

INTERALIA

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2017

NEWSLETTER OF THE MANATEE COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

...and Justice For All!

By Paul F. Grondahl, Esq.

President - Manatee County Bar Association



I am very grateful and honored to serve as this year's President of the Manatee County Bar Association. A great year lies ahead, one made so much more exciting thanks to the dedication and great ideas of our Board of Directors.

Leaders of local bar associations throughout Florida and other organizations (e.g., Manatee FAWL) recently attended the

Voluntary Bar Association Leaders Conference in Orlando. During one of the interactive breakout sessions, a question was posed: *Why does your local bar association exist?* At first, the question seemed simple enough, almost rhetorical. Yet, answers from bar leaders ranged widely, from "a sense of civic duty" to (only half-jokingly) "frequent happy hours". The response that occurred to me was "the pursuit of justice". As I left the conference, I challenged myself to think a little bit more about why our Bar exists, and why past, future, and current board members, judges, and members devote so much time and energy to the Manatee County Bar Association.

I'll take for granted that all lawyers and judges, and almost all Americans, celebrate the ideal of justice, even if the concept means different things to different people. It bears noting that we pledge allegiance to our Flag before every general meeting. While I proudly recite the Pledge, I'll admit that I sometimes find myself daydreaming in disbelief that I'm thirty years - the blink of an eye - removed from reciting the Pledge in 12th grade homeroom:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

A marital and family lawyer, I find that justice can sometimes be an elusive (even illusive) thing. I've spent the better part of my adult life attempting to discover facts and present evidence in a way that tells stories effectively (whether working to resolve cases cooperatively or by judicial determination). Far too much of my free time is spent wondering whether justice for all, especially for children, has been realized, notwithstanding the extraordinary efforts of attorneys and judges to uncover the truth. Recognizing justice staring you right in the face is even more difficult in the emotional setting of divorce litigation. The above said, I find peace by reminding myself that the American judicial system is by far the best our unfair world has to offer. The "justice for all" we enjoy under the Flag includes freedoms of speech, due process, fair trial, an impartial judiciary, etc. Such liberties were forged on the notion that truth is only revealed by the fair presentation of competing sides of an idea or dispute. Because truth is beautiful, the search for it is therefore among the most worthwhile pursuits. And so our pursuit of justice is itself beautiful.

Our Bar is doing its very best to pursue and promote justice for all. During Andrea Johnson's recent tenure as President, and spearheaded by Committee Chair Lori Dorman, we established a Diversity and Inclusion Committee created to explore, educate, and address implicit bias and other issues in order to encourage integration of diverse groups into our legal community and to promote fairhanded justice in the courtroom. Our collective desire to achieve justice for all leads us to make such efforts a priority. Look for announcements regarding social events and CLEs relating to Diversity and Inclusion, one of our most important and exciting new endeavors.

Education and the exchange of ideas between attorneys and judges helps to facilitate justice. This occurs informally at lunches, Javas with the Judges, and during our Section meetings. More formally, our Bar will be sponsoring CLE seminars this coming year: Diversity & Inclusion, Probate and others to be announced. (An upcoming probate CLE which should [application submitted] qualify for precious ethics credits (2) takes place on November 3.) Please take advantage of these CLE opportunities! Our Bar will again be partnering with our friends in Sarasota to jointly sponsor a Bench/Bar Conference in May 2018. Please look for a Save the Date in the near future and secure the date on your calendar. It's going to be a good one!

Young lawyers in Manatee County, whether forging out on their own or as part of one of the excellent firms around town, work to support one another and undertake projects to help the community. They build collegiality that will promote professionalism and facilitate the just resolution of disputes for decades to come. Early next year, the YLD will again sponsor the Professionalism Roundtable, where judges and more experienced lawyers share stories and ideas concerning ethics and professionalism with young attorneys. This is a fantastic event. In a fast-changing world, our Bar benefits tremendously from the experience and judgment of its older members mixed with the creativity and vitality of the new. Members have expressed great interest in a mentorship program, which will likely kick off next year with a social event designed to forge valuable long-term mentor relationships, especially benefitting young attorneys in solo practice.

Our Bar luncheons remind us to pause to celebrate liberty and justice. Not long ago, we celebrated *Miranda v. Arizona* at Law Day. We were privileged to hear from Bruce Jacob, esteemed educator and counsel for the State of Florida who argued *Gideon v. Wainwright*. Thanks to the efforts of this year's Program Chair, Alix St. Paul, we will be honored to host the President of the Florida Bar, Michael J. Higer, at our general meeting in March. Mr. Higer's talk should prove especially timely, with some very important issues facing our Bar and judiciary in 2018.

(continued on Pg. 2)

(Justice for all continued from Pg.1)

The Manatee County Bar Association takes time to celebrate our judiciary, in September at a dinner honoring Judge Janette Dunnigan and at our more recent lunch in honor of Judge Doug Wallace. We do so not merely to express our fondness and show thanks to our judges for years of service, but to celebrate that our rights as citizens are decided by a fair and impartial judiciary.

I am very happy to serve as President of the Manatee County Bar Association. Thank you again for the opportunity to serve, and to be part of something so important – the pursuit of justice for all!

Are you coming to the October General Membership Luncheon? Did you RSVP?

Please RSVP now to attend our October 25, 2017 General Membership Luncheon at Pier 22. Our theme will be "Veterans" in honor of the upcoming Veteran's Day holiday. You will not want to miss this! Don't delay, RSVP today to MCBA@ManateeBar.com

MCBA ANNOUNCES "The 100% Club" – JOIN NOW AND HAVE YOUR FIRM RECOGNIZED – It's Free!

The MCBA is proud to have such wonderful members! The "100% Club" is a special recognition within the MCBA reflecting our members' commitment to the advancement of the legal profession while enhancing the community. To become a member of the "100% Club", every attorney in your office must be a member of the MCBA. Firms with 100% attorney participation will be:

- Listed in Inter Alia
- Listed on the MCBA Website
- Sent a special "100% Club" web badge to be used on their website, and in advertising

The MCBA's "100% Club" is open to renewal each year, as it does not automatically renew due to changes in firm rosters from year to year. Firms must renew each year to participate.

To become a member of the "100% Club" for the 2017-18 year, please submit your request via email to Executive Director, Graceann Frederico at MCBA@ManateeBar.com **no later than, November 10, 2017**. <u>Include a listing of all attorneys in your firm.</u> Once the names are verified as active members of the MCBA, and approved, your firm will be added to the MCBA 2017-18 "100% Club" listings.



SAVE THE DATE:

MCBA Holiday Party

Who: All members of the Bench and MCBA, and their spouse/guest are invited to attend! MCBA Members are free. Guests are \$25.

When: Friday, December 1st 5:30 – 8:30 pm
What: Hosted Bar and Cocktail Buffet catered by enrich Bistro

Where: ArtCenter Manatee, 209 9th Street West, Bradenton

Holiday Party sponsored by: Fidelity Bank, Lexis Nexis, and Lutz Bobo & Telfair







Our Membership Is Growing!



WELCOME! Karl George Breitinger

Parents Annie (YLD Director) and Alex Breitinger Born August 23rd 8lbs 15 oz 21 in

Welcome New Members

PATRICK FORD – B.S., Florida Institute of Technology, (1988), J.D., Stetson University College of Law, (1992), Year Admitted to The Florida Bar, 1993. Mr. Ford is an attorney with Price, Hamilton & Price, Chrtd.,

2400 Manatee Ave. W., Bradenton, Fl 34205. Phone: 941-748-0550

GEOFFREY M. JONSSON – B.S., Florida State University, (2002), J.D., Barry University, (2010), Year Admitted to The Florida Bar, 2010. Mr. Jonsson is located at:

4662 LaJolla Drive, Bradenton, FL 34210.

Phone: 702-528-1568

JORGE MARTINEZ – B.S., Edison State College, (2012), J.D., Barry University, (2016), Year Admitted to The Florida Bar, 2017. Mr. Martinez is an attorney with Mackey Law Group, P.A.,

1402 Third Ave. W., Bradenton, FL 34205.

Phone: 941-746-6225

MICHAEL "BRANDON" ROBINSON – B.S., Hannibal-La-Grange University, (2011), J.D., Stetson University College of Law, (2015), Year Admitted to The Florida Bar, 2015. Mr. Robinson is an Associate Attorney with Barnes, Walker, Goethe, Hoonhout, Perron & Shea, P.L.L.C,

3119 Manatee Ave. W., Bradenton, FL 34205.

Phone: 941-741-8224

Perspective from Home

by Anne Breitinger, YLD Director



I assumed maternity leave would be full of free time. I foolishly downloaded CLEs, checked out library books, and took on commitments (such as writing an article for the Inter Alia) thinking I would have ample time. What I actually have is a lot of time to sit and think while feeding, rocking, and soothing my new baby, but finding time with free hands to type or read is elusive. While a lot of my brain power is spent thinking (or worrying) about my baby, my mind

often drifts back to work. I think about clients and wonder about the status of their transactions. I worry that my clients will like the other attorneys at the firm more than me. I worry that my practice group will adapt to my absence a little too well. I also worry about how I'm navigating this time away from the office.

My son is only 6 weeks old and already I've started to experience the paradox of being a working mom, without even being back in the office. In conversations with other attorneys, I attempt to portray myself as eager to get back to work and even a bit bored at home with the baby, but portraying this work-centric opinion to male attorneys can also feel a bit awkward when you know that many of them have wives who chose to stay home with their children. When speaking with stay-at-home mothers, or even my own mother who stayed at home with my sister and me, I find myself down playing my itch to get back to work. In truth, my feelings about taking maternity leave and [...writing break to change a diaper, feed the baby, and change another diaper...] going back to work are mixed. I am lucky to have a job I love and a firm that happily granted me the flexibility to take a long maternity leave, and I am looking forward to going back to work, but I also enjoy this time with my son and LOVE not obsessively checking my email.

I also wonder how much of my worry is self-inflicted and a result of reading too many overly-sensitive "mommy blogs" written by women who perceive every stranger's glance as an affront on their parenting style. No attorney has made me feel rushed to get back to work or criticized my decision to take a long maternity leave, but I still fret over every conversation. In the moment, in every conversation, whether it be with a senior male attorney or a stayat-home mom friend, what I want to learn to effectively portray is this: right now I love being at home with Karl and am far from bored, but practicing law is part of my identity that I am eager to return to. I am unsure how life will look being a mom and lawyer, but I believe I can do both because being both is my new identity. My goal for the balance of my maternity leave is to learn to portray this sentiment to without downplaying one piece or the other. I hope that my generation of women can be open and honest about their own feelings about returning to work, whether they are feeling eager to return, considering taking a longer leave, or staying at home for the foreseeable future.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE SEPTEMBER 27TH, 2017 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING - MCBA HONORS JUDGE DOUGLAS WALLACE, 2ND DCA:

The September 27, 2017 General Membership Meeting was a special one indeed; honoring 2nd DCA Judge Douglas Wallace for his many years of service. The Pier 22 newly renovated Ball Room was full to capacity as friends, family and colleagues gathered together for the special luncheon. Judge Gilbert Smith presented Judge Wallace with a special gift: a Stetson Hat, and the Color Guard was presented by Christopher Genewick and Charlie Landers, two scouts of Boy Scouts Troop 22, which was Judge Wallace's Boy Scout troop when he was a boy. Charles Clapsaddle and METV kindly filmed the event, and it can be found on the METV YouTube site at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Xts8--dAbo



Retired Judge Scott Brownell addressing attendees



2nd DCA Law Clerk Joe Tompkins and Judge Hunter Carroll



Judge Doug Wallace and Judge Gilbert Smith, Jr.



Judge Wallace receiving his Stetson Hat, with MCBA President Paul Grondahl



Judge Wallace's grandsons: Evan Reid and Cub Scout Stone Wallace



Event Sponsors from Fidelity Bank: Jeff Baker (Mt. Vernon Branch), Alan Murphy (Longboat Key Office), and Jacob Macias (Manatee Office)



YLD Directors, Dustin Wagner and Richard Green enjoying the event



2015 Excellence in Florida Judicial Writing Award presented to Appellate Concurring or Dissenting Opinion Category







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The Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division -A Workhorse of The Florida Bar

by Margaret Good, Esq. and Jesse Butler, Esq., 12th Circuit Representatives of the Florida Bar YLD

During this year's Annual Convention of The Florida Bar, we were privileged to be sworn in as members of the Board of Governors of the Young Lawyers Division of The Florida Bar (the

"YLD"). Our tenure on this Board has been extremely rewarding as it has allowed us to work with bright and talented attorneys from Key West to Pensacola for the betterment of our legal community and the State of Florida.

We are often asked – what does the YLD do? Simply put, the YLD is the "work horse" of The Florida Bar, and we work hardest for you, our members, and more importantly, our constituents. We do this by advocating for, educating, and serving Florida young lawyers.

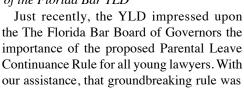
The YLD is an important engine of The Florida Bar that, among other things, produces top-notch programming, provides support for attorneys beginning their careers, and stimulates involvement and interest in the over 26,000 members of The Florida Bar below the age of 36 or who have been practicing for five years or less. While it is impossible to mention all of the initiatives of the YLD in the limited space provided, a few of the programs are highlighted below.

One of the primary roles of the YLD is to assist its members in the transition from law school to law practice. Historically, this responsibility has included administering the Practicing with Professionalism seminars that are required for all first-year attorneys, as well as the Basic Skills CLE courses that must be completed within the first three years of practice. Through our efforts, these courses are now offered online as a convenience to you, eliminating the mandatory in-person attendance requirement.

The YLD has also focused its efforts on providing resources to help new attorneys operate in today's challenging legal marketplace. For instance, the YLD recently launched a comprehensive website providing information on how to start a Florida law firm - www. startmyfloridalawfirm.com. There, you will find all of the basics you need to launch your own firm, including tips on how to incorporate your new firm for free! The YLD is also continuing to compile and build a library of videos and webinars that provides instruction and advice on how to accomplish various legal tasks. The YLD library of "How To" videos and "Mentoring with the Masters" is quickly becoming one of the most robust collections in the nation.

This year, the YLD is continuing its support of Florida's young lawyers by creating a website designed to provide virtual education and mentorship to every young lawyer in Florida. The website will aggregate all of the YLD's existing educational resources in one searchable place, while adding thousands of short 3-minute videos answering common questions young lawyers have regarding professional development, ethics, The Florida Bar, and substantive legal matters, to create a virtual hallway of instant mentoring advice.

The YLD is also in the forefront of effectuating change in our profession. Some of the most important work that we do is to advocate for young lawyers. The YLD's diversity efforts earned attention from across the country as its Pipeline Initiative Diversity Symposium - which seeks to motivate, encourage, and help high school, college, and law students enter our profession - received a national award from the American Bar Association.



our assistance, that groundbreaking rule was passed by the Board of Governors with unanimous support. Additionally, the results of a poll conducted by the YLD's Women in the Profession committee - which revealed that 43 percent of female lawyer respondents had experienced gender bias - garnered national attention and fueled a YLD effort to support and recognize the achievements of women in the profession. This effort continues today and will continue to lead to positive changes for women in the legal field.

The YLD also remains on the cutting edge of technology, the rapid growth of which necessitates the need for lawyers to stay up to date. The Florida Bar looks to the YLD to stay in front of the changing technology affecting our profession to assist all attorneys to keep abreast of changes. We have proven to be up to the challenge and remain dedicated to this cause.

That is only a small fraction of the work that we do for you. We encourage all YLD members to reach out to us, your Circuit representatives, and/or visit our website at Flayld.org for more information on the YLD and for opportunities to get involved. The YLD truly is a great organization doing hard work for the good of The Florida Bar.

> Margaret Good Jesse Butler

Margaret Good and Jesse Butler are elected members of the Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division Board of Governors for the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, and are members of the Sarasota County and Manatee County Bar Associations. Margaret Good is an associate at Matthews Eastmoore, where she practices civil and commercial litigation. She serves on the Sarasota County Bar Association's Board of Governors. Jesse Butler is an associate at Dickinson & Gibbons, where he practices appellate law, civil litigation, and commercial litigation. He is the immediate past-president of the Sarasota County Bar Association Young Lawyers Division. To learn more about the Florida Bar YLD, please visit https://flayld.org.

WILL SEARCH

Willis F. (Franklin) Pledger, Jr.,

Date of Birth: October 3, 1943, Deceased: April 20, 2017 Last Known Address: 1305 - 51st Ave Dr. W., Snead Island, Palmetto, FL 34221

Willis would have come into the attorney's office alone; he took the original Will home with him to have witnessed in May, 2016. He had white hair, a white mustache, and blue eyes. He may have mentioned attorney Peter Peak, who he used for some other legal matters. If you have any information, please contact Blair Pledger (Son) at 941-313-1486.

JUDGE JANETTE DUNNIGAN RETIREMENT EVENTS

The MCBA honored Judge Janette Dunnigan as she officially retired on August 31, 2017. Events included an afternoon reception at the Historic Courthouse, as well as an "Epic" evening event on September 7th, 2017, with plenty of laughs, song, a musical, and a special appearance of "The Dancing Janettes". The 300+ attendees did not let "Approaching Irma" cancel the party, and it was one memorable evening! Congratulations to Judge Janette Dunnigan and thank you for many years of service to your community! A special thank you from the MCBA to all those who made the night possible.



Lt. Paula Newman presenting gift to Judge Dunnigan



Judge Williams and Judge Adams



Judge Dunnigan with JA Cindy Chin, and former JA, Carolyn Kutt



Judge Farrance and JA Donna McCammond



Mark Barneby, Esq., and MCBA Director Marisa Powers, Esq.



The Dancing Janettes, live and in person, with Judge Dunnigan!



Libby McNary, Esq. and MCBA Past President Andrea Johnson, Esq.



Judge Quartermain and Judge Williams





Sam Love, MCBA Executive Director Graceann Frederico, & Terri Cromley, Esq.



Emcee Jon Weiffenbach and Judge Dees

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A Special Thank You From Judge Janette Dunnigan

To the Members of the Manatee County, Sarasota County, Venice and Desoto County Bar Associations:

Let me begin by thanking all of you who braved the on-coming storm to attend my retirement party. The event and your presence truly gave me an epic send off. An impending Category 5 hurricane seemed a fitting end to a career that had tumultuous moments and then ended in calm. I had a wonderful time and hearing all the laughter was joyous noise. I could not have imagined more.

For those of you who donated to the event – and to my eventual travel fund - I cannot express how grateful I am. The sheer number of the contributions is beyond my wildest expectations. This job (my former job) has its moments of insecurity, loneliness, criticism, concern and weighty responsibility. There is rarely positive feedback on the work that we do. For me, this donation is validation for all the sacrifices and sleepless nights over the last 23+ years. My family and I will think of you fondly as we travel on your dime!

My special thanks to the members of the retirement committee for the event planning; to Durand Adams, BTN Productions, Michael Gostischa and Court Administration for the incredible musical chronicle of my life; to the musings of Weiffenbach and Kaklis Dees back together again; to Charles Clapsaddle and the METV team for the montage and for filming the event for when my memory begins to fail (Sorry it took so long for you to find out that I have a sense of humor); to the Dancing Sues and Sue for getting the party started; and to my dear friend, Judge Ed Nicholas, for years of . . . everything.

I have often heard that the Twelfth Judicial Circuit has the best judges in the state. I have been proud to be among the greats. I leave you with the confidence that this reputation will endure. The professionalism and camaraderie among the lawyers in our bar associations is enviable. Please strive to preserve that. Serving the community and the lawyers in this circuit has been my greatest honor. I thank you all for the respect and the support that you have given me since I arrived here in the summer of 1980. This was not the life that I planned, but what a great life it has been. I really will miss the «All Rise.» Thank you.

> With greatest humility, Janette Dunnigan

DATES TO REMEMBER:

October 25, 2017 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING, PIER 22, NOON

November 3, 2017 PROBATE & TRUST CLE: MCJC,

Jury Assembly Room, flyer attached

November, 2017 NO GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

December 1, 2017 MCBA HOLIDAY PARTY: ArtCenter Manatee,

5:30 pm

December, 2017 NO GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

January 31, 2018 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING,

PIER 22, NOON

February 28, 2018 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING.

PIER 22, NOON

March 28, 2018 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING,

PIER 22, NOON

April, 2018 NO GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

May 30, 2018 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING.

PIER 22, NOON: LAW DAY PROGRAM

June 27, 2018 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING.

PIER 22, NOON

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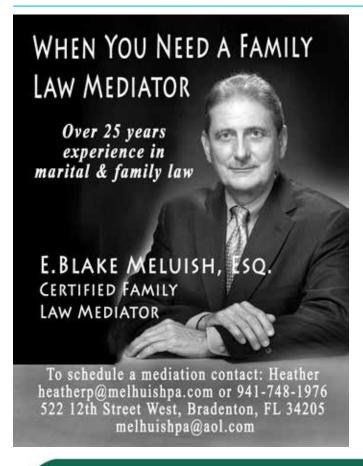
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Steve Heintz and David Becker are in the less than 1% of Florida lawyers that are board certified by the Florida Bar. Less than ½ of 1% are board certified by the National Board. Steve is certified by the National Board of Trial Advocacy.





The Sarasota and Manatee Realtor-Attorney Joint Committee is Filling Vacancies!

The Sarasota and Manatee Realtor-Attorney Joint Committee is currently looking to fill two vacancies for 2018-2019. Members are appointed for two year terms. Currently the monthly meeting is scheduled for the first Wednesday of every month at the Realtor Association of Sarasota and Manatee's office, currently located at 2320 Cattlemen Road.

Attendance at the monthly meetings is mandatory. Missing more than three meetings during one calendar year and/or not actively participating on the committee could result in SCBA removing the member from the committee.

The Sarasota and Manatee Realtor-Attorney Joint Committee consists of eight realtors appointed by the Realtor Association of Sarasota and Manatee (RASM) and eight attorneys, six appointed by the Sarasota County Bar Association and two by the Manatee County Bar Association. The committee is charged with providing timely and accurate information to RASM members by planning, organizing and presenting educational seminars and providing articles for the RASM Magazine.

Please send letter of interest by email to Graceann Frederico, ED, MCBA@ManateeBar.com no later than November 15, 2017.

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is pleased to announce that

MICHAEL B. "BRANDON" ROBINSON, ESQ.

is now an Associate with the Firm.

Brandon is a member of the Florida Bar, and is also licensed to practice before the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida, and is a United States Department of Veterans Affairs Accredited Attorney. Brandon's practice will focus on the areas of wills, trusts, estate planning, probate, guardianship, Medicaid planning, and veteran's benefits.

Brandon graduated *cum laude* in 2015 from Stetson University College of Law, where he was awarded a Certificate of Concentration in Elder Law, the Matthew Bender Elder Law Book Award, and the prestigious William F. Blews pro bono service award, having contributed over 470 hours of pro bono services during law school. Prior to joining Barnes Walker, Goethe, Hoonhout, Perron, & Shea, PLLC, Brandon worked as the Elder Consumer Protection Fellow for Stetson University College of Law. His professional commitments include serving as both the Circuit Representative and Law School Liaison for the Thomas E. Penick, Jr. Elder Law Inn of Court. Brandon is a combat veteran of the United States Marine Corps, is the past-adjutant of Marine Corps League Detachment #54, is a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and serves as a member of the Marine Corps League Honor Guard for military funerals, parades, and other civic events.



The Firm also practices in the areas of real estate sales and purchases, leasing, zoning & land use, homeowners and condominium associations, local government law, condemnation, wills, trusts, estate planning, probate, guardianship, elder law, business law, corporate, LLC, & partnership formation, business sales, business contracting, trademarks, contract disputes, creditor rights, bankruptcy, employment claims, trust and will disputes, stock broker negligence, financial and securities fraud, real estate litigation, insurance property damage claims, IRC Sec. 1031 exchanges, personal injury, and claims related to business disputes. Our law firm and affiliated title company, Barnes Walker Title, Inc., have closed over 19,000 real estate transactions since the firm's beginnings.



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