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Montana Bar Association Activities

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MONTANA BAR ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES

The 75th annual meeting of the Montana Bar Association was held May 12, 13 & 14, 1960, at Billings, Montana. Stanley M. Doyle, of Polson, was elected President of the Association succeeding Franklin G. Longan of Billings. Prior to his election Mr. Doyle had been a leader in the fight for integration of the Montana Bar and his resolution authorizing the Executive Committee to take the necessary legal steps to integrate the Bar was unanimously supported by the convention. In other actions at the meeting the Association approved a resolution recommending increases in salary and retirement emoluments for District and Supreme Court Judges. Also, a resolution was passed approving the adoption of the Rules of Civil Procedure (modeled after the Federal Rules) for the State of Montana. A highlight of the meeting was the panel discussion of trial practice moderated by Judge Guy C. Derry, with Melvin M. Belli of San Francisco and Truman Rucker of Tulsa as the members of the panel. Numerous other panels were held covering subjects of interest to Montana lawyers. The registration totaled 516, the largest in the history of the Association. The Association elected Raymond J. Fox, of Missoula, succeeding John M. Dietrich of Billings, as Secretary-Treasurer; Ben E. Berg of Bozeman was nominated the President-elect of the Association. President Doyle named Jerome Anderson of Billings, Gene A. Picotte of Helena, Kendrick Smith of Butte, and Ben E. Berg of Bozeman to the Executive Committee.

President Doyle, by way of implementing the program of the Association with regard to integration, appointed Jerome Anderson as Chairman of a special committee to prepare the petition for integration of the Montana Bar. This petition was filed with the Supreme Court on the 20th day of March, 1961, and was set for hearing before the Supreme Court on May 8, 1961.

In furtherance of the Association's legislative programs, President Doyle appointed a special committee on legislative matters to confer with the 1961 Legislature. Gene A. Picotte of Helena was appointed as Chairman of this committee and the Association vice-president for each judicial district was appointed an ex-officio member of the committee. Further, a special committee on Judges' retirement headed by Gene Turnage of Polson in cooperation with a committee of the Judges' Conference produced a retirement bill which was presented to the Legislature. This bill with certain amendments was passed by the House of Representatives and defeated in the Senate.

The Legislature passed the law adopting the new Rules of Civil Procedure, which has been signed by the Governor, and will become effective January 1, 1962. Under the leadership of Chief Justice Harrison of the Supreme Court in conjunction with members of the staff of the University Law School and the State Bar Committee on Continuing Legal Education, seminars will be conducted at various places throughout the State of Montana to acquaint the practicing lawyers with the new Rules of Civil Procedure.

On April 8, 1961, the Committee on Continuing Legal Education under
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Falls, Montana. Mr. James Newton, Regional Director of the Securities Exchange Commission of Seattle, Washington, conducted the seminar, which had a registration of over 60 lawyers.

Another activity of the Montana Bar Association during the year was the preparation for hearing in the matter of the Consent Decree in the case now pending, *Montana Bar Association vs. Eugene A. Rerat et al*, which action concerns the alleged practice of employing runners to obtain personal injury claims in railroad cases in the State of Montana. Ben E. Berg and Robert Ryan have represented the plaintiff, Montana Bar Association. The matter is pending in the Montana Court until dismissal of an injunction in Minnesota against our Association.

Mr. Doyle in carrying out the policy laid down by former President Franklin Longan invited the vice-presidents of all judicial districts to attend all Executive Committee meetings, in order that a more representative group of lawyers could be present to lend their thought and experience to the various problems of the Association.

In March Justice Albert H. Angstman, after a long and distinguished career, retired from the Montana Supreme Court. The Executive Committee on April 8, 1961, adopted a Resolution honoring Justice Angstman for the long and honorable service he has given to the Supreme Court and for his material contribution to justice by reason of his well-grounded opinions affecting the liberty, rights, and welfare of the citizens of this State.

On March 23, 1961, Governor Nutter appointed President Stanley M. Doyle to the Supreme Court to fill out the unexpired term of Justice Angstman. Justice Doyle thereupon submitted his resignation as President to the Executive Committee of the Montana Bar Association. The same by unanimous vote of the Committee was not accepted. The new Justice Doyle agreed to fill out his term as President of the Montana Bar Association until a new president takes office.

The Executive Committee has approved a new plan to encourage membership in the Association from the new law school graduates. Each of the graduates will be given membership for one year without charge upon his admission to the practice of law in the State of Montana.

The Montana Bar Association Convention will be held at Missoula, Montana, on June 15, 16, and 17, 1961. Mr. Harold L. Holt of Missoula has been named chairman of the convention. Plans are now under way for a most interesting program.

Respectfully submitted,

RAYMOND J. FOX

Secretary-Treasurer

Montana Bar Association