the WLF, and the accomplishments of the award recipients.

The WLF Award of Excellence and the Debra Van Ginkel, QC Mentoring Award support the WLF’s mandate to promote, support and advance women in the legal profession. By recognizing those who have made important contributions to women in law, we hope to inspire a new generation to become involved in mentoring and leadership roles in the legal profession. A number of WLF members remarked that the entire Awards Luncheon event, including the speeches, accomplishments of the awards’ recipients and speaker, was inspiring. As Madam Justice MacKenzie noted, the energy and goodwill exhibited by the attendees in the Sutton Place Ballroom was palpable, and the atmosphere warm and positive.

WLF Newsletter - Spring 2011 Edition

Editors: Janine F. Jones and Vanessa Gauthier

Editorial Board: Carol Anne Finch-Noyes, Linda Robertson and Nicole Byres

Contributors: Christina J. Cook, Margaret Ostrowski, QC, Barbara Devlin, Kathleen Kendall and Linda Thomas





L-R: Rosalind Campbell, Isabel Jackson, Christina J. Cook and Katrina Harry

WLF Outreach Event in New Westminster

One of the objects of the WLF is to provide a forum for networking. Each year, we aim to hold at least one networking event outside of Vancouver.

This year's outreach networking event was held on April 6, 2011 and was hosted by Carol Hickman, QC at the offices of Quay Law Centre in New Westminister.

Approximately 25 guests enjoyed the opportunity to meet new acquaintances and catch up with old friends over drinks and delicious appetizers.



L-R: Carol Hickman, QC, Angiola-Patrizia De Stefanis and Maritza Verdun-Jones

Thanks to Carol and Quay Law Centre for their generous sponsorship of the wine and drinks and their assistance in organizing the event.

Cover Photo L-R: Nicole Byres, Margaret Ostrowski, QC, Carol Anne Finch-Noyes, The Honourable Associate Chief Justice Anne MacKenzie, Joan Gordon and CBABC President Stephen McPhee

WLF: Positive Impact Beyond the Forum *How the WLF is creating positive change*



by *Christina J. Cook, Chair, CBABC Aboriginal Lawyers Forum*

Being a member of the WLF is very rewarding. I have been matched through the WLF Mentoring Program to two amazing and dynamic mentors. I have networked and benefited from the education days, the awards luncheons and the evening receptions. ("Hot Tips from Hot Mentors" was my favourite to date!)

In 2009, the CBABC Equality and Diversity Committee began inviting Aboriginal students and lawyers to their meetings to discuss the issues we face, and to strategize how the CBABC could address these issues. I was invited to such a meeting, and having just attended a WLF event the week before, I suggested that the CBABC start a similar forum for Aboriginal lawyers and students. The Aboriginal Lawyers Forum, like the WLF, would be a non-substantive law forum, offering Aboriginal students and lawyers a forum for networking, mentoring and support.

In January 2010, Isabel Jackson, Rosalind Campbell and I undertook to create the Aboriginal Lawyers Forum (ALF). From the beginning we described the ALF as a forum, like the WLF, for Aboriginal students and lawyers. We met with WLF Executive members, Jennifer Chow, Lana Li, and Linda Robertson, to find out as much as we could about the formulation and organization of the WLF. The CBABC and the WLF were supportive of our idea and provided us with suggestions and tips on how the ALF could succeed.

On December 11, 2010, the CBABC Provincial Council unanimously voted in favour of accepting the ALF as a CBABC forum. The mandate of the ALF is to facilitate social networking and mentoring for Aboriginal law students





Equity Ombudsperson

The Law Society of British Columbia provides British Columbia law firms with the services of an Equity Ombudsperson to help stop workplace discrimination and encourage equitable workplace practices.

The Equity Ombudsperson confidentially assists anyone who works in a firm in resolving concerns over possible discrimination, and assists law firms in preventing discrimination and promoting a healthy work environment.

The Equity Ombudsperson is independent of the Law Society and reports only anonymous statistical data.

Contact the Equity Ombudsperson

You can reach Anne Bhanu Chopra on her confidential, dedicated telephone line at (604) 687-2344 or achopra1@novuscom.net.



CBA National WLF Newsletter

The Common Room is available at www.cba.org/CBA/conf_women/women_lawyers/default.aspx.

The CBA National WLF is seeking articles for its newsletters. If you would like to contribute, please contact news@cba.org.

and lawyers. Due to the nature of the ALF, our members are primarily, but not exclusively, of Aboriginal descent. Like the WLF, we welcome anyone who would like the support of our mandate and efforts.

The ALF assists in addressing the various issues facing Aboriginal students and lawyers, including the retention of Aboriginal lawyers and the enhancement of the stature and influence of Aboriginal people in the legal profession. To date, we have hosted various events and publish a quarterly newsletter. As mentoring is a key focus of our group, we would like to create a mentoring program like the WLF Mentoring Program in the future.

The ALF owe a debt of gratitude to the WLF. The WLF was the first forum in the CBA and paved the way for the ALF. Further, the WLF Executive and members have been so supportive and generous with their advice and guidance in the creation of the ALF. As a member of the WLF and the Chair of the ALF, I am proud to see the WLF's positive effects go beyond the WLF.



Senior Women Lawyers' Dinner January 13, 2011

by Margaret Ostrowski, QC

At the Senior Women Lawyers' Dinner in January, we were fortunate to have as our guest speaker retired Senator for British Columbia, the Honourable Pat Carney, PC. She shared with us her drive, her enthusiasm and her wit as a major contributor to Canada's political and economic development. She has truly been a pioneer of roles for women in both her professional and political life. We were all truly amazed with her achievements and were fully engaged listening to her career recollections and highlights.

The Honourable Pat Carney began her career as a journalist as the first woman business columnist writing for the major daily newspapers. She was also an educator as an adjunct professor at UBC, a pioneer of distance learning systems and a politician. She was the first woman Conservative member of Parliament elected in British Columbia, the first woman Conservative appointed to the Senate, and a first in many other senior cabinet posts she occupied. She continues to be a prominent community advocate for arthritis research in Canada, an advocate for heritage conservation (including Canadian lighthouses), and is the author of two books and is working on a third. She initiated the Task Force on Barriers to Women in the Public Service which resulted in a report that was considered to lead in "breaking the glass ceiling" in the public service. She is also the mother of two adult children.

Senior women lawyers have special needs in that we have journeyed through much of our careers on solitary paths without the solace of many other women lawyers in our earlier years at the bar. We have struggled to adjust our careers as best we could to accommodate the challenges of raising families, coping with long work hours without "a wife" at home, and trying to maintain





some degree of our femaleness. We often had no mentors, no well-worn paths and few places to connect with each other. Several years ago, the CBABC Women Lawyers Forum supported the initiation of senior women lawyer dinners where we meet with each other and where outstanding senior women in the community come as guests to share with us their experiences as career pioneers. To date we have heard from: Marlene Scott, QC, the first female President of the CBABC; the Honourable Mary Southin, the first female Treasurer/President of the Law Society; May Brown, a 92 year old former municipal politician, community activist, Order of Canada recipient, and Honourary UBC degree recipient; and recently, the Honourable Pat Carney. Our dinners are limited to about 25 women so that round table introductions can be made and individual conversations can be had with our guest.

The senior women of the WLF are most appreciative to the CBABC for supporting these inspiring networking dinners.

Women Lawyers Forum-Kamloops Spring 2011



by Kathleen Kendall & Linda Thomas, Co-Chairs, WLF Kamloops

Kamloops WLF has been busy these past few months with both CPD and social events. Our first CPD event of 2011 was a comprehensive presentation on "Solicitor's Issues for Litigators" by member Candace Cates. Our very supportive librarian Denise Caldwell followed this on February 23 with a session on "New Developments in Legal Research at the Courthouse Library." On March 9, KPMG partner Scott Tupper gave a relevant and timely talk on "Tax Issues for Lawyers and Law Firms."

In January, Co-Chair Kathleen Kendall had the good fortune to join a number of other BC WLFers at the National WLF Leadership Conference for Professional Women in Toronto, an informative and inspirational event. In February, Kathleen published an article in *The Common Room*, our National WLF newsletter, on her volunteer experiences with the CBA in Lao PDR.

On March 17, a number of our members attended a productive lunch with President Stephen McPhee to discuss issues of importance to our Forum. Co-Chair Linda Thomas ably represented us at the Provincial Council March meeting and reported back that she was truly pleased with the work of the British Columbia Branch of the Canadian Bar Association.

After all this hard work, Kamloops WLF members celebrated with our first annual Spring Wellness Weekend, March 17 to 19, 2011. Although only a few members were able to attend, those who did put their whole hearts into relaxation at the Sparkling Hill Resort just outside Vernon. While we cannot claim any CPD for the event with a straight face, the camaraderie and inspiring discussion was amazing, the spa was lovely and our support of the Okanagan wineries was loyal!

Get Connected!

Forum membership is open to CBA members only. For membership information call the BC Branch of the Canadian Bar Association at (604) 687-3404, toll free in BC at 1 888 687-3404, or visit cba.org/BC for a Section enrolment form.

We hope you will make the Forum your meeting place of choice!



Upcoming Events WLF-Kamloops

May 20, 2011 – SKIRT party to welcome The Honourable Judge Sheri Donegan.

Summer (date TBA) – Annual BBQ at the residence of The Honourable Judge Stella Frame.

September (date TBA) – Welcoming event for women students at Thompson Rivers University Law School (the first new law school in Canada in 35 years).

For further details on upcoming events please contact Kathleen Kendall at kkendall@shaw.ca.



Update on the Retention and Advancement of Women in the Law

In April 2008, the Benchers of the Law Society of British Columbia (the "Law Society") established a task force to review the issues related to retention of women in private practice. Their work culminated in the publication of two reports in 2009: the *"Report of the Retention of Women in Law Task Force"* and the *"Business Case for Retaining and Advancing Women Lawyers in Private Practice."*

Since the publication of these two reports, the Law Society has implemented the *Maternity Leave Benefit Loan* program to assist self-employed women with overhead costs during maternity leave. This program provides self-employed women lawyers, who do not have access to other maternity and parental financial benefits, other than government programs, with \$2,000 per month for four months.

In addition, the Law Society has identified the retention of Aboriginal lawyers in the profession as a key objective. The Law Society is gathering demographic data and plans to develop a business case for diversity, including the retention and advancement of Aboriginal lawyers.

Further details regarding these reports and initiatives can be found at www.lawsociety.bc.ca.

On the same issue of retention of women in law, in October 2010, the Law Society of Upper Canada issued the Status Report on Retention of Women in Private Practice: www.lsuc.on.ca/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=2147484086.

National WLF Leadership Conference for Professional Women: Skills for Success Toronto, January 28-29, 2011

by *Barbara Devlin*

An experience to be savoured. A chance to laugh and participate together. All this AND an opportunity to learn, reflect, and set goals. In a nutshell, this describes the first-ever national CBA WLF Leadership Conference, held in Toronto. The conference room space was packed to the rafters with women from all over Canada at all stages of their careers.

The first speaker, Sharon Ellison, an expert in powerful non-defensive communication, described herself as "a pioneer in the field of eliminating defensiveness, [who] demonstrates that traditional communication methods are built on the 'rules of war' and systematically create and accelerate conflict and violence."

Sharon led participants through our own self-appraisal. We practiced what she termed "content questions" and "process questions" to attempt to learn the facts, our assumptions, and the other person's intentions in making a statement, as well as ways to respond effectively. She also offered a CD and book entitled *"How to take the war out of words"* - especially helpful for the litigators amongst us who sometimes query whether we unwittingly cross-examine others.

The second speaker, Roz Usheroff presented a fiery marketing approach titled *"Imperatives for Success: Projecting Personal Leadership."* Roz specializes in image, communications and branding while assisting clients in capitalizing on their unique abilities and talents. She described seven traps that could sabotage your image, such as the "Superwoman Trap" or the "Perfectionist Trap."

Roz encouraged us to be visible, to take the risk of being in the limelight and being heard, in spite of the stress, and challenged us to commit to one thing per week to boost our marketplace visibility. She elaborated on the importance of networking and provided many networking tips.

Our third speaker Linda K. Robertson, Past Chair of the BC WLF and a Lawyer Coach, stepped onto the stage with hot red shoes and a dynamite "how to" plan for creating professional strategic goals. She encouraged us to embark on a journey with goals in each of four areas: financial, learning and growth, personal effectiveness and stakeholders.

Linda asked us to consider our own limiting beliefs and enabling beliefs, and how they affect decisions we make. She also challenged us to consider whether a decision aligned with our strategic future plan, whether it was consistent with our own values, who would be affected by the decision and whose support would be needed to implement it. Linda ended by encouraging us to take action, launching us with a strong message: the Power of Taking One Step. Linda's wisdom and enthusiasm was warmly received by all participants, and left everyone with the tools for designing a professional strategic plan.

Given the enthusiasm of the many women who attended, the national WLF hopes to organize these conferences every two years. Plan to attend.

