

(Hello) Thank you for the memories

By Ralph A. Paolone, Esquire

“Why can’t we get all the people together in the world that we like and then just stay together? I guess that wouldn’t work. Someone would leave. Someone always leaves. Then we would have to say good-bye. I hate good-byes. I know what I need. I need more hellos.” - Charles M. Schultz

I love that quote. I would say that Mr. Schultz had it right, we all need more hellos. However, I think that he also got it wrong. We can get all of the lawyers we like together in Atlantic County—and we can just stay together. In fact we have already done it—the ACBA. Although members of the association go, we can always “come home”. We saw evidence of this fact at Judge William Todd’s retirement dinner. It was a night full of hellos.

Once you are a member of our bar association, you never really leave. Although we do say our good-byes, they are not forever. When you are brothers and sisters in arms, with singular goals and beliefs, our good-byes are not an end. They simply mean I’ll miss you until we see each other again.

I am very proud to have been the President of our bar association. It has been a wonderful experience. I will cherish the memories. I will always remember how much I learned from our Federal and State Bench during our symposium on Judicial Independence—I wish our State’s voters would have gone to the lecture. I will always smile when I think about Alex Barrera beating out Tom Cruise and Jim Carrey for the Benjamin Rimm Award. I will always remember how proud and lucky I felt to be an American during this year’s naturalization ceremony.

Thank you all for allowing me the honor of leading this wonder group of people. I want to give special thanks to Tamara Lamb, our executive director. She is directly responsible for the continued success of our association. I want to thank Joe Levin and Jerry Steiner for solving the mystery of how to get the association to mean something to the criminal bar! I want to thank Shelia Hughes for her tireless work and to Sam Wolf for all of her help and for being one of the best people I know.

I want to give special thanks to our Assignment Judge Julio Mendez. He has a tremendous vision for our vicinage. He has a plan and the drive to make his vision a reality. I saw it firsthand and there is so much more to come. Thank you for inviting the Bar Association to be a part of your dreams.

Although I will miss getting up for our Thursday morning breakfast meetings, I will not say good-bye. Instead I will look forward to the next time we can say hello. That may be at one of our local CLE programs or at our next symposium at Stockton State College. I am not sure where it will be, but I know it will be soon.