

C. Erik Chickedantz
Hawk, Haynie, Kanmeyer & Chickedantz, LLP
President, Indiana State Bar Association

May it please the Court.

Governor Daniels, Chief Justice Shepard, members of the Court and Judiciary, legislators, elected officials, members of the Indiana bar and friends of the Chief Justice.

A strong relationship between any state's Supreme Court and the practicing bar is crucial to the efficient administration of justice. Further, true access to justice doesn't exist unless all three branches of Government work together to insure the court system is fully operational. The thoughts of this year's American Bar Association President, Bill Robinson, capture that idea and are expressed in the theme of Law Day 2012 --"No Courts, No Justice, No Freedom."

Indiana is blessed to have three co-equal branches of government that understand this concept. The same cannot be said for all of our states. Leadership is the key. For the past 27 years Indiana's judicial branch has been led by a judge who ranks among the finest jurists to ever suit up -- to ever don the judicial robe -- at any level, Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard.

The Chief -- gets it!!

During the past 3 years I have traveled to many national and regional meetings involving other state bar associations. I can tell you that, without exception, other state leaders recognize how fortunate the Indiana Bar and Hoosiers, in general, are to have our effective and efficient system of courts under the leadership of Randy Shepard. He is held in the highest regard by his peers, other bar leaders and lawyers throughout the country.

On the home front, the Chief has always been willing to listen to comments and concerns of the practicing lawyer. He regularly reports on the State of the Judiciary, he reports at the State Bar's Annual House of Delegates Meeting and, in fact, stays throughout that meeting to listen to the debate on issues facing the practice of law in Indiana. Issues which ultimately affect the well-being of all Hoosiers.

Chief Justice Shepard has been a tireless leader on both the state and national level. He has served us well. On behalf of the 12,500 members of the Indiana State Bar Association it gives me great pleasure to #1, salute him for a job well done and wish him well in his retirement and #2 present the Chief with a small token of appreciation and thanks.

In the early 1990's, the ISBA commissioned a local artist to do a drawing of the bench of the Supreme Court not knowing how long he was going hang in. As 20 plus years have passed since it was commissioned, I can tell you we had to dust this thing off for today's ceremony. But regardless, the prints are signed and numbered. Even though the Court has undergone several changes over these years, we saved print #1 for "our Chief Justice" Randy Shepard.

Chief, from all Indiana lawyers, thank you for a magnificent run. You have brought great credit to our State and our profession.