

From Whence They Came...

As lawyers, we should all be proud of the Baton Rouge legal community. We have many of the finest lawyers and judges in America right here in our city. One of the most important assets of the Baton Rouge legal community is the way that our lawyers have trust and respect for each other. This makes our quality of life in the practice of law far superior to that in other cities because lawyers treat each other as gentlemen and ladies.

But, of late, with the influx of new lawyers and new firms, trained to practice law in what may be the proper manner in another city, the gentlemanly nature of our law practice is eroding and there is a serious threat in the way that we have always done business in this city. I don't mean to single out any particular lawyers or firms but everyone knows who they are and from whence they came.

So in order to set forth for these new comers the *custom legem* in the Baton Rouge area I called around to a few lawyers and got a non-exhaustive list of "rules of thumb" for courteous Baton Rouge law practice for the people who are not familiar with how we do it here (and as a refresher for those of us who have forgotten).

1. Baton Rouge lawyers don't lie to each other or to the Court;
2. A Baton Rouge lawyer will not default another lawyer when he has been notified by telephone that the other lawyer will be representing a party in a case;
3. A Baton Rouge lawyer does not set up depositions without first coordinating the times and dates with the calendars of all other attorneys involved in the case;
4. A Baton Rouge lawyer will not file a Motion to Compel Discovery without first notifying the other lawyer that he is going to do so and without allowing the offending lawyer a chance to respond after being so notified;
5. Baton Rouge lawyers do not engage in

ex parte conversations with the Court;

6. When a Baton Rouge lawyer says he is going to do something or send you something, he does;

7. No written motions are required if a Baton Rouge lawyer gives you an extension of time (unless, of course, some official court rule requires it);

8. Baton Rouge lawyers are considerate to other lawyers, Judges, their secretaries, law clerks, court reporters and staff;

9. Baton Rouge lawyers realize that a lawyer's client is very precious to him and, as such, do not try to entice another lawyer's client away;

10. In Baton Rouge, unless otherwise stipulated, the defendants pay the court costs on settlements;

11. Baton Rouge lawyers do not file unnecessary pleadings just for the purpose of generating an attorney's fee;

12. Baton Rouge lawyers always return phone calls from other Baton Rouge lawyers (maybe late, but eventually).

The reason I have listed many of these "rules" is that in talking to other lawyers it appears that the art of verbal communication is disappearing.

While in some cases and with some lawyers there is often a need to do everything in writing, there is also a lot that can be done if we just attempt to communicate with each other in person or over the telephone. When it gets close to a trial date and the lawyers are actually communicating with each other, most cases settle. The reason is that the lawyers, in all probability, first started talking to each other at that point.

The friendly nature of law practice in the Baton Rouge area is a gift we all take for granted because it has been here for such a long time. But, under present conditions, if we don't play an active role in attempting to preserve it, it will be gone and our quality of life as lawyers will deteriorate.

Ed Walters

AROUND THE BAR

Published by
Baton Rouge Bar Association

222 St. Louis Street #738

Baton Rouge, LA 70802-5882

504/344-4803

Officers

Gregory M. Eaton	President
	383-3001
Paul Marks, Jr.	President-Elect
	387-6966
Frank Tertitta	Secretary
	387-0241
Cordell Haymon	Treasurer
	343-8265
Michael H. Rubin	Past-President
	383-1400

Directors

Anthony Marabella	Charles McCowan
Cyrus Greco	Eugene Groves
Mike McKay	Ed Walters

Newsletter Committee

Ed Walters	Editor
Hon. Steve Riedlinger	Assistant Editor
Steve Klimczak	Robert Hoover
Scott Crawford	Robert Collins
Anne Crochet	Allen Posey
Art Vingello	Derren Johnson
Hon. Bob Downing	Hon. Doug Moreau

Staff

Bobbi M. Zaunbrecher	Executive Director
Jackie Wright	Public Service Coordinator
Dawn Spillman	Secretary

Advertising Sales Representatives

Robert Lenter	Jeff Wittenbrink
---------------	------------------

Copyright © 1987. All rights reserved.



JOSEPH F. FRANTZ

PhD Chemical Engineer
Expert Witness

- CHEMICALS
- PETRO-CHEMICALS
- PETROLEUM
- NATURAL GAS
- AVIATION

THE FRANTZ CO.

7171 Harwin Drive, Suite 202
Houston, Texas 77036

Area Code 713
Phone 781-8493

SHOP AROUND THE BAR FIRST

AROUND THE BAR wants to remind you to support the advertisers who support your Bar Association. When you require services, shop **AROUND THE BAR** first, to see who cares about your business enough to try to reach you through your own publication. Let them know you called because they advertise in **AROUND THE BAR**.