



INTERALIA

NEWSLETTER OF THE MANATEE
COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

SUMMER 2025

*News, invitations,
photos and more*

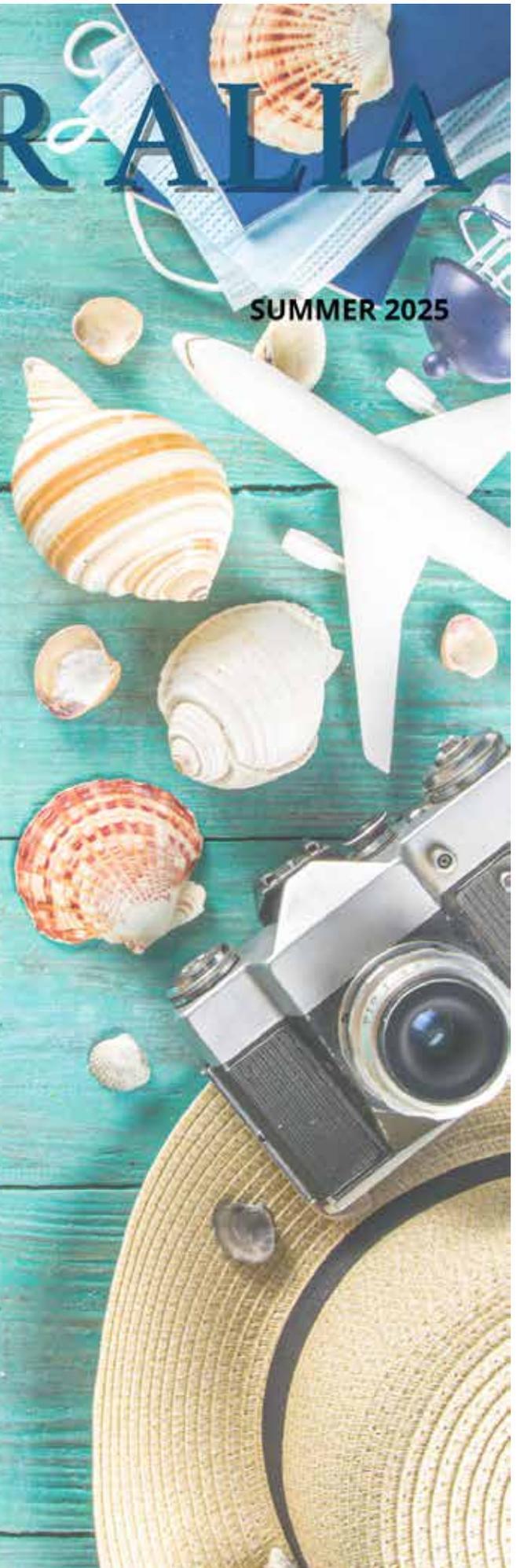
RIDE THE LIGHTNING

Members Out & About

**THE POWER OF
MENTORSHIP**

*It's Time! Membership
Renewals Underway*

**MAKE THIS YOUR
BEACH READ!**





Life Plan Community in Bradenton with two great locations



**THE MANOR
NEIGHBORHOOD**

1700 21st Avenue West • Bradenton, FL



**THE POINT PLEASANT
NEIGHBORHOOD**

1533 4th Avenue West • Bradenton, FL

Feel confident in referring your clients to our trusted Life Plan Community in Bradenton with two great locations. They'll love the active, maintenance-free lifestyle, great services and amenities, and the assurance of a plan for the future with our not-for-profit faith-based family, like:

- Delicious, chef-prepared dining
- Housekeeping
- Fitness center
- Outpatient therapy services — physical, occupational and speech
- A full continuum of healthcare services right on campus
- And more!

Call (941) 368-3518 today to learn more or to schedule a personal tour!



**Westminster
Bradenton**

WestminsterBradentonFL.org





RIDE THE LIGHTNING: A Beloved President’s Farewell Advice

By Dustin S. Wagner, Esq., MCBA President 2024-25

I figured I’d start this farewell note with something wise and timeless. Then I realized, that would be about as authentic as a love letter created by ChatGPT. So instead of quoting Socrates, being the consummate professional, my brain queued James Hetfield. Recently, I attended Metallica’s M72 tour in Tampa, and reflected on the volume, the intensity, the sheer energy of it all. Sometimes practicing law isn’t all that different. It can be fast, loud, and often not a lot of time for hesitation.

We all know that this profession—whether you’re in a courtroom, a conference room, or at your desk responding to keyboard brawlers—is unpredictable, intense, and at times, unforgiving. You plan, you prepare, you grind—and still the lightning strikes when you least expect it. It’s the motion filed at 4:59 p.m., the client’s unproductive tantrum before a hearing, the judge’s

question that you brilliantly deleted from your outline the night before. It’s the chaos you think you would handle with a little swagger when watching an episode of ‘Suits’ from your couch downing a pint of Haagen Dazs.

Regardless, our membership consists of real warriors, the ones reading this, the ones I’ve had the privilege of serving this past year. They don’t short-circuit when the voltage spikes. They rise, they adapt, and somehow, they even laugh while doing it. So, the next time the practice of law comes storming in like a surprise Friday afternoon emergency hearing or the client that shows up to trial in a shiny rhinestone suit (true story) just remember sometimes you’ve got to lean in, laugh, and Ride the Lightning.

With gratitude and grit,
Dustin Wagner
President, Manatee County Bar Association 2024–2025



Metallica takes the stage in Tampa – raw power in motion.



Pre-show energy.



Fire and fury – a trial-level performance.



Panoramic view of Raymond James Stadium – 360° Metallica.



A crimson haze and heavy riffs – Metallica commands the night.



James Hetfield closing the set – send opposing counsel off to never-never land, indeed.

LUTZ, BOBO & TELFAIR

TRIAL LAWYERS

BRADENTON | SARASOTA | PUNTA GORDA | TALLAHASSEE

PERSONAL INJURY COMPLEX CIVIL LITIGATION

*15 lawyers with over 350 years of
collective legal experience*

**REFERRALS & ASSOCIATIONS
WELCOME**



CHARLES W. TELFAIR, IV PAST MCBA PRESIDENT

(941) 951 - 1800

WWW.LBTLAW.COM



THE POWER OF MENTORSHIP IN SUMMER CLERKSHIP PROGRAMS

By Jenna Kyle Meltzer, Esq., YLD Director

As a practicing lawyer, I often forget how recently I attended law school, and the common feelings associated with it. Reminiscing on those times led me to realize that there might still be one common feeling law students face today: fear of the unknown. In practice, there might be tasks that feel second nature to lawyers, but to law students the tasks are uncharted territory. It is our duty as lawyers to shed light on the unknown for those who will soon be joining us in the profession.

Mentorship is crucial in the legal profession. It offers guidance, support, and opportunities for growth to law students. Being a mentor means providing law students with skill development, networking opportunities, and emotional support.

Skill Development

While law school educates students about the law, the application of the law is different in practice. As mentors, we lead the way for law students to understand legal practice, communicate effectively with clients, and witness the daily life of a practicing lawyer.

Networking Opportunities

Law schools typically have various networking events as outlets for law students to meet professionals where they

DISCLAIMER: The views and opinions expressed in each Inter Alia article are solely those of its respective author and do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the MCBA or its Board of Directors.

attend school. However, students often attend law school in communities that they do not plan to practice in, meaning they may have little networking opportunities in the area they plan to establish themselves. Moreover, during a law student's summer, networking opportunities may be few and far between without access to law school events. Therefore, it is important for mentors to connect their mentees with local professional networks, thereby expanding the mentee's reach and opening doors to potential opportunities.

Emotional Support

Law students are still learning during their summer clerkships. By providing a safe space for mentees to discuss challenges, fears, and aspirations, the mentor has in turn fostered the mentee's resilience in a demanding profession.

Becoming a mentor has become one of the great joys of my job. My mentee started with my firm as a legal assistant, has continued her work with my firm as a law clerk, and will soon be entering into her final year of law school. We have created a relationship that has not only given her opportunities to grow as a young professional, but has given me the opportunity to make a positive impact on an individual who will soon be joining the community.

Celebrating Creativity: Opening Reception for Senior Artists at the Manatee County Judicial Center



In June, the fifth floor of the Manatee County Judicial Center was transformed into a vibrant gallery space as community members gathered for the opening reception of an incredibly special art show. The exhibit features the creative works of senior citizens from Westminster Communities of Bradenton showcasing an inspiring range of talent and expression.

Guests at the reception were treated to a beautiful collection of art that includes cross stitch, mixed media, quilting, paintings, and photography. Each piece reflects the unique perspectives and life experiences of the artists, many of whom have been honing their crafts for decades.

The exhibit will remain on display in the courthouse for the next year, offering visitors a chance to appreciate the creativity, skill, and heart behind each work. More than just an art show, this exhibit is a celebration of lifelong creativity and the vibrant contributions of our senior community members.

We invite everyone to stop by the courthouse to experience this moving and joyful collection—and to honor the artists who continue to inspire us all. You can view the artwork on the fifth floor of the MCJC! Many thanks to the Young Lawyers Division and Westminster Communities of Bradenton for making this exhibit possible.



Registration now open!

ABC'S OF FAMILY COURT

EARLY PRICING THROUGH AUGUST 31

17 OCTOBER

**8:00 AM
5:00 PM**

SARA BAY COUNTRY CLUB | SARASOTA

- Full-day conference with multiple sessions
- Breakfast + lunch included
- CLE/CME/CE credit pending for all fields
- Opportunities to exhibit + advertise
- Annual membership included in registration
- Door prizes
- Happy Hour social

A unique opportunity to network with current and incoming judges and magistrates, court personnel, attorneys, mental health professionals, financial experts, and mediators

Open to members and non-members of FCPC who work in the areas of family law



Family Court Professional Coalition
FamilyCourtProfessionals.com

▶ **REGISTER NOW!**

tinyurl.com/FCPC2025

MCBA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Wed, July 30, 2025..... MCBA Board of Directors Meeting
- Wed, August 6, 2025
- SPECIAL DATEMCBA YLD Board of Directors Planning Meeting
- Wed, August 13, 2025
- SPECIAL DATEMCBA Board of Directors Planning Meeting
- Thurs, August 28, 2025Judge Denkin Retirement Party
- Wed, Sept. 3, 2025..... MCBA Board of Directors Meeting
- Wed, Sept. 10, 2025MCBA YLD Board of Directors Meeting
- Wed, Sept. 24, 2025 Membership Luncheon
..... YLD Spheres of Influence Event
- Wed, October 1, 2025 MCBA Board of Directors Meeting
- Wed, October 8, 2025MCBA YLD Board of Directors Meeting
- Wed, October 29, 2025..... Membership Luncheon
- Thurs, October 30, 2025.....Vintage Attorneys at Dye Harrison
- Wed, November 5, 2025MCBA Board of Directors Meeting
- Wed, November 12, 2025MCBA YLD Board of Directors Meeting
- Wed, December 3, 2025 MCBA Board of Directors Meeting
- Fri, December 5, 2025 MCBA Holiday Party
- Wed, December 10, 2025.....MCBA YLD Board of Directors Meeting
- Wed, January 7, 2026..... MCBA Board of Directors Meeting
- Wed, January 14, 2026.....MCBA YLD Board of Directors Meeting
- Wed, January 28, 2026..... Membership Luncheon
- Wed, February 4, 2026 MCBA Board of Directors Meeting
- Wed, February 11, 2026.....MCBA YLD Board of Directors Meeting
- Wed, February 25, 2026..... Membership Luncheon
- Wed, March 4, 2026 MCBA Board of Directors Meeting
- Wed, March 11, 2026.....MCBA YLD Board of Directors Meeting
- Wed, March 25, 2026..... Membership Luncheon
- Wed, May 6, 2026 MCBA Board of Directors Meeting
- Fri, May 8, 2026..... 12th Circuit Bench Bar Conference
- Wed, May 13, 2026MCBA YLD Board of Directors Meeting
- Wed, May 27, 2026 Law Day Membership Luncheon
- Wed, June 3, 2026..... MCBA Board of Directors Meeting
- Wed, June 10, 2026MCBA YLD Board of Directors Meeting
- Wed, June 24, 2026 Annual Membership Luncheon

**dates are subject to change*

5 Things You Didn't Know About RUBY, Annual Sponsor of the MCBA!



1. Ruby does more than just answer the phone for legal professionals like you. We can also schedule appointments, take payments, and even place outbound calls on your behalf.
2. The phone has become more important than ever for winning new business. We have seen a 9.6% increase in leads calling law firms over the past six years.
3. Fortunately, Ruby makes lead intake quick and easy. We can screen, qualify, and onboard new clients for you!
4. No habla ingles? No hay problema. We're available to communicate with your clients and prospects 24/7 in English and Spanish.
5. Ruby integrates with Clio Grow, Clio Manage, MyCase, and thousands of other apps and tools through Zapier. Say goodbye to busywork.

Members save 7% on Ruby with code MANATEE! To learn more and get started, give us a call at 866-714-8590

MCBA 100 CLUB

BARNES WALKER
 CAHALL LAW FIRM
 GALLAGHER & HAGOPIAN
 HALE LAW
 HARLLEE BALD
 HEINTZ LAW
 LANCASTER & EURE
 LEGLER MURPHY & BATTAGLIA

FIRMS WITH 100% MCBA MEMBERSHIP
 OF TWO ATTORNEYS OR MORE, THANK YOU!




HALE LAW
ACCIDENT ATTORNEYS

 **1-800-800-1414**
 **HALELAW.COM**



**Recent
Victories
We're
Proud Of:**

\$1,809,999.99

\$1,650,000.00

\$950,000.00

\$850,000.00

We're proud to serve as a trusted referral partner for fellow attorneys—and we handle every referral with integrity, transparency, and the personal attention your client deserves.

Because when it comes to personal injury cases, we

FIGHT LIKE HALE®



Experience streamlined coordination—our referral specialist manages all correspondence and keeps you informed every step of the way.



Effortless case tracking with advanced software that keeps you consistently informed on your case's progress.



Hale Law ensures referral fees are paid promptly and efficiently, just as promised.

Offices: Sarasota & Brandon; By Appointment: Lakewood Ranch, Venice, Port Charlotte, Bradenton

YOUR MCBA YOUNG LAWYERS DIVISION BOARD OF DIRECTORS for 2025-26

Chad Manausa, Esq; President
Tyler Dixon, Esq.; Vice President
Abigail Galati, Esq.; Secretary
Matthew Unzicker, Esq.; Treasurer
Patrick Iyampillai, Esq.; Imm. Past President

Directors:

Jenna Kyle Meltzer, Esq.
Lex Sayre, Esq.
Jennifer Myers, Esq.
Spencer Heintz, Esq.
Maxwell Shrem, Esq.
Simone Taitano, Esq.
Lauren Ravazzoli, Esq.
Caroline Tschida, Esq.

MCBA Members Out & About



Spotted at the Friendly City Foundation "Art of Brunch" event were MCBA members Dana Langanella Gerling, Judge Gilbert Smith, Jr., Alyssa Nohren, Marisa Powers, and Lisa Gonzalez Moore. The event was held at Oscura and was to benefit the Friendly City Foundation's "More Arts" programming (Mentoring, Opportunities, Resources & Education).



BARNES WALKER, GOETHE, PERRON & SHEA, PLLC



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
- Member, The Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration Committee
- J.D., The University of Tennessee College of Law



Kevin M. Collver, Esq.

- Admitted to the Florida Bar in 1997
- Member, Manatee County Bar Association
- LL.M., Taxation, University of Florida
- J.D. Ohio Northern University
- B.A., University of California at San Diego



Caroline M. Tschida, Esq.

- Admitted to the Florida Bar in 2025
- Member, Manatee County Bar Association
- J.D., Florida State University
- B.S., Florida State University, in Information, Communication, and Technology, *magna cum laude*

The firm's Wills, Trusts, and Estates attorneys handle matters relating to:

- Estate planning
- Probate and trust administration
- Homestead issues
- Estate and gift tax planning
- Elective share and surviving spouse rights

Serving Manatee and Sarasota Counties from our main office in Bradenton
3119 Manatee Avenue West, Bradenton, Florida
(941) 741-8224

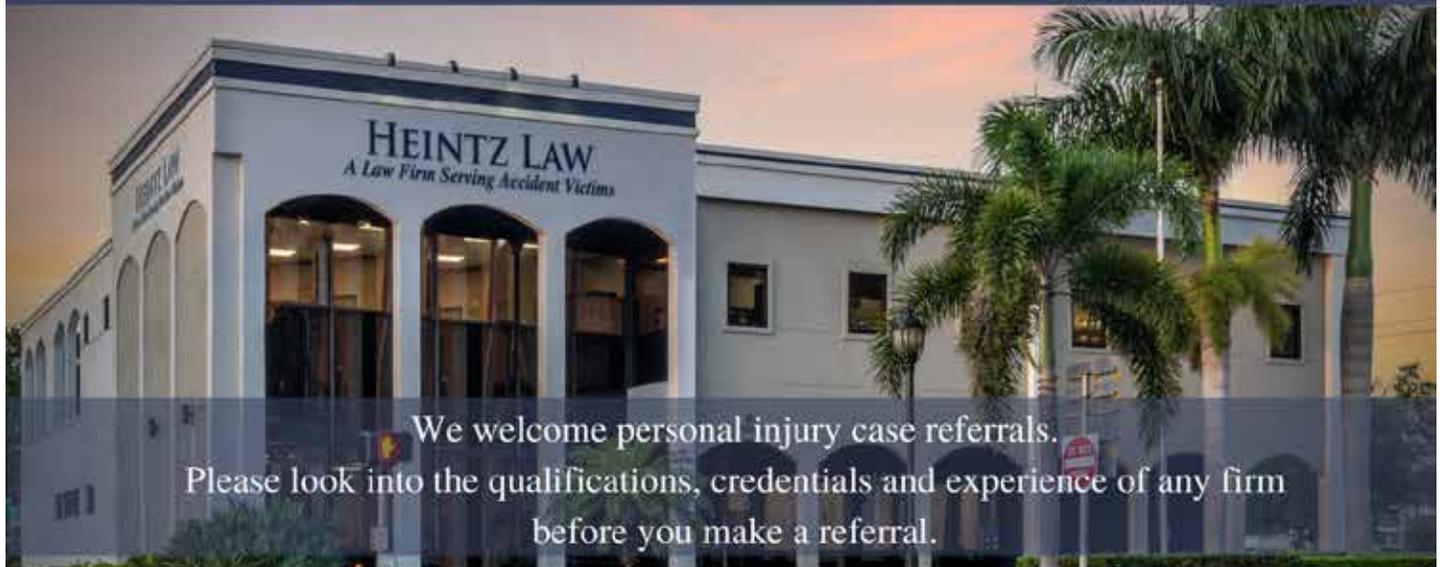
Available by appointment in Lakewood Ranch, Parrish, Sarasota, and Holmes Beach



HEINTZ LAW

A Law Firm Serving Accident Victims

941. 748.2916 • HEINTZLAW.COM



NBLSC Board Certified Lawyers



Super Lawyers



ANNUAL MEETING & BOARD SWEARING IN HIGHLIGHTS

On June 26th, 2025, our organization gathered for its annual meeting, featuring the formal swearing-in of both new and returning Board of Directors, Young Lawyers Division Board of Directors, and a special speaker presenting Healthy Teens Manatee.

The luncheon commenced as board members took their oath of office, given by The Honorable Melissa Gould. The 2025-26 Board are:

- James E. Lynch, Esq., Harllee & Bald, P. A..... President
- Dan VanEtten, Esq., Blalock Walters, P.A. President Elect
- Brian A. Iten, Esq., Manatee County Sheriff's Office Secretary
- M. Brandon Robinson, Esq., Battle Law, PLLC.....Treasurer
- Hon. Robert Farrance (Ret.).....Director
- Joseph B. Battaglia, Esq., Battaglia Law, PLLCDirector
- Kari Martin, Esq., Najmy Thompson.....Director
- Aaron B. Crittenden, Esq., Harllee & Bald, P.A.Director
- Patrick Iyampillai, Esq., Hale LawDirector
- Steele T. Williams, Esq., Steele T. Williams, P.A.....Director
- Chad Manausa, Esq., Grimes GalvanoDirector
- Dustin S. Wagner, Esq., Hanlon Law.....Imm. Past President

Following the swearing-in, Valerie Green, M. Ed and Program Director for Healthy Teens delivered an inspiring

overview of the Healthy Teens initiative, emphasizing its mission: empowering local youth to make positive, informed choices through peer-led health education. Drawing on the work of HealthyTeens, Inc., headquartered in Bradenton, FL, the presentation highlighted how peer-to-peer Teen Health Educators are transforming youth engagement. Key initiatives include:

- Developing teen-led workshops on physical, mental, and relationship well-being
- Building resilience and leadership through hands-on training
- Engaging community partners and sponsors to scale impact

The speaker connected these efforts to measurable outcomes—stronger youth leadership, increased health awareness, and a ripple effect of well-being across our community.

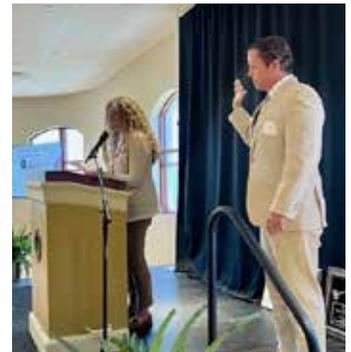
The annual meeting successfully combined governance with action—welcoming new leadership and reinforcing the organization’s commitment to community outreach. With a motivated Board and a clear mission, we are well-positioned for another transformative year ahead.



An assortment of MCBA Board and YLD Board Members



Bill Galvano and Dustin Wagner



Hon. Melissa Gould swears in directors of the MCBA and MCBA YLD with Imm. Past President Dustin Wagner



YLD incoming President Chad Manuasa, Past President Patrick Iyampillai and Bill Galvano pose for pic



President Dustin Wagner holds thank you plaque as incoming President, James Lynch looks on



Imm. Past President Dustin Wagner with Valerie Greene, Healthy Teen representatives, and President James Lynch



Get started



ruby[®]

Achieve more with 24/7 US-based bilingual answering.

What if everyone your practice served could connect with a real, empathetic professional whenever they reached out? Ruby makes it possible.

We're the #1 answering service solution for legal professionals of all kinds. Manatee County Bar Association members can get an exclusive discount on Ruby with promo code **MANATEE!**

Why Ruby?

- 24/7, US-based, bilingual answering
- Clio, MyCase, and Zapier integrations
- Appointment scheduling on 20+ software tools
- Accepting payments in a PCI-DSS compliant facility
- Customizable new client intake

Distinctive Weekend at the 2025 Voluntary Bar Conference

From July 11–12, 2025, Executive Directors and voluntary Bar leaders from all corners of Florida gathered at the Sunseeker Resort in Charlotte Harbor. The event, “Tech Trek,” combined tech insights, leadership growth, and community resurgence. And, MCBA President James Lynch and Executive Director Graceann Frederico were there representing the MCBA!

The schedule offered a thoughtfully curated mix: plenary speeches, engaging breakout sessions, and CLE opportunities (including tech and wellness credits) — all designed to equip leaders with practical strategies and fresh perspectives. Florida Bar President Rosalyn Sia Baker Barnes delivered a keynote emphasizing “authentic networking in leadership and service,” reinforcing the importance of authentic human connection. Additionally, attendees received an exclusive preview of a comprehensive disaster-response training program from Funding Florida Legal Aid. Hosting the event in

Port Charlotte also served as a deliberate effort to revitalize tourism in a region still recovering from devastating hurricanes, fulfilling both professional and community-oriented goals.

An annual highlight of the event is the “Basket Giveaway”. James Lynch was a winner! And the MCBA was excited to give away their basket to one happy winner from across the state!

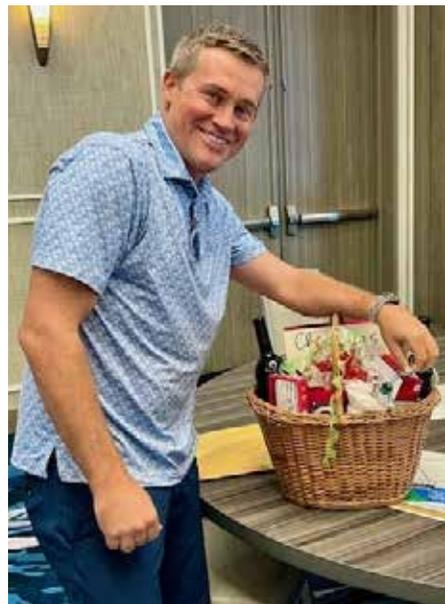
This year’s conference did more than inform—it brought leaders together, energized by shared learning, robust connections, and a unified commitment to community. With practical tools, inspiring conversations, and renewed alliances, Bar leaders returned home ready to lead with clarity and purpose. Manatee Bar members, get ready for an amazing 2025-26 year!



Voluntary Bar Executive Directors l to r: John Kynes (Hillsborough County Bar), Craig Schoup (Jacksonville County Bar), Carla Tharp Brown (Palm Beach County Bar), Holly Lipps (Sarasota County Bar), Teresa Conte (Clearwater Bar), Braulio Rosa (Broward County Bar), Melissa Byers (St. Petersburg Bar), and Graceann Frederico (Manatee County Bar).



Graceann Frederico poses with the happy winner of the MCBA basket!



James Lynch posing with his big basket win!



Graceann was a winner of a Florida Bar Weekly baseball cap!

KESSLER
SPINE & REHAB
 AUTO INJURY & SPORTS
 PERFORMANCE INSTITUTE
941.877.0317
 CHIRO | PT | BALANCE | REHAB
Trusted by Athletes, Built for Recovery



MEET THE DOCTORS

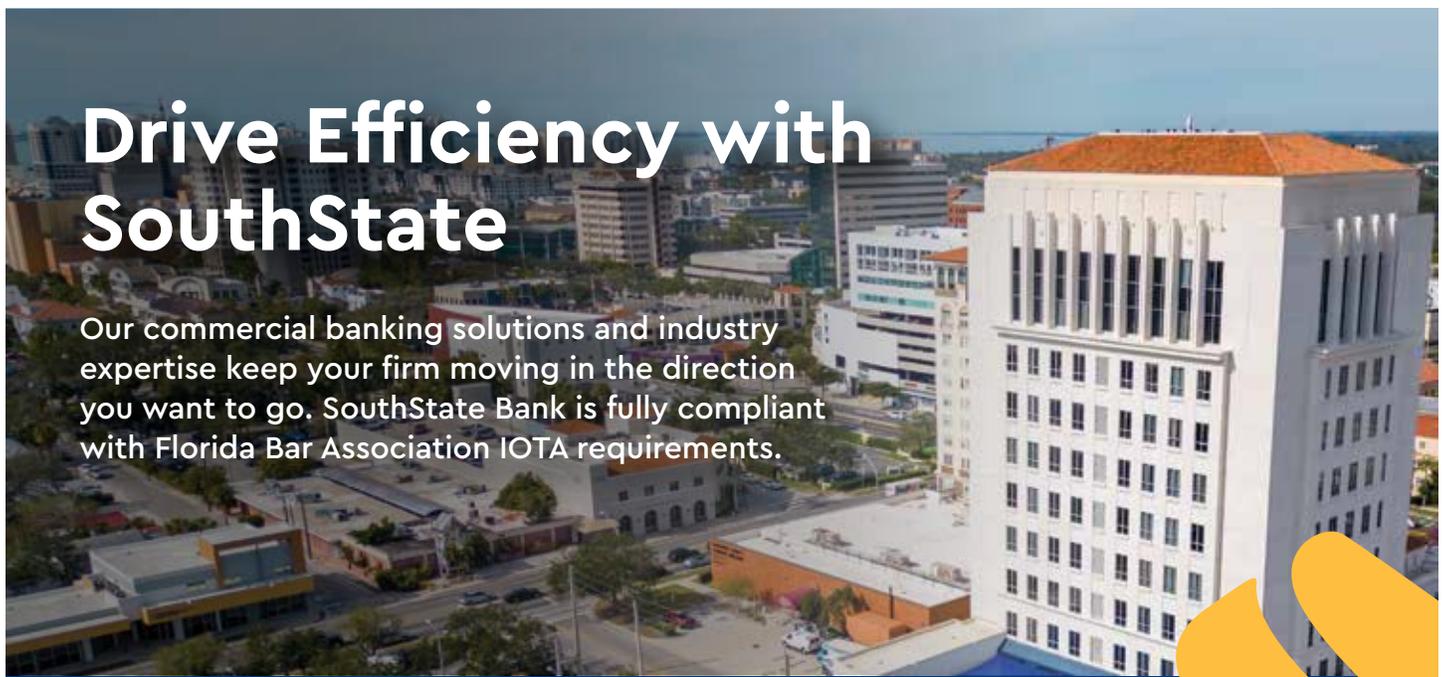
Firkins
 DODGE CHRYSLER Jeep DODGE RAM MITSUBISHI
 Your Local, Family-Owned Dealership Since 1953



FIRKINS.COM **1-800-FIRKINS**

Drive Efficiency with SouthState

Our commercial banking solutions and industry expertise keep your firm moving in the direction you want to go. SouthState Bank is fully compliant with Florida Bar Association IOTA requirements.




SouthState
 SouthStateBank.com
 Member FDIC • All loans subject to credit approval



Renee Brady
 Premier Private Banker
 1100 Tamiami Trail
 Sarasota, FL • 34236
 941.807.4848



If you haven't renewed your membership, you're about to be deactivated! Please don't let that happen!

As always, some of the fantastic benefits of MCBA Membership include:

- Meals at our General Membership Luncheons
- ONLINE listing in our searchable public FIND AN ATTORNEY directory
- Free (or almost free) CLE events
- Free (or almost free) tickets to events such as our Annual Holiday Party, Spring Social Event, Vintage Attorney Night, Java with the Judges, YLD events and more!
- Digital Subscription to our newsletter, *Inter Alia*
- Participation in community outreach & service projects

PLEASE Renew Online to avoid the \$50 late fee that is coming soon!

To keep our costs down, we DO NOT MAIL INVOICES - [This is your invoice.](#)

[Renew your membership](#)

Amount Due: \$295

Due Date: June 30, 2025

For Membership July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

If you would like to renew by mail, please visit our website to download your form, complete it, include your check and mail to, MCBA, PO Box 796, Bradenton, FL 34206. Dues must be received by July 30th to avoid the \$50 late fee! The downloadable form is here:

<https://manateebar.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/MCBA-NEW-Application-2025.pdf>

Thank you for being a member of the MCBA! If you have already renewed your membership, many thanks!

Graceann Frederico, MCBA Executive Director



Alan Gassman, Esq.
Gassman, Crotty &
Denicolo, P.A.

To Register visit
www.CFSarasota.org
Hover over "Advisors"
Click on "Distinguished
Speaker Series"

Please call 941-556-7165
for additional information.

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF SARASOTA COUNTY PRESENTS

Distinguished SPEAKER SERIES

ALAN GASSMAN

Essentials of Florida Asset Protection in Wealth Planning*

*1 credit pending approval for Attorney, CFP, CPA and Trust Officers.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2025

Registration and Breakfast 8:00 a.m.

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

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF SARASOTA COUNTY

2635 Fruitville Rd., Sarasota FL



Jesse R. Butler

*Board Certified in Business Litigation
& Appellate Law*



DICKINSON & GIBBONS, P.A.
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

(941) 366-4680 | dglawyers.com

Appeals | Legal Malpractice

- Board certified in both business litigation and appellate practice, bringing experience, expertise, and reputation to bear in a wide variety of complex cases.
- 25% referral fee upon the successful conclusion of legal malpractice matters referred in accordance with the Rules Regulating the Florida Bar.



Mediation Services

BOB HOYLE

- Probate matters
- Will and trust contests
- Real estate
- Homeowner and condominium associations
- Foreclosures
- Commercial and residential leases and tenancies
- Business and commercial litigation
- Personal Injury

D. ROBERT HOYLE P.A.
 941-745-1124
bhoyle@hoylefirm.com

6707 35th Avenue West
 Bradenton, FL 34209

Calendar availability and full bio at [floridamediators.org/Robert Hoyle](http://floridamediators.org/Robert_Hoyle)



36 YEARS EXPERIENCE

- Harvard College B.A., 1975
- Capital University Law School, J.D., Cum Laude, 1986
- Harvard Law School Mediation Training Program
- Chairman, Florida Bar Alternative Dispute Resolution Section 2015-2016
- Chairman, Florida Bar Council of Sections 2018-2019
- Certified Circuit Civil Mediator
- Certified County Civil Mediator



Our friends at Hale Law invite children from our local area – come on down!

• **Back to School Bash at The Mall at UTC**

Date: Saturday, August 2nd

Time: 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Location: The Mall at University Town Center
 (140 University Town Center Dr, Sarasota, FL 34243)

Come visit our booth for school-ready fun, giveaways, and helpful resources!

• **Hale Helps™ Back2School Backpack Giveaway**

Date: Sunday, August 3rd

Time: Starting at 6:00 PM (First come, first served)

Location: Restoration Church
 (3505 5th St E, Bradenton, FL 34208)

We're giving away backpacks filled with essential school supplies to help students start the year off strong. Supplies are limited, so be sure to arrive early!

Scott Brownell
 MEDIATION

CIVIL MEDIATOR

- PERSONAL INJURY MATTERS
- REAL ESTATE LITIGATION
- MEDICAL MALPRACTICE
- BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL LITIGATION
- LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT ISSUES
- PRODUCT LIABILITY
- LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISPUTES
- PROFESSIONAL FEE DISPUTES

Scott Brownell
scott@brownellmediation.com
 941.447.3701

WWW.BROWNELLMEDIATION.COM

BIG NEWS!

#12circuitFL court leaders are excited to announce that with Governor DeSantis finalizing the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 state budget, we are on track to welcome a new county judge in Manatee and two new circuit judges to the bench. All three positions will be appointed by the governor, so we encourage attorneys to apply when the Judicial Nominating Committee convenes.

The addition of the three new positions brings the total number of judges up from 32 to 35: 24 circuit judges, one Desoto County judge, five Manatee County judges and five Sarasota County judges.

After seeking input from the local judiciary, court leaders will determine what best serves the circuit regarding division and location assignments of the two circuit positions.



RETIREMENT PARTY FOR

JUDGE DAVID L. DENKIN

6 PM - 9 PM | AUGUST 28, 2025

After living the dream and completing 22 years of judicial service, Judge Denkin is ready to start a new chapter. Please join us to celebrate.

\$20

MICHAEL'S ON EAST
1212 SOUTH EAST AVENUE, SARASOTA

REGISTER ONLINE AT SARASOTABAR.COM BY **AUGUST 14**. THE PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS WILL BE ON THE REGISTRATION PAGE.




Our Office Locations
Bradenton
Sarasota
Parrish
Lakewood Ranch
Anna Maria Island

Abigail Holmes Galati, Esq. Andre R. Perron, Esq. Simone A. Taitano, Esq.





agalati@barneswalker.com aperron@barneswalker.com staitano@barneswalker.com

Business Trial Group

Providing professional services in the following practice areas:

- Complex Business Disputes
- Real Estate Disputes
- Trust and Estate Disputes
- Corporate/Partnership Disputes
- Collections
- Employment Disputes

For more information please visit our website at www.barneswalker.com

Telephone: (941) 741-8224 www.barneswalker.com

*Referral fees paid in accordance with Florida Bar Rules

When Clients Seek Resolution, Attorneys Seek Chapman Mediation.

Your clients deserve the least stressful and most practical path to resolution. John Chapman is an experienced, creative mediator who brings patience, persistence and a passion for helping disputing parties achieve common ground.

- 25 years as a Florida Board-Certified Business Litigation attorney
- 12 years as a Florida Supreme Court Certified Circuit Civil mediator
- Florida Supreme Court Approved Arbitrator
- FINRA Dispute Resolution Arbitrator

Let my experience and know-how resolve your client's civil dispute, via Zoom or in person at your office or mine.



CHAPMAN MEDIATION

BUSINESS AND ESTATE MEDIATION

1515 Ringling Blvd, Suite 870
Sarasota, FL 34236

Office: (941) 404-4616
Fax: (941) 404-4605

Jchapman@johnchapmanlaw.com
Book your mediation online at: ChapmanMediation.com

CONGRATULATIONS, MCBA Member, Michael Sasso!



Recently, MCBA Member Michael Sasso, Esq. was appointed by Florida Bar President Rosalyn Sia Baker-Barnes as the Vice Chair of the Senior Lawyers Committee. Mr. Sasso's appointment went into effect July 1, 2025. Congratulations, Mike!

WINNERS! WINNERS! WINNERS!

The following members have won gift cards to Amazon!

ERIC BRUCE, will receive a \$50 gift card to Amazon for renewing his membership by July 1st!

BRIAN ITEN, PAM D'AGOSTINO and **DARLENE RAGOONANAN** won our MCBA Membership Drive.

It was a three way tie, so we are splitting the prizes. They are each receiving Amazon Gift Cards!

Congratulations to all!

Looking for Job Opportunities?
Check out our Job Openings page
on our website at
www.manateebar.com

NOW HIRING Personal Injury Associate Attorney

Location: [Bradenton, FL] | - Full-Time

Start your legal career with a firm that fights for justice.

Are you a recent law school graduate passionate about advocating for the injured? Join our dynamic, client-focused team as a Personal Injury Associate Attorney. This is an excellent opportunity to launch your career in a supportive, fast-paced environment—no bar passage required at the time of application.

Job Description: Personal Injury Associate Attorney

Responsibilities:

- Assist senior attorneys in managing personal injury cases from intake through resolution.
- Conduct legal research, draft pleadings, discovery, and other legal documents.
- Communicate with clients, medical providers, and insurance adjusters.
- Attend depositions, mediations, and hearings (as permitted once licensed).
- Maintain accurate case files and support case development strategies.

Requirements:

- J.D. from an accredited law school.
- Awaiting results or planning to sit for the Florida Bar within the next administration.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills.
- Excellent organizational and time management abilities.
- Commitment to client service and ethical advocacy.
- Strong interest in personal injury and/or trial law.

Required:

- Previous experience (internships, clerkships, and clinics included) in personal injury, civil litigation, trial team, or client advocacy.

What We Offer:

- Mentorship from experienced trial attorneys.
- Competitive salary and benefits package.
- Hands-on experience with real cases and courtroom exposure.
- A collaborative and mission-driven team culture.

Apply Today

Send your resume, cover letter, and writing sample to pam@allinjurieslaw.com

Fraud Alert: Fake Payment Websites Targeting Florida Clerk Customers

The Florida Court Clerks & Comptrollers Association (FCCC) has issued a warning about fake websites and social media accounts mimicking the official PayFLClerk.com platform. These fraudulent sites may look legitimate and even include links to trusted agencies, but they are not secure.

If you need to make a payment to the Manatee Clerk's Office, always start at www.ManateeClerk.com.

Have questions or concerns? Call us at (941) 749-1800.

www.ManateeClerk.com

Steele Williams, Esquire

Legal Expertise You Can Rely On

Sarasota & Manatee County

My Florida law practice is focused on assisting clients in the following areas of the law:

Civil Litigation • Real Estate • Business Litigation
Securities Litigation • Estate & Trust Litigation

- ◆ 27 years of trial experience in court and arbitration.
- ◆ Referrals welcome, co-counsel business, commercial and estate litigation cases regularly.
- ◆ Very experienced with Florida Bar business and contract jury instructions.
- ◆ Board certified in business litigation over 10 years.

Steele Williams, Esquire

1381 Mc Ansh Square, Sarasota, FL 34236

(941) 378-1800

Email: SteeleTWilliams@comcast.net

Website: www.sarasotalitigation.com

Member:
Sarasota County Bar Association
Manatee County Bar Association





GET READY FOR A LEGENDARY NIGHT: THE VINTAGE ATTORNEYS PARTY IS COMING!

Dust off your briefcases and polish those wingtip shoes—our Vintage Attorneys Party is almost here, and it's going to be one for the books!

Think classic charm meets courtroom charisma—an evening where old-school legal legends meet timeless style, great company, and a few surprises. Whether you're a seasoned litigator or just love the vibe of vintage flair, this is your chance to celebrate the golden age of law with colleagues, friends, and fellow fans of all things retro and refined.

 Live music, food, fun, and maybe even a few legendary legal stories floating through the room... 

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2025
and get ready to turn back the clock for one unforgettable night.
Costumes encouraged, laughter required, fun guaranteed.

Details coming soon—stay tuned, spread the word, and get ready to party like it's 1969 (or maybe 1989—we won't judge).

FROM SAINT STEPHEN'S TO LOCKHEED MARTIN

CONNER LYNCH
CLASS OF 2013

LOCKHEED MARTIN



"Saint Stephen's gave me the tools to succeed at the highest academic levels, which prepared me for a rewarding career. The most important thing I came out of SSES with was knowing the importance of being a lifelong learner."

- Connor Lynch, Lockheed Martin, Aerospace Engineer



Scan the QR Code To schedule a campus tour.



315 41st Street West • Bradenton, FL 34209 • www.saintstephens.org



Musicals, Concerts, and More!



The Prince of Egypt
August 21st - 31st

Gutenberg!
The Musical!

Gutenberg! the Musical!
Sept 4th - 14th



Terry Lee Goffee
as Johnny Cash
Sept 30th - 2 & 7 pm



ManateePerformingArtsCenter.com
502 Third Avenue W | Bradenton
Box Office (941) 748-5875



SPECIALIZING IN: Estate Planning, Probate, Trust and Estate Administration, Business and Corporation Law, Taxation Law, Condominium Law, Homeowner Association Law, Planning, Land Use and Zoning, Real Estate Law, Litigation Practice Areas

WE MEAN BUSINESS



OFFICES IN
LAKEWOOD RANCH,
BRADENTON, SARASOTA,
ST. PETERSBURG & TAMPA

PH: (941) 748 - 2216

- Joseph L. Najmy, Esq.
- Stephen W. Thompson, Esq.
- Louis J. Najmy, Esq.
- Richard A. Weller, Esq.
- Sean M. Kelly, Esq.
- Aaron M. Thomas, Esq.
- Kari L. Martin, Esq.

WWW.NAJMYTHOMPSON.COM

Welcome To The MCBA Board of Directors



- James Lynch, President
- Dan Vanetten, President Elect
- Brandon Robinson, Treasurer
- Brian Iten, Secretary
- Dustin Wagner, Imm. Past President
- Hon. Robert Farrance (Ret.)
- Joe Battaglia
- Kari Martin
- Patrick Iyampillai
- Steele Williams
- Aaron Crittenden
- Chad Manausa, YLD President

**ARE YOU A
YOUNG LAWYER?**

Under 40 years of age, or less than 5 years of practice?

If you answered YES, then you are eligible to join our MCBA Young Lawyers Division!

Contact Chad Manausa, our YLD President at:
cmanausa@grimesgalvano.com
for more information.

Just a Few Member Benefits 🔍

1. Free Lunches
2. CLEs - local and many are Free!
3. Free Events
4. Free Online Directory Listing

[Join Now](#) www.manateebar.com



BlackheartTM INTELLIGENCE

Private Investigators & Consulting Experts

Litigation Intelligence
ESI & eDiscovery
Computer Crime
Payment & Wire Fraud
Cyber Extortion
DarkWeb | Crypto-Currency



Criminal | Civil | Family Law
State & Federal Courts



Jeff Birnbach

jbirnbach@Blackheart.US

Blackheart Intelligence LLC
FL PI Lic A3400185 | 941.312.2201

GRIMES GALVANO Mediation Services



Jack Hawkins, Esq.

Certified Circuit Court Mediator & Certified Family Law Mediator
Over 40 years' experience in Civil Trial, Family & Business Law Practice

JackHawkinsMediation.com

In-person, Zoom, or hybrid of in-person and Zoom



Bradenton (Main) Office
The Professional Building
1023 Manatee Avenue West
Bradenton, FL 34205

Phone: 941.748.0151
Fax: 941.748.0158
Email: Info@JackHawkinsMediation.com



Remembering Judge James Smiley Parker

On May 24, 2025, James Smiley Parker, Jr., 81, of Arcadia, Florida, passed away peacefully at his home. Born on January 27, 1944, to James Smiley Parker, Sr., and Nola Browning Parker in Arcadia, Florida, Jim was raised on the prairie of Parker Brothers Ranch. It was here that he found his love for the great outdoors. Jim attended high school at the Georgia Military Academy, in Atlanta, Georgia. He then graduated from the University of Florida with his Bachelors in 1965 and the University of Florida Law School in 1968.

After passing the Bar, Jim relocated to Jacksonville, and again on to Palmetto, where he served as an Assistant State Attorney, and as an Assistant Public Defender. He then went into private practice as a defense attorney.

In 1975, he moved his family back to Arcadia when he was appointed by the Governor to serve DeSoto County as County Judge. In 1985, he was appointed by the Governor

as Circuit Judge of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit of Florida, serving DeSoto, Manatee, and Sarasota Counties. Judge Parker retired from the bench in 2015, after 40 years of dedicated service.

When he wasn't practicing law, Jim was a lifelong member of Trinity Arcadia Methodist Church and the Arcadia All-Florida Championship Rodeo Association. He was also a member of the Elk's, DeSoto Cattlemen's Association, and Florida Farm Bureau.

Judge James S. Parker was an integral part of the Arcadia All-Florida Championship Rodeo, of which he was always happy to share his excitement and enthusiasm. Contributions honoring the memory of Judge James S. Parker can be made to the Arcadia All-Florida Championship Rodeo Association or Trinity Arcadia Methodist Church.



A 2019 photo from the MCBA archives, l to r: Judge Henderson, Judge Smith, Jr., Alix St. Paul, Judge Farrance, Judge Parker, Judge Wallace, Charlie Telfair, Steve Dye

Test Your Knowledge of Lawyer Fun Facts!

Opinions don't matter, we look to the internet for our answers. Have fun!

1. What percentage of U.S. presidents have been lawyers?

- A) About 10%
- B) About 25%
- C) About 50%
- D) About 70%

✔ Answer: C – About 50%

Explanation: Roughly half of all U.S. presidents were trained as lawyers.

2. Which U.S. president was the first to argue a case before the Supreme Court?

- A) John Adams
- B) Thomas Jefferson
- C) Abraham Lincoln
- D) William Howard Taft

✔ Answer: A – John Adams

Explanation: John Adams was a lawyer before becoming president and argued before the Supreme Court.

3. Which movie features lawyer Vincent Gambini, played by Joe Pesci?

- A) My Cousin Vinny
- B) The Lincoln Lawyer
- C) Erin Brockovich
- D) The Verdict

✔ Answer: A – My Cousin Vinny

Explanation: Vincent Gambini is a brash but talented lawyer who defends his cousin in a murder trial in the Deep South.

4. Which TV show about lawyers has won the most Emmy Awards?

- A) Boston Legal
- B) Law & Order
- C) The Practice
- D) Suits

✔ Answer: C – The Practice

Explanation: The Practice won multiple Emmys, including Outstanding Drama Series.

5. Which U.S. Supreme Court Justice was also a professional opera singer?

- A) Antonin Scalia
- B) Sandra Day O'Connor
- C) Ruth Bader Ginsburg
- D) Elena Kagan

✔ Answer: C – Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Explanation: RBG loved opera and even appeared in performances.

6. What's the average starting salary for a first-year associate at a big law firm in the U.S. (as of recent years)?

- A) \$50,000
- B) \$90,000
- C) \$160,000
- D) \$215,000

✔ Answer: D – \$215,000

Explanation: Many top law firms now offer over \$200K to new associates, not including bonuses.

7. What percentage of U.S. lawyers are women (as of recent stats)?

- A) About 25%
- B) About 35%
- C) About 40%
- D) About 50%

✔ Answer: D – About 50%

Explanation: Women now make up about half of U.S. law school grads and lawyers.

8. Which famous tech CEO once went to law school but dropped out?

- A) Mark Zuckerberg
- B) Elon Musk
- C) Jeff Bezos
- D) Larry Ellison

✔ Answer: B – Elon Musk

Explanation: Musk was briefly in a Ph.D./law program before leaving to start businesses.

9. What is the term for a lawyer who works in-house for a company rather than at a law firm?

- A) General judge
- B) Staff solicitor
- C) In-house counsel
- D) Corporate litigator

✔ Answer: C – In-house counsel

Explanation: These lawyers handle legal matters inside the company they work for.

10. What type of lawyer is most likely to never step foot in a courtroom?

- A) Criminal defense attorney
- B) Corporate lawyer
- C) Prosecutor
- D) Public defender

✔ Answer: B – Corporate lawyer

Explanation: Corporate lawyers usually handle deals, contracts, and negotiations — not trials.

QUALITY MEDIATION,
ARBITRATION, AND HYBRID
PROCEEDINGS AVAILABLE

DONNA LUGAR

MEDIATIONS - ARBITRATIONS - FLORIDA

VIRTUAL SESSIONS
FOR CASES PENDING
IN ANY COUNTY

CONVENIENT + EFFICIENT
online services



Book appointments



All sessions held virtually



Easy online payments

Visit our website for rates and other details

- Florida Supreme Court Certified Circuit Civil Mediator
- Florida Supreme Court Qualified Arbitrator
- Board Certified Civil Trial Lawyer (1998)
- AV Preeminent Rating by Martindale Hubbell
- Over 3,000 cases arbitrated and mediated to conclusion

*We take an
active role –
We never give up!*



DONNA LUGAR, ESQ.



Visit our new website!



DONNALUGAR.COM



941.600.9431

Proud Sponsor of the MCBA!

DHK

**DYE HARRISON KNOWLES
KIRKLAND PRATT & DEPAOLA, PLLC**

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Established 1920

www.dyeharrison.com

MANATEE COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

PROFESSIONALISM • FELLOWSHIP • SERVICE

2025-2026 OFFICERS

President:.....*James E. Lynch, Esq.*..... Harlee & Bald, P.A.
 President Elect:*Dan VanEtten, Esq.*..... Blalock Walters, P.A.
 Secretary:*Brian A. Iten, Esq.*..... Manatee County Sheriff’s Office
 Treasurer:*M. Brandon Robinson, Esq.*..... Battle Law, PLLC

2025-2026 DIRECTORS

Hon. Robert Farrance (Ret.)..... 12th Judicial Circuit
Joseph B. Battaglia, Esq...... Battaglia Law, PLLC
Kari Martin, Esq...... Najmy Thompson
Aaron B. Crittenden, Esq...... Harlee & Bald, P.A.
Patrick Iyampillai, Esq...... Hale Law
Steele T. Williams, Esq...... Steele T. Williams, P.A.

YLD PRESIDENT:

Chad Manausa, Esq.; *Grimes Galvano*

IMMEDIATE PAST-PRESIDENT:

Dustin S. Wagner, Esq.; *Hanlon Law*

DISCLAIMER: *The views and opinions expressed in each Inter Alia article are solely those of its respective author and do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the MCBA or its Board of Directors.*

Advertising in the Inter Alia

If you are interested in advertising in the *Inter Alia*, please contact Graceann Frederico at (941) 741-4091 or at MCBA@ManateeBar.com

Payment is expected at time of publication.
 Checks may be made payable to MCBA, P.O. Box 796, Bradenton, FL 34206.

Ad rates are as follows:

Bus. card \$40 members/\$45 non members
1/4 page \$60 members/\$70 non members
1/2 page \$90 members/\$100 non members
Full page \$150 members/\$175 non members

EBlast

Will Search \$30 members/\$40 non members
Job Posting* \$30 members/\$40 non members
 *Job posting includes listing on www.manateebar.com
 Inter Alia, the newsletter of the Manatee



Website: www.MANATEEBAR.com

Mailing address: P.O. Box 796, Bradenton, FL 34206

Phone: (941) 741-4091

Email: MCBA@manateebar.com

Executive Director:
Graceann Frederico

E-mail: MCBA@manateebar.com

Layout & Design:
On Trac Publishing
(941) 723-5003

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: Valerie at On Trac Publishing: Valerie@ontracnewsletters.com.