



Criminal Justice Advisory Board Receives State-Wide Recognition

On June 20 at State College, Judge Debra A. Pezze, Chair of the Westmoreland County Criminal Justice Advisory Board, received, on behalf of the board, the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency's Best Practices Award for 2011.



The Hon. Debra A. Pezze

and Delinquency's Best Practices Award for 2011.

The Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJAB) was initiated two decades ago as the Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee by then-President Judge Gilfert Mihalich in response to jail

overcrowding and increasing criminal caseloads. One of its initial acts was the creation of a prison population monitor in the court administrator's office in the person of Bruno Mediate, a present member of the CJAB.

"Since that time," according to Lori Dabbondanza, a commission spokesperson, "the group has continued to mature, accumulate additional stakeholder membership, and break out into various subcommittees designed to tackle the issues most pertinent to the health and safety of the citizens of Westmoreland County. With extraordinary attention to detail and a lengthy history focused on planning for improvements, only where

research shows that such improvements are necessary, Westmoreland County has proven to be one of the oldest, most highly effective, and forward-thinking Criminal Justice Advisory Boards in Pennsylvania."

The Westmoreland CJAB has close to thirty members and works through fourteen subcommittees. The purpose of the Westmoreland County Criminal Justice Advisory Board, according to its mission statement is "to bring key members and constituents of the criminal justice system together to monitor activities of state and professional agencies affecting criminal justice, identify grant opportunities, advise policymakers regarding need for innovation and change, coordinate activities of its constituent groups in implementing change, and maintain the county's Criminal Justice Plan."

Most of the criminal court innovations in our county during the last twenty years were either created or supported by the board, such as the fast-track DUI program; full district attorney coverage and screening at preliminary hearings; the creation of an institutional probation officer to monitor prisoners for parole eligibility; security measures for the courthouse and district courts; improvements in

communications, including Web-based videoconferencing for all police departments and district courts; and developing a day-reporting center to integrate treatment needs with services, to name only a few.

Sometimes the foresight of the CJAB is not put into action by government agencies. For example, when the jail was in its planning stage, the CJAB recommended an additional floor for the purpose of housing federal prisoners and to act as an overflow for future population needs. The Prison Board decided against this recommendation.

When asked to comment on the prospect of receiving the award, Judge Pezze said, "I am grateful to the hard-working and visionary members

of this committee and our subcommittee. They have anticipated

and responded to the ever-changing challenges we face."

The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency was established in 1978 to improve the criminal justice system in Pennsylvania. Commission members include judges, legislators, representatives of law enforcement and victim service organizations, as well as private citizens. It has a close working relationship with the governor's office. 🌟



President's Message

Dear Old Delta and the WBA

by Mike Stewart, Esq.



A few years back on New Year's Day, I had just watched my Nittany Lions lose to Auburn in the Capital One Citrus Bowl. As I was about to change channels to pick up the next bowl game, the broadcaster announced, "to present the championship trophy to Auburn is Capital One's General Counsel and Corporate Secretary, John Finneran." Sure enough, it was Finny, my fraternity brother and old college roommate from Penn State. Finny's notoriety prompted a few e-mails, a telephone call, and some arm-twisting from yours truly for him to speak at our next annual Norris Pig Dinner held by our Chapter at Penn State. Finny delivered, and as he spoke to undergraduates and graduates at the dinner, he acknowledged that his undergraduate fraternity experience had provided him with the social and communicative skills that allowed him to advance in the legal/corporate world.

During the time that I have served on the Board of Directors of the WBA, I have also served on the Board of Directors of the International Fraternity of Phi Gamma Delta. I see many common traits and experiences between the two organizations. Like Finny, my fraternity experience influences me daily in the practice of law and has prepared me to proudly take my turn leading the WBA.

Our missions are similar. The WBA seeks to continue a long-standing tradition of fostering excellence in professional service by our members to their clients and to the general community while engendering respect, civility, and camaraderie among the

members of the bench and bar. Phi Gamma Delta exists to promote lifelong friendships, to reaffirm high ethical standards and values, and to foster personal development and the pursuit of excellence.

I respect the proud history of both organizations. I recognize and applaud the efforts of those who have served before me. The strength of both organizations reflects the efforts and sacrifices made by leaders before me.

Both organizations have faced tremendous change during my time as a member. When I first started practicing law, you could count on occasional title examinations and closings to cover the overhead. Now, banks and real estate companies want to package title examinations and title policies with the services they render. A periodic personal injury case was the bonus that used to put you over the top. Today, in many cases, the personal injury work goes to the highest bidder, i.e., advertising. Technology has increased the pace of the practice of law tenfold.

On the fraternal side, undergraduates and graduates alike wrestle with the concept of "alcohol-free housing." Technology has placed its demands on fraternity housing and has impacted recruitment, graduate relations, and virtually every other aspect of fraternal life.

The legal profession is often blamed for many of the ills of society. Lawyers are not the source of the illness, the cause of the injury, or the providers of treatment, yet we are blamed in part for the cost of health insurance. Yes,

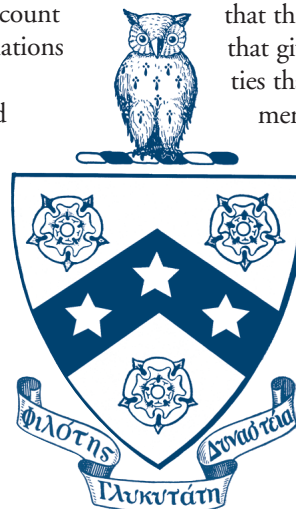
we walk around with targets on our backs. Misdeeds by lawyers or judges reflect poorly on the entire profession. We are visible. Likewise, hazing or alcohol-related incidents in a fraternity setting reflects poorly on the entire Greek system. We are visible. We are stereotyped.

After all is said and done, the bottom line is both organizations continue to do good work. We promote good causes, we instill good values, and we give back to our communities.

No one will ever convince me that there is another profession that gives more to its communities than the legal profession. Our members are coaches, Sunday school teachers, charitable board members, and civic leaders. Our association and our Bar Foundation promote the profession through mock trials, scholarships to worthy students, and Law Day and civic education presentations in our schools. Through our Pro Bono Program, we ensure that the legal system is available to all of our citizens, not just those who can afford it.

My fraternity and its related foundation has led the movement nationwide to alcohol-free housing, alcohol awareness, and TIPS (Training for Intervention Procedures). The foundation promotes academic achievement for pledges by awarding scholarships to academically qualifying pledges. Involvement in philanthropy is a way of life, not an afterthought, amongst our fraternities.

Yes, both organizations do good work.



continued on page 4

New Leaders Chosen, Awards Given at Annual Meeting

Michael J. Stewart assumed the office of President at the Annual Meeting of the Westmoreland Bar Association held on Monday, April 4, 2011, at the Greensburg Country Club.

A member of the WBA since 1978, Mike is a founding partner of Stewart, McArdle, Sorice, Whalen, Farrell, Finoli & Cavanaugh, P.C., in Greensburg. He is a graduate of Penn State and the University of Pittsburgh School of Law.

Mike is a member of the WBA's Family Law and ADR Committees. He succeeds Donald J. Snyder, Jr., and will serve a one-year term as President.



▲ WBA President Michael J. Stewart presented the Outstanding Young Lawyer Award to Michael V. Quatrini at the WBA Annual Meeting held in April.

BYLAWS CHANGES PASSED

The WBA Planning Committee recommended in its annual report to the WBA Board of Directors that the board be expanded from three to six members, with two members elected for each of the next three years. Thereafter two board members will be elected at each Annual Meeting.

The amendments were considered at the February 16, 2011, Board of Directors meeting and were approved for submission to the members at the April Annual Meeting. Bylaws Chair Timothy J. Geary presented the bylaws changes to the members, and the members passed them unanimously.

OTHER ELECTION RESULTS

John K. Greiner was elected Vice President for the 2011–2012 term. Pursuant to the new bylaws, both Lee R. Demosky and Maria E. Soohy were chosen to sit as Directors on

the board. Other board members include President-Elect David S. DeRose, Directors Joseph W. Lazzaro and Harry F. Smail, Jr., Past President Donald J. Snyder, Jr., Treasurer L. Christian DeDiana and Secretary/Executive Director Diane Krivoniak.

Philip N. Shelapinsky was elected to the Membership Committee and David S. DeRose was elected to the Building Committee. Both will serve five-year terms.

AWARDS GIVEN AT MEETING

Dennis J. Gounley was named Pro Bono Attorney of the Year in recognition of his noteworthy volunteer legal representation of indigent Westmoreland County residents (see page 5).

Other awards given at the WBA Annual Meeting included Outstanding Young Lawyer and Committee of the Year. The recipients are as follows.

Michael V. Quatrini

OUTSTANDING YOUNG LAWYER

Michael V. Quatrini was named Outstanding Young Lawyer at the WBA Annual Meeting. The award is given to the young lawyer who best exemplifies outstanding leadership and distinguished service to the legal profession and the community.

In presenting the award, WBA President Mike Stewart applauded Michael for epitomizing the qualities of the award through his service to the bar association and to those in need.

A member of the Westmoreland Bar since 2007, Michael is the immediate Past Chair of the WBA Young Lawyers Committee. He also maintains membership in both the Allegheny County and Pennsylvania bar associations. He is an active member of the National Organization of Social Security Representatives (N.O.S.S.C.R) and the National Organization of Veterans Advocates (N.O.V.A.).

Michael volunteers his time and expertise as a board member with the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Westmoreland County, and Westmoreland Cleanways, Inc. He is a founding member of "The

continued on page 4

the sidebar

the sidebar is published bimonthly as a service for members of the Westmoreland Bar Association. Letters to the Editor should be sent c/o WBA, 129 North Pennsylvania Avenue, Greensburg, PA

15601-2311, fax 724-834-6855, or e-mail westbar.org@westbar.org. the sidebar welcomes submissions from members or non-members. Please submit to the Articles Editor, c/o WBA.

Back issues from 2000 to the present and a comprehensive, searchable index are available online at www.westbar.org/thesidebar.

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President's Message

continued from page 2

Because of my positive experience with both of these organizations, today I find myself a member of two political action committees. Why? I am not willing to let the uninformed take shots at my profession and my fraternity without fighting back. I'm all for protecting our own turf. Both organizations have a message to deliver. It's a positive one, one that has shaped my life.

Finally, I want to share the greatest reward that I have experienced from my involvement in these two organizations: friendship. I love what I am doing. Here's to dear Old Delta and the WBA. 🍀

Your loyal servant,



New Leaders Chosen, Awards Given

continued from page 3

Visionaries," a young philanthropist initiative of the Community Foundation of Westmoreland County, and, for the last three years, has served as a community-art facilitator for the Sprout Fund, Inc., a Pittsburgh-based non-profit that sponsors public murals throughout Allegheny County.

An associate with QuatriniRafferty in Greensburg, Michael is a graduate of Greater Latrobe High School, Dickinson College, and Duquesne School of Law. He and his wife, Megan, reside in Shadyside.

Ciaramitaro was unable to attend.

Westmoreland County's annual Mock Trial Competition gives high school student teams the opportunity to act as lawyers and witnesses in simulated civil trials before judges and panels of juries. Lawyers volunteer to assist students as team advisors, scorekeepers, judges, and jurors. Each year, the winning team goes on to represent the county in the regional competition which leads to the state championship.

This year, Leo and his committee members—Judith Petrush, John Scales, John Leonard, and James P. Silvis—created unforgettable experiences for hundreds of competitors. 🍀



▲ Leo J. Ciaramitaro

Mock Trials

COMMITTEE OF THE YEAR

The Mock Trials Committee was honored as Committee of the Year at this year's Annual Meeting. President Snyder presented the award; Committee Chair Leo J.

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foundation focus

Dennis J. Gounley Named Pro Bono Attorney of the Year



Dennis J. Gounley, a sole practitioner in Greensburg, was named the 2011 Pro Bono Attorney of the Year. This award is given to the attorney who has provided noteworthy volunteer legal representation of indigent Westmoreland County residents.

Dennis has been a Pro Bono volunteer since the inception of the program in 1991. In 2010, he provided 50 hours of representation to six indigent clients in bankruptcy and other consumer-related issues.

President Judge John Blahovec made the award presentation at the annual meeting of the Westmoreland Bar Foundation held April 4, 2011. He detailed Dennis's dedication to his clients, and credited his legal knowledge and calm professional personality with enabling him to solve problems efficiently for his clients.

The Pro Bono Program of Westmoreland County provides free legal representation to those who qualify according to income guidelines and case merit. This past year, WBA members volunteered their time to represent over 500 individuals on civil matters.



▲ *Dennis J. Gounley (right) accepts the Pro Bono Attorney of the Year Award from The Hon. John E. Blahovec (left) at the Annual Meeting of the Westmoreland Bar Foundation held April 4, 2011, at the Greensburg Country Club.*

Q DENNIS, WHAT DOES THE AWARD MEAN TO YOU PERSONALLY?

A I am unaccustomed to all this attention. I generally go through life trying to practice my profession for the benefit of my clients without seeking publicity. The only other time I got this much notice in my career was when I portrayed Judge Loughran in a

BarFlies skit during a Bench/Bar Conference at Nemascolin many years ago. Believe it or not, I still receive comments about my performance from my colleagues, including a number of the judges. I do not know if anyone will remember my Pro Bono Award that long. Be that as it may, it has been gratifying to hear many congratulations from members of the bar since the Annual Meeting.

Q WHAT DOES THE AWARD MEAN TO YOU PROFESSIONALLY?

A It means a lot more to me than mere résumé enhancement. While we are all extremely busy, and seem to get busier as the years go by and the practice of law becomes more complicated, I believe it is important for us to schedule time for those who need legal services, but do not qualify for legal aid and cannot afford to pay an attorney. It is nice to receive the recognition, but I prefer to use the opportunity to lobby my colleagues to make themselves available for the Pro Bono Program, which is so ably run by Iva Munk.

Q HOW DID YOU FEEL WHEN YOU WERE ANNOUNCED AS THE ATTORNEY OF THE YEAR?

A Surprised! Feeling unworthy. Wondering what I was going to say. I was pleased to receive the award from President Judge Blahovec, whom I have known from the days he was the solicitor for the Murrysville Zoning Hearing Board. I also have had the opportunity to work with him on mental health proceedings for a number

continued on page 6

gen•er•os•i•ty

(jen' e-ros' i te) n. pl. -ties 1. Liberality in giving or willingness to give: a scholarship funded by the generosity of anonymous donors. 2. Nobility of thought or behavior; magnanimity. 3. Amplitude; abundance. 4. A generous act.

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A good lawyer shouldn't be hard to find.

foundation focus *continued from page 5*

of years. I was also amazed that my wife, Martha, had been spirited into the meeting without my knowledge.

Q WHAT ADVICE CAN YOU GIVE TO FUTURE CANDIDATES FOR THE AWARD?

A I do not know that one seeks to be a candidate for a Pro Bono Award. If you respond to Iva Munk's requests for assistance, and if you help your clients with their legal or other problems, you will eventually receive the recognition you deserve. The more you respond, the more likely you will receive the award.

Q WHY ARE YOU INVOLVED IN THE PRO BONO PROGRAM?

A As I said, I am involved in the Pro Bono Program because there is a pressing need in these troubled economic times for *pro bono* services. While I seem to concentrate in helping my clients through bankruptcy proceedings, there are other issues that also occupy my time, such as handling aggressive debt collection agencies and advising on real and personal property problems.

As the video prepared by Diane Krivoniak and shown at the Annual Meeting was titled, I ask my fellow members of the bar: What is your *pro bono*? 🍷

Franklin Regional Wins District, Regional Mock Trial Competitions



▲ *The Franklin Regional Senior High Mock Trial Team defeated defending champion Greensburg-Salem in the countywide Mock Trial competition held in early March at the Westmoreland County Courthouse. Franklin Regional went on to win the regional competition and was one of twelve teams to advance to the statewide competition in late March, which was won by a Luzerne County school.*

Franklin Regional Senior High School captured its first district mock trial trophy by defeating defending champions Greensburg-Salem in the finals held in early March at the Westmoreland County Courthouse. This win sent Franklin Regional to the Region 3 competition held in Washington, Pa., in mid-March, where they emerged victorious over schools from Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fayette, Fulton, Greene, Huntingdon, Jefferson, Indiana, Mifflin, and Washington counties.

After their regional win, Franklin Regional was one of twelve Pennsylvania high schools to advance to the 28th Annual Pennsylvania Bar Association Statewide High School Mock Trial Competition held March 25–26, at the Dauphin County Courthouse in Harrisburg. The winning team of the state championship—Wyoming Seminary College Preparatory School in Luzerne County—represented Pennsylvania in the National High School Mock Trial Championship in Phoenix.

This year, the teams argued the fictitious case of *The Estate of Simone Langston v. Dr. Lefu Harrison*—a case involving a pathologist who claims to have entered into a contract with a dying and impoverished elderly woman

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to obtain her mutated cancer cells in the hopes of curing cancer. The central issue in the case is whether Ms. Langston had the capacity to consent to selling her cancer cells to the doctor.

During most competitions, Franklin Regional was assigned to portray the plaintiff—teams are required to prepare arguments for both sides and are assigned their role before the competition. At the state competition, the students presented the defense argument.

“We get some incredibly committed and hard-working students,” said teacher-coach Jesse McDonnell. “All the work they put in really showed (that) weekend. Even though it was the first time, we did really well.”

The Franklin Regional Senior High School Mock Trial Team is composed of Alex Beebout, Nick DeRiso, Nick Freda, Nathan Kong, Amanda Mostowy, Mariah Ondeck and Madeline Peters. The teacher coach is Jesse McDonnell. The attorney advisors are Charles R. Conway and Elizabeth M. Male. 🍷

Volunteers for Justice

The Pro Bono Program extends thanks to all the attorneys who volunteered their time from January to March 2011.

- Steven Allias
- James Antoniono
- Mary Baloh
- Alan Berk
- Michael Bogush
- Richard Bruni
- John Bumbaugh

- George Butler
- Brian Cavanaugh
- David Colecchia
- Debra Cribbs
- Meagan Bilik DeFazio
- David DeRose
- Amanda Faher
- Charles Fox, IV
- Timothy Geary
- Dennis Gounley
- James Horchak
- Christopher Huffman
- Larry Kerr
- Maureen Kroll
- James Lederach
- Irene Lubin
- Shirley Makuta
- William McCabe
- Paul Miller, Jr.
- David Millstein
- Debra Nicholson
- Keith Nicola
- Joyce Novotny-Prettiman
- Dennis Persin
- Justin Schantz
- Mark Sorice
- Michael Stewart
- Ronald Zera 🍷

LawSpeak

“It is often easier to become outraged by injustice half a world away than by oppression and discrimination half a block from home.”

— Carl T. Rowan

G

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Daniel Joseph

Candid Camera: 2011 Annual Meeting



▲ Anxious to be remembered, the immediate past president pathetically ran from table to table, inserting his head into every shot just before the shutter clicked.



▲ "You know, Judge, your rulings on evidence have been pretty lame lately. Want some tutoring?"



▲ "Don't cross your arms at me. I said you're a Fascist and I meant it."



▲ "Yes, George, it does say you inherited \$7 million from a distant great aunt in Nigeria, but I'm just sayin' don't close your practice yet."



◀ Judge Blahovec and Dennis Gounley proudly show off the WBA award they shared for "Best Gray Suit of The Year."



◀ Though disappointed he didn't get the part in the remake now being shot, Rich puts on his game face and reenacts his audition performance for "Young Frankenstein."



◀ "I know I'm not your typical Republican, but come on, I look nothing like the President."



▲ Despite obvious clues, Peggy still clings to the fantasy that the three of them had been separated at birth.



▲ "Whenever I make this face at the jury, they forget all about the evidence. Works like a charm."

Save the Date

Friday, September 23, 2011
noon

Saint Vincent Basilica

Annual Red Mass Speaker:
W. Thomas McGough, Jr.
Chief Legal Officer, UPMC

Sponsored by:
Diocese of Greensburg
Saint Vincent Archabbey & College

Lunch to follow
at the Fred M. Rogers Center

Formal invitations will be sent in August.

New Members Introduced to Bench, Bar at Annual Ceremony



New members of the WBA were presented to the bench and bar on March 17, 2011. From left to right: Gregory L. Taddonio, Justin P. Schantz, Beth E. Teacher, Adam Gorzelsky, Anthony G. Urti, Jonathan M. Meyer, Michael J. Stewart, II, Sacha A. Kathuria, and Elsie R. Lampl.

On Thursday, March 17, 2011, the Westmoreland Bar Association presented its new members to the court.

Following a welcoming address by WBA President Donald J. Snyder, Jr., and an invocation by Harry F. Smail, Jr., each admittee was introduced to the court by a member of the association.

The new members presented to the court were: Adam Gorzelsky, presented by Susan N. Williams; Sacha A. Kathuria, presented by The Hon. Christopher A. Feliciani; Elsie R. Lampl, presented by William J. McCabe; Jonathan M. Meyer,

presented by Rebecca A. Brammell; Justin P. Schantz, presented by David A. Colecchia; Michael J. Stewart, II, presented by Michael J. Stewart; Gregory L. Taddonio, presented by Timothy J. Geary; Beth E. Teacher, presented by Daniel Joseph; and Anthony G. Urti, presented by Timothy J. Geary.

Following the presentation to the court, Michael V. Quatrini and Nancy

L. Harris greeted the new members on behalf of the Young Lawyers Committee and the Ned J. Nakles American Inn of Court, respectively. President Judge John E. Blahovec then spoke on behalf of the court.

A reception for the new admittees was held in conjunction with the WBA St. Paddy's Day Party, which took place at Bar headquarters immediately after the ceremony. 🍀

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(Free to all members of the WBA)

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ATTORNEY LOOKING FOR EMPLOYER 2009 Widener Law graduate admitted to practice in Pennsylvania. Member of Law Review, WBA, and Nakles Inn of Court. Experienced with unemployment compensation, no-fault divorce, bankruptcy, wills, powers of attorney, and mass tort litigation discovery. Contact Diane Krivoniak if interested.

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New Member Sketches

BENJAMIN BOLINGER has been admitted as an associate member of the WBA. He earned his bachelor's degree in Political Science from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania and his J.D. from the Vanderbilt University Law School. An associate with Delaney, Dougherty & Fritz, P.C., in Indiana, Pa., Benjamin and his wife, Amber, live in Greensburg.

KATHLEEN ANN CARUTHERS, daughter of WBA member William F. Caruthers, II, has joined the WBA as an associate member. Kathleen earned her undergraduate degree in Finance, as well as her J.D., from the University of Pittsburgh. Employed by Bayer MaterialScience in Pittsburgh, Kathleen and her husband, Joseph Fisher, reside in Moon Township.

STACIA A. CHRISTMAN was admitted to the WBA as a participating

member. She graduated from Ohio University with a degree in Environmental Studies, and earned her



J.D. from Vermont Law School. An associate with McGuire Woods, LLP, in Pittsburgh, Stacia lives in Murrysville.

MICHAEL T. KORNS has joined the WBA as a participating member. Michael earned his undergraduate

degree in Political Science from the University of Pittsburgh, and his juris doctor degree from Harvard Law School. He lives in Lower Burrell, where he is a sole practitioner.

GERALD R. O'BRIEN, JR., has joined the WBA as a participating member. Gerald started as an undergrad at Allegheny College, and finished at Duquesne University, where he also earned his J.D. A sole practitioner in Irwin, Gerald, his wife, Lauren, and their four children reside in Irwin.

GREGORY W. SWANK was admitted to the WBA as an associate member. He graduated from Washington & Jefferson College with a degree in History, and earned his J.D. from Syracuse University. Gregory is a sole practitioner in Apollo. He and his wife, Carol, have three children. 🐶

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AlterEgo: Ila Sensenich, Federal Magistrate

Ila Sensenich, Cross-Country Cyclist

Last summer, 19 people hopped on their bicycles and rode from the Pacific Coast to the Atlantic Coast in 57 days. Among them was Westmoreland County's first First Assistant Public Defender and retired Federal Magistrate Judge Ila Sensenich. We talked to Ila about her passion for cycling and why, at 72 years old, she still has many years of pedaling ahead of her.



▲ On the road: The Hon. Ila Sensenich

Q 2,837 MILES IN 56 DAYS ON A BIKE?!

ILA I had wanted to do this trip for a long time. Timberline Adventures calls it the "From Sea to Shining Sea" bike adventure. We left on June 6, 2010, from Hobuck Beach on Makah Bay in Washington, and arrived in Bar Harbor, Maine, on July 31, 2010. There were 19 of us and our average age was 64 years old. The oldest was 72. I was 71. Seven of the nineteen rode every mile. And about half of us were law school graduates, including

a woman who was an appellate court judge from California. The law school graduates who did not practice law went into corporate management, banking, or real estate.

Q HOW MANY MILES A DAY DID YOU AVERAGE?

ILA I averaged 74.6 miles of cycling per day that I rode, but I didn't ride every day. Each rider could go at his or her own pace, with one support van for slower riders and one for faster riders. I have always ridden like the proverbial tortoise—slow and steady.

Plus, I have a terrible sense of direction. On the first day, I was ceremoniously awarded the yellow scarf for doing the dumbest thing of the day—getting lost in the first three miles! I got lost the last day, too.

Q WHAT WAS THE SLEEPING AND DINING LIKE ALONG THE WAY?

ILA The variety in our accommodations was part of the fun. We stayed in a range of hotels, from 1950's style dives to elegant resorts. For the most part, you were on your own for lunch, but we'd often try to find a good place to stop. There were always peanut butter, cookies, and fruit in the van.

Q WHAT KIND OF BIKE DO YOU HAVE?

ILA I ride a Trek 5200 racing bike—supposedly the one Lance Armstrong rode the first year he won the Tour de France—but I added a small chain ring to help me up the mountains and raised the handlebars.

Amazingly, some of my fellow cyclists did the Timberline trip on rented bikes. And ironically, the guy on the \$12,000

custom-made bike (a lawyer from California) had the most mechanical problems on the ride.

Q HAVE YOU ALWAYS BEEN AN AVID RIDER?

ILA I bought my first bike when I was practicing law in Greensburg in 1969. It was a used ten-speed Schwinn bike. Then I joined a biking group in the early '70s, and did my first overnight trip on a rainy, Labor Day weekend in 1974 on the C & O Canal from Maryland to D.C. From there, I started doing bike camping trips on long holiday weekends traveling to New York, Canada, and Lancaster County. I joined a women's group with the Western Pennsylvania Wheelmen, which provided me with many opportunities to ride. In 2004, right after I retired, I did the Lewis and Clark ride.

Q DID YOU SPECIALLY TRAIN TO PREPARE FOR THESE TRIPS?

ILA On Sunday mornings, I would take a 40- to 50-mile ride with the Wheelmen. Then I started attending boot camp at the YMCA last winter. At 6:15 a.m., two mornings a week, we run up and down stairs, do bear crawls, push-ups, lunges, running with weights, and whatever other crazy things our trainer can think up! We all agree we have never

continued on page 12

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AlterEgo: Ila Sensenich *continued from page 11*



◀ Retired Federal Magistrate Judge Ila Sensenich (fifth from left) and her fellow travelers at the end of the bicycle trip that took them from the Pacific Coast to the Atlantic Coast, across the U.S. and Canada, in 57 days last summer.

had so much painful fun. Add to that, power sculpt classes once a week, yoga on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and downhill and cross-country skiing in the winter.

Q SO WOULD IT BE AN UNDERSTATEMENT TO SAY THAT YOU ARE PRETTY ATHLETIC?

ILA To the contrary, I'm naturally non-athletic and uncoordinated. Boot camp has improved my balance, but none of this comes naturally to me. It takes a lot of work.

It started when I was about to begin studying for the bar exam. I knew that I'd need stamina to

get through that exam, so I started doing the Royal Canadian Air Force Exercises for Physical Fitness, which were recommended by the Surgeon General. After a few weeks, I realized that I had to continue exercising on a regular basis for the rest of my life.

Q SO WHAT'S NEXT?

ILA The cross-country bike trip was fun, but challenging: from spectacular views to mile after mile of desolation (when you ride from coast to coast you ride whatever road will get you there); restrooms that were few and far between; breakfast and dinner in restaurants every day became a tedious

routine, as was packing and unpacking every day. But every day was a new adventure. It was the most difficult thing I've ever done.

But despite all that, I hope to do a bike trip every other year. I love riding with friends and discovering new places.

I have not abandoned the law—I am still on the Court's Historical Committee and am writing the history of the first 36 years of the magistrate judge system in the federal court in Western Pennsylvania. 🐾

Editor's note: For a detailed account of Ila's "From Sea to Shining Sea" adventure, log on to www.crazyguyonabike.com.

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To-Wit: Apophis Rising

by S. Sponte, Esq.

Have you ever, at the conclusion of a deposition, pushed yourself back from the conference table, clasped your hands behind your neck, smiled confidently, and congratulated yourself on how well it went? Yeah, me neither.

With depositions you just never know. I've done maybe five hundred in my career, each unique, but each with common threads of both certainty and suspense intertwined; a certainty that all deponents come to the deposition garbed in truth, and a suspense as to exactly when during its course they will begin to disrobe.

Depositions are kind of like asteroids. They tear around helter skelter with their own trajectories, harmless enough until they careen unexpectedly off course and plummet down to Earth with frequently devastating results. And sooner or later they always careen off course.

I recently took the deposition of a witness critical to a client's case. Because of the significance of her testimony, I had interviewed her no less

than three times before her deposition, the last time being the night before. She knew things, important things, things that no one else knew. Her testimony was of titanic importance to my client's case, and she was willing to talk.

Come the start of her deposition, she was still willing to talk. She just wasn't willing to say the same things. I

“Depositions are kind of like asteroids ... sooner or later they always careen off course.”

realized her testimony was going to be a fairy tale when she answered my first question with “Once upon a time...” I might not have been right about what she was going to say but I was right that it would be titanic. When she was through, my client was sunk.

When I walked into my office the next morning, both my secretary and my associate knew at once something was amiss. I'm guessing they could tell because of the “Say One Word To Me

And I'll Kill You” button I'd pinned to my earlobe.

I can deal with defeat okay as long as I can see it coming. I can see it in the way a jury refuses to look at me when they file back in with an adverse verdict, and I can see it in the way my court reporter friend hangs himself with an imaginary noose and laughs at me when the judge walks out of the courtroom on recess.

I didn't see this one coming, it had caught me quite unexpectedly in the solar plexus. I sat there in my chair all morning, numb and befuddled, knowing that without this witness's testimony I would have to withdraw the case. After a satisfying mope, I instructed my secretary to get opposing counsel on the phone.

“I know when I'm licked,” he said before I could utter a word. “If your demand is still the same, we're settled.”

“You're kidding,” I said before my best avaricious instincts had kicked in.

“Okay, five grand more, but that's it.”

“Send me the release,” I said, “we have a deal. You made a smart decision.” God will get me for that last one.

I wish I could tell you I knew what happened. I wish I could tell you I snatched victory from the jaws of defeat, but I can't do that either. Last time I saw those jaws they had a death grip on my posterior. All I can do is accept the mystery, like when a beautiful woman smiles at me. I can't fathom why it happens, but occasionally it does.

Oh now, don't get me wrong, I'll take the credit, however undeserved. I was, after all, right about one thing. With depositions, you just never know. 🐼



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Westmoreland Revisited

The Trial of John Wesley Wable

by The Hon. Daniel J. Ackerman

On the night of September 26, 1955, in a nondescript building on the grounds of Rockview Penitentiary, then a branch of Western Penitentiary in Center



▲
The Hon. Daniel J. Ackerman

County, Leon Cassidy, who admitted to being “kind of nervous,” and four other guards escorted John Wesley Wable up a flight of stairs to the execution chamber where he, like 347 men and 2 women between 1915 and 1962, would die by electrocution.

At the top of the stairs, Wable was strapped into a wood and metal chair by his guards and authority shifted to a man who, by tradition, was unseen and never named. The man was charged with the responsibility of carrying out the order of Judge Edward G. Bauer, which called for Wable’s life.

The conviction, trial, and crimes which brought about his end also spawned a burst of media attention unprecedented in Westmoreland County, where the term “serial killer” was not yet in common usage. Three men—Lester Woodward, Harry Pitts, and John Shepard—had separately been shot and robbed in the summer of 1953. What they had in common



▲
John Wesley Wable (center) begins the last mile at his arraignment before Alderman Henry Frederickson (right rear) with Assistant District Attorney Joseph Loughran (right) reading the murder charges. At left is Assistant County Detective Merle Music, testifying to his part in the investigation. In background stands District Attorney L. Alexander Sculco. [Photo and caption: Tribune-Review, 6 February, 1977]

was that all three were truck drivers and the assaults all occurred on or near the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

The turnpike itself, which had opened thirteen years earlier, was still the focus of public attention. It was the nation’s first superhighway, a road which initially was unencumbered by a speed limit, and when one was eventually established, it was set at 75 miles per hour. At the time, it was a transportation marvel. The coupling of this high-visibility thoroughfare with murder created a media dream.

Many truckers responded to the crimes by equipping their cabs with firearms and clubs, by traveling in convoys, and sharing a night watch

when they stopped, preferably in well lighted areas. The state police procured tractor trailers and parked them along the turnpike as decoys. An \$11,000 reward for information (the equivalent of almost \$100,000 today) was offered by the Pennsylvania Truck Motor Association.

Prior to Wable’s arrest, the media dubbed the assailant the “Phantom of the Turnpike,” or the “Phantom Killer.” The phantom’s first victim was Lester Woodward, a 30-year-old interstate trucker, who, on July 25, 1953, pulled his rig off the turnpike near the Irwin interchange for a night’s sleep. The next morning, a fellow trucker seeking directions stopped and

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found Woodward's body in the cab with a gunshot wound to the head. Woodward's wallet was empty. One news source, noting a six-car pileup that night on the turnpike not far from where Woodward's rig was parked, speculated that the accident may have been caused by the gunman's high-speed flight from the scene.

Three days later, a similar crime occurred when Harry Pitts, a 39-year-old trucker from Bowling Green, Va., was shot to death, apparently while asleep in his cab at a pull-off close to the Donegal interchange, thirty miles from the site of the Woodward murder. Ballistics tests determined that both men were killed by the same .32-caliber weapon.

After another three-day interval, the gunman struck again in similar fashion. This time, his intended victim was John Shepard, a 36-year-old trucker who went to sleep in his truck near Lisbon, Ohio, eighteen miles from the western terminus of the Pennsylvania Turnpike. But there was one important variation: Shepard

survived his wounds and saw his attacker. And, of no small significance, his pocket watch was stolen.

FROM OBSCURITY TO INFAMY

For all his twenty-five years he was probably known to friends and family as simply John Wable, just as Lee Oswald was known by only two names before he became infamous. The formality of using the middle name, however, seems more dramatic; and, it arguably separates one from all the hundreds, if not thousands, of other John Wables who were peacefully going about their business. A Fayette County native, John Wable was born in Ohiopyle on August 8, 1929. His prior life was summarized by Chief Justice Horace Stern in his opinion affirming Wable's conviction:

"[A]lthough of a well respected family in the community and a high school graduate [he] was court-martialed while in Army service and received a dishonorable discharge; thereafter he worked for some time in

Cleveland but became unemployed a short time prior to the circumstances which have now resulted in his conviction for the crime of murder."

Observers described him as fair with dark hair, tall, about six-foot, and thin, weighing anywhere between 150 and 165 pounds. Looking at his photograph, taken in the office of Alderman Henry Fredrickson at the time of his arraignment (*see page 14*), with his downcast eyes and shackled wrists, it is not difficult to think that there is a slight resemblance to Lee Harvey Oswald.

On August 4, ten days after the first murder, a clerk at the David Loan Company in Cleveland handed Wable \$5 and a pawn ticket in exchange for a gold pocket watch. On the pawn shop records he identified himself as "John Waple, of 1856 Terbenser Drive, Cleveland." Except for the not-too-veiled misspelling of his surname, the information was correct.

continued on page 16

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The Trial of John Wesley Wable *continued from page 15*

In his next commercial transaction—Wable certainly did his part in ensuring that he would be caught—he rented a car, failed to return it and was arrested for theft of the vehicle, which, in turn, resulted in his detention in the Fayette County jail. It is reported that during this confinement he stated he was the one responsible for the turnpike killings, but the sources vary concerning the details. According to some, he told the jailer, or some other authority, but no one believed him, thought he was a crackpot, and released him. It is, of course, common in high-profile cases that deranged persons, for whatever reason, will come forward and confess to crimes which they could not have possibly committed. The turnpike killings generated a number of them. Other sources hold that the confession was made to a fellow inmate at the jail who revealed it after Wable was charged with murder.

ON THE RUN

In any event, Wable left the jail behind and headed west. He made two new friends from Anteach, Okla.—Marvin Parsons and J.D. Francis—and the three set their sights on a New Mexico gas station which they robbed on October 11, 1953, netting \$70. They then fled in their stolen car, which bore Pennsylvania plates. Parsons and Francis were apprehended together after a high-speed chase; Wable was



▲ *The prosecution was led by District Attorney L. Alexander Sculco (left), and its case was presented in court by Assistant District Attorney Joseph P. Loughran (right), assisted by ADA John K. Best (not shown).*

arrested attempting to hitchhike out of harm's way, the vehicle having earlier been abandoned to avoid a police road block. Now in jail in Albuquerque, Wable learned that he was the subject of a nationwide manhunt based upon the collection of evidence that had been building against him back east. Among the items the Albuquerque police found on his person was a ticket from a Cleveland pawn shop.

POLICE WORK PAYS OFF

Three days before Wable's New Mexico robbery and arrest, the police had found their way to the David Loan Company—and Shepard's watch.

Wable, of course, was not to be found at the Cleveland address he wrote in pawn shop records; he had moved on. However, in addition to the information he gave the pawn broker, an employee remembered that Wable wore a blue work uniform bearing the company name of Parker's Alliance. Checking with the company, police learned that no "Wable" had been in their employ, but they had employed a John Wable for a time; he had been fired on March 13 for absenteeism. Inquiry among other employers in the area revealed Wable had applied to several for employment after the 13th of March, and, as luck would have it, one said that he knew Wable's girlfriend, who lived on Heldane Road.

"Yes," Leora Crissey told the police during interrogation; she had known Wable two years; "yes," she had seen him with the pocket watch; and, "yes," he had a pistol which he had left with her when he was taken to Uniontown on the auto theft charge. The gun, a .32-caliber Walthour, had

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been kept in the china closet of the Crissey home until her father, who didn't like having it in the house, took it to a police station near Cleveland and asked the police to hold this gun which belonged to his daughter's boyfriend. Unbeknownst to the authorities, the murder weapon had been in police custody for some time.

CROSS-COUNTRY CONFESSION

Pennsylvania State Police Detective William Smith, Westmoreland County Detective Merle Music, and Assistant District Attorney Joseph Loughran hurriedly boarded a flight to Albuquerque. However, once there, they learned that airline regulations precluded the flying of shackled prisoners. So, after taking Wable into custody, the trio had to split up, with Loughran flying home and Smith and Music taking their prisoner by train to Greensburg.

It was a long ride, made longer by the fact that the route was not direct, but was by way of Pensacola, Fla. During those monotonous hours, the

captors conversed with their prisoner and it appears they soon were on a first-name basis. Eventually, perhaps as was said to have occurred in the Fayette County jail, Wable started to talk and before the trip was over he had written out a 17-page confession.

Wable's declaration, one he held to the end, was a variation on a common theme well known to law enforcement officers. It is one where the accused admits to being at the scene but only in a subservient roll; someone else pulled the trigger; someone else led the enterprise. Sometimes, it is true; quite often it is not.

That someone, according to Wable, was "Jim Parks." Parks, who lived near Cleveland, said Wable, had once employed him to run the risk of passing counterfeit bills. Up to the day of his execution, Wable's counsel would spend untold time and energy attempting to find Parks, who, whether he had any connection to the turnpike or not, turned out to be a true phantom. One has to wonder why a person engaged in the

sophisticated crime of counterfeiting would take to the road to shoot truckers for the contents of their wallets.

Whether he was a phantom or not, Parks was the only defense Wable could offer his three court-appointed lawyers, A.C. Scales, Richard McCormick, Sr., and B. Patrick Costello, who faced the unenviable task of defending him.

The prosecution would be led by District Attorney L. Alexander Sculco, and its case would be presented in court by Assistant District Attorney Joseph P. Loughran, assisted by ADA John K. Best.

THE TRIAL

The trial for the murder of Harry Franklin Pitts began March 1, 1954, in the Court of Oyer and Terminer and General Jail Delivery of Westmoreland County in what is now Courtroom No. 3. The Pitts homicide was tried first because it was the only one of the three cases where a witness could testify

continued on page 18

QUATRINI RAFFERTY
ATTORNEYS AT LAW



Michael V. Quatrini is an associate of the firm and concentrates his practice in the areas of Veterans Disability, Social Security Disability and Workers' Compensation.

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QuatriniRafferty attorneys Michael V. Quatrini and Brian Patrick Bronson were accredited by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in 2008 to represent members of the armed services who suffer service-connected disabilities or diseases. Since that time, they have represented veterans at the application level (VA Regional Office in Pittsburgh), the hearing level (Board of Veterans Appeals in Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.), and the appeal level (Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims also in Washington, D.C.). Michael and Brian are also members of the National Organization of Veterans Advocates (N.O.V.A.).

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Brian Patrick Bronson is an associate of the firm and concentrates his practice in the areas of Long-Term Disability, ERISA, Criminal Litigation, Veterans Disability and Social Security Disability.

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The Trial of John Wesley Wable *continued from page 17*

to seeing Wable on the turnpike near the time of the crime. The witness, Joseph Kunkle, a school teacher who earned extra money by moonlighting as a toll collector, testified that he saw Wable exit at the Donegal interchange in a gray Chevrolet sedan at 2:30 a.m. on July 28, 1953. Kunkle recalled Wable because Wable lacked money to pay the toll and Kunkle paid it for him because he and Wable had a conversation the night before and Wable had brought him a coffee from a nearby restaurant.

Jury selection lasted five days. Before it was complete, the available panels were exhausted and Judge Bauer ordered Sheriff Howard “Bud” Thomas to put his deputies on the streets in order to impress pedestrians into jury service. Soon, at least 50 bemused, frightened, and angry citizens found their daily routine in shambles and were being questioned about their qualifications to serve on the jury.

MEDIA FIGHT

High-profile cases always make jury selection problematic and Judge Bauer had a legitimate concern that the ongoing and pervasive publicity might well be disruptive. It was then the court adopted its long-standing rule banning the taking of photographs and motion pictures in the courtrooms or in the vicinity of the courtrooms. Subsequently, a photographer for the Tribune-Review clearly and admittedly violated the rule by photographing Wable as deputy sheriffs brought him into the courtroom for sentencing.

The newspaper, along with other plaintiffs, brought an action in federal court seeking to enjoin the sheriff from enforcing the rule. While conceding the court could ban taking photos in the courtroom, the plaintiffs argued that extending the ban to the vicinity of the courtroom violated their First Amendment rights. The district court denied the

injunction sought by the plaintiffs and the United States Court of Appeals affirmed, noting that the judiciary’s authority to control its own proceedings did not stop at the courtroom door.

EVIDENCE IS PRESENTED

Over the next three weeks, with the trial sometimes going into night sessions, A.D.A. Loughran called 60 witnesses and introduced 58 exhibits including the gun, the pawn ticket, and Shepard’s watch, along with impressions of tire tracks from the scene which matched the tread on Wable’s Chevrolet. John Shepard took the stand to identify Wable as his assailant. Much of the testimony offered by the prosecution—over defense objections—dealt with the crimes committed against Woodward and Shepard.

A.C. Scales, the most experienced of the three defense lawyers, told

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Bachelor’s degree in Engineering from New York University
 Master’s degree in Electrical Engineering from Drexel University
 J.D. from Temple University
 Chemistry studies at University of Pittsburgh
 Registered Professional Engineer (Pennsylvania)
 Formerly Assistant Professor at Villanova University
 Formerly Doctoral Candidate in Mathematics at Bryn Mawr College



▲ *John Wesley Wable's court-appointed defense lawyers: B. Patrick Costello (left), Richard E. McCormick, Sr. (center), and A.C. Scales (right). [Photo: Greensburg Daily Tribune, 11 October, 1953.]*

Pat Costello, who had never tried a significant criminal case, that he could open for the defense: "Pat," he said, "you can open, but please don't open it so wide that I can't get it closed."

The defense managed to muster 19 witnesses, including Wable, who was on the witness stand for seven hours proclaiming his innocence, blaming Jim Parks, and contending that the words in his written statement were dictated to him by Detective Music.

While Parks' existence seemed illusory, nonetheless, the defense had the judge's tipstaff page Parks in the hall several times during the trial.

JURY DELIBERATIONS

Judge Bauer's jury instructions lasted three hours and eighteen minutes. Later, while the jury was out, Pat Costello decided he had time to get a long-neglected haircut. While sitting in the barber chair in a basement shop at the corner of Main and Otterman, the phone rang and the judge's tipstaff shouted to Pat, "Get back over here; the jury is in with a verdict!" The deliberations had lasted four hours.

Pat turned to his barber and said: "Well, my client is going to get the electric chair; they got in too early."

He was right.

THE APPEAL

The appeal process changed nothing. On May 23, 1955, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court affirmed the verdict and sentence. Without dissent, the court quickly disposed of the contentions raised on behalf of the appellant. While the law generally prohibits the introduction of evidence

of other crimes, such evidence can be admissible under "special circumstances," and such circumstances exist where the evidence of other crimes tends to prove a common scheme, plan or design.

In support of the introduction of the challenged evidence relating to the assaults on Woodward and Shepard, the court pointed out that in each instance the victim was lying on the seat of his cab with his head against the door; each was attacked in the early morning hours; in each case the gunman put the gun through the door window and shot the victim in the head with the bullet entering at about the same angle; and, in each instance the motive was robbery.

The defense also objected to the introduction of evidence of Wable's arrest in New Mexico for robbery, which did not fall within the common scheme exception. The court, however, found that the arrest was admissible to explain how the defendant came to be identified and apprehended.

Another issue raised was that the defendant's ballistic expert was not

continued on page 20

where in the world IS THE WBA MEMBER?



Chuck Wade did some hiking in the Olympic Mountains while visiting his son, Eric, and his family in Washington State in June 2010. Mt. Townsend, one of the most

hiked summits in the Olympics, can be seen over Chuck's left shoulder. Easy access, a long hiking season, and unparalleled views of Puget Sound and the eastern half of the Olympics make Mt. Townsend a popular hiking destination.

OLYMPIC MOUNTAINS, WASHINGTON

The Trial of John Wesley Wable *continued from page 19*

afforded a sufficient opportunity to examine the gun and bullets offered in evidence as the murder weapon. After the jury was empaneled, the defense expert examined the weapon at counsel table, but was not called as a witness. In what present-day prosecutors and defense counsel would find surprising, the court held that the prosecution's prior withholding of the weapon from the defense could not be faulted because, "The gun and bullets had been at all times in the custody of the police and the District Attorney had no control or authority to compel their surrender for such an inspection..."

Both sides had Wable examined by psychiatrists to determine his competency to stand trial. The defense objected to the prosecution's denial of the defense request to see the report of the prosecution's doctor. The court, however, found the issue of "no real importance," since no question of the defendant's sanity was raised at trial.

The final issue focused on a perceived prejudicial remark in the prosecution's closing argument to the jury which pointed out that a defense alibi witness changed his testimony over a recess. The witness, Eugene Weber, testified that, "It is very possible I did see him [Wable] the last week of July." The prosecution objected to the admission of this testimony because it did not specifically refer to July 28, the date of the murder. After the noon recess, Weber testified that after seeing a newspaper, he recalled that the time he saw the defendant elsewhere was July 28. The defense objected to the prosecution's reference to this change of testimony on the basis that the remark implied that the witness had been coached. The opinion notes that the remark was no more than a statement of fact, which did not carry such an implication; and furthermore, the remark was not objected to at the time, nor was it noted upon the record.

THE END

According to Pat Costello, Wable didn't believe he would be executed. His lawyers and everyone else did. On September 26, 1955, his three lawyers drove to Rockview to see him for the last time. One by one they were allowed to visit him. To say what? *We did the best we could—we're sorry it turned out this way.* What could you say in such an impossible situation? But Wable had something to say to them. He had Parks' address.

How he got it or why it wasn't revealed earlier were unimportant. A.C. Scales was immediately on the telephone trying to reach the governor, George Leader, but the governor was away on vacation or out of the state on business. However, the attorney general, Herbert Cohen, could be reached. A.C. told him of the importance of the revelation and the need to stay the execution to prevent what might be a massive injustice. Mr. Cohen responded by saying that

he had thoroughly reviewed the evidence, that the request for a stay would be denied, and the commonwealth would take its chances that no injustice was being done.

At 10:10 p.m., John Wesley Wable was pronounced dead.

A few days later, A.C. Scales received a telephone call from Herbert Cohen, perhaps to put him at ease. Cohen had given the Cleveland address that Scales gave him to an investigator who followed up on it. There was no such address.

In the placid 1950s, there were few, if any, trials that captured public attention more than this one. It came about because of solid, or perhaps even brilliant, police work. Yet, Wable's ineptness as a fugitive almost suggests a desire to be caught. The lawyers on both sides exhausted themselves in pursuit of their goals. For them, it was a pursuit of principle and justice as each saw it. It wasn't about money. Prosecutors don't receive bonuses beyond their salaries for a good result. And for the defense, who had endured an agonizing uphill battle, the court approved counsel fees of \$1,000; each lawyer earned \$333.33 for their representation in the most difficult case they would ever see. 🐾

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Committee Reports

Young Lawyers Elect New Leadership

Young Lawyers Committee

At the annual meeting of the Young Lawyers Committee held on April 4, 2011, at the Greensburg Country Club, the following individuals were elected to fill these leadership positions:



▲
New YL Chair Kerri Shimborske-Abel
[Photo: zklaw.com]

CHAIR-ELECT:

Don Rega

TREASURER:

John Hauser

SECRETARY:

Michael Stewart, II

EDUCATION CHAIR:

Elsie Lampl

PUBLIC SERVICE

CHAIR: Jonathan Bompiani

BENCH/BAR

CHAIR: Jim Silvis

IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR/ MEMBERSHIP OUTREACH:

Michael Quatrini

Kerri Shimborske-Abel is serving as Chair of the Young Lawyers Committee for 2011–2012. She is an associate with Zimmer Kunz in Greensburg. 🐦

Family Law Committee

by Abby De Blassio, Esq.

Congratulations and thanks to all members of the Family Law Committee who gave generously to support the 2011 CASA Leadership Breakfast. The Family Law Committee raised \$675 to support CASA, thanks to the following individuals: Mary Mears, Debra Henry, Bruce Tobin, Elizabeth

McCall, Maureen Kroll, Mike Stewart, Sandra Davis, Karen Ferri, Phil McCalister, Abby De Blassio, and David Pollock.

As a result of the donations, the Family Law Committee has become a part of the CASA Leadership Circle, as a Hero of CASA, and several committee members attended the 2011 CASA Leadership Breakfast, on April 29, 2011, to show their support of the program. The donations will help CASA meet its annual funding needs, so it can continue to provide valuable services to dependent children in Westmoreland County.

Judge Christopher A. Feliciani extends his thanks to everyone for believing in, and supporting the Court Appointed Special Advocates program.

continued on page 22

WILLIAMS LAW OFFICE

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Between 2009 and 2010, the number of claims of **race, sex, age, religious, national origin, or disability discrimination** filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission jumped by 49% in Western Pennsylvania, compared to a 7% increase nationwide. Our firm will guide your client through the entire process, from the initial administrative filing to trial in Federal or State Court. Let us put our years of experience to work for you and your client. Our initial consultation is free, and we are happy to schedule a meeting at your office.

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Adam R. Gorzelsky, Esquire**

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snwilliams2004@yahoo.com**



They're your Rights! Use them or lose them.

Committee Reports

continued from page 21

“I tell you firsthand that this program truly makes a profound difference in the lives of those innocent, dependent children for whom they advocate,” he says.

“Our committee makes me proud,” says WBA President and former Family Law Chair Michael J. Stewart. “We’re family...we care.” 🍷



▲ David Trevaskis (second from left), Pro Bono Coordinator for the Pennsylvania Bar Association, attended the Westmoreland Bar Association board retreat on May 7, 2011, at Lambertville House to train the board on initiating a yearlong civics education project for 7–8th graders in Westmoreland County. Also shown, from left to right, are Harry F. Smail, Jr., Donald J. Snyder, Jr., and Michael J. Stewart.

Greater Greensburg Civil War Round Table



Attention Civil War Buffs

Commemorate the Civil War Sesquicentennial by joining The Greater Greensburg Civil War Roundtable, which meets on the first Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Westmoreland Bar Association. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 4, and will feature a talk about the First Battle of Bull Run/Manassas. Future topics include “Oak Ridge,” on September 1; “Tennessee 1864,” on October 6; “Battle of Island No. 10” and a covered dish on November 3; and a show and tell on December 1.

For more information, contact Stu Horner at 724-834-5060. 🍷

50-Year Members Honored by PBA

The Pennsylvania Bar Association presented awards to Pennsylvania lawyers for outstanding leadership in the legal profession and longstanding membership in the association.

The PBA Fifty-Year Member Awards recognize lawyers who have been association members for five decades. This year, three Westmoreland County attorneys attained this milestone: Judge Irving L. Bloom, Workers’ Compensation Bureau, Greensburg; Senior Judge Charles H. Loughran, Westmoreland County Court of Common Pleas, Greensburg; and Albert M. Wiggins, Jr., of Ligonier. The awards were presented during the association’s Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, May 4-6. 🍷



▲ Judge Irving L. Bloom

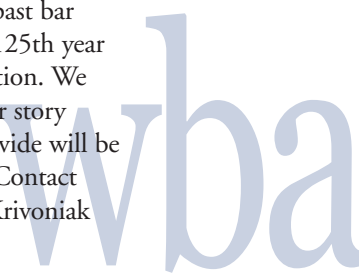


▲ Senior Judge Charles H. Loughran

Help Us Celebrate Our 125th Anniversary



The WBA is seeking photos from past bar events for our celebration of the 125th year of the Westmoreland Bar Association. We are hoping to make a slideshow telling our story “through the years.” Any pictures you provide will be scanned, returned, and very appreciated. Contact Susan Zellner (724.834.7260) or Diane Krivoniak (724.834.6730) at the WBA. 🍷



Actions of the Board

MARCH 16, 2011

- Membership Committee report accepted as submitted: Jenee Oliver, Stacia Christman, James Welsh, participating; Gregory Swank, associate.
- Learned that 24 members will be dropped for nonpayment of WBA dues.
- Agreed to ask Court Administrator Paul Kuntz about use of statewide jury list for juror pool.
- Agreed to e-mail WBA members to create a list of attorneys who are fluent in foreign languages.
- Agreed to consider mentoring minority high schoolers about career in law.
- Committed to working on increasing WBA volunteers for the Pro Bono Program.
- Learned that PBA is calling a meeting on March 31 for discussion on legal journals and the PBA relationship.
- Learned that WBA Law Day/Civics Ed program is being kicked off in May.
- Agreed to solicit advertisements for the pictorial directory from those businesses who support the bar.
- Reviewed the ABA report on Pro Bono.
- Learned that the YLs will schedule a reverse mentoring session for setting up Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.
- Agreed to present the committee of the year to Leo Ciaramitaro for his work on the Mock Trial program.

- Agreed to have written ballots prepared for annual meeting for the bylaws and for the elections.
- Learned that the WBA-sponsored Chamber Bash is set for Wednesday, April 20.
- Learned that Mrs. Krivoniak and President Snyder are signing off on letters to LRS attorneys who may have overlooked LRS payments to the WBA.

APRIL 20, 2011

- Reappointed L. Christian DeDiana as treasurer for the next administration year.
- Considered offering a CLE on the Nuremberg Trials, which is an ABA project.
- President Stewart has set a meeting with LLS attorneys Cindy Sheehan and Sam Rosenzweig to discuss issues of concern to both the WBA/WBF and LLS.
- Learned that *pro se* representation for custody is 49.73%.
- PBA Pro Bono Coordinator David Trevaskis will attend the board retreat to discuss the implementation of the civics education project for 2012 school year.
- Reviewed an LRS report of panel attorneys who have docketed cases but have not submitted payments to the LRS.
- Voted to sponsor the SummerSounds concerts in Greensburg by placing an ad in the program.
- Agreed to hold a 125-year anniversary event; place an ad in the sidebar that seeks photos from bar events over the years; and assign a committee to help with planning the event. 🌸

www.westbar.org/blog

Stay up-to-date on what's happening in the courtrooms. Bookmark the WBA Blog or WBA Facebook page to read notices from the Court Administrator and notices concerning civil and orphans' court motions. **When they tell us, we tell you.**

[facebook.com/westbar](https://www.facebook.com/westbar)

Get Connected!

Need access to a free wireless Internet connection in Greensburg? WBA members are welcome to stop in the WBA offices and log on to our free wireless network to conduct business online.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

*All committee meetings and activities will be held at the WBA Headquarters unless otherwise noted. Visit www.westbar.org for more information about activities and CLE courses, or to **register online**.*

JULY

- 4** Courthouse closed in observance of Independence Day
- 7** Investment Committee, 9 a.m.
Planning Committee, Noon
- 11** WBF Trustee Special Meeting, 4 p.m.
- 14** [PBI Simulcast] Winning Before Trial: 10 Keys to Winning Depositions, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (**Register with PBI**)
- 19** Family Law Committee, Noon
[CLE] Movie Critics CLE: "Fall From Grace," Noon to 2:45 p.m.
- 20** Board Meeting, 4 p.m.
- 27** [CLE] Movie Critics CLE: "Fall From Grace," Noon to 2:45 p.m.

AUGUST

- 4** [CLE] Bridge the Gap, 9 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.
WBF Scholarship Award Presentation, 3 p.m., Judge Blahovec's Courtroom
- 16** Family Law Committee, Noon
- 17** Board Meeting, 4 p.m.

save the date!

October 1: WBA 125th Anniversary Celebration, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., Westmoreland County Courthouse

LAWYERS CONCERNED FOR LAWYERS CORNER

- The 12-step recovery meeting, exclusively for lawyers and judges, is in downtown Pittsburgh every Thursday at 5:15 p.m. For the exact location, call Pennsylvania Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers at **1-800-335-2572**.
- LCL has a new website at www.lclpa.org. Attorneys and judges will find information on how LCL can help them, a member of their family or a colleague who may be in distress. It is confidential and easy to navigate. Visit it today.
- Lawyers Confidential Help Line: **1-888-999-1941**. Operates 24 hours a day.