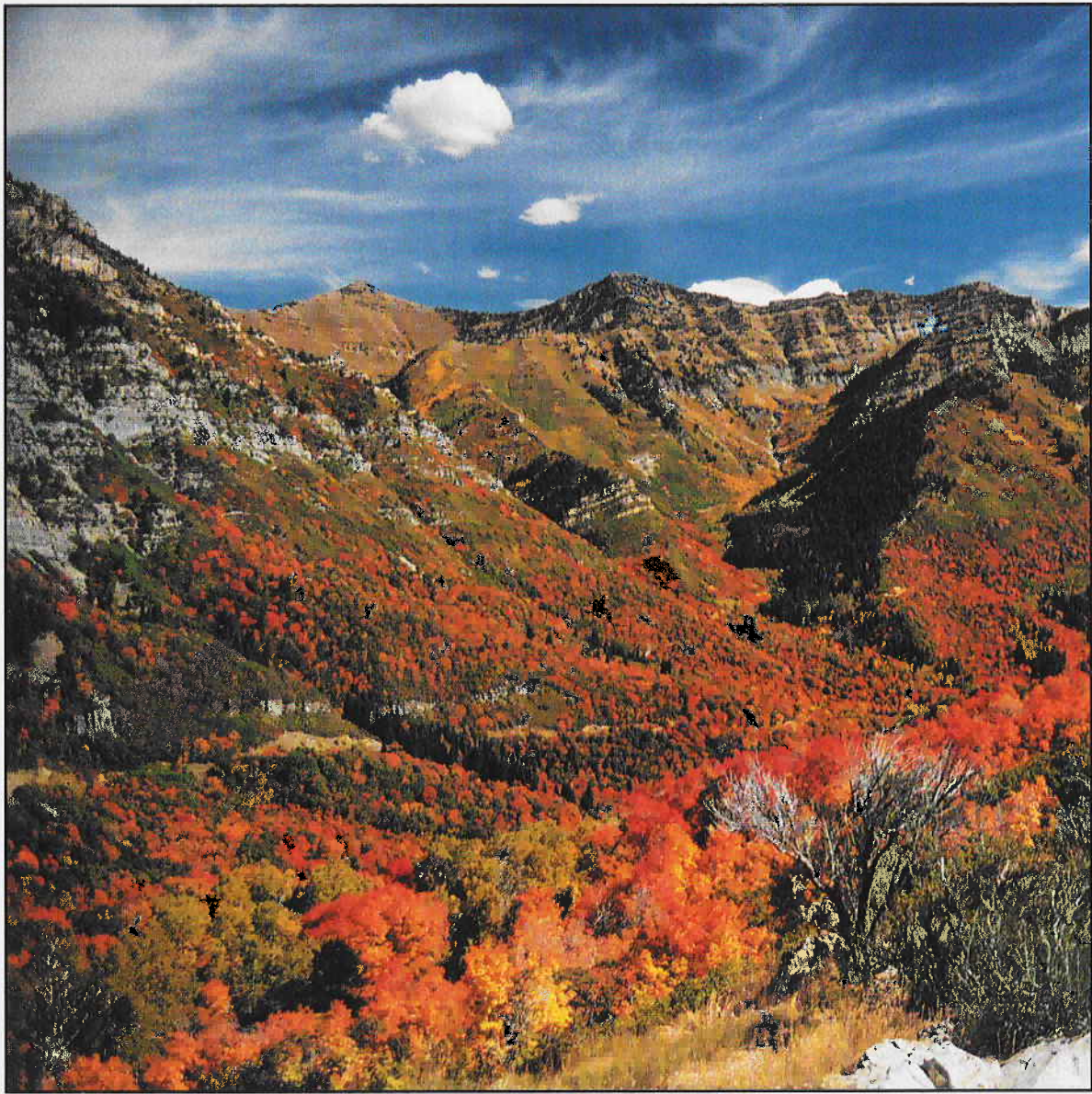


# UTAH BAR JOURNAL

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**The Premier Trial Lawyer's Seminar:  
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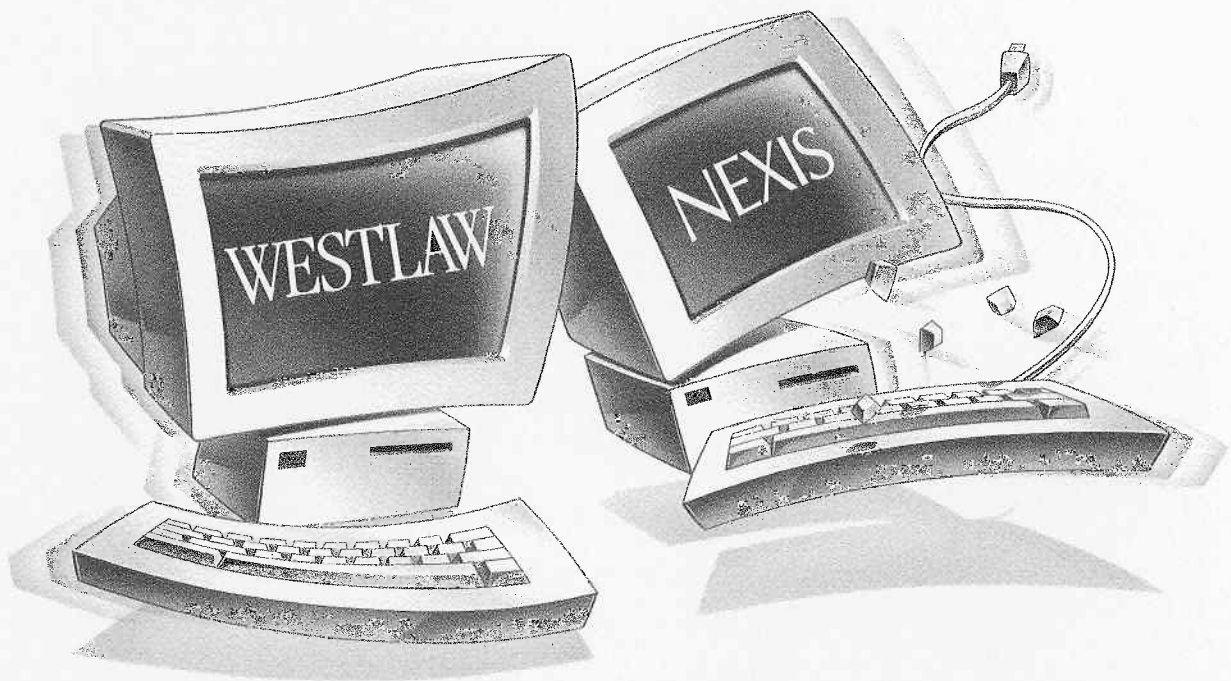
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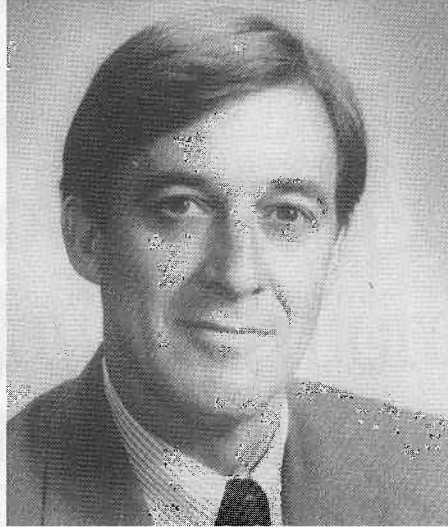
COVER: Provo Peak and Friends, Utah County by Phillip E. Lowry, Provo, Utah.

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## Vision, Mission and Goals of the Bar

By Dennis V. Haslam

A few weeks ago, the Board of Bar Commissioners met to review critical issues and goals facing the bar and to reexamine the vision of the bar and its mission. We waxed philosophical for hours, parroted a few Bruce S. Jenkins stories about lawyers, beat on our chests saying what good people lawyers are, and listened to former Justice D. Frank Wilkins insert a few Abraham Lincolnisms.

In the end, we came up, tentatively of course and subject to your input, with a "Vision" of the Utah State Bar, and a Mission Statement, Critical Issues and Goals.

### VISION

A famous disk jockey once said that you should keep your feet on the ground and reach for the stars. Well, here is our Vision:

To lead society in the creation of a justice system that is understood, valued, respected and accessible to all.

We have much to do in improving the public's understanding of our justice system. Once the public understands it they will value and respect it. As lawyers, we need to take the lead in making legal services accessible to everyone.

### MISSION

We adopted the following as the Mission Statement for the Utah State Bar:

To represent lawyers in the State of Utah and to serve the public and the legal profession by promoting justice, professional excellence, civility, ethics, respect for, and understanding of, the law.

It is pretty hard to argue with this one except, of course, that we have probably left out a few important messages. Nonetheless, in a relatively simple statement, without too much legalese, we think we've got it. The bar should adopt this statement as its mission. Each element of the statement is achievable if it is reflected in the conduct of all members of the bar.

### CRITICAL ISSUES

We reviewed the many critical issues facing the bar. In our current environment, the social issues include increasing poverty, violent youth crimes, breakdown of the family, physical abuse, racial discrimination and low income citizens who are unable to obtain access to the legal system.

Practice issues are particularly significant for solo and small firm practitioners. As you know, approximately 40% to 50% of lawyers nationwide are small firm and solo practitioners. Those lawyers need access to information in order to remain current with legal and technological changes. We are working to get Utah lawyers closer to the web of the ABA internet.

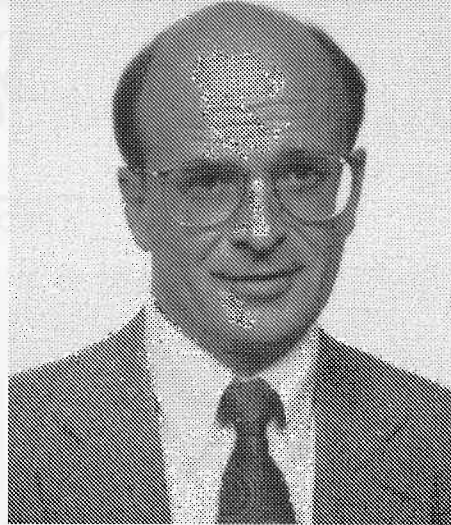
The public standing of lawyers in society is also an important issue to our members. Our image, in light of recent legal proceedings televised nationally, is probably not too good. Negative public perceptions must be changed by setting good examples of doing the right thing, both privately and publicly.

### GOALS

Five goals were adopted by the Commission:

1. To promote the administration of justice.
2. To uphold and elevate the standards of courtesy, ethics, competence, professionalism, public service and collegiality in the legal profession. Do unto other lawyers as you would have other lawyers do unto you.
3. To educate the public about the rule of law and the public's responsibilities under the law and to increase public understanding of the role of the legal profession within the system of justice.
4. To provide improved access to legal services for the public.
5. To promote the value of lawyers in the legal system.

The vision, mission statement, issues and goals are the fabric of our bar. If you like any of these ideas, let us know. If you don't, let us know. If they can be improved, let us know that, too.



## The Public Image of Lawyers

*By James C. Jenkins, Bar Commissioner, First Division*

Perhaps the single most important purpose of an organized Bar is to promote public confidence in the judicial system. In a democracy, the integrity and efficiency of an institution is dependent upon its public support, and public support is affected by the image the institution portrays to the public and the experience the public has with the institution.

Attorneys of the Utah Bar support legal services to the poor and disadvantaged, contribute to the regulation of judicial conduct and lawyer discipline and the unlawful practice of law. Utah lawyers participate in continuing legal education to improve competency and professionalism. We advocate principles of justice and promote many other improvements to the law.

Perhaps the public has taken our profession and the legal system for granted. Certainly it is much easier to sell magazines and newspapers or commercial air time with controversy and criticism, than with optimism and education. We must continue

to promote the good in our profession and the qualities of our system. It is easy to focus on the O.J. Simpson case and its examples of professional acrimony and legal posturing, judicial disorder, and the commercialization of trial. Yet the public needs to be reminded that such is not representative of the judiciary or the legal profession, nor is it necessarily the model for resolution of controversy. The public needs to be reminded that the overwhelming majority of attorneys and judges are people who have devoted their lives to order, justice and equality. They are people who serve their community outside their occupation as religious leaders, volunteers on civic boards, commissions and committees, and as local government leaders on school boards, city councils, zoning commissions, and other organizations. They are PTA leaders, scout leaders, little league and soccer coaches, police instructors, volunteers at nursing homes, and civic leaders. Lawyers are called upon, and willingly serve, in a myriad of volunteer assignments sharing

their unique educational skills and training for the improvement and benefit of the community.

Rather than accept or ignore the criticisms of our system and profession, I believe it is our duty to inform and remind the critics and the general public of who we are and what we do. When we improve the public image of lawyers, we build the public's confidence in lawyers and the judicial system.

The mission of the Utah Bar should be to make better lawyers and improve public respect for the profession. I am honored to be a lawyer. I consider it a privilege to be a member of the Utah Bar. I am pleased with the accomplishments of Utah lawyers. We need not apologize for our profession, but rather we should continue to strive to honorably serve our clients and the community, to improve our skills and services, and to otherwise help earn and maintain public respect.

