

Painting The Town

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By admin

It was a grand affair at the Museum of Fine Arts as the Massachusetts Academy of Trial Attorneys hosted a cocktail soiree during the Association of Trial Lawyers of America annual meeting in Boston late last month.

All the MATA heavy hitters were there, including current President Kathleen M. O'Donnell and incoming President Frederic N. Halstrom, who hinted about making a move to have the name of MATA changed during his presidency.

And what does Halstrom, who takes the MATA helm in the fall, have in mind?

"Something with 'consumer lawyers' in it," says Halstrom, noting that other associations nationwide — including California — have already made the move in order to present a moniker that has a more positive connotation to the public.

Some trial attorneys, however, are skeptical of any such name change because it looks as though they are caving to public pressure. A name change also suggests that being a 'trial attorney' is a bad thing, they say.

At the moment the name change remains a Halstrom thought, and nothing more. Until he takes over MATA, that is.

Nonetheless, Boston was hopping with trial attorney over the July 27 weekend with more than 2,500 attorneys attending seminars to expand their litigious minds during the ATLA convention. And MATA certainly did its bit to make sure visitors got a dose of culture.

The MFA cocktail party was replete fine wine, and a special treat — a viewing of a sublime Paul Gauguin exhibition. (For those of you running to your Red Books, he's an artist, not a lawyer, and he's very dead.)

But the real show was watching local attorneys relax and mingle with the national types.

We'd like to report that one prominent lawyer was seen doing the Funky Chicken in the Evans Wing, but unfortunately we can't since all guests appeared to be on their best behavior. What's more, the July 28 event was so well attended that it was hard to keep a tally of who was there, let alone who may have spilled dip on their lapels.

Among those spotted: former Massachusetts Bar Association presidents Leo V. Boyle and Michael E. Mone (the latter, but not the former, a past president of MATA as well); Superior Court Judge Thomas E. Connolly; Marc L. Breakstone; Warren F. Fitzgerald; Camille F. Sarrouf; Neil Sugarman; Paul R. Sugarman; Leonard A. Simon; Anthony Tarricone; Kerry P. Choi; Kenneth W. Halpern; Paul G. Hamel; Douglas K. Sheff and dad, Irving H. "Chick" Sheff; David W. White-Lief; Robert Costello; Walter A. Costello, Jr.; Richard G. Shalhoub; Gary W. Orlacchio; Richard J. Ianello; Albert J. Marcotte; Frank R. Saia; Robert W. Casby; Paul F. Leavis; Michael K. Gillis; Robert J. Bonsignore; Dino M. Colucci; Darin M. Colucci; Norman J. Fine; Edwin L. Wallace; Arthur F. Licata; Steve H. Schafer; Kimberly E. Winter; Steven L. Hoffman; Martha E. Howe; Valerie A. Yarashus; Marilyn A. Beck; and insurance-defense expert Carol A. Griffin, who had the bravado to take ATLA up on its invitation to speak at a seminar on dram shop liability.