



INTER ALIA

SUMMER 2020

NEWSLETTER OF THE MANATEE COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

NOTE:

The Manatee County Bar Association leadership has determined, based upon the updated CDC guidelines that all *in person* events are cancelled until further notice.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – SUMMER 2020



Thoughts On A Lawyer's Role in a Free Society

By Charles W. Telfair, IV, Esq., MCBA President

We can all agree that the United States is extraordinarily heterogeneous. That diversity brings more conflict and less agreement regarding social customs and thus, more necessity for lawyers to help mediate across that diversity or, as Madison said, those factions.

Of late, it seems that we are, as a country, less tolerant of the views of others and insist that, as an officer used to say when I was in the military: "it's my way or the highway." While that may work well in the military, there is an insidious danger in that approach for a free society. To create a collective will, one must destroy all of those wills that run counter to your vision of the general will.

The most tragic impediment to open conversations about any issue that is considered contentious (and there are too many to list in this article) is fear. Fear that free speech will result in retribution limit the kinds of topics people can rationally discuss

and what type of conclusions are permissible. This bodes ill for the development of knowledge.

Stated another way, free speech is useful for developing and testing ideas in the search for truth. When only certain segments of society are comfortable sharing their opinions, we end up with a skewed outlook of the world. "He who knows only his own side of the case knows little of that." John Stuart Mill.

Further, free speech is a critical component of a democracy. Free speech is a human right and is critical for the individual. It is important that people can say what they feel, express ideas, question authority and not worry that they will be unjustly punished for it. Free speech is designed to protect speech that we may hate.

How do we play into this? We lead from the front. First and foremost, we must work to protect the rights of individuals to engage in free speech – yes, even the speech we hate. Second,

(continued on page 3)

HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR MCBA DUES?



Please take a moment to renew your 2020-21 membership dues to the MCBA. The new bar year began on July 1st and your dues allow us to continue to provide all our fantastic MCBA benefits.

We have recently launched our new online directory of all active MCBA attorneys. The public can now search for any active attorneys in our membership with the click of a button! The data provided is updated from your Dues Renewal form, so please make sure your information is correct.

Due to Covid 19, the Board of Directors will not consider dues delinquent until September, but we do encourage you to send in your renewal soon. If you have sent your renewal in already, we will be drawing

a winner for a \$100 Amazon Gift Card: all renewals paid/postmarked by July 31, 2020 will be eligible for the drawing. Stay tuned for the announcement of the winner – it could be you!

To pay your dues online, please visit the MCBA Website at: www.manateebar.com

News from the 12th Judicial Circuit: COURT UPDATES

JACS

The Court has updated its JACS calendaring system (Judicial Automated Scheduling System) to schedule hearings. As of July 31, 2020, you will no longer be able to login directly and schedule in JACS with your Florida Bar Number. Attorneys who have scheduled in JACS in the past twelve months should have already received an email about this.

To access JACS you will need to do two things:

1. Setup an account on our website [jud12.flcourts.org/attorney]; and
2. Setup Attorney Access from this new account.

If you're on our court-appointed attorney list for FY 20/21, you've already done this! For those who haven't, once registered, you'll be able to use one login and password to access your subscriber features, the online court appointed attorney applications and schedule hearings on JACS. As an added benefit, if you forget your password, you'll be able to reset it immediately from the login page, eliminating the need to contact the court's Help Desk to change your password.

To ease the transition, we ask that you please begin the process as soon as possible. For instructions to get registered, please go to jud12.flcourts.org/attorney. The website also has two short videos to assist with this process.

Highlights of the 2020 June Annual Meeting

History was made at the June 24, 2020 MCBA Annual Meeting, when it was held using virtual technology, in this instance, "Zoom". Special guest speaker, FL. Representative Will Robinson, spoke with over 50 members at the virtual event. Representative Robinson gave an update regarding various topics at the state level such as the state's Covid 19 response, the crisis with the Re-employment system, and other interesting policies and procedures.



Also, at the meeting, Judge Gilbert Smith, Jr. swore in the 2020-21 MCBA Board of Directors, as well as the officers for the Young Lawyers Division. To watch the meeting, please visit the MCBA Youtube Channel at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_SEqbmWAaaY



SIGN UP NOW!

Join Florida Bar President Dori Foster-Morales and other bar and judicial leaders for a Virtual Town Hall on Sept. 9 from noon to 1pm to discuss how Florida attorneys are coping during the pandemic and what the Bar can do to assist members in their legal practice and beyond. Register at floridabar.org/virtualtownhalls.

YLD News & Happenings

Young Lawyers Division Announces 2020-21 Board of Directors

At the June General Membership Meeting, Judge Gilbert Smith, Jr. swore in the 2020-21 Young Lawyers Division Board of Directors. Congratulations to the following:

President, Alexandria C. Nicodemi, of the Manatee County Attorney's Office

President Elect Dustin S. Wagner, Esq., of Lightning Law PLLC

Secretary Kari Martin, Esq., of Najmy Thompson, P.L.

Treasurer Anisley H. Mena, Esq., of Greene Hamrick Quinlan & Schermer P.A.

Sierra A. Butler, Esq. of Butler Elder Law, P.A.

Gregory S. DeMeuse, Esq. of Blalock Walters, P.A.

Katherine M. Fall, Esq. of Boyer & Boyer, P.A.

Grace M. Reeves, Esq., of Legler, Murphy & Battaglia, LLP

M. Brandon Robinson, Esq. of Barnes, Walker, Goethe, Perron, & Shea, PLLC

Jami C. Worley, Esq. of Worley Elder Law, PLLC

Kelley Thompson, Esq. of Barnes Walker, Goethe, Perron, & Shea, PLLC

James M. Horne, Jr., of Shapiro Delgado

Aaron B. Crittenden, Esq., of Harllee & Bald, P.A.

Imm. Past President, Melissa R. Casanueva, Esq., of Butler Elder Law, P.A.

(President's Message, continued from page 1)

as trained advocates, we can all (hopefully) see many sides of an issue. If we are to repair the deep rifts that divide us, we must step back, take a deep breath, and try to see the world from the perspective of others. Common ground may not be available, but it is certainly worth seeking.

As lawyers, we play a special role in our society. It is a true privilege. I see opportunities for us to work together and bridge the gaps that divide us as a society. Our duties start with protecting free speech which has been at the core of our democracy since its inception. On the issue, the U.S. Constitution is unequivocal: Government "shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech." When we took an oath as attorneys, we stated: "I will support the Constitution of the United States..." I'm biased, but I believe we have the best bar association in the State of Florida. If we lead from the front, others will follow.

The Manatee County Bar Association supports diversity and inclusion in our membership and welcomes lawyers of all backgrounds, ethnicities, races, religions, cultures, sexual orientations and abilities. As part of this initiative, the Manatee County Bar Association has created the Diversity and Inclusion Committee (DAIC) and fully supports its mission to increase the diversity of our membership and the local legal community.

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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 1/2 of 1% are board certified by the National Board. Steve is certified by the National Board of Trial Advocacy.



MCBA SWEARS IN 2020-21 OFFICERS!

At the June 2020 MCBA Annual Meeting, Judge Gilbert Smith Jr. swore in the MCBA officers, virtually! It was certainly a historical moment as the new Board of Directors took their Oath of Office utilizing the power of "Zoom" technology, due to CDC health guidelines in response to Covid 19. Congratulations to the 2020-21 MCBA Board of Directors, as follows:

President: Charles W. Telfair, IV, Esq.
 President-Elect: Stephen R. Dye, Esq.
 Secretary: Brian A. Iten, Esq.
 Treasurer: David W. Wilcox, Esq.

Faith Z. Brown, Esq.
 Gregory S. Hagopian, Esq.
 Mary F. Levine, Esq.
 James E. Lynch, Esq.
 Andre R. Perron, Esq.
 Rebecca J. Proctor, Esq.
 YLD President: Alexandra Nicodemi, Esq.

Immediate Past -President:
 Alexandra D. St. Paul, Esq.

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July Virtual General Membership Meeting

Special Speakers:

Melissa Gould, Esq.

Connie Mederos-Jacobs, Esq.

Chris Pratt, Esq.

Kristy Zinna, Esq.

Candidates for Manatee County Court

Wednesday, July 29, 2020

12 noon on ZOOM

Check your email for your link!

Thank You to Our Sponsors:



Zoom Link for Meeting:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86061709626?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86061709626?pwd=WUJlaEMrNWRtYosxT1BoendsMjZOdzo9)
[pwd=WUJlaEMrNWRtYosxT1BoendsMjZOdzo9](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86061709626?pwd=WUJlaEMrNWRtYosxT1BoendsMjZOdzo9)

MCBA Held Virtual Staffing Technology CLE in June

Recently, the MCBA hosted a free technology CLE regarding virtual staffing. Over 20 attendees received two technology credits as they learned about “virtual staffing for law firms”, sponsored by Get Staffed Up and Enrique Fernandez, Esq. Subjects discussed included: benefits of outsourcing, differences of project types, where to find virtual assistants, how to onboard virtual assistants, and ethical obligations. If you, or your firm, have questions regarding virtual staffing, please contact Get Staffed Up!



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Welcome New Members

JUSTIN “TANNER” HEINTZ, ESQ.

Florida State, 2019

Year admitted to the Florida Bar, 2019

Mr. Heintz is an attorney with Heintz & Becker, 905 Sixth Ave. W., Bradenton, FL 34205. Area(s) of practice: Personal Injury, Wrongful Death

BARBARA NEGRON DE LA FUENTE, ESQ.

Stetson University, 2018

Year admitted to the Florida Bar, 2018

Ms. Negron is an associate attorney with Lutz, Bobo & Telfair, 2 N. Tamiami Trail, 5th Floor, Sarasota, FL 34236.

Area(s) of practice: Personal Injury, Automobile Insurance, Medical Malpractice

JAMES TURFFS, ESQ.

Florida A&M, 2009

Year admitted to the Florida Bar, 2009

Mr. Turffs is an associate attorney with Porges, Hamlin, Knowles & Hawk, PA, 1205 Manatee Ave. W., Bradenton, FL 34205.

Area(s) of practice: Civil Litigation

MELISSA FINLEY WILLIAMS, ESQ.

University of Florida, 2012

Year Admitted to the Florida Bar, 2012

Ms. Finley Williams is the owner of Finley Williams Law, PA, 695 Central Avenue, Ste. 106, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

Area(s) of practice: Elder Law, Estate Planning, Guardianship

SANDRA WISEMAN, ESQ.

University of Montana, 2001

Year Admitted to the Florida Bar, 2001

Ms. Wiseman is the owner of Sandra Wiseman, PA, PO Box 1896, Sarasota, FL 34230.

Area(s) of practice: Real Estate, Personal Injury



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DOD: June 2, 2020

Occupation: Delta Pilot

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DATES TO REMEMBER:

July 29, 2020	VIRTUAL General Membership Meeting: Special Event	March 10, 2021	YLD Board of Directors Meeting
August 12, 2020	YLD Virtual BOD Planning Mtg	March 18, 2021	Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting
August 13, 2020	Diversity & Inclusion Committee Virtual Meeting	March 31, 2021	General Membership Meeting
August 19, 2020	MCBA BOD Planning Mtg	April 7, 2021	Board of Directors Meeting
August 26, 2020	VIRTUAL General Membership Meeting: Special Event	April 14, 2021	YLD Board of Directors Meeting
September 9, 2020	YLD Board of Directors Meeting	April 15, 2021	Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting
September 9, 2020	Florida Bar Virtual Town Hall with TFB President	May 5, 2021	Board of Directors Meeting
September 17, 2020	Diversity & Inclusion Committee Virtual Meeting	May 12, 2021	YLD Board of Directors Meeting
September 30, 2020	General Membership Meeting	May 20, 2021	Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting
October 7, 2020	Board of Directors Meeting	May 26, 2021	LAW DAY General Membership Meeting
October 14, 2020	YLD Board of Directors Meeting	June 2, 2021	Board of Directors Meeting
October 15, 2020	Diversity & Inclusion Committee Virtual Meeting	June 9, 2021	YLD Board of Directors Meeting
October 28, 2020	General Membership Meeting	June 17, 2021	Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting
November 4, 2020	Board of Directors Meeting	June 30, 2021	Annual Meeting: General Membership Meeting
November 11, 2020	YLD Board of Directors Meeting		
November 19, 2020	Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting		
December 2, 2020	Board of Directors Meeting		
December 9, 2020	YLD Board of Directors Meeting		
December 11, 2020	MCBA Holiday Party: BCC		
December 17, 2020	Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting		
January 6, 2021	Board of Directors Meeting		
January 13, 2021	YLD Board of Directors Meeting		
January 14, 2021	Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting		
January 27, 2021	General Membership Meeting		
February 3, 2021	Board of Directors Meeting		
February 10, 2021	YLD Board of Directors Meeting		
February 18, 2021	Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting		
February 24, 2021	General Membership Meeting		
March 3, 2021	Board of Directors Meeting		

*dates are subject to change – check your weekly News You Can Use email for updates



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The firm's attorneys practicing in the area of Wills, Trusts and Estates are currently accepting referrals and new clients in the following areas:

- Estate planning
- Probate and trust administration and litigation
- Elective share and surviving spouse rights
- Homestead issues
- Probate and trust related appeals
- Elder Law
- Guardianship administration and litigation
- Public benefits and Medicaid planning
- Veteran's benefits



Jeffrey S. Goethe, Esq.

Admitted to the Florida Bar in 1990
Florida Bar Board-Certified in Wills, Trusts & Estates
Fellow, American College of Trust and Estate Counsel
Past President, Manatee County Bar Association



Lawrence W. Thomas, Esq.

Admitted to the Florida Bar in 1985
Past Director and Secretary of the Manatee County Bar Association



Kevin M. Collver, Esq.

Admitted to the Florida Bar in 1997
Member, Manatee County Bar Association
LL.M., Taxation, Univ. of Florida



M. Brandon Robinson, Esq.

Admitted to the Florida Bar in 2015
United States Dept. of Veteran's Affairs
Accredited Attorney
Combat Veteran, United States Marine Corps
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AUGUST VIRTUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Welcome!

Chief Judge
Kimberly Bonner



Wednesday, August 26, 2020

Noon

ZOOM

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Live Webcast via Zoom

Program: 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused fear, paranoia, anger, sadness and anxiety that lingers even as the world "re-opens". This program will discuss tips for maintaining your own mental health and stability while managing the emotions of your clients.



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David C. Brennan has mediated probate, guardianship and trust disputes for 30 years as part of his practice in estate litigation and administration. He has mediated in numerous counties on both a court-appointed and attorney selected basis.

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IMMEDIATE PAST-PRESIDENT:

<i>Alexandra D. St. Paul, Esq.</i>	Dye, Harrison Kirkland, Petruff, Pratt & St. Paul, PLLC
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Manatee County Bar Association
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InterAlia, the newsletter of the Manatee County Bar Association is published 8 months annually and is circulated electronically to local attorneys, judges and law office staff. Issues are later posted to the association website: www.manateebar.com Rates shown are for one issue. Discounts apply to multiple issues on a prepaid basis. Ads should be submitted as high resolution .pdf files. Deadline for submission: First of the month.

For information please call Graceann Frederico, Executive Director at (941) 741-4091 or email mcba@manateebar.com For ad specifics or variations, contact: Joan at Teledrex; joan@teledrex.com

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