

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S PAGE

“It’s been quite an autumn” I wrote in last fall’s message. But the California wildfires, the third Presidential impeachment in our nation’s history, even the first-ever World Series title for the Washington Nationals that captured our attention so very recently seem like distant memories in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic that has engulfed the entire globe.

None of us has been untouched by the novel coronavirus. Some of us have lost loved ones. All of us, I’m sure, know of persons who have contracted the disease, and know of still others who have lost their jobs. And as we heard only last month from the leaders of the major energy trade associations, shortages of personal protective equipment – the PPEs we read about in the daily news – can mean the difference between life and death not only for first responders, health care workers, and nursing home caregivers, but for those critical system operators who keep the lights on and natural gas flowing. Every one of our lives have been upended in one fashion or another.

Beyond the staggering death toll, saddest to me is that we’ve had to alter so drastically the ways in which we mark life’s events – the mourning of a friend or loved one who has passed away, the birth of a child or grandchild, a wedding, a birthday, a graduation. One of those events of significance to those of us who work on the Journal is the annual banquet held in Tulsa each spring to honor the hard work and dedication of the students and faculty who help put the Journal together.

When classes were suspended on campuses nationwide, including classes at the University of Tulsa College of Law, plans for the banquet were cancelled. The student Editor-in-Chief, Carly Kidner, urged the faculty to schedule a virtual banquet that would allow students, now taking classes from home, to celebrate. Professor Robert Butkin, the Journal’s faculty advisor, readily agreed and the school arranged a full program. While the presentation of the student awards by video was not the in-person ceremony the students deserved, it provided the students at least a form of the recognition they had earned.

I would venture to say that most of us who practice energy law consider ourselves relatively lucky. We have the ability to work from home. And fretting about Instacart not delivering all the items on our grocery list is indeed a trivial concern compared to the bona fide hardships others are facing.

Fortunately, the same technological advances that allow us to work from home have allowed the authors, peer review editors, and students who produce the Journal to continue our work as well. The products of that work have taken several forms.

Over the last several years we have asked the author of the lead article in each edition of the Journal to give an author talk. Like the student banquet, we had to postpone the author talk/workshop on LMP pricing by David Savitski, author of *LMPs for (Technically-Inclined) Dummies*. As we go to press, our plans are to schedule David’s talk using an online platform.

EBA Brief, the brainchild of EBA's immediate past president, Jonathan Schneider, became a reality. The new quarterly electronic publication is a product of the efforts and coordination of the EBA Board, the Foundation of the Energy Law Journal, the Energy Law Journal's editorial staff, the George Washington University Law School, and the EBA Brief Task Force. *EBA Brief* will serve as a complement to the Journal. Unlike the Journal and its more in-depth treatment of issues, *EBA Brief* will focus on shorter, topical pieces in an on-line magazine-style format. The first co-Editors-in-Chief of *EBA Brief* have roots with the Journal. Nicholas Pascale is the outgoing President of the Foundation of the Energy Law Journal and John McCaffrey has written for the Journal. My friend and predecessor, Bob Fleishman and I are serving as EBA Brief's ELJ liaisons.

We have also begun plans to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Journal this fall in a fashion similar to the way we acknowledged the Journal's 25th anniversary. We devoted that anniversary edition to republishing some of the most influential articles of the Journal's first quarter century of existence. This time we will be republishing Journal articles from the last fifteen years that have also had a significant impact on energy law and policy. Kat Gamache, our Executive Editor, Nick Cicale, our Administrative Editor, and I have begun canvassing past and present peer review editors for their recommendations. The selection will be an inherently subjective process, since we'll be selecting only three articles and still intend the fall edition to include new pieces as well. If you have some favorites that you believe merit inclusion, please share your thoughts with us.

A new Canadian Chapter has come into existence. As Jane Rueger notes in her President's message, members of that Chapter have co-authored a comprehensive survey of Canadian energy law developments during 2019. We know you will find their work useful.

Finally, our authors, editors, and the student members of the Journal have continued to work through the crisis to produce the high quality articles, notes, and committee reports you have come to expect. An edition of this magnitude – five articles, two student notes, four committee reports, and more – would have been a tall order under conventional circumstances. So let me give a special shout out to the graduating student Editor-in-Chief and her hard-working staff for their remarkable dedication.

When the pandemic ends – and it will – the new normal almost certainly will look different than the world in which we lived such a short time ago. But we are confident that you can continue to rely on the Journal as a source of practical and timely scholarship.

Stay safe and well,
Harvey L. Reiter
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