

## Change is Inevitable

There are few certainties in life, but one of them is that change is inevitable, and I was reminded of this during a recent visit to Bernheim Forest with my family. When we started walking around Lake Nevin, I was struck by the change in temperature since our last visit as well as the contrast between the trees that had already lost their leaves, those that were still holding on, and the evergreens that never will.

During a stop to skip rocks across the lake, I was also struck by the dichotomy between being a child and an adult. As a child I often took comfort in the consistency of my upbringing and the belief that things would never change, but as an adult I realize that things will always change and one's success in life, love, and in profession is often dictated by his or her ability to adapt.

Much like the trees in Bernheim Forest, people often fall into several categories with respect to change: (1) those who embrace it; (2) those who may not embrace it, but can adapt to it; and (3) those who fear change and fight against it, consciously or otherwise. When confronted with the many changes and challenges presented over the last 12 months, there were moments of self-doubt and concern about what steps to take next. Fortunately, however, I benefited from many wonderful people in my life, all of whom have common characteristics—they are doers who embrace change. They may not always know the right answer but understand that leading is often best exemplified by those who act even when the outcome is unknown.

Or, as better articulated by our 44th President Barack Obama:

“The best way to not feel hopeless is to get up and do something. Don't wait for good things to happen to you. If you go out and make some good things happen, you will fill the world with hope, you will fill yourself with hope.”

This past year as president of the Louisville Bar Association has taught me many things, but my desire to be a doer allowed me to move from a person able to adapt to change to someone who actually embraces it. This new personal characteristic is likely to be one of the most tangible and lasting impacts of my experience as president.

For example, in January I wrote about how my primary goal as president was to help create opportunities for the LBA's membership to come together, forget about day-to-day work, and focus on building relationships with one another. This was based upon my unwavering belief that the practice of law is always better when we know and respect those with whom we work. Little did I know, however, how truly impossible accomplishing that goal would be given COVID-19's impending impact on our society and way of life.

That said, as the impact of COVID-19 came into focus, I was forced to embrace the changing environment. No longer was I concerned about developing social events that encouraged our membership to gather together, but rather I became focused on partnering with our amazing staff and our voluntary board of directors to develop strategies that ensured the financial stability of the LBA, kept people safe, and enabled us to continue providing membership benefits.



Scott Furkin

A second goal of my presidency was to develop a strategic plan for the LBA so the board of directors could partner with the staff to adapt to the changing landscape in which attorneys obtain their continuing legal education credits. Well, as with everything in 2020, our strategic planning initiative was directly impacted by COVID-19. We did not abandon our initiative entirely; rather, it just evolved. When LBA Executive Director Scott Furkin announced that he would like to step down from his role at the end of 2021 and fully retire beginning in early 2022, we evolved from strategic to transitional planning.

The news of Scott's impending retirement is not only a defining moment of change for the LBA, but it also perfectly encapsulates his tenure as executive director. He became executive director in May 2007 after a short-term transition from his predecessor and immediately brought a foundation of stability to the organization. This stability is why the LBA was positioned to navigate this last year in a financially strong position. One of the primary reasons for this—and one that will continue to pay dividends for years to come—was the establishment of the LBA's investment account, which occurred when Scott was himself LBA president in 2004. This account permitted the board to navigate the COVID-19 environment this year without furloughing staff.

By giving 15 months prior notice of his intent to retire, Scott gives the LBA a long runway to be strategic about the hiring of its next executive director, as evidenced by the establishment of a search committee that will be working with an outside search firm over the next several months to identify his successor. Furthermore, this extended time allows the LBA to not only adapt to the upcoming change in leadership, but to fully embrace it. I am excited for Scott and the LBA as it ventures into this new chapter and look forward to seeing the fruits of search committee's efforts. I look forward to seeing the new executive director excel by working with Scott during his final months of service and under Deena Ombres' upcoming presidency in 2021, a presidency that is filled with much promise.

As I close this final article as president, I am proud of the LBA's accomplishments over the last year and I hope I have made its membership proud as well. Change is all around us, and always will be, and I will lean on my experiences serving as president as well as the counsel I have gathered from the LBA's staff, its board of directors, and its members as I continue with my professional career. There is no doubt, life will continue to present new and interesting challenges, but I will face these challenges with the confidence in knowing that by working with the many talented people who make up our greater legal community, anything is possible. Thank you for a wonderful year—I hope I made you proud—and my best to you and your family in 2021 and beyond.

Sincerely,

Peter H. Wayne IV  
LBA President



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