



# INTER ALIA

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2022

NEWSLETTER OF THE MANATEE COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

## Convert New Members To Active Members In 2022

*By Dustin Wagner, Esq., YLD President, Lightning Law, PLLC*



There are two types of people in this world: those that are aware of the MCBA membership drive and those that are not. As a reminder, MCBA is hosting a membership drive through June 1st, 2022. Why should you participate? For starters, the 1st place winner gets a \$300.00 dollar Amazon gift card; 2nd place wins a \$150.00 dollar Amazon gift card, and 3rd place wins a \$50.00 dollar gift card. However, as nice as it is to splurge on new workout gear with an Amazon gift card, another incentive is to expand our community and network of local attorneys.

I have had the chance to observe several bar associations throughout Florida and believe MCBA is among the best. Our local bar events offer opportunities to engage with some of the highest caliber attorneys within a laid-back and welcoming atmosphere. In addition, we are fortunate to have access to world class beaches for events and parties. Luckily, we have had success growing our membership in this recent turbulent climate. But we should capitalize on that success by staying engaged with those members we helped recruit. There are plenty of new members coming on-board that could bring fresh ideas and projects “to the table” that would benefit all members of the MCBA.

How can you help? If you know an attorney that is new to Manatee County (and you genuinely like that person), carve out five minutes for a quick phone call to invite them to attend the next luncheon, or social event. Then, if that person decides to become a member, make sure they feel welcome to attend events and get involved. Most people are more inclined to get involved with community-based projects by invitation, rather than happenstance.

Circumstances have caused us to reschedule a few of our events as this is being printed. As of this minute, the YLD has postponed it’s “New Member Pizza Lunch” to Wednesday, February 9th at noon at the MCJC.

## How One Dollar A Month Can Increase Your Wealth

*by Jami C. Worley*

*Worley Elder Law*



There are just 24 hours in a day.

Imagine for a moment that those hours are represented by dollars, so we each get 24 dollars everyday that we either spend or lose. If we’re smart, then we choose to wisely invest (at least some of) our 24 dollars—getting the biggest bang for our buck so to speak. Don’t worry, I have no intention of turning this into a math problem.

How do we, as young lawyers (defined as age 40 or under, and/or within our first 5 years of practice), best invest our 24 dollars when we have to account for billable hour requirements, family time, sleep, and everything else that we’re involved with? Why should we try and spend one more of our dollars when we already feel like we’re living

on credit because those dollars just don’t stretch the way we need them to? Well, we would have to consider the potential reward for our investment.

For example, what if investing one dollar a month resulted in opportunities to learn from others, get and give professional support and encouragement, network with legal leaders, and help improve the community? As a young lawyer this appears to be a valuable investment, but who do we invest the dollar with? The answer is the Manatee County Young Lawyers, and more specifically, the Board of Directors.

I am a solo practitioner and joined the Board in 2018, serving as a Director since then. During that time, I have helped plan and attended social events with other young lawyers, networked with other attorneys who have become referral sources, attended numerous CLEs—like the one coming up on January 18th discussing stress in the legal field, enjoyed breakfast with our local judges at Java with the Judges—coming up on February 23rd with the 2nd DCA also attending, helped collect school supplies for Big Brothers Big Sisters, and participated in several other projects (for more details, hit the Like button on our Facebook page at MCBAYLD). The Board meets on the second Wednesday of every month from 12-1 and lunch is provided. My dollars are spent—sometimes before I get them, but that one-dollar monthly investment continues to pay dividends!

Now, you might be saying, I simply cannot spend one more dollar, and I certainly understand your concern. But just one dollar a month could result in meaningful connections to the local community, referrals to you as well as resources for referring out, social events with your peers, and the opportunity to serve only at the local level, or to pursue a more active role at the state level if you are looking to distinguish yourself from your colleagues. Honestly, how could you not afford to invest that one dollar per month?

It was great to see so many new young lawyer members noted in the recent issues of the Inter Alia, and if you are a young lawyer

*(One Dollar a Month, continued on page 3)*

## Highlights from the 2021 Holiday Party

On Friday, December 3rd, 2021, members gathered at Heritage Harbour Golf Club to celebrate the holidays! Lots of ugly sweaters were seen and Mark Barnebey took home the prize when Judge Ruhl announced his sweater as the ugliest sweater of all! The Young Lawyers Division raised \$830 for Southeastern Guide Dogs in a raffle for an official, signed football, affectionately called the "Gronk football". Andre Perron was delighted when his winning ticket was called. It was a great night of fantastic food, lots of holiday cheer, and music provided by the association's very own DJ, James Lynch.





## YLD News & Happenings

### The Young Lawyers Division – Making it Happen!

The Young Lawyers Division of the MCBA was busy this past holiday season. Led by YLD President Dustin Wagner, the group collected coats and clothing for Turning Points. Soon after, the YLD raffled an official NFL football signed by Tampa Bay Buccaneers player, Rob Gronkowski. The football raffle raised \$830 for Southeastern Guide Dogs and Andre' Perron was announced the winner at the 2021 Holiday Party. Way to go, Young Lawyers Division!



*Coats & clothing collected for Turning Points*



*Getting ready to raffle the “Gronk Football”*

#### *One Dollar a Month, continued from page 1*

interested in learning how your potential investment could grow, I invite you to join us for a tour of the Manatee County Courthouse and meet and greet on Wednesday, February 9th at noon.

While my discussion has been focused on the young lawyers, I want to take a moment to address the firms and managing partners overseeing these new young lawyers. While I certainly understand and respect the importance of billable work, involvement in the Bar and YLD is not without its own benefits. Studies have shown that having employees with a meaningful connection to the local

community boosts the young lawyer's overall well-being while increasing profitability, retention of quality employees, productivity, and client satisfaction. Much like I am asking the young lawyers to invest their “dollars”, I am imploring you to recognize that you have invested in the new young lawyer. Increase your return by encouraging them to invest in their legal community and join the YLD Board.

I thank you for your time and look forward to meeting you on February 9th!

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once registered, you will receive your Zoom link as confirmation

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### BE SEEN

Gone are the days of hanging your sign and clients would appear. Our members are seen by others on our website, social media, and at both membership-wide and community events!

### CLE COURSES

We offer numerous CLE courses throughout the year - many are FREE for our members! No need to travel and incur an extra expense, when you can be on your way to fulfilling your CLE requirements with us!

### NETWORKING

Build your law practice network by attending our luncheons, events, meetings, and socials. Your lunches at our General Membership Meetings are included in your dues!

### ONLINE DIRECTORY LISTING

Your membership includes a basic listing in our searchable online directory. The public can find you when they search our online directory for a local attorney!

### INTERACT WITH YOUR JUDGES

Our judges often can be found teaching or participating in our CLEs, and attending our various events!

### REFERRALS & MENTORING

MCBA attorneys are known for their professional manner and willingness to assist other attorneys with referrals and mentoring!

## JOIN OR RENEW TODAY!

All this and more is included in your MCBA dues! At only \$225 annually, it's still the best deal around!

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## *Welcome New Members*

**Thomas R. Baugher, Esq.**

University of Pennsylvania  
 Year Admitted to The Florida Bar, 2010  
 Firm: Investigative Lawyers Group, PLLC  
 Area(s) of Practice: General Practice, Criminal Law

**Micaela A. Cleall, Esq.**

Barry University School of Law  
 Admitted to The Florida Bar, 2021  
 Firm: Porges, Hamlin, Knowles, and Hawk, PA  
 Area(s) of Practice: Real Estate, Estate Planning

**Morgan R. Bentley, Esq.**

University of Florida, 1992  
 Admitted to The Florida Bar, 1992  
 Firm: Bentley Goodrich Kison, PA  
 Area(s) of Practice: Civil Litigation, Commercial Litigation, Environmental and Land Use

**Hillary Lane, Esq.**

Georgetown University Law Center  
 Admitted to The Florida Bar, 2021  
 Firm: Holland & Knight  
 Area(s) of Practice: Entertainment, Arts & Sports, Global Technology, Media

**John W. Chapman, Esq.**

Stetson University College of Law, 1989  
 Admitted to The Florida Bar, 1990  
 Firm: John W. Chapman, Jr.  
 Area(s) of Practice: Mediation, Estate Litigation, Construction

**Austin T. Palombizio, Esq.**

Nova Southeastern Shepard Broad Law School, 2019  
 Admitted to The Florida Bar, 2020  
 Firm: Esposito Law Group, PA  
 Area(s) of Practice: Litigation, Business Law, Real Estate, Estate Planning, Probate

**Andrew L. Clark, Esq.**

Florida Coastal, 2010  
 Admitted to The Florida Bar, 2021  
 Firm: Battisti Law Group  
 Area(s) of Practice: Insurance, Probate, Estate Planning

**Jesse L. Podor, Esq.**

University of Florida  
 Admitted to The Florida Bar, 2016  
 Firm: The Podor Law Firm, LLC  
 Area(s) of Practice: Personal Injury

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Date of Death: 10/26/2021

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with any information at:

(941) 371-0532 office (941) 893-7533 cell

(941) 377-4542 Fax

Email: CEGirard@aol.com

Mail: 4337 Oak View Drive, Sarasota, FL 34232

## DATES TO REMEMBER:

January 13, 2022	Virtual Ethics CLE
January 15, 2022	Keep Manatee Beautiful Clean Up POSTPONED
January 18, 2022	Trauma Informed Legal Practice CLE NOW VIRTUAL ONLY
January 26, 2022	January General Membership Luncheon
January 27, 2022	A Cautionary Tale CLE
February 2, 2022	MCBA Board of Directors Meeting
February 9, 2022	MCBA YLD BOD Meeting
February 17, 2022	Layon Robinson Celebration
February 23, 2022	February General Membership Luncheon
April 29, 2022	MCBA Spring Beach Social

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

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The top three members, listed on a New Member Application as "Referred By" will win!

Just sign up new members between now and June 1st, 2022! Winners will be announced at the Annual Meeting in June.

\* New Members must not have been a member of the MCBA within the last 3 years.

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**JANUARY 2022  
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Michael Mullan,  
M.D., Ph.D.  
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Michele Hall, Esq.



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Doors open at 11:30 to view the artwork created by residents of Westminster Communities of Bradenton. Artwork will be installed at the MCJC, 5th floor, and is made possible by the MCBA YLD and a grant from The Florida Bar!

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**DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS FRIDAY, JANUARY 21st!**

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**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. Collier, 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  
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Director, Manatee County Bar Association Young Lawyer's Division

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## LIVE CLE WEBINAR for Manatee County Bar Association Ethical Duties and Electronically Stored Information

Speaker: Tom Plunkett, Managing Director of Digital Forensics

Minimum Legal Credit: 1 Hour, Ethics

January 13, 2022

12:00 PM, Eastern Time

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[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_ZvwQlyGiQY2ftqYdqxij6g](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ZvwQlyGiQY2ftqYdqxij6g)

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This Continuing Legal Education presentation covers electronic discovery and the related ethical duty of competence. Drawing on guidance from the State Bar, recent e-discovery cases, and our own experience assisting attorneys, the presentation outlines the main risks to counsel and client of failing to properly understand e-discovery obligations in litigation. This activity is approved by the State Bar for 1 hour of Ethics credit towards the Minimum Continuing Legal Education requirements.

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## Manatee County Law Library Renamed In Honor of Layon F. Robinson, II

Friends, family, and colleagues gathered at the Manatee County Law Library to honor the life and legacy of the late Layon F. Robinson, II.

The Manatee County Board of County Commissioners adopted resolution R-21-124, designating the Manatee County Law Library as the Layon F. Robinson, II Law Library. On Monday, November 29, a renaming and dedication ceremony revealed the library's new name.

The dedication ceremony was attended by many people whose lives were touched by Mr. Robinson's generosity and service. Speakers at the event included Manatee County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller Angel Colonnese, Manatee County Commissioner Chair Vanessa Baugh, Manatee County Commissioner Reggie Bellamy, and Manatee County Bar Association President Stephen R. Dye, Esq.

Clerk Colonnese took a moment to reflect on the impact Mr.

Robinson made in her life. "Mr. Robinson was a dear friend to me ever since I was a young deputy clerk working the counter at the courthouse. When I became a young attorney, he attended my swearing-in ceremony. He never let an interaction pass without saying how proud he was of me." Colonnese said she will miss him terribly but feels grateful to dedicate the Manatee County Law Library in his honor.

The Manatee County Bar Association released a statement saying they fully support the naming of the law library after Mr. Robinson. Manatee County Bar Association President Stephen R. Dye, Esq. says, "Attorney Robinson was a long-time member in good standing of the Manatee County Bar Association. He was both well-liked and highly regarded by all who knew him and practiced law with him." Dye continued by saying that Mr. Robinson was a fine lawyer and a good citizen. He exemplified the virtues that Bar members strive for.



## Congratulations Cathie Mackey and Mackey Law Group on 30 Years!



Mackey Law Group celebrated 30 years in business in 2021. The law firm was started in 1991 by 4th generation Bradenton native Cathie (Zoller) Mackey after the birth of her first child and the denial of Cathie's flex-time request by her then-employer. A lot has changed over 30 years. Mackey Law Group initially opened-up for business down on 14th Street in a small office rented from Cathie's architect uncle Jerry Zoller. The firm's first dollar came from Dan Zoller's engineering firm, the former Zoller, Najjar, and Shroyer. Cathie still has that first dollar framed in in her office. Mackey Law Group has consistently grown over the past 30 years. The firm now operates out of a block-wide building on the corner on 14th and 3rd in downtown Bradenton and has 7 accomplished lawyers with support staff, and another lawyer coming on-board in March 2022.

Cathie still manages the firm and it is the only woman start-up firm of its size in the history of Bradenton. Currently there are four partners and three associate lawyers. The law firm started out

representing a few large clients like Citi Bank, the FDIC, and the RTC and the firm has now expanded out into real estate, probate, a general litigation practice, and the largest family law practice in the County. Mackey Law Group also ended 2021 with a bang by resolving a wrongful death case for a significant amount and looks forward to 2022. The law firm continues to claim that its lawyers are capable of trying any type of case that comes in the door and the firm's lawyers are always on the lookout to help others. Over the years, Mackey Law Group has tried bench and jury cases in state and federal courts including patent infringement, law firm representation, contract disputes, personal injury/wrongful death, business disputes, and family law. The law firm has also always handled its own appeals and has argued appellate cases not only throughout Florida; but, also Knoxville Tennessee, Atlanta Georgia, and the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit in Washington, D.C.

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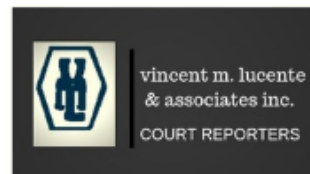
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## What do Ray Bellamy, Sheriff Rick Wells and Judge Gilbert Smith Jr Have in Common?

1. They grew up in Palmetto. Ray was a star football player from Lincoln High School before the school was closed in 1969 when Manatee County integrated the schools.
2. Ray was the first black football player to be given a full scholarship to a major university when he was drafted by the University of Miami in the mid 1960's.
3. Ray went on to be a star football player at the University of Miami and the first black student body president of the university.
4. In the 1970's Ray met Chesterfield Smith, Jr. when they worked for the courts in Miami.
5. Ray gives back to our community every year when he partners with Sheriff Rick Wells to give away Thanksgiving dinners to needy families in Manatee County. Approximately 400 Thanksgiving dinners were prepared and distributed this year, and were done in honor of Chesterfield Smith, Jr.



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celebrating

# LAYON F. ROBINSON, II

Join us as for lite bites and memories as we celebrate the naming of the  
Layon F. Robinson, II Law Library!

## Local Digest

### Robinson elected president of MCS

Layon Robinson, a partner in the Bradenton law firm of Buckle & Robinson, has been elected president of the Manatee Children's Services. Other officers and new board members also were elected recently including:



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