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New President to Take Over Beverly Hills Bar

By Jean-Luc Renault
Daily Journal Staff Writer

Stephen Raucher, president-elect of the Beverly Hills Bar Association's Board of Governors, wants to focus his upcoming tenure on strengthening the bar so that it can, essentially, live long and prosper.

Of course, the business litigator and longtime "Star Trek" fan recognizes that the association already has its strong points, including its family, trusts and estates, and entertainment law sections.

But the weak economy has chipped away at members, and Raucher, a partner at Reuben Raucher & Blum who takes over the post at an induction ceremony Tuesday, has made it his top goal to get membership back to pre-recession levels.

The ceremony and dinner at the Four Seasons Hotel also will feature the swearing in of other new officers, as well as the presentation of several awards to members. U.S. Attorney André Birotte Jr. for the Central District of California is the keynote speaker.

"We've already seen an increase in membership recently, which is not the case for a lot of associations," Raucher, a former president of the bar's young lawyers section, said. "But the goal will be to improve on that."

Raucher, who has been a member



Stephen L. Raucher

Robert Levins / Daily Journal

of the association's governing board since 2006, said that one way to grow membership is to continue offering the association's renowned seminars and talks.

"That's one reason why we've been able to bounce back already," he said. "We offer the best programs around."

On top of bolstering the association's numbers, Raucher plans to beef up its litigation section, with plans to

award a "litigator of the year" honor next year. The bar also plans to give an award for judicial excellence next year, a recognition Raucher would like to see become an annual tradition.

Raucher grew up in what's now known as Valley Village. While studying English at UCLA, Raucher took a constitutional law class that sparked his interest in becoming an attorney.

After graduating from UC Berkeley

School of Law in 1992, Raucher spent two years at Kinsella Boesch Fujikawa & Towle, later joining Reuben & Novicoff.

In 2005, he became a name partner. Since then, his practice has consisted mainly of intellectual property litigation and complex business disputes, with an emphasis on representing individuals and institutions against liability insurers that have dropped them.

When not busy with family, the father of two and lifelong Dodger fan lately has been trying to get past the team's miserable season — on and off the field.

He also still enjoys "Star Trek," and though it's been more than 20 years since he's been to a Trekkie convention, he was able to sneak out to see last year's motion picture reboot of the series.

When it comes to his volunteer work for the bar, Raucher takes his job very seriously, a quality that hasn't been lost on colleagues.

"Steve's a fine thinker and always impresses me with the quality of his analysis," said Marc Staenberg, the bar association's executive director. "He gets the fact that the position is not about him but all about the institution. He's going to be a great leader."

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