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Announcements

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

REPORT ON LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

During the recent session of the Legislature representatives of the Association appeared before the judiciary committees of the Senate and House of Delegates of the Legislature on behalf of several measures approved and sponsored by the Association for the betterment of the profession and in the public interest. Among these measures were the following:

(a) the Bar Integration Bill (House No. 309, Senate No. 87), a proposal which has been discussed fully in the *Law Quarterly* by Wright Hugus, Esq., of the Wheeling bar, past president of the Association;¹

(b) the Uniform Declaratory Judgments Bill (House No. 310, Senate No. 84), a proposal which has also been discussed fully in the *Law Quarterly* by Thomas B. Jackson, Esq., of the Charleston bar, past president of the Association;²

(c) the Tax Lien Bill, to require the state and its political subdivisions to file notice of tax liens in the office of the clerk of the county court with respect to all taxes, other than *ad valorem* taxes on real property and special assessments for improvements (House No. 315, Senate No. 33) ;

(d) bills to reduce the time for appeal to the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia from eight to five months (Companion Bills, House Nos. 331, 332, Senate Nos. 138, 139) ;

¹ Hugus, *An Integrated Bar* (1936) 43 W. VA. L. Q. 10.

² Jackson, *Proposal for Declaratory Judgment Procedure* (1938) 45 W. VA. L. Q. 31.

(e) Automobile Guest Bill, to require a showing of wilful and wanton negligence as a prerequisite to recovery by a guest against the operator of the vehicle in which he is traveling (Senate No. 121).

A full hearing was given to these measures by the legislative judiciary committees. Representatives of the Association appeared at the hearing, at the request of Chairman Stanley C. Morris, of Charleston, of the Association's Committee on Legislation, and discussed and analyzed the various measures. The presentation of the Uniform Declaratory Judgments Act was made by Thomas B. Jackson, Esq., of the Charleston bar; the presentation of the Bar Integration Bill, by Wright Hugus, Esq., of the Wheeling bar; the presentation of the proposal to reduce the time for appeal to the Supreme Court of Appeals to five months, by Robert S. Spilman, Jr., Esq., of the Charleston bar; the presentation of the Tax Lien Bill, by H. L. Snyder, Jr., Esq., of the Charleston bar; and the presentation of the Automobile Guest Bill, by Charles G. Peters, Esq., of the Charleston bar. Other representatives of the Association who attended the hearing at the request of Chairman Morris included Ronald F. Moist, Esq., of the Clarksburg bar; C. Lee Spillers, Esq., of the Wheeling bar; W. Chapman Revercomb, Esq., Kenneth Talbott, Esq., A. G. Stone, Esq., S. L. Flournoy, Esq., Donald O. Blagg, Esq., and Charles C. Wise, Jr., Esq., of the Charleston bar; and Bernard Selove, Esq., Executive Secretary of the Association, of Charleston.

UNIFORM DECLARATORY JUDGMENTS ACT

One of the measures sponsored by the Association was enacted into law, namely, the Uniform Declaratory Judgments Act. This Act, designated now as Enrolled House Bill No. 310, was introduced in the House of Delegates by Delegate James R. Ewing, of Wheeling. It was reported out of committee favorably almost immediately after the hearing of the representatives of the Association, and was passed, without substantial opposition, on March 3, 1941, effective ninety days from passage, and became law with the Governor's signature. The act is similar to the existing federal law, and it confers upon all courts of record jurisdiction to make binding declarations of rights and to determine questions of construction of writings, whether or not any consequential relief is or could be claimed. The uniform act was first approved by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws in 1922, and West Virginia

now becomes the twenty-ninth state to adopt it. The act is the fourteenth uniform act adopted to date by West Virginia.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

After three years of intensive effort, the Association has over 800 members in good standing, and is gradually approaching the goal of 1,000 members set in 1938 by the then president, W. G. Stathers, Esq., of the Clarksburg bar. State-wide canvassing for new members and for reinstatement of former members is now being carried forward vigorously under the able leadership of McDaniel Purcell, Esq., Chairman of the Committee on Admissions of the Association, of Huntington, with the aid of the twenty-four members of his committee who represent the various judicial circuits. The coming annual meeting at Morgantown, on October 9 and 10, 1941, should be an incentive to many nonmembers to affiliate with the Association, (the last meeting having been held there ten years ago), and this should be true especially as to attorneys located in the northern part of the state and as to attorneys throughout the state who are graduates of the College of Law of West Virginia University. All members of the Association are urged to cooperate with the Committee on Admissions and to endeavor to interest nonmembers in their respective communities, especially the new members of the bar, in becoming members of the Association.

Membership in a local bar association where one exists in the county is a prerequisite to membership in the state Association. Membership fees are \$5.00 and \$3.00, the latter fee being for attorneys who apply for membership during the first five years after admission to practice. Former members of the Association, who did not resign but whose names were dropped from the roll of members in the past for nonpayment of dues for two or more years pursuant to the requirements of the constitution and by-laws of the Association, may reinstate by paying a fee of \$15.00 which is applicable to all back dues and to dues for the current year in which reinstatement is made. Membership and reinstatement application blanks may be obtained from Chairman Purcell whose address is First Huntington National Bank Building, Huntington, or from any of the members of his committee or from the Executive Secretary, P. O. Box 1372, Charleston.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

Dues reminders have been mailed recently to all members of the Association who have not yet paid dues for the current year, 1941, which were due and payable on January 1. At the present time the vast majority of the members are fully paid to December 31, 1940, so that the collection of dues involves only current dues for the year 1941 in most instances. The Association is operating within its income and has no past-due debts whatsoever, and with the receipt of all dues now outstanding will be enabled to meet all of its anticipated operating expenses to the end of the present fiscal year, on December 31, 1941. All members still owing dues are urged to send in their remittances at once, payable to the Association, mailed to P. O. Box 1372, Charleston. Annual dues are \$5.00 and \$3.00, the latter for members during the first five years after admission to practice, and payment of annual dues entitles one to subscription to the Yearbook of the Association and to the West Virginia Law Quarterly and The Bar.

1940 YEARBOOK

The recently issued Yearbook of the Association for 1940 has been sent to all members who were in good standing as of December 31, 1940. The book was edited by the Executive Secretary, with the technical assistance of the printer's staff, and with the assistance of Ralph D. Woods, Esq., of Charleston, Librarian of the Association, as to the historical data included in the appendix of the volume. Further revisions in form, arrangement and material were made, and the publication has been copyrighted. Each book contains a receipt card insert which members are requested to return to the Association promptly. The Association has a limited supply of the books on hand for distribution to delinquent members who desire to pay their dues and place themselves in good standing. Members who have extra copies of the yearbooks of prior years which they do not need are requested to send in such copies to the Association for its files.