



Arkansas Association of Defense Counsel

April 18th 2016

PRESIDENT'S THIRD QUARTER REPORT TO THE MEMBERSHIP

We are three quarters of the way through the 2015-16 AADC year and it seems a fitting time to share some information concerning your Arkansas Association of Defense Counsel.

WE ARE GROWING

As of April 8th 2016 we have 234 members, up more than 50 from the weeks leading up to the 2015 meeting. President Elect Michael Harrison (Watts Donovan and Tilley) chairs the membership committee and she and her regional chairs and other committee members have done yeoman's work driving up membership figures. How many other organizations can claim a 29% membership increase in nine months? Our Executive Director, Tracey Cline-Pew tells me active, registered, membership is at an all time high. Again, my heartfelt thanks go out to President Elect Michael Harrison and the many members of the membership committee.

WE MEAN SOMETHING

AADC Secretary Bryan Burns (Tyson Foods) and his legislative committee cohorts have monitored the happenings at the capitol and reported as necessary. Mark Wankum (Anderson Murphy and Hopkins) and Spence Fricke (Barber Law Firm) monitored recent proposed changes to the Arkansas Rules of Civil Procedure, recognized real problems, and authored the AADC's first ever organizational response to a per curiam order or proposed rule change. That response and the others received by the clerk's office are available on the AADC web site <http://www.arkansasdefensecounsel.net>. All those speaking to the issue took exception to the proposed change allowing service of process upon a receptionist or other "person in charge". Our plaintiff's colleagues apparently felt it unduly burdensome to observe due process by actually serving corporate or business defendants properly. However, it appears the consensus of those responding is that due process is something that we as attorneys should actually observe. There

was not a single response supporting this change.

WE ARE PROACTIVE

Every Monday morning of the 2015-16 AADC year has begun, and will begin, with an e-mailed copy of a newsletter from the AADC concerning issues of law relevant to the defense practitioner. These newsletters have been written by real lawyers (one was written by a gifted law student) really practicing defense law. These articles were volunteer efforts by lawyers facing the same demands of the billable hour we all face yet, all of whom felt a commitment to the community of defense practitioners and the simple truth stated in each issue of the AADC Newsletter. We are better together.

WE ARE GOING TO HAVE A GREAT YEAR END MEETING AND CLE CONFERENCE

As noted above, we are indeed proactive. Planning for the 2015-16 annual meeting is complete. In addition to a stellar line up of speakers (more on that below), we have a great group of vendors and sponsors, all of whom are contributing financially to our annual meeting. For the first time in my memory, the annual meeting will pay for itself. We will not run a deficit in order to present this meeting. Rather, our membership funds will be devoted to building the AADC and molding the legal environment in which we operate.

Our panel of speakers include **Dr. Sarah Cearley**, the Executive Director of JLAP, the Judges and Lawyers Assistance Program. Dr. Cearley will speak to those issues affecting our mental health and well being as well as the resources available to Judges and Lawyers absolutely free of charge.

Dr. Dennis Gardisser is both a licensed mechanical engineer with extensive background in agricultural equipment and a licensed pilot with virtually every pilot and instructor rating. Dr. Gardisser provides remedial training to ag pilots and has an extensive background in chemical application.

Dr. Hank Simmons has both PhD and MD credentials. Dr. Simmons is a board certified physician whose current endeavors are principally limited to forensic toxicology. Dr. Simmons will provide guidance on interpreting and using the mountains of data available in cases of suspected impairment.

Dr. A.J. Zolten is a neuropsychologist who will speak generally on the issues of traumatic brain injury and separating the real injury from the imagined and how we as lawyers can appreciate the difference.

Angie Hopkins, MBA, CPA is a forensic accountant who also provides guidance in business valuation. Ms. Hopkins will walk us through the mountains of data associated with business losses and again, provide the tools necessary to get to the real numbers.

Steve Johnson is a cause and origin expert, retired fire fighter, licensed private investigator and general resource in the investigation of fire losses. Mr. Johnson has been the lead investigator on thousands of fires and testified in hundreds of trials. Mr. Johnson will speak on how we, as defense practitioners may better prepare our case for trial and best of all, the things we do wrong and can do better.

Michael Langley JD is an attorney with an extensive practice in government relations and specifically alcohol regulatory issues. Mr. Langley was the director of the Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Commission. In that position, Mr. Langley was responsible for both regulatory and enforcement issues and will speak to us on the issues related to navigating government agencies in the handling of claims and suits.

It both pleases and embarrasses me to report that of all the people speaking at the annual meeting, I will be the least qualified.

Chateau On The Lake Resort and Spa is arguably the most elegant, luxurious facility at which our annual meeting has ever been held. While the attorneys are receiving continuing education hours, our family members may enjoy the benefits of a true resort and spa. Please review the facilities on line at <http://www.chateauonthelake.com/>

At the end of the day, this should be the most qualified panel with the most relevant

information made available to the defense practitioner. Likewise, our setting is fabulous and conveniently located for most of our members. As my grandmother once said, it just doesn't get any better.

I hope to see everyone at the AADC annual meeting in Branson Missouri July 29th and 30th. The registration form and brochure are attached for your convenience.

And that, friends, is the State Of The AADC for the third quarter, 2015-16.



Scott M. Strauss

AADC President 2015-16

We welcome your articles and thoughts for future editions.

**We Are Better Together:
Support The AADC**

**Membership Applications
available at**

<http://www.arkansasdefensecounsel.net/application.php>

**Please share this with friends
and colleagues.**