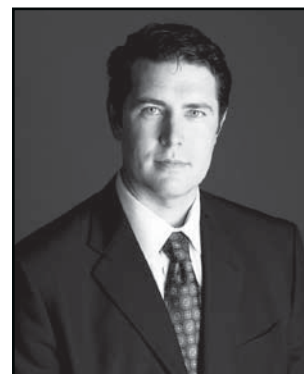


# YLS president's message

by Chris Wirken



By the time this comes to print, Law Week and the Bench-Bar & Boardroom Conference will have passed. I really look forward to these two key events in the KCMBA year. In that our Association's Mission begins with serving our members and our community, how better for YLS to further our ends than multiple public service programs in Law Week and the networking, educating, and fellowship of the Bench-Bar & Boardroom Conference?

Similar to last year, there is a historical milestone emphasized in Law Week 2009. In Law Week 2008, we celebrated 50 years since President Eisenhower first established Law Day as a "day of national dedication to the principle of government under law." In Law Week 2009, we highlighted the life and accomplishments of Abraham Lincoln for his 200th birthday. Lincoln's fame for debate, history as a practicing lawyer and presidency throughout some of the nation's most shaping times makes the President a perfect theme for Law Week.

As we have steadily done, the Young Lawyers Section organized the Ask-A-Lawyer Telethon at Fox 4 News on Monday through Thursday from 5 - 7 p.m. and 8 - 10 p.m. Last year, we answered approximately 1,800 calls and questions of the public for free—often directing callers to the KCMBA Lawyer Referral Service for further assistance. The influence and success of YLS' endeavors is totally driven by volunteers. Every volunteer from Ask-A-Lawyer with whom I've ever spoken raves about how rewarding, interesting and oftentimes entertaining they find the event. Be sure to join our efforts next time.

Also, as in previous years, we conducted several Gold E. Locks Trial presentations at area elementary schools. We hope to soon complete the editing and production of the professionally recorded presentation done of the trial this past December to readily enable this presentation to be presented at all interested schools in our region without exhausting our gracious volunteers, staff and time.

The KCMBA YLS sponsored a Naturaliza-

tion Ceremony at the Charles Evans Whitaker Federal Courthouse on Friday April 10. A reception was held for all of the new U.S. Citizens and their family after the ceremony.

Most exciting, however, for Law Week 2009, was the development of our cooperative efforts with Radio Disney brought about by the imagination, resources and diligence of the YLS Public Service Committee and the leadership of Betsy Blake, Marty Seaton and Jenny Reddix. Starting April 2 and running through May 1, Radio Disney aired public service announcements on 1190 AM promoting the law along the 2009 theme, A Legacy of Liberty: Celebrating Lincoln's Bicentennial. Additionally, Radio Disney's Rockin' Road Crew and KCMBA lawyers made presentations in true Disney fashion at several middle schools throughout the metro area focusing on President Lincoln and the law. Finally, on April 23, in conjunction with Radio Disney, YLS aided in activities at the "Take Your Child to Work Day" events at City Center Square. I cannot give enough thanks to the hard work of these volunteers and leaders for such great ideas, work and results.

Unfortunately, some of YLS' programs have waned in effect or participation and were retired. We ended the Adopt-A-Lawyer/Judge program for students to "shadow" lawyers and judges for "a day in the life." Similarly, we have exhausted our stock of Dr. Seuss books to read and give to local grade schools in the Read Across America program. We are glad to have previously provided these programs, but we must make the best use of our limited resources for the maximum effect to our profession and community.

As a significantly sized and active Section of our Association, Young Lawyers should be very proud of all that we accomplished in Law Week. YLS volunteers deserve everyone's appreciation for all the great service to the community and good will made for the profession through their efforts.

Everyone should keep in mind that the YLS

has a reserve of funding for Public Service Programs. In recent months, YLS has drafted a proposal to the KCMBA Board to clarify how KCMBA considers projects and programs. The ideal would be to direct lawyers in programs where they can provide services that non-lawyers are unable to provide. YLS thrives on volunteers that bring great ideas, time, muscle, wisdom, care, and/or energy. If you have any of these to provide and help us promote justice, professional excellence and respect for the law—the YLS is ready for you.

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