

“As Time Goes By – NYIPLA, By Any Other Name...”

by Dale Carlson

The history of the NYIPLA is replete with tongue-twisting acronyms. Back in 1981, the Association’s Bulletin was called the “The New York Patent Law Association Bulletin.” The September 1981 issue was identified as Volume 21, Number 1 - suggesting that the Bulletin of the Association was entering its 21st year of publication then.

In 1983, the Association’s name was changed to The New York Patent, Trademark and Copyright Law Association. Although that name aptly reflected the important role that trademark and copyright lawyers brought, and continue to bring, to the table as members of our Association, the name was a bit cumbersome. Accordingly, the Board of Directors searched for an acronym, settling on “NYPTC” since that was considered “easier to say” than “NYPTCLA.” To see if you agree, try saying “NYPTC” three times fast!

In any event, the December 1983 Bulletin was published as “The New York Patent, Trademark and Copyright Law Association NYPTC Bulletin.” That rather substantial, if not redundant, moniker stuck for a number of years.

Later, when “intellectual property” became a popular catch-all phrase, our Association changed its name again, and the Bulletin became the “NYIPLA Bulletin” as we know it today.

Perusing the last three decades of Bulletins offers more than just a glimpse at Association name changes. It also offers a

glimpse at people changes within the Association: to wit, members becoming

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committee chairs, committee chairs becoming directors, directors becoming officers.

These people changes flow from the various tasks that the committees set out to accomplish, and the accomplishments themselves: amicus brief submissions, commentaries on pending IP legislation, CLE meeting synopses, case law digests, articles of interest, and so forth. The over-arching theme for our Association is education about the significance of intellectual property to our society. This IP education speaks to a myriad of audiences: members educating members, members educating the general public, members educating Congress, members educating the Supreme Court.

If you are interested in getting ahead in your chosen profession, be it in the area of patents, trademarks, copyrights, privacy law, trade secrets, or a related field, in my opinion there’s no better way to do so than by becoming active in the NYIPLA. Measured against any other IP law organization I can think of, the NYIPLA stands out as being most worthwhile.

If you’re already engaged in NYIPLA committee work, that’s great. If you’re not, then please feel free to reach out to the Association’s Executive Administrator, Feikje Van Rein, to express an interest in becoming active.

If you do become actively involved in the Association now, that activity will become its own reward since it will make you a better IP lawyer. It will also lead to friendships and business contacts that will last a lifetime. Of course, the full measure of the benefits you will gain will only be apparent when you peruse the Association’s Bulletins, by whatever name they may then be called, thirty years from now. In the meantime, enjoy!

With kind regards,
Dale Carlson