



Court of Common Pleas of Westmoreland County

Survey of the Judicial Candidates

Editor's note: As in past judicial elections, we have made space available for all the candidates to respond to a series of uniform questions, hoping that the effort enables our colleagues to learn a little bit more about those who seek a seat on the bench. The answers are solely the statements of the candidates and have not been edited or altered in any way.



Michele Bononi

1. WHY DO YOU WANT TO BE A JUDGE?

To further serve the people of Westmoreland County, preferably in the area of Family Law.

2. WHAT UNIQUE OR SPECIAL QUALITIES QUALIFY YOU TO SIT ON THE BENCH?

My experience of trying cases in the courtroom. The experience of already hearing over 3500 cases. Fairness and honesty in dealing with the cases that have been brought before me in my role as the Hearing Officer for Domestic Relations. The knowledge of the outside community and its needs by serving on the Board of Directors for six nonprofit entities and numerous other committees.

3. WHAT DO YOU MOST DISLIKE ABOUT WHAT YOU DO AS A LAWYER?

When I hear cases, having to tell attorneys to act in a professional manner and to treat each other with civility and respect.

4. WHAT IS YOUR FULL EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND, INCLUDING YOUR PROFESSIONAL RESUME?

Education: Seton Hall University, BA, magna cum laude; Ohio Northern University, Juris Doctorate

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Christopher Feliciani

1. WHY DO YOU WANT TO BE A JUDGE?

Law, in and of itself, is an honorable profession and I have been blessed to have even a small part in it. As a

lawyer in private practice, I have been able to offer advice and assistance to clients facing difficult and, at times, terrifying dilemmas. To serve the public as a judge in guaranteeing citizens the protections of the law is perhaps the most noble vocation. I believe I possess the qualities necessary to be an effective judge: temperament, work ethic, and experience—both from my practice in many areas of the law, as well as the experiences of my life.

2. WHAT UNIQUE OR SPECIAL QUALITIES QUALIFY YOU TO SIT ON THE BENCH?

I have been practicing law for nearly 15 years. During that time, my practice has been what is typically referred to as a "general practice" and includes many areas of the law, including extensive jury trial and appellate court experience. My professional experience, which includes family law, personal injury (representing both plaintiffs and defendants), criminal law, orphans' court, municipal law, and real estate, enables me to serve where needed. My experiences as a teacher and juvenile counselor, taught me early, the importance of actually listening, not just hearing. This skill lends itself to solving problems. Because most of my professional

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President's Message

The Ten Commandments

by Aaron M. Kress, Esq.

For the past 44 years, I have had the pleasure of practicing law and working either with or against some of the most interesting men and women with whom I have ever come into contact—lawyers. I have come to know most of you socially and professionally and I consider nearly all of you to be family.



Looking back, what strikes me most is how the profession and we lawyers have changed. We come into the practice of law with very little training on how to behave ourselves professionally.

When I finished law school in 1958 (that's A.D., not B.C.), I was required to spend several months working for an established lawyer as a clerk before I could be admitted to practice. That lawyer was called a preceptor. You worked, sometimes for little or no monetary compensation, but what you got in return from your preceptor was experience and insight into how to be a lawyer, how to conduct yourself with the Court and with your fellow lawyers. For some strange reason the Pennsylvania Supreme Court did away with that requirement. It was one of their less intelligent moves.

In my opinion, the absence of this practice has worked to the detriment of our profession. Many young lawyers, in our county and most of the other non-metropolitan counties in the state, are solo practitioners. Many have never worked for a firm or another lawyer. They need help. To some extent, the Westmoreland Bar Association and the Inns of Court fill that gap. Mentors are available to all of those who ask.

Although the Pennsylvania Supreme Court has issued rules governing the way lawyers should act with their clients and with the Court, I feel a need to act as the preceptor to some of you and, by way of anecdote and otherwise, to tell you how you should act towards each other. Anyone admitted before 1965 need not read any further because you already know what I am going to say or you won't pay attention anyhow.

All right Class, pay attention. Here comes the good stuff:

1. Read all the rules that tell lawyers how to play nice. These include, but are not limited

to the Rules of Professional Conduct (they are way in the back of the soft cover Rules of Civil Procedure, etc., that Bisel puts out), and the Rules of Civility (located near the Rules of Professional Conduct). They instruct us on how to be nice to our clients and the judges—something we should have known if we had any common sense. These rules govern lawyers' conduct and responsibilities to our clients; i.e., don't steal their money, don't date them, but do return their phone calls (especially if you have broken that last rule and are dating them). They also govern lawyers' conduct and responsibilities to our judges; i.e., show up when you are supposed to, don't lie to a judge and, for Lord's sake, don't lie to a judge you're dating. (I think someone has been watching too much Ally McBeal and A.U.S.A.).

2. Pay particular attention to Pa.R.C.P. 1023.1, also known as the "Put Up Or Shut Up" Rule. In other words, don't waste everyone's time and money initiating a lawsuit that has more holes in it than a slice of Swiss cheese, based on "facts" pulled out of thin air. It ain't nice, it can cost your client money, it can cost you money and you're going to get some judge really upset (see Item 1, *supra*).

Anecdote: Several years ago my daughter, Becky, and I were defending a will contest where the party opposing the will based his challenge solely on the fact that the decedent, at the

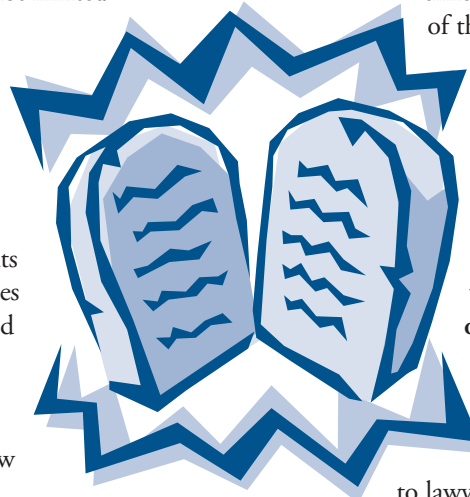
time of the execution of the contested will,

was suffering from gastritis and taking suppositories for that condition. Talk about anal retention!

3. Be nice to the lawyer on the other side, even if it kills you. In a small county such as ours, when it comes

to lawyers interacting with lawyers, what goes around comes around. Who among us has never been frustrated by an unreturned phone call? A nasty letter here and there? Discovery requests that go unanswered? And let's face it, where does bad behavior get you? Nowhere. Has being uncooperative or a jerk ever brought about a result different from the one you would have obtained if you had proceeded in a professional manner? Aside from impressing your client who "wants to hire a shark," when has "nasty" ever solved a case? Leave that sort of

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New Leaders Chosen, Awards Given at Annual Meeting

Aaron M. Kress assumed the office of President at the Annual Meeting of the Westmoreland Bar Association held on Monday, April 7, 2003, at the Greensburg Country Club.

Aaron earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from Dickinson, and his Juris Doctor from the University of Pennsylvania. He has been instrumental



▲
WBA President
Aaron M. Kress

in Unauthorized Practice of Law litigation on both the local and state levels. A member of the WBA since 1959, Aaron practices in New Kensington.

Aaron succeeds Timothy J. Geary and will serve a one-year term as President.

OTHER ELECTION RESULTS

James R. Silvis was elected Vice President for the 2003–2004 term, and Barbara J. Christner was chosen to fill the vacant Director seat on the board. Continuing to serve on the board are President-Elect Robert I. Johnston, Directors Rebecca A. Brammell and James E. Whelton, Jr., Past President Timothy J. Geary, Treasurer Milton V. Munk, Jr., and Secretary/Executive Director Diane Krivoniak.

Peggy Henry Hooker and Milton V. Munk, Jr., were elected to serve five-year terms on the Membership and Building Committees, respectively.

AWARDS GIVEN AT MEETING

Awards given at the meeting included the President's Award for

Professionalism as well as the Pro Bono Attorney of the Year and Committee of the Year. The recipients are as follows.

Milton V. Munk, Jr.

**PRESIDENT'S AWARD
FOR PROFESSIONALISM**

At this year's Annual Meeting, Milton V. Munk, Jr., was named the fifth recipient of the distinguished President's Award for Professionalism for his achievements in ethics and integrity; competence and dedication to the practice of law; civility; service to the bar and its members; and dedication to the improvement of the practice of law.

The President's Award for Professionalism is not an annual award, but is presented when the dedication and achievements of a WBA member who best exemplifies the highest standards of the profession with regard to the practice of law should be acknowledged.

"This recognition from people in the profession makes the 43 years of practice worthwhile," says Milt. "I cannot think of anything which could be more rewarding from a professional standpoint."

Personally, Milt says, the award is "recognition that what I was taught by my parents, teachers and mentors was worth living up to and something one can be proud to have achieved."

Though the practice of law has changed considerably since he began



▲
Outgoing WBA President Timothy J. Geary presents 2003 President's Award for Professionalism recipient Milton V. Munk, Jr., with a commemorative clock.

his practice, Milt believes that the old beliefs and values are still essential elements in the practice of law today.

"I hope that the younger attorneys take time to investigate the tried and true values of a profession which must be maintained if our society is to survive as our country was originally established," Milt says. "We need a true legal profession in order to succeed and it must continue to be a profession and not just a means of making a living."

Milt has been the Treasurer of the WBA for the past 15 years. He is a current member of the Elder Law and Orphans' Court Committees, as well as the Building, Finance, Planning and Real Estate Committees. He has been the Solicitor for Mount Pleasant Borough since 1965 and for Smithton Borough since 1977.

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Leaders Chosen, Awards Given *continued from page 3*

Sean Cassidy

**PRO BONO ATTORNEY
OF THE YEAR**

Sean Cassidy, a partner in Cassidy, Kotjarapoglus & Pohland, LLC, in Greensburg, was named Pro Bono Attorney of the Year at this year's Annual Meeting.

According to Pro Bono Program Coordinator Iva Munk, Sean has been a loyal and faithful volunteer since the inception of the Pro Bono Program in 1991. "Over the years, Sean has always been very accessible to any need I might have had," says Iva. "This year, he provided an estimated 60 hours on behalf of just one pro bono client ... he spent many hours at the Courthouse on the client's behalf, provided transportation to and from several municipal council meetings which are held in the evenings, and even returned the client's phone calls while on vacation."

"He was one of my clients," explains Sean. "Even though he's not paying, he deserves the same treatment as anyone else."

Sean's "ordinary" practice is in oil, gas and mineral law, so most of his time is spent meeting the legal needs of corporate clients. Volunteering for the Pro Bono Program enables him to work at meeting more personal legal needs of clients.

"While it is certainly gratifying to be recognized by your peers with an award, the greater gratification comes from the ability to provide legal assistance to a needy person," says Sean.

Employment & Labor Law

COMMITTEE OF THE YEAR

The Employment & Labor Law Committee was awarded Committee of the Year at this year's Annual Meeting for their

*President Judge
Daniel J. Ackerman
congratulates 2003 Pro
Bono Attorney of the
Year Sean Cassidy.*



Employment & Labor Law Forum held September 13, 2002, at the Westmoreland County Community College in Youngwood.

The seminar was attended by 75 human resources specialists, employers and attorneys and included how-tos on labor law issues, focusing on basics and recent developments. Speakers

were Jennie Bullard, Tim Fedele, Barry Gindlesperger, Tim Hewitt, Kim Houser, George Love, John O'Connell and Tom Schultz.

Accepting the award was committee member John M. O'Connell, Jr.

President's Message

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behavior to the new associates in those Pittsburgh and Philadelphia mega-firms who are trying to get 80 billable hours a week. In five years after they burn out and are discarded you will likely see them in solo practice in Hunker, wishing that they had never been mean to you.

4. The thing you do with giving notice of a motion at the last minute? Don't do that.

5. The thing you do where you accept an offer or comply with a Court Order at 5 p.m. the day before a 9 a.m. hearing in order to pressure the other side to accept without getting a chance to think it through? Don't do that either. We know what you're doing, that you probably had an answer or solution about a week ago, and it makes you look like a jerk.

6. If you get an offer of settlement, at least have the courtesy to acknowledge that you have received it and that you will mull it over with your client.

7. If you say you're going to "get back" to opposing counsel, then, by God, get back to opposing counsel.

8. If you are asked to accept service on behalf of your client, do so. Is there ever a valid reason not to?

9. If you are up against a less-experienced attorney, don't tell your client; it will get back to opposing counsel. He or she may be young, but you may be senile.

10. Be nice to other people besides lawyers and judges. Some of those other people may be related or close to those lawyers or judges and when it gets back to the lawyer whose sister-in-law was falsely accused of theft by you on behalf of your client, it can make for a very chilly scene at the next WBA Holiday Dinner Dance.

OK, so they're not exactly the Ten Commandments but we are, whether we like it or not, one big family. So quit hitting your brother or sister and quit fighting or you don't get to watch TV tonight.

Spotlight on Aaron Kress



Q WHAT JOBS HAVE YOU HELD PRIOR TO BECOMING AN ATTORNEY?

A 1) Drove a hearse for the Donaher Funeral Home in Arnold, Pa., while in high school.

2) Drove a delivery truck for Central Drug Stores in high school and college.

3) Worked as head of a swimming program at a coed summer camp on the Chesapeake Bay while in college and law school.

Q WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE AND WHY?

A Driving the hearse because it was a cool way to pick up chicks when the back of the hearse was not otherwise occupied.

Q WHAT IS THE FUNNIEST THING THAT'S HAPPENED TO YOU AS AN ATTORNEY?

A A.C. and John Scales were trying an eminent domain case for the condemnees before Judge Sculco. Irv Green and I were representing the condemnor. During a break in the trial, one of the jurors—a lovely little old lady with blue hair—came up to John, looked at him and said: “Mr. Scales, you have such a wonderful smile. You must be beloved by Jesus.” Mistrial or no mistrial, Irv and I figured we didn't have a chance with this crew and we settled the case forthwith.

Q WHAT IS THE QUALITY YOU MOST LIKE IN AN ATTORNEY?

A The good sense and perception to accept my argument and my offer of settlement.

Q WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE JOURNEY?

A A few years ago, Dorothy and I went on a bicycle trip in the Po River Valley in northern Italy. The scenery was magnificent, the food was other-worldly and the people were warm and friendly.

Q WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST REGRET?

A Dorothy says I have no regrets.

Q WHO ARE YOUR HEROES IN REAL LIFE?

A My heroes are the women who practice law (or are in any other profession or job) and raise a family at the same time.

Q WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO ATTORNEYS NEW TO THE PRACTICE OF LAW?

A 1) Return all phone calls promptly; 2) Don't hesitate to seek advice from an older lawyer; 3) Get involved in your community on a volunteer basis.

Q WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT?

A Watching my wife raise two marvelous daughters and staying out of her road in the process.

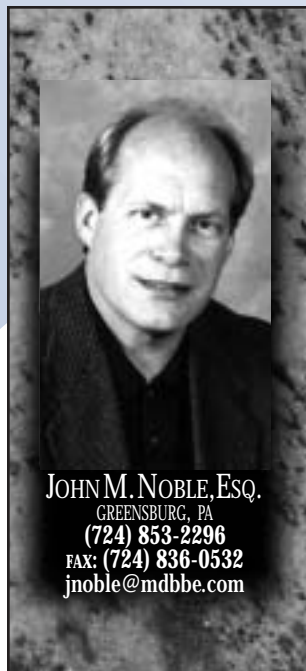
Q WHAT IS YOUR IDEA OF PERFECT HAPPINESS?

A It has to do with dark chocolate and Chivas Regal. If I had to tell you the rest, I'd have to kill you.

Q WHAT ARE THE MOST TREASURED THINGS YOU HAVE?

A My wife, my daughters, my sons-in-law and my grandchildren.

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JOHN M. NOBLE, ESQ.
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Michele Bononi

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Professional: Dato, Ippolito and Carracino, P.C., Attorneys at Law—Law Clerk; Juman and Juman, Attorneys at Law—Associate Attorney; Livingston and Clark, P.C., Attorneys at Law—Law Clerk and Associate Attorney; Bononi and Bononi, P.C., Attorneys at Law—Founding Partner; Child Support Advocate Attorney, Westmoreland County; Domestic Relations Hearing Officer, Westmoreland County

Currently I still work as the Hearing Officer for Westmoreland County and practice in my firm.

5. WHAT EVENT IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL LIFE ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF, AND WHY?

Being nominated by Governor Schweiker to replace Judge Loughran. It came as a complete surprise to me and was truly an honor that I will never forget.

6. DO YOU HAVE ANY SPECIALIZED PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE, AND IF SO, IN WHAT AREA(S)?

Family Law, although I started my career in civil litigation.

7. HOW MANY JURY TRIALS HAVE YOU TRIED?

At least 30.

Christopher Feliciani

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experience was gained in private practice, I also appreciate the difficulties attorneys encounter with scheduling and preparation. I like to think that my demeanor and temperament are particularly appropriate to serving as a judge.

3. WHAT DO YOU MOST DISLIKE ABOUT WHAT YOU DO AS A LAWYER?

Two things. First, I am often frustrated with the sense of being overwhelmed by the daily problems and predicaments in which many of my clients become involved. Over the years, with the guidance of my partners, colleagues, and the judges before whom I have practiced, I have learned the necessity of remaining objective and not to try to bear the burdens they carry.

Second, unnecessary litigation and unprofessional conduct. In my opinion, this feeds what Abraham Lincoln referred to as the “vague popular belief that lawyers are necessarily dishonest.”

4. WHAT IS YOUR FULL EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND, INCLUDING YOUR PROFESSIONAL RESUME?

I graduated from Derry Area Senior High School in 1977. I attended Slippery Rock State College where I obtained a Bachelor of Science with teaching certification in 1982. I worked for a brief period of time as a teacher in the Greensburg Salem School District and as a juvenile counselor in a medical facility until 1985 when I began law school. In 1988, I received a Juris Doctorate Degree from Ohio Northern University, Claude W. Pettit College of Law, where I was an Editor for the Law Review. I have been admitted to the courts of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and to the United States District Courts for both the Western and Eastern Districts, the United States Court of Appeals (Third Circuit), and the Ohio Supreme Court.

I have been practicing law for approximately 15 years, two of which were spent working as a part-time public defender in the Westmoreland County Public Defender's Office. While working as a part-time public defender, I was also an associate with the firm of Riley & DeFalice, P.C., and worked in their Greensburg office. The remaining years have been spent in the general practice of law. I am currently a shareholder in the firm of Berk, Whitehead, Kerr, Feliciani & Turin, P.C.

5. WHAT EVENT IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL LIFE ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF, AND WHY?

I have always been proud to be a member of the bar. Despite the public's perception of lawyers, for me, being a lawyer will always be a prestigious and noble profession. Everyday I practice, I get to help people. Sometimes their problems are substantial; sometimes, less so. But they seek

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practice tips

Myths About the Disciplinary System

by Richard Steven Levine, Esq.,
Disciplinary Counsel Region IV

The primary mission of the Office of Disciplinary Counsel (ODC) is protection of the public. Unfortunately, most lawyers view ODC as “pro-client” and “anti-lawyer.” This is a myth. While the prosecution of serious or repeated rule violations is *one* mandate of ODC, ODC also seeks to *educate* the Bar and *advocate* for attorneys who are subjected to complaints that warrant dismissal. In fact, over 90% of *all* complaints are dismissed outright, or with letters of education or concern. Eighty percent of these complaints are dismissed without contacting the attorneys.

ODC lawyers, with the assistance of seasoned investigators, review the

merits of each complaint. Complaints are dismissed by ODC for many reasons. Foremost, ODC has no jurisdiction regarding fee disputes. Skillful clients who owe fees and costs to attorneys frequently allege multiple violations of the Rules of Professional Conduct, hoping that an ODC investigation might leverage attorneys into withdrawing or reducing claims.

Other complainants are angry with lawyers because of personality conflicts or dissatisfaction with the progress and results of cases. Indeed, the majority of complaints received by ODC allege lack of communication (returning calls and keeping clients informed), delay (diligence) and fee disputes.

In criminal cases, complaints alleging the ineffective assistance of counsel are usually dismissed on the basis

that ODC will not consider acting until the issue is judicially determined. These clients are advised to consider acting until the issue is judicially determined. These clients are advised to consider direct appeals or post conviction relief. Allegations of prosecutorial misconduct are treated in a similar fashion.

Complaints are also dismissed on the basis of staleness and ODC, except in unusual circumstances, does not entertain complaints arising out of acts or omissions occurring more than four (4) years prior to the date of the complaint. Clients who are unhappy with results or an attorney's advice are informed that ODC will not “second-guess” the actions of attorneys during representation unless there are compelling reasons.

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(Conference Rooms are also available at our Pittsburgh and Erie offices.)

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Spotlight on Aaron Kress

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Q WHAT DO YOU MOST DISLIKE?

A Indiscriminate use of cell phones, waiting for anything and the suffering of fools.

Q WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST EXTRAVAGANCE?

A Owning and flying my own airplane. It was like owning three yachts and a string of polo ponies, all at the same time.

Q WHAT TALENT WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE?

A I would like to be able to play a guitar as well as John Blahovec. Wheeee Dogie!!

Q WHAT DO YOU MOST VALUE IN YOUR FRIENDS?

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(*Free to all members of the WBA)

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A No hidden agendas.

Q WHICH LIVING PERSON DO YOU MOST ADMIRE?

A Former President Jimmy Carter.

Q WHAT IS YOUR MOTTO?

A "Non Uratus Contra Ventum."

Myths About the Disciplinary System

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Finally, cases may be dismissed because ODC is unable to prove by "clear and convincing" evidence that the Rules of Professional Conduct have been violated.

ODC is not unaware of the realities of the practice of law. Nor is ODC insensitive to the personal problems of lawyers and the stress of practicing law. So when you get a call from ODC on a case, please don't panic! By promptly returning the phone call, you will most likely discover that ODC is seeking some additional information necessary to dismiss a complaint. Yes, we do "feel your pain!"

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January/February 2003 Trial Term

Jury Trial Verdicts

by Rachel Yantos, Esq.

Out of 106 civil actions listed for trial during the January/February 2003 trial term, only 2 were tried to a jury verdict. The dispositions of the remaining cases are as follows: 39 settled; 37 were continued; 2 were stayed; 2 were transferred to arbitration; summary judgment was granted in 1; 3 were tried nonjury; 3 verdicts were entered; 1 verdict was rendered in a binding summary jury trial and 18 were held to the next trial term.

**JOHN PAPAGEORGIU AND
ELENA PAPAGEORGIU, HIS WIFE
V.**

**ROCOR INTERNATIONAL, INC.,
LAND TRANSPORTATION, A
ROCOR TRANSPORTATION
COMPANY, LAND, A ROCOR
TRANSPORTATION COMPANY,
LAND CONTAINER, A ROCOR
TRANSPORTATION COMPANY,
LAND TRANSPORTATION, LLC,
AND BERNARD BAUMEISTER
NO. 45 OF 2000**

*Cause of Action: Negligence—
Motor Vehicle Accident*

This motor vehicle accident occurred on July 25, 1998, at approximately 11:55 p.m. in Hempfield Township. Plaintiff was traveling north on State Route 66, while defendant Baumeister was operating a 1985 Mack tractor trailer unit. According to the amended complaint, Baumeister operated the tractor trailer so as to completely block the northbound lane of all oncoming traffic, including plaintiff's vehicle. As a result, plaintiff's vehicle collided with and became pinned underneath the tractor trailer. Baumeister was an employee of the defendant over-the-road trucking companies ("Land Transportation"), who owned the tractor trailer. Negligence was asserted against defendants in blocking the

northbound lane of Route 66 directly in front of all oncoming traffic, inattentiveness to traffic conditions, failing to operate the unit with proper reflector or light fixtures, and failing to warn plaintiff that his lane of travel was blocked. Plaintiff suffered a severe compound fracture of the right humerus that required multiple surgeries; a fractured left wrist; a fractured clavicle dislocated from the sternum; facial injuries; and a mild to moderate closed head injury. His wife asserted a claim for loss of consortium.

Defendants stipulated as to their liability in negligence. At trial, defendants contested the severity and permanency of plaintiff's injuries. Defendants' case focused on rebutting plaintiff's psychological injuries and that plaintiff was permanently disabled. Defendant's rehabilitation specialist opined that plaintiff was capable of holding multiple positions of employment. Plaintiffs presented medical testimony that plaintiff was permanently disabled from employment based upon his injuries.

Plaintiffs' Counsel: John A. Straka III, Hirshberg, Gustine & Straka, III, Pgh.
Defendants' Counsel: Elizabeth E. Deemer, Brown & Levicoff, P.C., Pgh.
Trial Judge: The Hon. Gary P. Caruso

Result: Verdict for plaintiff in the amount of \$360,000. \$50,000 was awarded to wife-plaintiff for loss of consortium.

**DESIREE NASIBYAN AND IGOR
NASIBYAN, HER HUSBAND
V.**

**THE BOROUGH OF LIGONIER A/K/A
LIGONIER BOROUGH, A POLITICAL
SUBDIVISION OF THE COMMON-
WEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
NO. 5226 OF 1998**

*Cause of Action: Negligence—
Premises Liability*

This action resulted from a trip and fall that occurred on October 10, 1997, at approximately 8:00 a.m., during Fort Ligonier Days. Plaintiff

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Timothy J. McCormick
Attorney at Law

Announces the opening of his new Law Office
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The First Annual "You Must Have Been A Beautiful Baby, 'Cause, Baby, You Sure Look Like An Old Codger Now" Identify the Old Codger by His Baby Picture Contest

It happens. One day you're young, the next day you're not. Feeling no longer pretty, no longer facile, no longer interesting, your life at the Bar seems a meaningless, empty charade.

Well, old codger, cheer up. Even if you're constantly forgetting, you're by no means forgotten, no siree. We here at *the sidebar* revere you, we value your judgment, we value your wisdom, we value your experiences, and anytime you need us to help you find the bathroom, we're here for you.

To properly venerate our senior members, we have decided to run this contest. It's so simple even our younger members could figure it out. The trick is to match up the baby pictures to the current snapshots of their age-wizened counterparts. Just cut out the enclosed entry form, make your selections by matching the baby pictures to the corresponding grizzled ones, and if you get the most right, you win a prize.

All the entries with the most correct answers will be thrown into a hat, the Editor will pick one of those entries at random, and provided the chosen entry is from someone he likes, you win.

First prize is an all expenses paid visit to the WBA Home for Venerated Lawyers where you will get to spend one whole glorious day changing diapers, bedpans and bed sore bandages. You will also win your choice of a round of golf for four, with carts, to some local golf



course, or a pair of tickets to a Pirates home game of your choice this season. Plus your own photo will be published in *the sidebar* along with a bunch of

crapola about how astute you are.

You may enter as many times as you like, but we'll only count one entry, or maybe not even that. All



George Berry



Rich Ferguson



Jim Gaut



Tack Hammer



Richard Jim



Aaron Kress



George Lamproplos



Gene McDonald



Bob Milie



Larry Moore



James Nardelli, Sr.



John Scales



Bernie Shire



Christy Walthour



Wayne Whitehead

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Candid Camera: St. Paddy's Day



▲ "You can laugh all you want, but I say a man without pearly whites just isn't a man."



▲ "I swear, hold this up to your ear and you can hear the brewery."



▲ "Glad you like them. For Passover, I'm gonna wear matzoh."



▲ "No, my forebearers didn't own it, but they named it for my great-grandfather who worked there and got sales booming after he started spitting into the vat."

Jury Trial Verdicts

continued from page 9

was assisting her husband in setting up his craft booth in a municipal parking lot. While carrying items from the booth to their car, plaintiff attempted to pass through an opening in a yew hedge located near the booth. Plaintiff tripped and fell over the stump of a yew shrub that had been removed by the defendant borough. Plaintiff alleged negligence against the borough for allowing a dangerous condition to exist when it knew or should have known that openings created by defendant's cutting were used by the public as a thoroughfare between the parking lot and the street. Plaintiff's injuries included two fractured elbows, which required two arthroscopic procedures, and arthritis had developed in her right elbow. Plaintiff's husband sought damages for loss of consortium.

In new matter, defendant raised the affirmative defenses of governmental immunity, comparative negligence and voluntary assumption of the risk. Defendant admitted that it was in the possession and control of the property where the allegedly dangerous condition existed.

Prior to trial, the parties stipulated that plaintiff incurred recoverable medical bills for treatment of her physical injuries in the amount of \$5,098.24.

Plaintiff's Counsel: Denis P. Zuzik, Gbg.

Defendant's Counsel: Marna K. Blackmer, Summers, McDonnell, Walsh & Skeel, Pgh.

Trial Judge: The Hon. Gary P. Caruso

Result: Molded verdict for plaintiff in the amount of \$500.36. Because the defendant was a local agency, the jury's finding of no loss of permanent use of a bodily function precluded an award of non-economic damages. 50% causal negligence was attributed to plaintiff. Pursuant to statute, damages were further reduced by medical bills paid by insurance.

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To-Wit: Really

by S. Sponte, Esq.

If there's one thing I've learned over the years I've spent lawyering, it's that clients are often tasteless, greedy and narcissistic. This explains, for instance, why to clients a matter of profound principle so frequently becomes a matter of raving capital at settlement time, and why the dearest and closest of siblings tear each other's throats out over probate. And now, thanks to the miracle of reality television, I've been oh, so pleased to discover that the rest, residue and remainder of humankind are apparently similarly encumbered.

It really doesn't surprise me that such reality shows as "So You Want To Marry A Millionaire" and "Joe Millionaire" are popular. I mean, come on, put sex, money and greed together in one package and you could sell welts to lepers.

But when it comes to such shows as "Escape From the Island of Gorgeous, Horny Women," I seriously question the whole concept of the phrase "reality." In the first place, there is no "reality" that I'd ever find myself in that situation, and in the second place, if I ever did, trust me, I wouldn't be looking to escape anytime soon.

But taste, ethics and morality aside, the concept seems sound. Audiences are watching these reality shows in droves. In herds. In colonies. And I see here yet another opportunity for our profession to engage in some much needed image enhancement simply by getting on this ship before it starts to sink.

After all, who better knows the foibles of humankind than we do, huh? Greed, hate, jealousy, rage, promiscuity, lying, cheating, stealing—hey, we see it all every day, sometimes even before we leave the

house. Put them all together and they spell reality show, you betcha.

So, in keeping with my lifelong ambition to better the profession at every turn, I have come up with a few of my own ideas for law-based reality shows. It can only help our cause, and for that reason I invite you to submit your own ideas. I especially look forward to input from the family law practitioners. For them this is a natural.

1. "I DON'T"—A hilarious combination of "Divorce Court" and "Beat the Clock" in which the contestants vie to establish the absolute quickest time between "I now pronounce you husband and wife" and the granting of a divorce decree. Extra points awarded for spousal abuse, alienation of children,

continued on page 14



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Christopher Feliciani *continued from page 6*

my help because I am a lawyer. For that accomplishment, I will forever be proud.

As to a particular case or client, after nearly 15 years of general practice and trial experience, there are many events of which I am proud. One in particular, was the defense of a young man charged with homicide and other charges. The prosecution offered him a plea bargain.

Throughout trial preparation and even during the trial itself, his family and friends were nearly relentless in encouraging him to accept the plea. I found myself doubting the ultimate outcome of the trial and thought that it might be in his best interest to accept the plea bargain. My client was steadfast in his innocence of the murder charge and his belief in the “system.” The jury acquitted him of the murder charge. That trial was approximately six years ago. Since then, my client has become a very positive member of society and counsels young boys who come from broken homes. I receive regular calls from his parole officer just to let me know how well my client is doing! It gave me a tremendous sense of pride to think that I may have played perhaps some small role in helping to turn this young man’s life around. But, moreover, it also reaffirmed my faith in the “system.”

6. DO YOU HAVE ANY SPECIALIZED PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE, AND IF SO, IN WHAT AREA(S)?

I do not profess to have “specialized professional expertise.” However, over the years, my practice has afforded me an opportunity to gain experience in many different areas of the law. My practice has been more focused in personal injury, criminal law, and family law where I have handled hundreds of cases. In addition to trying three first degree murder cases, I have also represented defendants in three additional homicide cases that were resolved,

prior to jury selection, by way of guilty pleas. I have argued numerous cases before the Pennsylvania Superior Court as well as cases before The United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. I have also been appointed by our family court judges as a Special Master on a number of complex divorce/equitable distribution cases. From my experience as a solicitor for Irwin Borough, I have gained experience in many municipal matters, including police collective

bargaining, drafting and interpretation of ordinances, land use and zoning issues, and even Public Utility Commission issues. I have also prosecuted a number of quasi-criminal ordinance violation cases.

7. HOW MANY JURY TRIALS HAVE YOU TRIED?

I have been lead trial counsel in 26 jury trials. These include both criminal and civil trials in both state and federal court.

To-Wit: Really *continued from page 13*

extramarital affairs, non-disclosure of marital assets and the passage of any recently acquired sexually transmitted disease between contestants.

2. “ALL FALL DOWN”—The slip-and-fall show in which contestants compete for prize money by strolling down the Walk of Pain, tossing themselves at the various holes, construction sites, icy patches, dirt mounds and puddles they encounter along the way. Prizes are awarded based on the success and frequency with which contestants break various bodily parts—femur, \$2,500; fibula, \$3,000, etc.—with bonuses for repeat injuries. But be careful. One defense verdict and you’re immediately dragged off the set, whether you’ve healed or not, and you have to give back all the complimentary meds.

3. “WHO’S YOUR DADDY?”—A family law game show in which the participants compete to win a DNA paternity test so they can pay child support for 18 years. Production will have to wait until the producers can come up with a way to include female contestants.

4. “THE REAR-ENDERS”—A raucous, noisy demolition derby show in which both rear-enders and rear-endees team up to cause as much vehicular damage and bodily injury to

fellow team members in as short a time as possible. Winning teams share 65 percent of the damages, 60 percent if it goes to trial.

5. “ESCAPE FROM MANDAMUS”—Something a bit on the more cerebral side, designed primarily to appeal to the typical PBS viewer. The show takes the mundane, an elected official who abuses his or her office, ignoring both law and the commonweal, and combines it with, get this, an outraged electorate tired of being flamboozled and finally willing to do something about it. Ratings should be spectacular, provided the show can get clearance from the Office of Homeland Criticism.

Well, there you have it, five sure winners in this new age of reality television. You know, it’s at times like this that I really think I missed my true calling. The law is fun, sure, we all know that, but gee, I just bet I could make it big in the TV biz. I just bet I could be a rich, successful, television producer, if only I could figure out a way to shed these accursed mantles of taste, ethics and morality. And then of course there’s that intellect thing I’d have to learn to ignore. Damn my luck.

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Can’t get enough Sponte? More articles are online at www.funnylawyer.com.

bookmark What Have You Been Reading?

by Beth Orbison, Esq.

Although there are many books that I could recommend from recent years' best seller lists as being "good reads," the following recommendations are books that I have most often shared with good friends.



Beth Orbison

They are books that have caused me to have to catch my breath, in the way that a painting or sculpture or dance performance can.

ANGLE OF REPOSE

◆ by Wallace Stegner

◆ Confined to a wheelchair, a retired historian researches and unravels the life of his grandparents, who were among America's first western pioneers, and in the process, begins to understand himself. The

phrase "angle of repose," a geological reference, is a metaphor for arriving, after tumbling and falling, at a place of rest, perhaps having found peace, but maybe having resigned and surrendered.

ANNA KARENINA ◆ by Leo Tolstoy ◆

Although the popular movie versions focus on Anna, the doomed, adulterous woman, the true hero of this book is Levin. Levin is a pious, moral, socially responsible man who achieves greatness thoughtfully and quietly. In my next life, I want to be Levin.

ULYSSES ◆ by James Joyce ◆ For the pure enjoyment of what man is capable of doing with words on paper, you must read "Ulysses," a book about one day in the life of Leopold Bloom. "Joyce has attempted—it seems to me, with astonishing success—to show how the stream of consciousness with its ever-shifting kaleidoscopic impressions, carries, as it were on a plastic

palimpsest, not only what is in the focus of each man's observation of the actual things about him, but also in a penumbral zone residua of past impressions, some recent and some drawn up by association from the domain of the subconscious." From U.S. District Judge John M. Woolsey's Opinion rendered December 6, 1933, in *United States of America vs. One Book called "Ulysses" Random House, Inc.*, lifting the obscenity ban on "Ulysses."

FIFTH BUSINESS, THE MANTICORE, AND WORLD OF WONDERS ◆

by Robertson Davies ◆ These three books are collectively known as the "Deptford trilogy," because each story is set in the village of Deptford. "Fifth Business" is the story of a rational man who discovers that the marvelous is only another aspect of the real. "The Manticore" has been described

continued on page 16

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9+	\$603	\$754	\$830	\$936

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*Firms with one to five attorneys, each with gross billings under \$300,000, with no attorney spending more than 25% of his time in Personal Injury or Financial Transactions, no negligence claims within the last five years, and no history of disciplinary action.

What Have You Been Reading? *continued from page 15*

as “an exploration, by an exquisite stylist, of those regions beyond reason where monsters live ... lucid, concise, beautifully phrased, rich in drama and in relentless penetration of character.” —*Library Journal*. “World of Wonders” is the story of a master illusionist, “a novel of stunning verbal energy and intelligence.” —*The New York Times Book Review*. Upon reading this trilogy, you are likely to want to read every other Robertson Davies book you can get your hands on.

MAN'S SEARCH FOR MEANING ♦ by Viktor E. Frankl ♦ The author is a holocaust survivor, who then became a psychiatrist in clinical practice. He writes of his life in the concentration camp, and explains how spiritual awareness and strength overcomes otherwise overwhelming adversity and hopeless depression. “An enduring

work of survival literature.” —*The New York Times*.

MOTHERLESS DAUGHTERS, THE LEGACY OF LOSS ♦ by Hope Edelman ♦ Although pop-psychology books can be simplistic and obvious, Edelman's research and analyses provide comfort and relief to any woman who has had to “grow up” and live life in the face of the untimely death of her mother. “A moving, comprehensive and insightful look at the lifelong ramifications of the loss of a mother.” —*San Francisco Chronicle*

LIGHT ON YOGA ♦ by B.K.S. Iyengar ♦ Iyengar, who is now 83 years old, was the first to compile this comprehensive text on the practice of yoga. This is not simply a book about achieving the ability to assume certain physical postures (asanas); it is about broader concepts of balance, flexibility

and strength that, with practice and commitment, can foster tolerance, compassion, honesty and moderation. “By its very nature it [yoga] is inextricably associated with universal laws: for respect for life, truth, and patience are all indispensable factors in the drawing of a quiet breath, in calmness of mind and firmness of will.” —Yehudi Menuhin

ALL THE PRETTY HORSES ♦ by Cormac McCarthy ♦ McCarthy's tight, staccato writing style evokes the harsh existence and quiet passion of a young Texas rancher as he sets off on an adventure through the Wild West.

JOY OF COOKING ♦ by Irma S. Rombauer and Marion Rombauer Becker ♦ My list would not be complete without a cookbook. Although my kitchen shelves contain books by Alain Ducasse, Julia Child, the Silver Palate women and many others in between (not discounting www.epicurious.com), I prefer “Joy of Cooking” (not “The All New Joy of Cooking”—it's not as good) as the classic reference for the basics—cranberry sauce, apple pie, Beef Wellington, etc. I could not eat (well) without it.

THE SUNDAY NEW YORK TIMES ♦ Growing up in eastern Pennsylvania, going into “the City” could only mean that you were going into Manhattan. In other words, Manhattan was tantamount to Mecca, and all things associated with it were golden.

Although I now have lived in western Pennsylvania longer than I lived in eastern Pennsylvania, I still consider it among life's pleasures and small indulgences to be able to find the time to sit down on a Sunday and read “All the News That's Fit to Print,” from cover to cover, particularly because, up until recently, it was no small feat to locate the Sunday Times within a half-hour driving distance of the hinterlands of Murrysville. Of course, I always save the magazine for last.

letters to the editor

Editor's note: Our last issue contained the final President's Message from the WBA's outgoing president, Tim Geary. It apparently evoked some interest from our membership, as several members have written in response. We encourage our readers to write anytime they are motivated to do so, and as a matter of policy, we will publish such letters whenever it is appropriate to do so. The opinions are solely those of the authors.

Plaudits to President Tim for writing (and you for publishing) his thoughts on the manufactured malpractice malaise. I realize that “bad” cases are settled, but the public and politicians should be aware of the almost unbroken string of defense verdicts in those cases that are tried in our county.

It's time we stop apologizing for being lawyers.

Very truly yours,
Stuart J. Horner, Jr.

Just received January/February sidebar. Firstly, my congratulations on the good things you have done during your tenure for the Westmoreland Bar Association.

However, you now have the dubious distinction of being the first officer of the Westmoreland Bar Association

during my 52 years as a member of the association who used his position to advance partisan politics.

David W. Cook

I gently chide you on your disparagement of Mississippi. I assume that neither your remarks nor my retort would be taken too seriously.

I found your diatribe in the January/February 2003 issue of the sidebar lacking any indicia of propriety, scholarship, tolerance, humor, or merit, an affront to anyone with differing views and unworthy of response.

You certainly have projected an image of the Westmoreland Bar Association. It is an embarrassment greater than I have ever seen before.

Very truly yours,
Richard F. Flickinger

Candid Camera: 2003 Annual Meeting



▲
“Yes, it is a quarter, and yes, I did take it out of your ear, but now it's mine and I'm keeping it.”

▶
“Hey, what do you think the good Lord gave us two hands for, huh?”



▲
“Now, Milt, pay attention ... when the big hand is on the 3 and the little hand is on the 8 ...”

▶
Barely able to contain their excitement, the three finalists wait with bated breath to see who wins the gift certificate from “Prostates ‘R Us.”



▲
“... after which they discreetly got a room.”





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Supreme Court Trip Planned

Have you been admitted to the bar of the U.S. Supreme Court? Would you like to be? The Westmoreland Bar Association is considering a group admission along with members of the Washington County Bar. This trip would probably be late Fall 2003 or early Spring 2004.

Typically the day's event includes: continental breakfast, swearing-in ceremony and group photograph. In past years we have had the opportunity to meet with a Supreme Justice and have toured the court.

Requirements for the group admission ceremony are quite specific and include the following:

- Must have been admitted to practice in the state's highest court for a period of at least three years immediately before the date of application;
- Must not have been the subject of any adverse disciplinary action during that three-year period;
- Must appear to the court to be of good moral and professional character.

One guest per attorney is permitted into the admissions ceremony (we have found that this is not generally enforced) and children are discouraged from attending the ceremony.

LawSpeak

On the occasion of his retirement many years ago, Lord Erskine, a famous and highly regarded English barrister, said, "Half the cases I won, I should have lost, and half the cases I lost, I should have won. So all in all, I guess justice was done."

And Baby Makes ...

Chris and Tina Haidze welcomed a son, Luke Christopher, into their family on March 24, 2003. Luke, who was born October 13, 2002, in South Korea, already has his own Web site at inkoo.hopto.org. Chris is an Assistant Public Defender for Westmoreland County and practices with George & Joseph in New Kensington.

Jim and Beth Horchak are the proud parents of Maxwell James, born February 26, 2003. Max was 8 lb. 10 oz. and 21 inches long at birth. Jim is an associate with QuatriniRaffertyGalloway in Greensburg.



Fee is \$100 and applicant must have two written endorsements from attorneys or judges.

If you are interested in knowing more information or wish to be placed on the list, please call (724-834-6730) or e-mail (westbar.org@verizon.net) the Bar office.

Fee Dispute Committee Needs You

Hey, you! Want to make a contribution to the profession? Then why not consider signing on as a member of the Fee Dispute Committee?

This committee provides an important service to the Bar and does Herculean work in ironing out disagreements between clients and attorneys over attorney's fees. Hearings run similar to arbitration hearings including rules and binding agreement options.

Typically volunteers serve on one case a year, requiring about two to three hours of your time. We are also looking for non-lawyers willing to serve in the same capacity. Interested persons should contact Committee Chair Harvey Zalevsky

at 724-837-3700, or the WBA office at 724-834-6730.

Bench/Bar Conference Registration Deadline Looming

If you haven't yet sent in your registration for the 2003 Bench/Bar Conference of the Westmoreland Bar Association, do so now. The registration deadline is Tuesday, May 13, 2003. Send in your registration today!

Actions of the Board

MARCH 18, 2003

- Received report that the WBF is sponsoring the findwestmoreland site, a one-stop shopping web page for all organizations, social service agencies and nonprofits in the county, in the amount of \$250 per year for three years.
- Voted to have WBA become a sponsor of findwestmoreland in the

wba news

amount of \$750 per year for next three years.

- Voted to provide \$1,000 to sponsor the "Capital Steps" performing group scheduled to perform at UPG in 2004.
- Discussed ACBA's interest in renting the Lawyers Abstract space for their court reporting service and how that may impact the court reporting services presently in existence in Westmoreland County.
- Reviewed letter received from new Chief of Disciplinary Board which offered a Disciplinary Board liaison for CLE presentations.
- Received report on a meeting held with Elder Law Chair Peggy Hooker, Orphans' Court Chair Chris DeDiana, Vision Group Coordinator John Campfield and Mrs. Krivoniak to discuss a WBA-sponsored community education seminar on "Truths about Living Trusts."
- Publicly thanked Past President and outgoing board member John Campfield for his commitment of time, talents and leadership as WBA board member.

On The Move ...

AMY CUNNINGHAM has moved to One Northgate Square, P.O. Box 930, Greensburg, PA 15601. She can be reached at 724.850.8170; fax 724.836.3376.

DEBORAH JACKSON has moved to Keystone Commons, Suite 110, 35 W. Pittsburgh St., Greensburg, PA 15601. She can be reached at 724.836.3848; fax 724.837.7868.

JON M. LEWIS, DONALD B. MOREMAN and **WILLIAM J. WIKER** have moved their offices to the Coulter Building, 231 S. Main St., Suite 205, Greensburg, PA 15601. Their phone and fax numbers remain the same.

IRENE LUBIN has moved to 414 S. Maple Ave., Greensburg, PA 15601. Her phone and fax numbers remain the same.

BRUCE MATTOCK and **CINDY STINE** have moved the Greensburg office of Goldberg Persky Jennings & White to 231 S. Main St., 2nd Floor, Greensburg, PA 15601. Their numbers remain the same.

TIMOTHY J. McCORMICK has relocated to 101 N. Main St., Suite 106, Greensburg, PA 15601. He can be reached at 724-838-1912; fax 724-838-1600; e-mail tjmc@tjmclaw.com.

RON RUSSELL has moved to Suite 201A&B, 101 N. Main St., Greensburg, PA 15601. He can be reached at 724.830.8844; fax 724.830.8892.

SHARON L. WIGLE has moved to 101 N. Main St., Suite 201C, Greensburg, PA 15601; 724.850.9600; fax 724.850.9700.



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CALENDAR of Events

MAY

- 13 Deadline for registration for the Bench/Bar Conference
- 20 Family Law, Noon
Board Meeting, 4 p.m.
- 21 Membership, Noon
- 26 Courthouse closed in observance of Memorial Day

JUNE

- 11 Membership, Noon
- 12-14 Bench/Bar Conference of the WBA, Lakeview Scanticon Resort, Morgantown, W.Va.
- 13 Courthouse closed in observance of Flag Day
- 17 Family Law, Noon
Board Meeting, 4 p.m.

TOP TEN

Top Ten Reasons To Run For Judge

1. Tends to bolster a flagging career.
2. If you're havin' a bad day, there are just oodles of folk to take it out on.
3. Free courthouse parking.
4. Shows all those law school classmate clowns that your last place class rank didn't slow you down a bit.
5. Having no clients just won't matter any more.
6. The law will be what you say it is, and not what's in those damn silly books.
7. If you have to spend one more day faking judicial temperament, you're just gonna puke.
8. Health plan will include your mistress.
9. No one will ever again laugh at your cockamamy legal theories.
10. The God-given chance to deliver justice, fair play, sensitivity and compassion to everyone you like.



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MAY 13, 2003

foundation focus

SUPPLEMENT TO THE SIDEBAR • VOLUME XV, NUMBER 2 • MARCH-APRIL 2003

WBF Kicks Off Mentoring Program

Judges and lawyers of the Westmoreland Bar Association are partnering with Big Brothers Big Sisters to begin a mentoring program at the Westmoreland County YMCA Emergency Youth Shelter.

A temporary, residential care facility located in downtown Greensburg, the Y Shelter houses, counsels, and educates adolescents under the age of 18, who are declared dependent by the judicial system and placed at the shelter by court order.

“Other than the youth shelter staff, many of these children do not have positive role models,” says the Hon. Gary P. Caruso, who organized an informational meeting held at Bar Headquarters on April 14. “Only a few of the children receive visitors with any regularity and many receive no visitors at all.”

The WBA mentors will spend at least one hour per week meeting, sharing lunch and talking with shelter residents. To date, 31 judges and lawyers have registered. The official start date for the first mentoring session is scheduled for mid-May.

“We can show these children that they are not forgotten,” says Judge Caruso. “Will we keep every child from going down a negative path? No, but we will change the lives of some and that is reason enough to help.”

This program is a result of a Juvenile Court Town Meeting held at the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg in October 2001 where stakeholders of the juvenile court system along with members of the public learned that one-on-one mentoring of at-risk youth can be a deterrent in juvenile crime.

Other “lunch buddy” programs within school districts have also developed out of the Juvenile Court town meeting. To find out how you can mentor a child, please contact Big Brothers Big Sisters at 724.837.6198.

UPG Hosts Family Court Town Meeting



The University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg hosted “New Directions in Family Court in Westmoreland County,” the second in a series of public town meetings on making the courts more accessible and responsive to citizen needs on Thursday, March 13, 2003.

The meeting featured discussions on issues regarding divorce, support, custody and protection from abuse, and sought to inform citizens about the current family court system and partner with the courts to help family-related services best serve the citizens of Westmoreland County.

Lou DeRose served as moderator for the evening. Panels of judges, attorneys and other court-related professionals discussed each issue and fielded questions from the audience.

Ralph Conrad, The Hon. Rita Hathaway, Gary Falatovich and Doug Farrell made up the divorce panel.

Speaking on support issues was Michele Bononi.

Custody issues were discussed by Bruce Tobin, Marnie Abraham, Behavior Health Services’ Wayne Shipley, and Assistant Director of the Westmoreland County Children’s Bureau Marilyn McSparrin.

Kathleen Kemp and Donald Moreman handled the Protection from Abuse portion of the town meeting.

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▲ WBA members were invited to an informational meeting on a new Mentoring Program through Big Brothers Big Sisters that benefits children housed at the YMCA’s Emergency Youth Shelter in Greensburg. Thirty-one attorneys and judges have signed up to participate in the program, which is scheduled to kickoff in mid-May.

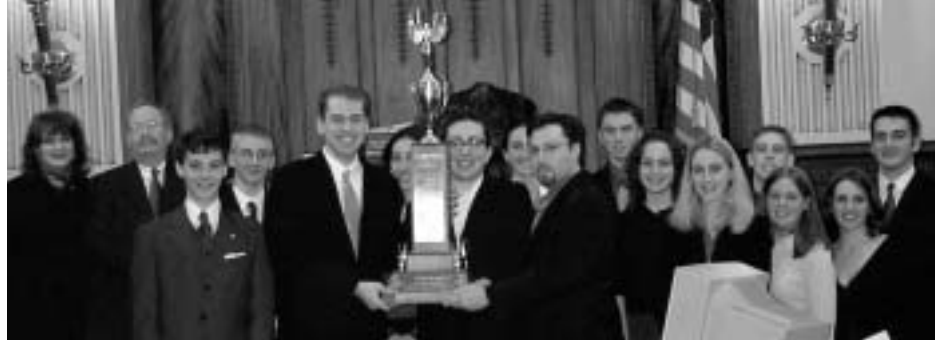
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Following public comments and questions, The Hon. John Driscoll and The Hon. Al Bell spoke about the future of Family Court.

Additional committee members were Becky Brammell, Sandi Davis, Blackburn Center Director Ann Emmerling, Director of Domestic Relations John Graham, Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters Bruce Hotchkiss, Court Administrator Paul Kuntz, The Hon. Anthony G. Marsili, Annaliese Masser, John Noble, Director of the Pa. Futures Commission on Justice in the 21st Century Barbara Perkovic, and Director of the Behavioral Sciences Academic Village at UPG Frank Wilson.

The first town meeting featured juvenile justice and was held in October 2001 at UPG.



▲ The Greensburg Salem Mock Trial Team celebrates its fifth consecutive county title at the Westmoreland County Courthouse in February.

Greensburg Salem 1st in County, Region, 5th in State

Greensburg Salem's Mock Trial Team took home the top honors in this year's county and regional mock trial competitions, but was ousted in the quarterfinals of the state competition, which was held March 28 and 29 in Harrisburg, finishing fifth out of twelve teams. Their demise came at the hands of

eventual state champion Gateway High School of Monroeville.

This is the fourth year in a row that Greensburg Salem has won the regional competition and the fifth consecutive year they have won the county title. They won the state title in 2000.

Over 50 WBA members participated in the county mock trial competition this year as judges and jurors. Robert Frey, Jr., and Leo Ciaramitaro served as coordinators. Other volunteers included: Steve Allias, Maria Altobelli, Mary Baloh, Rebecca Calisti, John Campfield, David Caruthers, Barbara Christner, Adam Cogan, Tom Cole, Abby DeBlassio, Gary Falatovich, Chris Feliciani, Tim J. Geary, Tim P. Geary, Donna Heldman, Deborah Henry, Jim Horchak, Bob Johnston, Dan Joseph, Karen Kiefer, Bob King, Mike Kolodziejczak, Aaron Kress, Joe Lazzaro, Wes Long, Larry Loperfito, Patrick Mahady, Rabe Marsh, Joe Massaro, Annaliese Masser, Scott Mears, Jim Michael, Diane Murphy, Chris Nakles, Ned Nakles, Chris Nichols, Joyce Novotny-Prettiman, Emily Painter, Gino Peluso, Megan Prezgar, Corey Riddell, John Scales, Dennis Shean, Mark Shire, Heather Shultz, Jim P. Silvis, Jim R. Silvis, George Trout, Chris Vallano, John Ward, Paul Ward, Chuck Washburn, Bill Wiker and Tracey Wilson.



▲ Participating in the Family Court Town Meeting were (from L to R): Standing: Frank Wilson, Sandi Davis, Marnie Abraham, Lou DeRose, Bruce Tobin and Michele Bononi. Seated: Kathleen Kemp, Ralph Conrad and Wayne Shipley.