President’s Report
Mark Giavedoni

I am extremely pleased and excited to be The Hamilton Law Association’s 77th President. Having spent 13 years prior in various roles and positions volunteering with the HLA, it is truly rewarding and fulfilling to now lead the organization for the coming term.

As a solicitor, I acknowledge that some of the membership may not have had a chance to meet me, so please allow me to spend a brief part of this opening article to introduce myself, in the hope that it may set us off on the right path to knowing each other a little better.

I am a proud graduate of McMaster University and the University of Windsor’s Faculty of Law. While articling at Evans, Philip LLP, I immediately found the pleasure and challenge of practising real estate. That passion, and some very serendipitous experiences with clients, enabled me to expand a generic real estate practice into a rewarding career that embodies every aspect of real estate, development, municipal, education, health, condominium and lending law. Every day is different and I love coming into the office.

In 2013, I joined a wonderful firm called ESB Lawyers LLP and further enhanced my love for property law. My partners were and continue to be supportive, co-operative and collegial. It was an ideal atmosphere to practice. I have become a Certified Specialist in Real Estate Law.

As you may have heard, ESB Lawyers merged with the Hamilton office of Gowing WLG (Canada) LLP on January 1, 2019 and I continue to be a partner there in the commercial real estate group. Some of you may have questions about this merger and I would be more than happy to speak with you about that and what it means for our community. But in a similar way, that story has lead me to consider three themes that I have identified as the focus of my term as President.

Firstly, we should be attentive to an overarching sense of community: a community of professionals in law as a membership; the community in which we practice, namely Hamilton; and the larger communities within the Golden Horseshoe and the Province generally. Community is everything, and the HLA needs to be front and centre in your ability to both plug into this “community” and to enable you to advocate for it beyond its borders. Also, as stewards of our community, our members should be able and willing to defend and support this community in all that we do.

Secondly, advocacy is another theme that we need to build upon. We need to advocate for Hamilton lawyers within our community but also for our membership and association beyond our community. The Hamilton

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Law Association has developed a very strong and influential reputation in the Province. We participate regularly in working groups and public consultations. Our ear is close to the ground. We stand up for Hamilton lawyers and speak our minds on issues that impact our membership. The HLA has earned the trust of its members and promises to advocate for them. I uphold that promise and strive in all my communications as President to maintain that advocacy.

Thirdly, it is the power of communication that enables all this to happen. The HLA Board of Trustees and its various subcommittees operate as a cogent network throughout the membership and the various areas of practice to share information. I seek to enhance communication within the membership and develop ways to better ensure that all our members have access to the information they need and a forum for questions as they arise. The HLA website is a great tool for this already, but we can do more. I welcome your ideas, comments, criticism and questions.

At the time of this writing, the HLA is currently involved in the following:

1. Oversight of the process of the transformation of LibraryCo to LIRN (Library Information Resource Network) and the reformulation of the shareholders agreement underlying that organization;
2. Monitoring the implementation of a limited licence for paralegals to practice family law;
3. Continued enhancement to the recruitment, support and integration of articling students within our community;
4. Liaising with court services staff and management to discuss matters such as processing certificates of appointment, implementation of case management initiatives and re-igniting Bench and Bar committees;
5. Review and enhancement of our excellent CPD programming;
6. Finding new ways to make our membership feel connected to each other, their community and other lawyers.

Thank you to Pat Mackesy, as our past-president, for his encouragement of and dedication to the HLA over his term. He truly has connected all the subcommittees and by extension the volunteer members throughout the organization with his tireless attendance at every meeting and event. His steadfast oversight and commitment will be a valued resource at the trustee table.

Thank you to the staff of the HLA, and specifically Executive Director Rebecca Bentham, for her daily efforts to make this organization the best law association in the Province and to making our membership in the HLA seamless, rewarding and fulfilling.

Thank you to you, dear reader, for your participation in our association, whether by volunteering, attending CPD, communicating with our members and looking to the HLA to help you feel good, connected and valued. We can’t do this without you. We do this for you. This year, you’ll see just how much an impact you will have, both personally and for the association. I think we’re going to have a blast together.