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GRAWA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Busy GRAWA summer equals a busier fall

For many of us, summer is a time to slow down the pace of life a bit, enjoy the weather and the outdoors, take a “staycation” with the family, and have a little meditative time pulling weeds in the garden.

While many of GRAWA's hardworking committees turned down the volume a little, most were gearing up for what is shaping up to be an active and interesting fall season.

Coming events include:

Meet and Greet, Ontario County, Sept. 24

GRAWA is delighted to come together with the Ontario County Bar Association and prominent members of the Ontario County judiciary for an informal reception to mingle with the judges and learn more about all GRAWA has to offer all attorneys in our region. The event is open to everyone. Please join us in Canandaigua to say hello, have a cookie and learn more about GRAWA's work and mission.

Annual Legislative Breakfast, Sept. 24

Join us for our Third Annual Legislative Breakfast, where GRAWA members have the unique opportunity to mingle with members of the Monroe County (state Senate and Assembly) delegation and other legislators. In addition to connecting in-person with our representatives, GRAWA will highlight, and advocate for, several of our legislative priorities for the 2009-2010 session, including no-fault divorce and equal marriage rights for same-sex couples.

Judicial Candidates Luncheon, Oct. 9

GRAWA's Judicial Candidates Luncheon is a must-attend pre-Election Day event and one of our signature programs. Attendees can meet the candidates and learn more about their backgrounds and respective positions. Participants even have the opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns. Because of its unique candidate access and dialogue, the luncheon always makes for an interesting and useful afternoon for the entire Rochester legal community. GRAWA members receive a reduced rate for attendance.

New Member Reception and Honoring 5-Year Members, Oct. 14

Each year, GRAWA hosts an evening that allows us both to look back — honoring our members with 25 years in the legal profession — and to look forward, welcoming not only GRAWA's new members but also the new members of our profession. Representatives from GRAWA's committees will be on hand to introduce themselves and their work. Our organization boasts many committees that offer our members a wide — and growing —

variety of opportunities for personal and professional growth, great substantive work, and — in the case of the Book Club and the Dinner Club — just plain fun. Come to celebrate the work of our seasoned members and to welcome GRAWA's newest generation of supporters and leaders.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month CLE

In recognition and support of October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month, in collaboration with the Seventh Judicial District's Gender Fairness Committee and the Monroe County Bar Association, GRAWA is pleased to offer a CLE addressing the issue of stalking in today's high-tech world. We are in the process of finalizing a date, so please check our Web site for more information.

I hope Rochester's legal community will support these great events. Some of our programming is open only to members of GRAWA, or is offered at reduced cost to our membership. To become a member, renew your membership, or to learn more about our upcoming events, visit us online at www.grawa.org.

As president, I am blessed to be working side-by-side with such a superb group of women attorneys. I extend my sincerest gratitude to GRAWA's dedicated members who worked so hard over the summer months to maintain our programming momentum. Thank you to GRAWA Program Committee Co-Chairwomen Stephanie McNinch-Fix and Kari Smoker for helping to coordinate virtually all of the above programs, a big job indeed. Our energetic and creative Media Chairwoman Cassie Rich already has made herself invaluable with her promoting initiatives. To the fantastic former CLE Chairwoman Linda Lohner-Pilato, who despite ending of her term in June remained steadfast in her commitment to raise awareness about GRAWA's work outside of Monroe County's borders. Kudos to Legislative Chairwoman Katie Courtney and members of GRAWA's Legislative Committee for organizing what is looking like a fascinating and politically-charged morning. Domestic Violence Committee Co-Chairwomen Kate Woods and Kristen Porpora-Sturgis have been diligently planning our upcoming stalking CLE. Finally, our Judicial Evaluation Committee Chairwomen Amy Cote and Carol McKenna deserve thanks not only for completing the candidate evaluations, but also for overseeing the many details of the luncheon. Your generosity of time this season has not gone unnoticed.

Amy Schwartz is the 27th president of the Greater Rochester Association for Women Attorneys and a senior staff attorney with Empire Justice Center, where she directs the organization's Domestic Violence Legal Project.



By **AMY SCHWARTZ**

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