Stephen Speicher Heads Blind Lawyers Association

Blind lawyers can have a hard time competing on equal terms with their sighted colleagues, but Stephen Speicher and the American Blind Lawyers Association are trying to even up the odds. Speicher, a 1974 graduate of the Law School who has been totally blind since the age of two, has been President of the Association since July 1988. Through mailings to law schools, state bar associations, and judges, he is trying to bring the ABLA, which currently has about 200 members around the country, to the attention of both visually impaired lawyers and those with normal sight. “Blind” is something of a misnomer, he states. “It encompasses the whole range of those whose vision is impaired, from those with no sight to those who can read a computer screen and people who can almost drive.”

Speicher is hoping to reach more blind students and also practicing lawyers who do not even think of themselves as blind, such as those with vision impaired through glaucoma, diabetes, or age. The Association puts visually impaired lawyers in touch with each other to share experiences and offer mutual help. The Association’s annual convention will be held in Denver at the end of June, and Speicher is contacting visually impaired judges to encourage them to attend. The ABLA also aims to educate the sighted world not to dismiss blind job applicants through fear of overwhelming difficulties. The Association is contacting larger law firms and bar associations to find out their needs and then pass on to students tips and skills to increase their ability to compete for jobs on an equal basis. “We want to bring blind people into the mainstream,” Speicher says.

The American Blind Lawyers Association was incorporated in 1971 and Speicher has been associated with it since 1979. He sees his Presidency as an opportunity to make the organization more active. “We are also trying to get together with other organizations for the blind, such as the National Federation, to work for our common aims rather than competing, as has happened in the past.”

Stephen Speicher is a solo practitioner in Lincoln, Nebraska, with a general practice that emphasizes disability and consumer credit cases. He worked for Legal Services and the Consumer Law Center after graduating from the Law School until setting up his own practice in 1981.

announces that effective January 8, 1990, he became a Senior Consultant at Hay Management Consultants, where he is establishing a division specializing in collective bargaining and human resources in the public sector. Prior to that, Bob had been Director of New York City’s Office of Municipal Labor Relations and Chief Labor Negotiator since 1983, and since April of 1989 he had been both Director of Personnel and Director of Municipal Labor Relations. Lee Martin writes from Birmingham, Alabama, that he recently changed firms and is now a partner with Dominick Fletcher & Yelkin in Birmingham, where he represents public hospitals and tax-exempt organizations. He has two daughters, ages nine and thirteen, has been campaign manager and adviser to several Democratic candidates in Alabama, and was recently elected chief legal officer for Civitan International.

Preston Moore reports that he has relocated to Morrison & Foerster’s Tokyo office. Bill Penteoswitz, Minneapolis, represented Planned Parenthood of Minnesota in a case argued before the U.S. Supreme Court in November of 1989, in which Planned Parenthood was challenging a state statute requiring notice to parents of minors prior to abortions. A decision is expected this spring. Bill is one of three managing partners of Maslon Edelman Borman & Brand in Minne-
apolis, where he and his wife, Barbara, live with their three children.

Dick Roddewig is practicing law, principally land use and zoning, and is also president of Clarion Associates, a real estate consulting and appraisal firm. He frequently testifies in administrative hearings and trials involving real estate valuation issues. He is currently chairman of the ABA’s Land Use, Planning and Zoning Committee of the Urban, State and Local Government Law Section. Dick, his wife Noreen, and their three children reside in Riverside, Illinois.

Laurence Rosen’s latest book, The Anthropology of Justice: Law as Culture in Islamic Society, was recently published by Cambridge University Press. He is Chairman of the Anthropology Department at Princeton University and Adjunct Professor of Law at Columbia Law School. Mike Rosenhouse, Rochester, New York, reports that he has recently published two articles, “One Bill, One Subject,” in the October 17, 1988, issue of the National Law Journal and “Tort Liability: What Kind of Crisis?”—a book review in 73 Judicature 56 (June-July 1989). Donald Shapiro heads the firm of Donald A. Shapiro, Ltd., in Chicago. The firm specializes in medical malpractice and product liability litigation for plaintiffs. He recently won a $1,500,000 verdict against Cook County Hospital on behalf of the estate of a woman who committed suicide while a patient there. Barry Sullivan writes that for the last two years he has served as the Chair of the ABA’s Coordinating Committee on AIDS. Barry is a partner at Jenner & Block in Chicago, where he heads up their Appellate Practice Group.

Nancy Schaefer opened a new firm in mid-1988, Schaefer & Rosenwein, with two lawyers. They are now up to seven lawyers, and as Nancy writes, “Two of our goals were to have more fun and find a more balanced lifestyle—we’ve been having a lot of fun, and we’re still working on the balance.” Also announcing the opening of a new office is John Strain, who has opened an office in Long Beach, California, with a practice specializing in a broad range of tax matters, including international tax and employee benefits. Carl Struby is a partner with Gage & Ticker, Kansas City, Missouri, where he enjoys a