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THOUGHTS FROM THE CHAIR



I'll Take A Vowel

By William B. Oberts

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I-
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.
—*The Road Not Taken* by Robert Frost

Many of us obtain our law degrees and believe that the next logical step is to secure a job at a law firm. Why not? Isn't that why we endured three years of law school and took the bar exam? Although many lawyers opt to practice law at private law firms, other do not choose that path. Still others may initially work for a firm, but realize that it is not the career path they desire. Attorneys leave the practice of law to pursue other professions, often take the road less traveled, and, to them, that has made all the difference in their lives.

March is designated as "Transition Month" in the YLS Life in the Balance Series. On March 27, 2008, the YLS will host a seminar entitled, "Leap Before You Look: Taking Time Off to Reinvigorate Your Career." We all need time off to avoid burnout. However, the speakers at this seminar will discuss why they took permanent vacations

from the practice of law. They had the strength to quit their jobs when they knew that their career paths were not taking them in the direction they desired. Some took a leap without having another job secured; they knew that if they continued where they were, they would never change career paths. Our speakers will discuss how they took the road less traveled and the impact that the change has had on their lives. Their stories about overcoming adversity will be insightful and provide hope and inspiration for those contemplating a career change. For more information about this program, please go to www.chicagobar.org.

I have spoken with many attorneys who question whether practicing law is truly what they want to do for the next 30 years of their lives. Before deciding to change career paths, I suggest that you first question whether you are happy at your current firm and in your area of practice. Perhaps your dissatisfaction with the profession is tied to your current employer or area of practice and is not related to the practice of law in general. If so, consider changing firms or your practice areas. If you simply do not enjoy practicing law or are considering a career change, I encourage you to come to the YLS program on March 27, 2008, to learn more about how and why others made their decision. In the process, you will secure two hours of professionalism/ethics CLE credit.

I enjoy the practice of law and the fact that my legal career provides me with the opportunity to help others through bar association activities. I am not sure what I would do if I did not practice law. I think I would enjoy being a game show host. If Pat Sajak ever retires, perhaps I may consider a career change. I think I can handle asking contestants to choose a letter and solve the puzzle. But, until then, I will continue practicing law and see where this road takes me. ■