

To: Tompkins County Bar Association
RE: 2020 President's Report
From: Michael C. Pehinec Jr.

Every year, the TCBA president is expected to provide a report to the Bar Association members regarding how the year went. As I stare at my computer screen, I immediately recognized that I have no idea how to define 2020. I'm writing this on November 6th; there was an election for President of the United States on November 3rd; I still have no idea who the 46th President of the United States is going to be. Did I mention that I am writing this report from my home, and not my office, because my office, like all offices in NY, is limited to a certain capacity because of a global pandemic that is now nearly a year old? In a nutshell, 2020 can be defined by three letters, all capitalized: WTF?

More eloquent and smarter minds will be able to better sum up 2020 as the year draws to a close. But let's use this opportunity to focus on a few of the positives that came out of this year. We have all learned how to work remotely. While bumpy at first, the NYS court system has largely adapted to the pandemic in a full-scale way and I think there is an expectation that some of the remote features may be here well in to the future. And while several national events, such as the murder of George Floyd, have been shocking and unbelievably sad, the aftermath has spurred discussions that simply were not happening before in regards to addressing uncomfortable truths about our society and how we all must do better. There can be no question that discussion alone is not, in and of itself, enough of a response to these issues. It is my hope that within the next year, the TCBA will be able to announce specific steps and programs that have been undertaken to address these issues locally. I understand we can't fully solve the problem, but we should always strive to be part of the solution.

Next, I would like to address a few housekeeping issues within the organization. First, the TCBA has purchased a Zoom account. While the Board has not yet discussed this (as it was purchased a day before this report was drafted), it would be my goal that the account would be available to our members and not used simply for monthly board meetings and our Annual Meeting. Hopefully more on that soon. Second, we are going to begin utilizing the director of the Broome County Bar Association, Sindy Garey, for more administrative tasks associated with our bar, such as emails and maintaining our website. For any of our members that are also members of the Broome County Bar, you may know Sindy's name. She is great at what she does and she currently assists with our CLE programs. We are excited she has agreed to take on these tasks for us (Hayden more than anyone else). Finally, dues are going to remain the same for next year. No increase, no decrease, no elimination. Presently, our bank account is very healthy as you can probably guess because we had next to nothing to spend money on this year. But we want to ensure that the TCBA bank account remains healthy well in to the future. It is for that reason that dues will remain the same next year, but with the caveat that we expect to spend much more (Summer Social, other events, etc.) assuming the end of the pandemic and everything opening to full capacity.

Finally, I would like to thank a few individuals. To my fellow board members, thank you for the support, lively discussions, unique ideas, and ability to adapt no matter the circumstances. I feel very strongly that the incoming slate of officers and directors will be able to build upon everything we accomplished this year. To Peter Walsh, thank you for your service to the TCBA. Your experiences, wisdom, and knowledge will be missed and it's been an absolute joy for me to get to know you better, not just as a lawyer, but as a person. To Hayden Brainard, who is really the President, Treasurer, IT guy, and anything else the TCBA needs, thank you for everything that you do. I imagine that your headstone will one day say, "Loving Husband, Devoted Father, and Treasurer of the TCBA." And finally, to the Honorable Scott A. Miller. Judge, I realize that you were unable to plan the Summer Social or this year's Annual Meeting, but thank you for taking on the task of planning Wally Wiggins's memorial in the middle of a pandemic. I felt this was a perfect goodbye for one of the stalwarts of not only the Ithaca legal community, but Tompkins County as a whole.

Thank you everyone and may this year end without me having to place another chip on my card for Apocalypse Bingo. Murder hornets put me one away from a full card.

Dated 11/6/2020

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Pehinec Jr.', written over a faint horizontal line.

Michael C. Pehinec Jr.
2020 TCBA President