# Bencher Election: Getting to Know You Questionnaire

## PETER MACKENZIE, KC

1. What is your favourite song, movie or book & why?

   They change all the time but for the purposes of this questionnaire I will say my favourite book is James Joyce's Dubliners because I studied and wrote about it numerous times, I admire Joyce, and I have some connection with Trieste [now Italy] where I believe Joyce wrote some or all of this book.

2. What was the most inspiring or rewarding volunteer activity you have performed?

   Again, hard to answer and probably truthfully something to do with volunteering for one of my now adult daughters extra-curriculars but I spent many years on the board and as board chair of Elements Mental Health Centre and it was both gratifying and frustrating. I remain a strong supporter of their commitment to support adults with profound mental health issues.

3. How do you deal with stress?

   When I am at my best dealing with stress I try to demarcate work from the rest of my life so I am not always carrying work with me. That means important commitments to have friends other than lawyers, to do things other than law – music and theatre are favourites- and to take holidays and to leave Calgary (and work) for holidays because that creates space from work.

4. What does lawyer well-being mean to you?

   I have spent a lot of time thinking about this and supporting Prosecutors who work with stressful fact patterns. I have been very focused on vicarious trauma and working to minimize impact of vicarious trauma on me and on the people I support. That has meant some work with a staff Psychologist and also a program for first responders called Beyond Operational Stress (BOS). I am a believer in the front-loaded BOS approach to vicarious trauma. More broadly, I am mindful of the general stress of practicing law. In the course of doing articling interviews over the years I was quite startled to learn some articled students are accessing ASSIST. Again, I believe in front-loaded mental health programs that try and get ahead of these issues.

5. Do you believe mental health should be a priority?

   Mental health has been a priority for me in my practice group and I believe the practice of law is very hard on people and mental health should be a priority.