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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
WESTMORELAND BAR ASSOCIATION
VOLUME XXXV, NUMBER 3
AUGUST 2023

A Curtain Call for S. Sponte, Esq.

He's back. The ink has hardly dried on our August 2020 issue containing a farewell salute titled "Our Retiring Editor," yet we are now constrained to inform you that very same retiring editor, who never courted publicity, is the recipient of one of the Pennsylvania Bar Association's highest accolades, the PBA's President's Award. The award was announced May 5 at the PBA's Annual Meeting Awards Breakfast in Philadelphia by Jay Silberblatt, then the president of the PBA, who told those in attendance:

All faithful readers of The Pennsylvania Lawyer magazine—the PBA's flagship publication—know that the last page in each issue of the magazine is the "To-Wit" column.

In surveys, PBA members have told us that when a new magazine arrives, they flip first to the back of the magazine to read "To-Wit."

Our next award winner is David Millstein, the author of that long-running column. David works under the pseudonym S. Sponte.

S. Sponte—David—irreverently contemplates the privileges and pitfalls of being a lawyer.

David has retired from his law practice and now lives in Florida. He was unable to join us today.

David has authored "To-Wit" for more than 40 years—that's about 250 columns he has penned over the four-decade period.

As any writer who has tried it would tell you, it takes a lot of effort and a lot of smarts to be comically sarcastic yet insightful.

Thank you, David, for giving us reason to laugh, cringe, and reflect on this legal profession of ours.

So David wasn't there to receive the award. Rather, he was in Boston celebrating his grandson's bar mitzvah, which was, as it should have been, a priority. As we noted, he does not seek out publicity. Even with the many ingenious scripts he wrote for the elaborate BarFlies productions, performed at the Bench/Bar Conferences between 1999 and 2008, he usually couldn't be talked into a curtain call.

His first article in *The Pennsylvania Lawyer* appeared on June 1, 1979. If lawyers across the state were refreshed and entertained by the satire and occasional wisdom found in his columns, so were we, though we alone can take pride of the fact his work is loosely based on his experiences and

encounters at our bar. Thereafter, his articles began appearing in *the sidebar*, where for 25 years as editor he infused our publication with an energy, an effort, and an intensity that made it rise above its humble designation as a newsletter.

The President's Award is not conferred on any timetable, and, as the name suggests, it is given by the PBA president in

recognition of a lawyer's extraordinary commitment to the association.

This recent award is not the first time David has received statewide recognition for his contributions to our profession. In 2016, the Pennsylvania

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David J. Millstein, a/k/a S. Sponte, Esq., was honored with the PBA's President's Award at their Annual Meeting on May 5.

President's Message

Unlocking the Power of ChatGPT

Revolutionizing legal practice for the Westmoreland Bar Association

by Maureen Kroll, Esq.

Introduction:

In an ever-evolving digital landscape, technological advancements continue to shape and redefine various industries, including the legal profession. One such innovation that holds immense potential is ChatGPT, an advanced language model developed by OpenAI. ChatGPT leverages the power of artificial intelligence to provide efficient and intelligent conversational capabilities. In this article, we explore the benefits of ChatGPT for the Westmoreland Bar Association and how this cutting-edge tool can revolutionize legal practice.



1. Enhanced Research and Case Preparation:

ChatGPT serves as an invaluable resource for legal professionals, offering instant access to a vast repository of legal knowledge. With its ability to understand natural language queries, it streamlines the research process and provides relevant legal information, statutes, case precedents, and legal opinions. Lawyers can leverage ChatGPT to swiftly gather comprehensive information, ensuring thorough case preparation and informed decision-making.

2. Time and Cost Efficiency:

The legal profession demands significant time and effort for research, drafting documents, and preparing arguments. ChatGPT can significantly reduce the time and resources required for these tasks. By automating research and providing instant answers to legal

questions, ChatGPT enables lawyers to optimize their workflow and allocate more time to complex legal analysis and strategy. This efficiency leads to cost savings for both legal practitioners and their clients.

3. Document Generation and Review:

Drafting legal documents is a crucial aspect of legal practice. ChatGPT's language generation capabilities can assist in generating initial drafts of contracts, pleadings, and legal correspondence. While the final review and editing should be done by legal professionals, ChatGPT's ability to provide accurate and contextually appropriate content aids in accelerating the document creation process, freeing up time for lawyers to focus on higher-value tasks.

4. 24/7 Availability and Scalability:

Unlike human assistants, ChatGPT is available round the clock, providing immediate support and answers to legal queries at any time. This accessibility ensures that legal practitioners can access crucial information and guidance whenever they need it. Additionally, ChatGPT's scalability allows multiple legal professionals to benefit simultaneously, regardless of their physical location or time zone, making it a valuable asset for the Westmoreland Bar Association and its members.

5. Training and Continuing Legal Education:

The Westmoreland Bar Association has a responsibility to support the professional development of its members. ChatGPT can be employed as an innovative training tool for legal research, case analysis, and drafting. It can simulate realistic scenarios,

allowing legal professionals to practice and refine their skills. Furthermore, ChatGPT's ability to stay up-to-date with the latest legal developments ensures that members receive current information, enhancing their continuing legal education.

Conclusion:

As the legal industry adapts to the digital age, leveraging innovative technologies like ChatGPT can deliver numerous benefits to the Westmoreland Bar Association and its members. From enhanced research capabilities to cost and time efficiency, ChatGPT revolutionizes legal practice by augmenting the skills and expertise of legal professionals. Embracing this cutting-edge tool enables the Westmoreland Bar Association to stay at the forefront of legal innovation and provide its members with invaluable resources, ultimately advancing the quality of legal services in the digital era.



Image: Freepik.com

As you may have deduced, this article was written in seconds by ChatGPT with just a mere prompt to create an article that outlines the benefits of artificial intelligence for our legal community. This artificial

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Remembering Ronald E. Valasek

Ronald E. Valasek, formerly of Lower Burrell, passed away at the age of 80 on March 13, 2023, in Washington, D.C. A member of the WBA for over 40 years until his retirement in 2021, he is survived by his wife of 56 years, Mary Rose (Reano) Valasek; a son, Maj. (ret) "JR" Ronald E. (LaRae) Valasek, Jr., of Virginia; and two grandchildren, Cody and Alex.

by Dennis E. Shean, Esq.

For whatever reason, it never occurred to me that I would one day be writing a tribute to our recently deceased colleague, Ronald E. Valasek, Esq. Nevertheless, both fond remembrance and the urging of our most esteemed Judge Daniel Ackerman have moved me to put pen (or computer) to paper and do my best to share "a few appropriate words."

Ron was one of the first lawyers I ever met, outside of those I came into contact with in law school. It would be no exaggeration to say that Ron's personality, and perhaps his practice, stood in stark contrast to the academic pursuits encountered at Duquesne University School of Law. In law school I encountered *Pennoyer v. Neff*. Outside of law school, I encountered Ronald E. Valasek, Esq. Both were eye-opening experiences.

My initial introduction to Ron came through a fellow St. Vincent College graduate and Duquesne Law School student, the late Steven R. Allias, with whom I occasionally rode the bus to law school and whom I occasionally transported back to New Kensington when I drove to and from classes. Steve was a very detail-oriented and thorough student, whose estate-planning notes proved invaluable to me in one of the

few classes I attended on Saturday mornings at Duquesne. Steve was a year or two ahead of me in law school and I had the benefit of his having taken that course the year before me. While I did not immediately go on to develop a thriving estates practice, I did quickly discover the benefit of knowing the right people at the right time.

“He was unfailingly cheerful and exuded delight and exuberance at the sheer pleasure of being there. I believe wholeheartedly that this carried over into his representation of his clients, for whom he always wished to go the extra mile.”

Something in our "travel talk" while riding the bus or while driving back from law school must have made an impression upon Steve, because shortly after taking a job working as Ron's associate at his Lower Burrell law office, Steve persuaded me to work as a law clerk for Ron while I was in law school.



While many of my classmates were focused on clerking at a prestigious Pittsburgh firm, working in the Allegheny County District Attorney's Office, or finding other reasons to spend most of their time in Pittsburgh, what free time I had was spent working in the law library, teaching legal research and writing to younger students, or learning the realities of small-town law at Ron's comfortable, but not ostentatious, Lower Burrell office. There, I fine-tuned my research skills to try to find the perfect black letter law, statutes, and cases to address such monumental issues as driveway disputes among neighbors, custody quarrels, fender benders, and the myriad and at times humorous and peculiar criminal cases which I could never imagine Perry Mason or Atticus Finch handling, but which Ron seemed to relish.

I only clerked for Ron for one summer, but while I was working as a judicial clerk in Fayette County right out of law school, my friend Steve Allias again recruited me at the behest of Ron to come to work for him after I had finished my clerkship. Because of

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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, 100 North Maple Avenue, Greensburg, PA 15601-2506, 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.

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Remembering Ronald E. Valasek *continued from page 3*

what are politely termed “philosophical differences,” I only stayed in practice with Ron for a couple of months before deciding to strike out on my own.

What memories I have of Ron are fond ones, however. Certain of them are indelibly imprinted upon my memory. Included among those are his recitation of the “mission statement” of his practice. Stated succinctly, it was, “We make diamonds out of lumps of (expletive deleted).” I probably encountered more expletives than diamonds, but I still found it entertaining. Speaking of “mission” statements, I remember the Purdon’s sales representative wryly noting the incongruity of Ron’s vanity license plate, which simply read, “REV-ESQ.” This caused the representative to remark to me that he was surprised to see someone who was both a minister and a lawyer.

Ron was hardly a minister, but he did have a unique personality and his own idiosyncratic means of arguing cases, whether to a jury or to a judge. I recall the time he defended a miscreant on gun charges by standing inches away from a juror and pointing his finger like a gun toward the juror and arguing, “If I was standing this close, would I miss?” Not the type of argument that I would make, but it seemed to work for Ron. Just like the time he argued for a weekend furlough for an inmate by citing the “Spirit of Christmas.”

I never got to know Ron intimately as an attorney, though I am sure we had different perspectives and life experiences. What I do know quite well is that every time I ever encountered Ron, he was unfailingly cheerful and exuded delight and exuberance at the sheer pleasure of being there. I believe wholeheartedly that this carried over into his representation of his clients, for whom he always wished to go the extra mile. We didn’t always go the same direction, and we didn’t always have the same goal, but he had a way of making the trip enjoyable. Rest in peace! Wherever you are, I’m sure you are telling some good stories! ■

Unlocking the Power of ChatGPT

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intelligence app has the ability to generate a wide range of applications including creating images, text, and audio.

ChatGPT debuted in November 2022, and on March 14, 2023, ChatGPT-4 was released. This is the fastest growing app in history. A free account can be created, or for \$20 per month, a premium account can be established to seek information even faster.

The overall advantage of artificial intelligence is just being discovered and is promising and daunting at the same time. Best results for using this app is to give good “prompts” that will produce helpful, relevant, and accurate responses and avoid “hallucinations” or “made up stuff.” An article on zdnet.com provides some insight on writing better prompts (*see* bit.ly/chat-gpt-prompts). A request can include the number of words needed or one can ask for an article to be reviewed to evaluate what is missing or how can the article be more interesting. Grammatical errors can also be detected upon submission of your work product.

In the legal arena, artificial intelligence can answer legal questions, perform legal research, provide basic legal information, review contracts and other documents, conduct a due diligence review, provide deposition questions, predict how a judge is likely to rule, and market your legal practice by writing website language, devising letters, blogs, and articles, and composing social media posts.

However, concern for AI use in the legal field is real. AI can generate data and client privacy breaches, spread disinformation, copyright infringement, or cybersecurity risks.

So what do you think? Are you going to use this app as soon as you finish reading this article, or will you resist? ■

Maureen Kroll



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New Leadership Elected, Awards Presented at Annual Meeting

At the Annual Meeting of the Westmoreland Bar Association held on Monday, April 3, at Rizzo's Banquet Hall in Crabtree, Maureen Kroll assumed the office of president.



WBA President
Maureen Kroll

An attorney for 31 years, Maureen is a sole practitioner in North Huntingdon. A *summa cum laude* graduate of the University of Pittsburgh, Maureen received a bachelor of science degree in nursing. She went on to earn a master's degree as

a cardiovascular nurse specialist and a University Scholar distinction. While working full-time at Monsour

Hospital in Jeannette, she attended the University of Pittsburgh School of Law and earned her juris doctor degree.

Maureen succeeds Eric E. Bononi and is serving a one-year term as President.

ELECTION RESULTS

Leo J. Ciaramitaro was elected to a one-year term as Vice President and Kristen C. Weidus was chosen to serve a three-year term on the Board of Directors. Rounding out the Board



are President-Elect Angelea Allen Mitas; Directors Adam J. Long and Kelly M. Eshelman; Past President Eric E. Bononi; Treasurer James A. Horchak; and Secretary/Executive Director Alahna O'Brien.

Maria V. Rossi was elected to serve a five-year term on the Membership Committee. Vanda Raszewski was elected to serve a five-year term on the Building Committee. Todd T. Turin was elected to serve a five year-term on the Investment Committee.

AWARDS PRESENTED AT MEETING

Nicole M. Pardus was presented with the Outstanding Young Lawyer Award; and the Elder Law & Orphans' Court Committees were named Committee of the Year.


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New Leadership Elected, Awards Presented at Annual Meeting *continued from page 5*

Outstanding Young Lawyer

Nicole M. Pardus

At the Annual Meeting of the Westmoreland Bar Association, Nicole M. Pardus was recognized as the 2023 Outstanding Young Lawyer. This award is given to the young lawyer who best exemplifies outstanding leadership and distinguished service to the legal profession and the community.

Nicole has been a member of the Westmoreland Bar since 2016. She is the immediate Past Chair of the WBA Young Lawyers Committee, a member of the Pennsylvania Bar Association, and sat on the board of Laurel Legal Services (now Summit Legal Aid), serving as treasurer.

A partner with Long & Long LLC in Greensburg, Nicole focuses her practice on estate planning and administration, business formation and advisement, and real estate and civil litigation. She earned a bachelor degree in philosophy from Slippery Rock University and her JD from the University of Pittsburgh.

Q CONGRATULATIONS, NICOLE. WHAT DOES THIS AWARD MEAN TO YOU PERSONALLY?

A It is an acknowledgment from the Bar Association Board that they see



At the Annual Meeting on Monday, April 3, President Eric Bononi presented Nicole M. Pardus with the 2023 Outstanding Young Lawyer Award.

and appreciate the work I have done and continue to do for the organization. On a personal level, the time I dedicate to the Bar Association is time that I am not with my family or friends so to have my dedication recognized feels wonderful.

Q WHAT DOES THIS AWARD MEAN TO YOU PROFESSIONALLY?

A When I made the decision to build my career in Westmoreland County, I knew that participation

in the Bar Association would be a part of that and the Bar Association has really given me such a wonderful, supportive community. There are incredible lawyers practicing in Westmoreland County and to be given an award by my mentors and colleagues, it is such an honor.

Q HOW DID YOU FEEL UPON LEARNING YOU WERE THE RECIPIENT?

A Honored and excited. I am not a huge fan of competition or awards generally, but I think it always feels nice to be recognized by peers especially as an attorney.

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

A To win this award, you have to be involved and there are so many opportunities and ways to be involved



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with the WBA. As a young lawyer, the YL Committee is such an easy way to get involved and meet peers. The YL Committee was my path because it felt nice to be around peers of my own age and experience level. I would encourage anyone who wants to come to any WBA function to do it and for anyone reading this, please reach out to me if you ever want to go to something but would like a bud to go with you. ■

Committee of the Year

Elder Law & Orphans' Court Committees

The Elder Law & Orphans' Court Committees were chosen as Committee of the Year at the WBA Annual Meeting held on April 3, 2023. The committees and Chair L. Christian DeDiana were recognized for their involvement in the Elder Law Mistakes and Myths estate planning seminars presented by the Westmoreland Bar Foundation and



At the Annual Meeting on Monday, April 3, President Eric Bononi presented Elder Law & Orphans' Court Committees Chair L. Christian DeDiana with the 2023 Committee of the Year Award.

sponsored by Somerset Trust Company last fall at the Westmoreland Museum of American Art.

Q CONGRATULATIONS, CHRIS. WHAT DOES THE AWARD MEAN TO YOU, AS COMMITTEE CHAIR?

A I was very pleased that our committee received recognition. I have been chair or co-chair for at least 25 years. We are an active committee and hold regular meetings.

Q WHAT DOES THE AWARD MEAN TO YOU AND YOUR COMMITTEE PROFESSIONALLY, AS MEMBERS OF THE WBA?

A The substantive areas of elder law and Orphans' Court practice are important areas for most of our members. The award recognizes that importance.

Q HOW DID YOU FEEL UPON LEARNING YOUR COMMITTEE WAS THE RECIPIENT?

A Surprise, as this past year was business as usual for the committee.

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

A Before I was chairman, I was a member of the committee, but we never had any meetings. I think it is important for the committees to hold regular meetings. Occasionally we have an outside speaker; often I will discuss a new case or rule change or some interesting issue I have encountered; often I have no agenda and the attendees simply discuss issues they have and the group offers insights. The bottom line is to have regular meetings. We never have a shortage of things to discuss. ■

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Spotlight on Maria Rossi

Editor's note: Maria Rossi is the new Chair of the WBA Young Lawyers Committee. Her one-year term began at the 2023 Annual Meeting, held April 3 at Rizzo's Banquet Hall in Crabtree. Maria is a part-time solicitor for the Westmoreland County Children's Bureau, and recently opened her own practice in Youngstown. Other election results for the Young Lawyers Committee included Erica Hixson, Vice Chair; John Bumbaugh, Jr., Treasurer; and Stephanie Sheehan, Secretary.



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

A I started as a machinist at Westmoreland Mechanical Testing and Research in high school.

Since then, I have worked at a local garden center, beach house rental company, general counsel for a hospital, clerk in the Indiana County Court House, and then small law firms.



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

A I was a law clerk working in the family law court in Indiana. We had a divorce case where the parties could not agree on the division of their

property. They submitted their inventories, and it was my job to go through and compare the inventories. One party literally listed every spice, seasoning, and bouillon cube (opened and unopened) on the inventory. The other party then requested to divide the spices equally to which the opposing party declined. Therefore, we had to have a hearing to split spices (among other trivial things).

in personal assets is the standard in Tanzanian divorces. We spoke to judges, lawyers, women's shelters, and divorced women for a week. It was a wonderful experience to see how the Tanzanian court system worked. At the end of the trip, I was able to go on a photo safari which was on my bucket list. It was incredible.

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

A Integrity. I believe the best attorneys are honest with their clients and opposing counsel. I do not like the "fight just to fight" or "run up the tab" mentality some attorneys develop. I believe its counterproductive to the client and the profession. If every person would act with more integrity, the world would be a happier place.

Q WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST REGRET?

A I regret not signing up for a study abroad class which was going to the Galapagos Islands to study biology. It was a pre-freshman course offered to new incoming freshman at Wake Forest. All freshmen had to take one of these courses. My passion in life is animals and nature, so the Galapagos is on my bucket list of places to go. I let insecurity and fear talk me out of going on the trip. I think if I would have gone, I would have had a great time and made the transition to freshman year a little easier. Instead, I ended up in a class about video game violence in the

Q WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE JOURNEY?

A My favorite travel experience was my 3L Human Rights Trip to Tanzania. I was with 10 of my law school friends and we worked on gathering research on divorce in Tanzania. Our end goal was to lobby for policy change and make sure a 50/50 split



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basement of the freshman hall. I disliked the topic and had a hard time in the class. I still think about what would have happened had I gone on that trip.

Q WHO ARE YOUR HEROES IN REAL LIFE?

A I have many heroes in real life. I admire my mom for her caring nature. My brother is incredibly intelligent and fantastic at making new friends. My sister-in-law is very artistic and creative.

My friends, Nicole, Erica, Jenna, Gina, Ali, are all incredible businesswomen and lead inspirational lives. I truly look up to each one of them as younger women in business. They are a great support network.

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

A Do not take anything too personally. Many people (attorneys and clients) will say rude and unnecessary things to you. It is best to be humble, accept responsibility for your mistakes, learn from them, and work to fix those mistakes. Treating everyone with respect leads to lower stress levels and better results.

Q WHAT IS THE BEST ADVICE YOU EVER GOT?

A Take 24 hours to respond to an email that may have made you mad. If you still want to respond the way you wanted to in the first place, then you can send the response.

Q WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT?

A So far, passing the bar. I hope to continue to achieve more goals such as become self-sufficient, own a small farm, own a small beach house, perhaps have a family, travel more. I have been to almost all the continents so maybe someday I will check them all off.

Q WHEN AND WHERE WERE YOU HAPPIEST?

A I love the beach. I am happiest when I am by the ocean. Especially when I can take my dogs with me to the ocean.

Q WHAT IS YOUR MOST TREASURED POSSESSION?

A Other than my animals, which I believe are more like family than possessions, right now I have an antique chicken pin from

England. It was one of the last things my dad gave me before he passed.

Q WHAT IS IT THAT YOU MOST DISLIKE?

A Animal cruelty. I love animals and the thought of someone harming them makes me very angry. Also, another dislike is having to take off my flip-flops to go through airport security. I just find it incredible that the machines cannot scan through a piece of thick leather or plastic.

Q WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST EXTRAVAGANCE?

A I love a nice spa day. Massages and facials are my favorite.

Q WHAT TALENT WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE?

A I wish I could speak multiple languages. I have

tried to learn but it is very difficult to learn when you cannot use it every day.

Q WHAT DO YOU VALUE MOST IN YOUR FRIENDS?

A Loyalty. I am a very loyal person and I like when I can count on the same loyalty from my friends. Trustworthiness is also important, and I am lucky to have such a great support system within my friends.

Q WHAT OTHER CAREER WOULD YOU LIKE TO ATTEMPT?

A I wanted to be a veterinarian when I was younger. I think I would have made a great veterinarian or biologist.

Q WHAT IS YOUR MOTTO?

A Everything happens for a reason. ■

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NEW AD RATES

EFFECTIVE AUGUST 1, 2023

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Download a new rate card at westbar.org/wlj or call 724-834-7260 to have one mailed to you.

JANUARY 2023 TRIAL TERM

Of the three trials on the January 2023 Civil Jury Trial list, two were settled and one was continued. No jury trials were held.

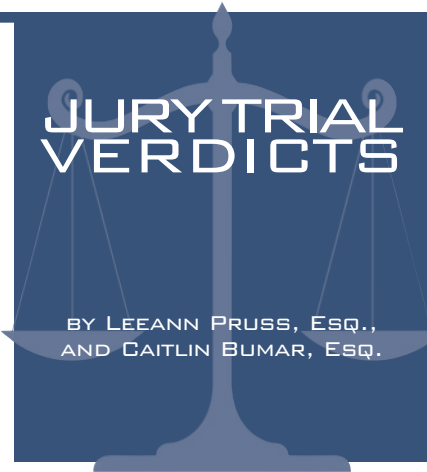
MARCH 2023 TRIAL TERM

Of the eight cases on the March 2023 Civil Jury Trial list, six settled, one was continued, and one proceeded to a jury trial.

**CARRIE HARDY
V.
KENDALLY CARLSON
NO. 1954 OF 2020**

Cause of Action: Negligence

This case arises out of a motor vehicle accident that occurred on May 27, 2018, at the intersection of Clay Pike Road and Robbins Station Road in Westmoreland County. Defendant admitted liability, stipulating that she disregarded a red light and caused a collision with the vehicle in which Plaintiff was a rear seat passenger. At the time of the



accident, Plaintiff was recovering from a surgical repair of her anterior cruciate ligament in her right knee. She alleged that the accident at issue caused her right knee to collide with the rear passenger door, resulting in significant pain and a delay in her recovery from the initial surgery.

According to Plaintiff's expert, the collision caused a serious injury to Plaintiff's right knee because it delayed her recovery time and increased scar tissue formation, which limited her ability to fully extend and mobilize her knee joint. This resulted in two

additional surgeries to drain the excess scar tissue. Plaintiff also testified that she continues to experience pain, popping, and bruising in her right knee, and she has limited her activities as a result of that pain.

According to the testimony of Defendant's expert, Plaintiff's symptoms were the normal risks associated with an ACL surgery, and the collision did not alter her treatment plan or cause a serious injury.

Trial Dates: March 13–15, 2023

Plaintiff's Counsel: Ernest J.

Pribanic, Pribanic & Pribanic, LLC, White Oak

Defendant's Counsel: Jason A. Hines, Summers, McDonnell, Hudock, Guthrie, & Rauch, P.C., Pgh.

Trial Judge: The Hon. Chris Scherer

Result: Verdict in favor of Defendant.

MAY 2023 TRIAL TERM

Of the five cases on the May 2023 Civil Jury Trial list, three were continued, and two proceeded to a jury trial.

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- Scope/Cost of Repair
- Period of Construction



Children in the Court System: A Brief History

by Caitlin Bumar, Esq.

Although the welfare, care, and supervision of children forms a large part of our legal system as it exists today, it is only within the past century that United States law has truly addressed the unique needs of children through the mechanism of the judicial system. At the beginning of the twentieth century, one in ten children died in infancy. There was no separate legal system for the punishment and rehabilitation of juvenile offenders. No legal restrictions on child labor existed, and there were little to no institutional protections to prevent the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children.

THE DEPENDENCY SYSTEM

The history of legal child welfare proceedings began as a patchwork of various organizations which formed in the late 1800s in the United States. The first reported case of child abuse to reach a state supreme court was that of Mary Ellen Wilson in 1874. Mary Ellen, a nine-year-old girl in an adoptive home in New York, was so brutally beaten and malnourished that she appeared half her age. Her case was so shocking that she was permanently removed from her home by the New York State Supreme Court and taken into protective care. Mary Ellen's case directly led to the founding of The New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the first such agency in the United States.

The first real recognition of the need for some form of organized oversight of the welfare of American children came in 1912 when the Federal Children's Bureau was created by Congress. The Bureau was tasked with investigating and reporting on child welfare among all populations of United States citizens. At this time, there were no standardized birth



In Westmoreland County, the history of child welfare programs began in 1851 with the opening of the Westmoreland County Poorhouse (also known as the County Home) on the current site of Westmoreland Manor. This institution housed indigent and disabled adults and children, along with orphaned children.

records, making the welfare and safety of children particularly difficult to track. It took until 1933 for the federal birth registration efforts to encompass all currently existing states. As a part of their ongoing efforts, in 1927, the Federal Children's Bureau began collecting standardized national court statistics on delinquency, dependency, and neglect.

Here in Westmoreland County, the history of child welfare programs began in 1851 with the opening of the Westmoreland County Poorhouse on the current site of Westmoreland Manor. This institution housed indigent and disabled adults and children, along with orphaned children. The orphaned children were often sent to do laborious and hazardous work as housekeepers, farmhands, and miners. Finding this to be less than ideal, the women of the newly formed Westmoreland County Children's Aid Society established a separate Children's Home for these orphaned children in 1886. The

Westmoreland County Children's Bureau as we know it today was founded in 1931 out of this work.

The very real problem of child abuse and neglect, however, only became a visible, national concern in the 1960s in the wake of increased scrutiny by the medical community and the media. Amendments to the Social Security Act in 1962 required that all states make child welfare services available nationwide by July of 1975. The federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) was passed in 1974, shaping the modern day child protective services agencies available in every state and county in the nation. Over the decades, Pennsylvania's dependency system has increased emphasis on foster and kinship placement as well as reunification services for families, creating the system that is in place today.

THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Although its first juvenile court did not appear until the early 1900s,

continued on page 12

Children in the Court System: A Brief History

continued from page 11

Pennsylvania was an early adopter of the “house of refuge” model of housing minors in the prison system. On the basis that minor criminal offenders should not carry out their sentences intermixed with adult prisoners, the first Pennsylvania house of refuge for child prisoners was opened in Philadelphia in 1828. Although physically similar to adult prisons of the time, the refuge provided greater freedom to the inmates, as well as greater emphasis on education, training, and rehabilitation. A similar house of refuge was opened in Allegheny County in 1854. Notably, not all juvenile offenders were sent to these refuges, but only those deemed “appropriate subjects,” comprising about half of the juvenile prison population.

The first actual juvenile court system in the United States was established in

1899 in Cook County, Illinois, for offenders under the age of 16. By the 1920s, every state had some form of juvenile court system, and in 1923, the first federal juvenile court standards were published. Pennsylvania was an early adopter of this model, with an initial Juvenile Court Act adopted in 1901. While this law was struck down by Pennsylvania’s Supreme Court, a revised version followed in 1903. This Act created the jurisdiction of a juvenile court in relation only to minor crimes. The Juvenile Court Act of 1933 greatly expanded this jurisdiction, covering all crimes except murder, along with “ungovernable” behavior and truancy in regard to all children under age 16. This jurisdiction was again expanded by amendment to cover children up to 18 in 1939.

In a particularly dark chapter in juvenile justice history, Pennsylvania

established the Pennsylvania Institution for Defective Delinquents in 1937. Any juvenile male over the age of 15 could be committed to the Institution if he was convicted or adjudicated delinquent and found to be “mentally defective with criminal tendencies.” Regardless of the initial infraction, this commitment was tantamount to a life sentence; the inmate was held there until released by the committing court. It was not until 1966 that the Pennsylvania Supreme Court held that it was impermissible to hold men at the Institution past the age of twenty-one. The statute providing for the Institution was repealed in its entirety in 1968.

Notable by their absence from juvenile court systems in all states were the constitutional protections given to adult defendants. Most courts lacked a formal process, did not provide counsel



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for the juveniles, and did not offer the due process protections provided in the adult criminal court system. The 1967 Supreme Court decision in *In Re Gault* held that minors in the criminal justice system must have the same due process rights afforded to adult defendants. Additional Supreme Court cases followed, extending to juveniles the right to the “beyond a reasonable doubt” standard of proof and the prohibition against double jeopardy.

Pennsylvania adopted a form of the national model Uniform Juvenile Court Act in the form of the Juvenile Act of 1972. This Act formed the structure and basis of juvenile law as it exists today in Pennsylvania, and it has been modified numerous times over the years to adapt to changing societal and legal trends. In its modern iteration, Pennsylvania’s juvenile justice system has been considered a model for other states based on its significant constitutional safeguards and evidence-based practice. ■

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CASA of Westmoreland Speaks for the Children

by Joyce Novotny-Prettiman, Esq., and Mitchell Samick, Executive Director of CASA of Westmoreland

The history of CASA as an organization dates back to 1977 when it was first formed in Seattle by The Hon. David Soukup. The Judge had a case involving a 3-year-old child and felt he did not have enough information to make a decision about the case. He came up with the idea of having trained volunteers to be the voice of and speak up for abused and/or neglected children in the courtroom. Fast-forward to 2023—there are now approximately 950 programs located throughout the United States.

The Pennsylvania Court Appointed Special Advocates Association (PA CASA) is a non-profit organization founded in 1998. Currently, there are 21 programs in Pennsylvania that cover 28 counties.

CASA of Westmoreland was founded in 2006 and took its first cases in 2007. The Hon. Christopher Feliciani played an instrumental role in bringing CASA to Westmoreland County and he continues to assist with volunteer graduations. CASA currently has 9 professional staff members and 68 volunteer advocates. In 2022, CASA served approximately 158 dependent children.

Mitchell Samick is the current Executive Director of CASA of Westmoreland. He began his career with CASA in August of 2014 as an Advocate Supervisor. In that position, he primarily supervised volunteer advocates and attended court hearings and meetings with the volunteers. He was in that role until 2018 when he was promoted to the Program Director position. As Program Director he managed his own caseload and provided supervision for the Advocate Supervisors. In May of 2021, Mitch left the Westmoreland program and became the founding Program Director for the CASA program in Fayette County. This was a unique opportunity for him to start the program and build it from the ground up. He was fortunate enough to work with The Hon. Linda Cordaro, who was a great supporter of the program. With the program in Fayette established, Mitch had the opportunity to return to Westmoreland in November of 2022 to become the Executive Director. Mitch’s favorite thing about CASA is seeing the successful conclusions of cases when the children find their permanent homes.



Joyce Novotny-Prettiman



Mitchell Samick

What staff works with CASA at the present time?

Current staff includes:

- Melissa Burns, Program Director
- Evan Markowitz, Development Director
- Jillian Tocco, Social Media/Communications Manager
- Lauren Adamson, Advocate Supervisor
- Hannah Oldham, Advocate Supervisor
- Kate Sell, Advocate Supervisor
- Kelly Rowe, Outreach and Events Coordinator
- Susan Goldsworthy, Administrative Assistant

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Dependency Court Is Going to the Dogs (and it's a good thing!)

by Rebecca K. Fenoglietto, Esq.



Rebecca K. Fenoglietto

In December 2018, county commissioners approved a joint venture between the Westmoreland Children's Bureau and CASA (Court-Appointed Special Advocates) to bring therapy dogs into the courthouse for children going

through dependency proceedings.

The two groups partnered with Thera-Paws, a volunteer organization that is part of the Westmoreland County Obedience Training Club, located in Delmont.

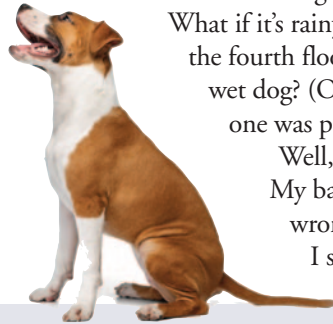
At the time, 13 handlers were to set up shop in the fourth floor family division on a rotating basis, mostly

on Mondays and Wednesdays, when children involved with dependency court would most likely be in attendance.

I have a confession. I was against this when it started. Not that I don't love dogs. Not that I don't love children. Not that I don't love children with dogs. I just worried about a few things: What about children who are afraid of dogs? If a child has already experienced trauma, and they have if they're involved with dependency court, and if they're afraid of dogs, will they be re-traumatized? What if someone is allergic to dogs?

What if it's rainy and now the fourth floor smells like wet dog? (OK, that last one was petty.)

Well, mea culpa. My bad. I was wrong. There. I said it.



CASA of Westmoreland Speaks for the Children *continued from page 13*

Q What can CASA volunteers expect?

A Volunteers need to complete an interview and be willing to complete an in-depth training program, pass a criminal and child abuse background check, and be 21 years of age or older. During the training, the role of a CASA is reviewed as a CASA needs to establish a relationship with the child, speak for the child in the courtroom and, most importantly, represent the child's best interests. The volunteer is the observer and speaks with everyone involved in the child's case including family members, teachers, case workers, guardian ad litem, doctors and/or therapists.

The CASA will need to regularly visit the child, prepare reports for court hearings and attend hearings, case conferences and other meetings involving the child. The main contact that the CASA volunteer has with the child is in home visits. The CASA volunteer many times is the one person who is the constant throughout the legal process from the time a child is removed from the home until the child returns to a permanent home.

Mitch explains that the most surprising thing to most of the new volunteers is the realization of how the system works. He sees that once volunteers begin the required CASA training program, they gain more of an understanding and appreciation for the system and those involved and they realize the complexity of child welfare cases. ■

Barb Jollie, who is the dependency court hearing officer, appreciates the effect the dogs have on the children who come into her courtroom. She especially loves to see Chloe, a white Mountain Pyrenees, who comes on Monday afternoons. "She's absolutely beautiful," says Barb. "She is very comforting. The kids breathe a sigh of relief when Chloe sits next to them in the courtroom. They keep one hand on the dog and it helps to calm them."

Barb would like to see the program expand to include more children who are in the courthouse. "I'd like to see us make more use of them," she says.

When not in the courtroom, the therapy dog will hang out in either the lobby or the waiting room on the fourth floor. Their handler has a sign indicating that they are a therapy dog.

One of the handlers is Kathleen Galembush, who goes to court monthly with her golden retriever, Brandi. Brandi has been certified since 2018. Kathleen described the process of certification, telling me that the dogs are given specialized tests that include staging scenarios with folks in wheelchairs and walkers, for example. The dogs are led in between the actors and tested to see how they behave. They're tested on how they react to sudden sounds and also obedience and listening. The dogs then have three supervised visits before beginning their time as therapy dogs.

Kathleen takes Brandi around to people in the fourth floor lobby and waiting room and asks if they'd like a visit. "We'll visit with anyone," she says. "Not just the children, but the adults, the





lawyers, and caseworkers.

The courthouse employees especially like to spend time with Brandi.”

I can attest that the handlers

and dogs are welcoming to all,

including lawyers.

Chloe was

there one day when I was in court, and although I’m not a child and wasn’t particularly traumatized at being in court that day, don’t you know that I

“Although I’m not a child and wasn’t particularly traumatized at being in court that day, don’t you know that I sat with that dog and held on to her and dang it felt good.”

sat with that dog and held on to her and dang it felt good. Chloe gave me a look that said “I told you so” (probably) and we both went about our days.

While Westmoreland has had this program since 2018, therapy dogs in courtroom have been around for awhile in states across the country. In fact, there’s a federal law, the Courtroom Dogs Act, that clarifies federal judges’ authority to allow therapy dogs in certain cases.

Here in Pennsylvania, the right to have a therapy dog in some cases was addressed in *Commonwealth v. Purnell*, a 2021 Superior Court case. In *Purnell*, a child was witness to a shooting and then subsequently the attack of other witnesses. She was permitted to have a therapy dog at her side as she testified and although the defendant appealed, the state supreme court held it permissible. ■

Dog images by master1305 and Racool_studio on Freepik.

Ciao, Bella! Blackburn Center Adds a Furry New Team Member

by Blackburn Center

After a traumatic experience, the decision to get help can be a difficult one. You may be scared about talking about what happened, reluctant to open up to someone else, or just stressed about the idea of reliving it all. At Blackburn Center, we understand how challenging going to therapy or counseling can be. Our latest addition to the team, therapy dog Bella, may make sessions slightly easier as she offers comfort and support to clients.

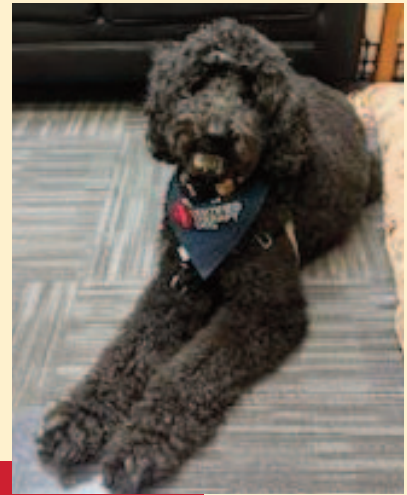
Bella is a 4-year-old black and gray Goldendoodle who was trained through Youngwood’s Top Dog Therapy Team. Her human grandmother knew early on that Bella would make a great therapy dog, given her calm disposition and social demeanor. Bella became a therapy dog as a tribute to her grandmother.

Bella began her work at Blackburn Center in January 2023. At our offices, she offers comfort to clients during counseling or therapy sessions. She works with both children and adults. Given her training, Bella is able to sense when a person is distressed and will sit at their feet so that they can pet her. This gives clients something else to focus on—and a source of connection and comfort—when they are talking about something difficult, like a traumatic memory. When she knows that a client is especially stressed, she often gives them what we refer to as a “Bella hug,” leaning into them and putting her head onto their lap.

Many clients say that they can feel their stress melt away when they are sitting and petting her. One client told her therapist, “I didn’t think you could make me feel better today, but I walked out of here smiling because of Bella—not that you didn’t help me feel better, she’s special.”

Bella has a goofy personality, and many people state that they feel better just by being in her presence. When she isn’t in a session, she will greet clients, visit staff members and get lots of pets and love from employees and volunteers at Blackburn Center. She also visits our emergency shelter to provide comfort to residents there. Bella also loves taking naps at our offices when she isn’t busy!

At Blackburn Center, all of our services are trauma-informed. Adding Bella to our staff is another way that we can provide the highest level of care to victims and survivors of gender-based violence and other types of crime. ■



Therapy dog Bella has been comforting and supporting Blackburn Center clients since January of this year.

Excerpt reprinted with permission. See the full blog post at blackburncenter.org/post/meet-bella-therapy-dog

Bruce Tobin Retires, Closes His File on the Custody Hearing Office After 22 Years

by Rebecca K. Fenoglietto, Esq.

On May 8, 2001, Bruce Tobin sat down to listen to his first day of cases as a custody hearing officer. On June 7, 2023, he sat down for his last.



Rebecca K. Fenoglietto

But let's go even further back for a minute, back to before Westmoreland County moved to a system of hearing officers. In the dark ages, Charlie Marker (you may remember him as Judge Marker) heard custody cases in a room in a basement across

the street from the courthouse. This is probably what spurred him into running a campaign for judge. But we're not here to talk about Judge Marker. We're here to talk about Bruce Tobin.

Bruce has seen it all when it comes to custody cases. I know this because I brought him a lot of really crazy things myself throughout the years and he's always remained unflappable, despite my efforts.

Bruce started practicing in 1981. He was the executive director of the Westmoreland Bureau of Consumer Affairs.



He had a private practice and worked in the district attorney's office. In 2001, the county decided that perhaps hearing custody cases in the basement across the street was in no one's best interest, so they

hired Bruce, Carol Sokolski, Sandra Davis, and Marnie Abraham to hear the cases, each on a part-time basis.

The county changed the position to one full-time hearing officer and with Marnie off to the ministry, Bruce was the last man standing. He took the job on Groundhog Day, 2004, and likes to think that was prophetic in some way.

I sat down with Bruce recently to ask him what has changed in the let's-call-it 22 years he's been in the custody trenches. In a word or three: pretty much everything.

“At the end of the day, there are cases where you know you've made the difference in a child's life. And really, that's all that it's about.”

“When I started, custody cases generally never even made it to the custody conference level,” he says. “People wanted to work things out. Now it's different. Cases are more complex. I see everything and the kitchen sink, more drug and alcohol issues, more people unwilling to compromise on anything.”

It's not just the actual facts of the cases that have changed, it's the whole attitude toward the court system that is different, he says. It's in how litigants dress and how they address Bruce.

“The attitude is that ‘these are my kids,’” he explains. “I'll stop the discussion and tell them that ‘we're here because you can't work things out. If you can work it out here, that's great.



If you can't, you've surrendered your children to the court process and you're looking at the person who is going to make that decision.”

“Often,” he says, “that works. This is the place where you want to settle. After here, it gets more expensive, financially and emotionally.”

In all the 22 years he's been at this job, the welfare of the children has always come first. Bruce has always been able to look at a case with an eye toward what works best for the children, not whether one parent or the other should “win.”

One of the ways he focuses on the children is to avoid talking to them during conciliations. Bruce says he can tell when they've been coached by a parent, or on the other hand, they are afraid to say anything to hurt a parent even if they're facing criminal or addiction issues.



“In all my years,” he says, “there has been only one time where a child has come in and told me they never want to see or talk to their mother again. The

guardian ad litem and I ran straight to the judge with that.”

Guardian ad litem are, in fact, an invaluable resource for Bruce and he laments the recent state rule that does not allow them to be appointed at the conciliation level. Whereas they were another objective set of eyes and ears in

the room, now parties need to present a separate motion for a GAL to be appointed after the conciliation has occurred.



Another change he laments is the increase in *pro se* litigants, which occurs in at least 60% of cases these days.

“They either can’t afford an attorney or they know the law because of the internet,” he says. “It becomes very difficult. This is why I greatly appreciated the Pro Bono Custody Program that we had. It makes a world of difference to have two or even just one person in the room who understands the process. I want counsel in the room. By and large they make the proceeding smoother.”

“Also with *pro se* litigants, a lot of cases wind up getting continued because they don’t follow the instructions for filing petitions or serving the other side.”

Bruce credits the office staff of Jamie Kemp and Denise Hixson for

dealing with a lot of *pro se* litigants in addition to their other responsibilities. They’re the ones who go out into the lobby and hallways and meet with folks and they do so with patience and understanding.

He also credits the family law judges and their clerks. “If there’s a question, they’re always open to discussion. They know we’re all in this together.”

I asked Bruce what his trick is for maintaining decorum and civility throughout what is one of the most contentious and emotionally charged proceedings in the legal world.

“Take control early,” he explains.

“If the parties try to seize control, it’s not going to turn out well. If someone tries to interrupt, remind them that they’re in a court proceeding. Tell them that they’re each going to get a chance to tell their stories and give me their proposal, but they can’t interrupt.”

Taking control and remembering that, for the parties, it’s about the most precious thing they have, is the advice Bruce would give to whomever

occupies the seat next. (*Editor’s note: It’s WBA member Karen Crow, formerly of Laurel Legal Services.*)

“People are going to get emotional. It’s about their children. They’re sitting next to someone they don’t necessarily want to see.”

Bruce is looking forward to retirement. He, his wife, and son—a recent college grad—will do some traveling. He will be able to spend more time researching his family history and reading things that aren’t custody petitions or Parent



Information Forms (and by the way, he knew when someone’s attorney filled those things out for their clients).

After a long, successful career as a custody hearing officer, Bruce is glad to retire. But he’s glad to have served as well. “At the end of the day, there are cases where you know you’ve made the difference in a child’s life.”

And really, that’s all that it’s about. ■

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 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

Jury Trial Verdicts *continued from page 10*

**CHRISANNE BLATNEY
AND STACY BARRON**

V.

**SHERYL L. KLINGENSMITH
NO. 2049 OF 2020**

Cause of Action: Negligence

This case arises out of a slip and fall incident at a residence located in Hunker, Westmoreland County. At the time of the fall, Plaintiffs were tenants of the upper portion of the residence and had been for a period of approximately twenty years prior to the fall. Defendant was their landlord, and for that same period of time she resided in the lower portion of the residence. There were two wooden steps that were used by both parties on a regular basis and led from Plaintiffs' portion of the residence to the parking area. On August 3, 2018, Plaintiff Chrisanne Blatney was leaving her residence and slipped on the top step, resulting in injuries.

According to Plaintiffs, the steps were worn and slippery when wet. Both Plaintiffs testified that although they did not directly request that Defendant repair the steps, they did notify Defendant of the slippery conditions and of prior falls on the steps. Despite those communications, Defendant did not make any repairs to the steps. Defendant testified that she was not aware of the need to repair the steps and that she regularly used the steps without incident.

Prior to trial, the parties stipulated that the jury would only determine liability, and the Plaintiffs would either receive the policy limit or nothing, depending on the percentage of negligence assigned to each party.

Trial Date: May 3, 2023

Plaintiffs' Counsel: Finnian M. Carstens, Porta-Clark + Ward, LLC, Pgh.

Defendant's Counsel: Sharon Bliss, Law Office of Kelley A. Morrone, P.C., Pgh.

Trial Judge: The Hon. Rita Donovan Hathaway

Result: Verdict in favor of Defendant.

GERALDYN RIZER

V.

**ZIG VENTURES, LLC
NO. 1406 OF 2017**

*Cause of Action: Negligence —
Premises Liability*

This case concerned a slip and fall which occurred on December 3, 2016. Plaintiff Geraldynn Rizer was a second-floor tenant in a multi-unit building in Irwin, Westmoreland County, owned by Defendant Zig Ventures, LLC. Plaintiff was proceeding down a set of indoor stairs in the building, heading to a hair salon which was located on the first floor. Plaintiff slipped and fell on the stairs, grabbing the handrail which pulled away from the wall. Plaintiff suffered fractures to her left arm, both wrists and neck, along with soft tissue injuries. Plaintiff brought claims for wage loss, medical costs, and pain and suffering.

Plaintiff argued at trial that Defendant was negligent in maintaining the stairwell. Plaintiff included allegations of loose carpeting, dim lighting, and an insufficiently

attached handrail. Defendant argued that the stairwell was maintained in a reasonably safe and careful manner. Defendant claimed that the lighting was adequate and that the carpet and handrail were sufficiently attached. On May 3, 2023, after a one-day summary jury trial, the jury returned a verdict in favor of Defendant. The jury found that Zig Ventures was not negligent in its maintenance of the stairwell.

Trial Date: May 3, 2023

Plaintiff's Counsel: Joyce Novotny-Prettiman and Richard H. Galloway, Quatrini Law Group, P.C., Gbg.

Defendant's Counsel: Timothy J. Scelsi, Reeves & Ross, P.C., Latrobe

Trial Judge: The Hon. Harry F. Smail, Jr.

Result: Verdict in favor of Defendant.

JULY 2023 TRIAL TERM

Of the three trials on the July 2023 Civil Jury Trial list, one was settled and two were continued. No jury trials were held. ■

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ABSTRACTS

REAL ESTATE & MORTGAGE CLOSINGS

Westmoreland Revisited

The PRR's Greensburg Legacy

by Daniel J. Ackerman

In 1882, when at the notable age of 36, George Dallas Albert published his *History of Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania*, a tome of 840 pages, he referred to the Pennsylvania Railroad as “now one of the most gigantic corporations in the world.” In fact in that same year, it was *the* largest corporation in the world with a budget only exceeded by the federal government—and it had changed the lives of most Americans.



In the 1830s commerce in the western part of the commonwealth was escalated and improved by the creation of the Pennsylvania Canal, a short-lived engineering marvel that died on the vine two decades later when the Pennsylvania Railroad, with its breathtaking speed, made canals obsolete. Reporting on the

opening of the Pennsylvania Railroad in Pittsburgh in 1854, *The Daily Morning Post* wrote:

There are now people living in Pittsburgh who have traveled diligently for a whole week to reach Philadelphia. The same persons can now go from our city to the eastern



The Greensburg train station opened in 1912 as part of the Pennsylvania Railroad's project to elevate the right-of-way as it passed through town. William Holmes Cookman served as architect. It has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1977.

metropolis between sunrise and sunset of a summer's day, without fatigue, and without occasion for stopping to eat more than one meal.

There was, of course, an impact upon the area between Pennsylvania's two largest cities. Villages and towns bloomed along the Pennsy's right of way, which in some cases would otherwise have been sparsely populated, if populated at all. It's little wonder that communities along its route competed for the prestige that would accompany the erection of a passenger depot hoping it would have a major economic impact on the lives of their citizens. Greensburg, however, was not one of the Johnny-come-lately creations of the railroad, but had been the county seat and home to an established community since 1785; and in 1836, prior to the formal creation of the PRR, its residents and public officials publicly expressed a desire to have access to a railroad by making it a stop on the line. Grading for the PRR's track in the area, however, didn't begin until 1849, and the sight of a steam-belching locomotive first transfixed a crowd here on November 29, 1852.

The original Greensburg depot was an unimpressive temporary structure, just enough to shield waiting passengers from the elements, and was later replaced in 1860 by the first permanent station, a one-story brick building. Westbound trains often found the grade running to the Grapeville anticline challenging and would have to back out of the station so as to get a running start in order to overcome it. To remove this impediment, the level of the track was raised in 1910, which necessitated the removal of a tunnel under Main Street followed by the construction of bridges over Main Street and Pennsylvania Avenue as they exist today.

continued on page 20

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We are honored to support one of Western Pennsylvania's most popular and enduring legal community traditions and the forum you provide for education, discussion, and camaraderie.



The PRR's Greensburg Legacy *continued from page 19*

Also existing today is the PRR's most impressive contribution to the city, the Greensburg train station, built between 1910 and 1912. In 1901, fourteen years after his graduation from the University of Pennsylvania, the Pennsy hired William Holmes Cookman, not to work aboard a train, or in the yard, or as one of its superintendents, but in the unique capacity as the railroad's architect.

Through 1930, Cookman designed nine stations for the Pennsylvania Railroad at Chester, Dover, Greensburg, North Philadelphia, Chambersburg, Baltimore, Cheltenham Avenue in Philadelphia, Mayville, N.Y., and South Philadelphia. Surprisingly, most appear as no more than solid utilitarian structures—striking exceptions to the grand design Cookman created for the Greensburg station, which has been on the National Parks Service's National Register of Historic Places since 1977.



There is no doubt that the station is a vivid icon of years gone by, but it is often overlooked, perhaps because its location on the north end of the city and at a level lower than Main Street has shielded it from view. In fact, if one was hoping to conceal a railway station, they would be hard-pressed to find a more likely location. Yet, it is not only listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but Amtrak has recognized it in its project, "The Great American Stations." It is described below in technical language, and for those of us lacking a degree in architecture, footnotes have been added, though likely they will be of little help.

The depot is constructed of red brick laid in a Flemish bond

pattern¹ with stone trim and quoins² on the building's corners; the overall architectural style is Jacobean Revival³.

A tall square clock tower is topped by a copper Ogee⁴ dome with finial⁵. Ornamental parapets with center cartouches⁶ and corner finials surround the dome.

Of course, one doesn't have to know any of that to appreciate the station's graceful, almost fairy-tale-like exterior or its high cavernous rooms reminiscent of the nineteenth century's Gilded Age. It is a place where it is easy to imagine crowds gathered with mixed emotions, sending off troops, or joyfully welcoming them home during the wars of the twentieth century; preoccupied traveling salesmen; whistle-stop crowds arriving with high hopes or curiosity to get a glimpse of candidates for national office; or young families loaded with baggage anxious for the thrill of traveling by rail to a distant place yet unseen.

Film producers and directors know how to create an atmosphere to support the authenticity of their stories and what structures will convey a sense of time and place; and in



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¹ A brick construction pattern which consists of alternate stretches and headers for each course (How helpful is that?)

² Stones used in forming an angle.

³ The second phase of Renaissance architecture in England following the Elizabethan style, named for King James I.

⁴ An arch with a pointed apex, formed by the intersection of two S curves.

⁵ The upper termination of a pinnacle.

⁶ A decorative frame, often an oval, surrounded by scrolls, found above doors or entrances.

2021, Amazon chose the Greensburg station as a set for a scene in its series “A League of Their Own,” to recreate the flavor of 1940s.

By the 1960s, the giant that was the PRR was failing and soon would be in bankruptcy. Properties were sold off, including the Greensburg station, and rail service would be interrupted until 1971 when it was resumed by Amtrak. Thereafter, owners of the station came and went, but fortunately one former owner, the Westmoreland Trust, now the Westmoreland Cultural Trust, invested \$3 million in its restoration in 1998. Presently the station is occupied by professional offices and a restaurant, and it is once again functioning as originally intended, as a train depot, with a ridership of 4,900 and ticket sales of \$297,938 in 2021. Not nearly the number of riders as it had in its heyday, but it’s comforting to know that the Pennsy’s vision for Greensburg is still alive and well. ■

SOURCES

- Albert, George Dallas. History of the County of Westmoreland, Pennsylvania. L.H. Everts & Co., 1882.
- “Greensburg, PA (GNB),” Great American Stations. Web. 26 April 2022.
- “Greensburg Station,” Wikipedia, Web. 24 April 2022.
- “Pennsylvania Railroad,” Wikipedia, Web. 27 April 2022.
- “Pennsylvania Railroad Co.,” Britannia, Web. 27 April 2022.
- “The Railroad in Pennsylvania,” Explore PA History, Web. 26 April 2022.
- “William Holmes Cookman,” Peoplepill, Web. 26 April 2022.

PBA Honors 50-Year Members



In May, the Pennsylvania Bar Association presented PBA Fifty-Year Member Awards to a number of Westmoreland County attorneys who have been association members for five decades.

The Westmoreland Bar Association members who were recognized are, from left to right:

- Nathan F. Abromson, Greensburg;
- Robert D. Austin, West Newton;
- James J. Conte, Latrobe; and
- Ronald S. Lombard, Murrysville. ■

Lawyers' Exchange

(Free to all members of the WBA)

SECRETARY/PARALEGAL WANTED The law office of Nils H. Ljungman & Associates is looking to hire a full-time Secretary or Paralegal. Training will be provided. If interested, please contact Nils H. Ljungman, Esquire at 724-467-6101.

LEGAL SECRETARY WANTED Nakles and Nakles is hiring a legal secretary for our Latrobe office. The position offers a competitive starting salary along with employer paid health, dental, and retirement plan benefits. Please email a résumé and cover letter to the following email address: cnakles@aol.com.

IMMEDIATE OPENING Successful attorney in Greensburg area looking for ambitious lawyer to assist in overflow personal injury and miscellaneous cases at established law firm. Case sharing and part-time hours to be discussed. The perfect candidate is one that is licensed to practice in PA and willing to provide legal assistance to clients from start to finish including court appearances. To join our winning team, please forward CV to: jmassaroesq@comcast.net.



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A Curtain Call for S. Sponte, Esq.

continued from page 1

Bar Foundation bestowed upon him the Louis J. Goffman Award, which recognizes and honors those “whose commitments to pro bono have enhanced the delivery of legal services to Pennsylvania’s poor and disadvantaged, making a critical difference in the lives of those in need of legal representation.”

Four years after becoming a member of the Westmoreland Bar Association, David, who could not keep to himself the moments of humor and irony he observed in the profession, saw his first satire, “Respectfully Submitted: Lexaplexy,” run in a most unlikely publication, the staid *Westmoreland Law Journal*, on December 2, 1977. Yet, it was not until April 1995, when “Snoring with the Enemy” appeared under the S. Sponte, Esq., byline in our otherwise bland publication, that his articles became the ongoing mainstay of *the sidebar*. Somewhere along the line David published a book comprised of his articles from that publication titled: *To Wit: the collected humor of an uncollected mind*. If you can’t find it in your local book store the Library of Congress has it in its stacks, undoubtedly well worn by that library’s clientele.

In response to our inquiry as to how he felt about receiving the President’s Award, David replied: “It’s really quite wonderful to be acknowledged by one’s colleagues. As I said a long time ago, it is quite ironic that the only name I made for myself isn’t really mine, but I’ll take it nonetheless.”

For the foreseeable future David will, at his leisure, send us new and biting observations about the law, which we will happily mix in with some of his timeless columns from the past. ■

Save the date!

We are heading back to Omni Bedford Springs for the 2024 Bench/Bar Conference, June 12-14, 2024.

Call 877-409-6664 now and make your room reservations directly with Omni Bedford Springs under the Westmoreland Bar Association block of rooms, or register online at tinyurl.com/2024bbrooms.

Room rates are as low as \$259/night plus tax & fees.

Event registration forms will be mailed in early April, but **don’t wait to reserve your room at this special rate**. The block of rooms will be released on Monday, May 13, 2024, and we won’t be able to guarantee that rate after that date.

THE HIGHEST STANDARD OF SUCCESS
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FAYETTE LEGACY PARTNERS NAMED TO FORBES 2023 BEST-IN-STATE WEALTH MANAGEMENT TEAMS LIST



Uniontown, PA – January 2023

Fayette Legacy Partners has been named to the Forbes 2023 Best-In-State Wealth Management Teams list.

“Congratulations to Financial Advisors Melody Cole, Laura Williams, Mike Tetteris and Chris Filicky for receiving this prestigious recognition, which is a testament to their commitment to offer the highest standard of success in financial relationships. Melody, Laura, Mike and Chris represent the best of our industry,” said Kevin Reed, Executive Vice President and President of Private Client Group

Forbes Best-in-State Wealth Management Teams ranking was developed by SHOOK Research and is based on in-person, virtual and telephone due diligence meetings and a ranking algorithm that includes: a measure of each team’s best practices, client retention, industry experience, review of compliance records, firm nominations; and quantitative criteria, including: assets under management and revenue generated for their firms. Investment performance is not a criterion because client objectives and risk tolerances vary, and advisors rarely have audited performance reports. SHOOK’s research and rankings provide opinions intended to help investors choose the right financial advisor and team, and are not indicative of future performance or representative of any one client’s experience. Past performance is not an indication of future results. Neither Forbes nor SHOOK Research receive compensation in exchange for placement on the ranking.

ABOUT FAYETTE LEGACY PARTNERS

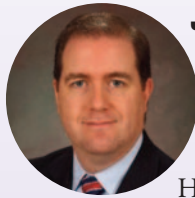
Fayette Legacy Partners was created with a simple mission: to help clients achieve their financial goals through trusted advice and personalized service. Our objective is to simplify and enhance our clients’ financial lives by fostering the relationship and by utilizing the knowledgeable resources of our financial services firm.

As a multi-disciplined team, with more than 60 years of collective experience, we manage over \$500 million in assets. Our clients are long-term investors who value the breadth of our investment experience and unwavering focus on goal-oriented results. The Group is located at 43 S. Beeson Boulevard, Uniontown, PA 15401.

LEARN MORE ABOUT JANNEY

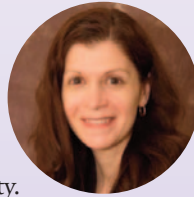
Janney provides advice to individual, corporate, and institutional clients. Our expertise includes guidance about asset management, corporate and public finance, equity and fixed income investing, equity research, institutional equity and fixed income sales and trading, investment strategy, financial planning, mergers and acquisitions, public and private capital raising, portfolio management, retirement and income planning, and wealth management. Janney is an independently-operated subsidiary of The Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company and is a member of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, the New York Stock Exchange, and Securities Investor Protection Corporation. Additional company information is available at www.janney.com.

New Member Sketches



James W. Creenan has been admitted as a participating member of the WBA. Born in Buffalo, N.Y., Jim graduated from Canisus College and earned his J.D. from Duquesne University. He is a founding partner of Creenan & Baczkowski, PC, in Murrysville, and is a past president of the Allegheny County Bar Association.

Molly M. Creenan was admitted as a participating member of the WBA. A native of Elmhurst, Ill., Molly studied political science at Saint Vincent College and received her juris doctor degree from Duquesne University. She is an associate with Creenan & Baczkowski, PC, in Murrysville.



John M. Elias has been admitted as an associate member of the WBA. John earned a bachelor's degree from Virginia Tech and his J.D. from Loyola of Chicago School of Law. He is a founding partner of Elias Legal, PLLC, with offices in Greensburg and Uniontown.

Brian V. Gorman has been admitted as a participating member of the WBA. He earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy/political science from Washington & Jefferson College and his J.D. from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. Brian is the Executive Director of Summit Legal Aid in Greensburg, which was formed when Laurel Legal Services merged with Southwestern Pennsylvania Legal Aid in July 2023. Brian had been Executive Director of Southwestern Pennsylvania Legal Aid since 2015.



Meghann E. Mikluscak-Hewitt was admitted as an associate member of the WBA. Meghann studied English at West Virginia University and earned her juris doctor degree from Western Michigan University, Thomas M. Cooley School of Law. A former Assistant District Attorney and First Assistant Public Defender in Fayette County, Meghann is the PAI/Pro Bono Manager for Summit Legal Aid and is based in Washington, Pa.

Lindsay L. Miller has been admitted as a participating member of the WBA. Lindsay studied special education and Spanish at Miami University of Ohio, and speech, language, and learning at Northwestern University before earning her J.D. from Capital University Law. She is a law clerk for The Hon. Meagan Bilik-DeFazio in Westmoreland County.

Katrina Mitchell, daughter of WBA member Maria Soohey, has been admitted as a participating member of the WBA. She earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education from Saint Vincent College and her J.D. from Duquesne University's Thomas R. Kline School of Law. Before attending law school, Tina owned and operated the Best Day Ever! Learning Center in Greensburg.



Kevin G. Nowe was admitted as a participating member of the WBA. Kevin received his bachelor's degree from the University of Pittsburgh and his juris doctor degree from Case Western Reserve University. He is a past Vice President, Secretary, and General Counsel with Kennametal, and Senior Vice President, Chief Legal Officer, and Secretary for GNC. Kevin has been serving the clients of Creenan & Baczkowski, PC, in Murrysville, in an "Of Counsel" role since 2021.

Joanne L. Parise has been admitted as a participating member of the WBA. Joanne earned a bachelor's degree from Point Park University, and her J.D. from the Duquesne University School of Law. She is an associate with Creenan & Baczkowski, PC, in Murrysville, and volunteers as a firefighter with the Rosedale Volunteer Fire Department in Penn Hills.



Ashley Sharek has been admitted as an associate member of the WBA. Born in Philadelphia, she earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Westminster College and her J.D. from Duquesne University School of Law. She is the founder and managing attorney of Sharek Law Office, LLC, in Warrendale. ■

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

*All committee meetings and activities will be held at the WBA Headquarters or virtually via Zoom. Visit westbar.org for more information about activities and CLE courses, and **register online**.*

For PBI CLE courses, call 1-800-932-4637 or visit pbi.org/westmoreland-county.

AUGUST

- 22** [CLE] Bench/Bar Video Replay, Noon to 2:30 p.m., 1.5S/1E
Yoga in the Park, 6:30 p.m.,
Saint Clair Park, Greensburg
- 25** [PBI CLE] Trials of the Centuries: Notorious Stories, Famous Figures, and Landmark Cases, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., 6S
Party on the Patio, 4 to 6:30 p.m.,
weather permitting
- 29** Yoga in the Park, 6:30 p.m.,
Saint Clair Park, Greensburg
- 30** [PBI CLE] Child and Spousal Support: Back to the Basics 2023, 9 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., 3S
- 31** [PBI CLE] Ethics Refresher 2023, 9 a.m. to 12:20 p.m., 3E

SEPTEMBER

- 4** Courthouse and WBA offices closed in observance of Labor Day
- 8** [CLE] CGA: Computer Generated Animations for Trial, Noon to 1 p.m., 1S
- 11** [CLE] Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Weed! 4 to 5:30 p.m., Quatrini Law Group offices, 1.5S
- 26** [CLE] Firearms & Estates: Pitfalls & Dangers, Noon to 1:30 p.m., 1.5S
- 29** [CLE] Ethics for the Catholic Lawyer, 11 a.m. to Noon, Crypt of the Saint Vincent Basilica, Latrobe, 1E
54th Annual Red Mass, Noon,
Saint Vincent Basilica, Latrobe



How Stress Affects Lawyers

Stress affects all people and all professions. Stress in the legal profession, however, is well-documented. Lawyers work in an adversarial system with demanding schedules and heavy workloads, which may contribute to increased stress levels.

Lawyer assistance programs are available to help lawyers manage stress effectively. Contact Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers for help: www.lclpa.org.

LAC Committee members:
Joyce Novotny-Prettiman, Tim Geary,
Jim Antoniono, Chris Skovira,
Linda Broker, Linda Whalen.

THE WESTMORELAND BAR ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

PARTY ON THE PATIO

AUGUST 25 | 4 TO 6:30 PM
(WEATHER PERMITTING)

Enjoy food and drinks, and take a chance take a chance on the weather being nice enough so you can dance, you can jive, having the time of your life on our patio before Dancing Dream—an ABBA tribute band—takes the SummerSounds stage at St Clair Park.



RSVP ONLINE OR CALL 724-834-6730

CGA: Computer-Generated Animations for Trial

This course will focus on the value of demonstrative aids for the courtroom. You will learn about the impact that Computer-Generated Animations (CGA) can have in helping to convey complex cases into an easy-to-understand medium.



Speaker:
Jeremy R. Gibson
Owner/Lead Developer
Digital Trace Forensics, LLC
Mr. Gibson will be joining us via Zoom

LIVE CLE

**Friday, September 8, 2023 • Noon to 1 pm • WBA Headquarters
1 substantive credit • \$35 WBA members/\$55 Nonmembers**

**CGA: COMPUTER-GENERATED ANIMATIONS FOR TRIAL
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2023 • NOON TO 1 PM**

Name: _____

Attorney ID #: _____

Email: _____

Seminar Fees:

- WBA Member - \$35
- Nonmember - \$55
- WBA Member Noncredit - \$10
- Nonmember Noncredit - \$20
- Young Lawyer Noncredit - FREE

There is no Zoom option for this seminar; it is in person only.

Choose one:

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Lunch will be provided.

To qualify for **pre-registration fees**, return this form and your payment to:

Westmoreland Bar Association
100 North Maple Avenue
Greensburg PA 15601-2506

by **Noon on September 7, 2023**, or register online at westbar.org.

Walk-in fees of \$45 WBA members/\$55 Nonmembers will be charged for registrations received after Noon on September 7, 2023.

Phone 724-834-6730
Fax 724-834-6855

For refund policy information, or if special arrangements are needed, contact the WBA office at 724-834-6730 or email westbar.org@westbar.org.

Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Weed!

During this program, Vince Quatrini will discuss the ramifications of using marijuana in the workplace and the current state of Pennsylvania Workers' Compensation law and marijuana. He will also lead a give-and-take segment on the game-changing legal precedents that were recently handed down by our Commonwealth Court.

In addition, premier medico-legal neurosurgeon Bill Bookwalter will offer a medical perspective on this constantly developing area of medical practice.

**Speakers:**

Vincent J. Quatrini, Jr.
Quatrini Law Group, PC

Dr. J. William Bookwalter
Co-CEO of Delta 9 PA, Medical Marijuana
Dispensary Group

LIVE CLE

Monday, September 11, 2023 • 4 to 5:30 pm • In Person & Via Zoom
Quatrini Law Group Offices, 550 East Pittsburgh Street, Greensburg
1.5 substantive credits • \$10 for WBA members/\$82.50 Nonmembers

EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT WEED!**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2023 • 4 TO 5:30 PM**

Name: _____

Attorney ID #: _____

Email: _____

Seminar fees:

- WBA Member - \$10
 Nonmember - \$82.50
 WBA Member Noncredit - FREE
 Nonmember Noncredit - \$20

Choose one:

- In Person
 Via Zoom

Choose one:

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Billing Address: _____

This CLE is sponsored by **Quatrini Law Group, PC.**

To qualify for **pre-registration fees**, return this form and your payment to:

Westmoreland Bar Association
100 North Maple Avenue
Greensburg PA 15601-2506

by **Noon on September 8, 2023**, or register online at westbar.org.

Walk-in fees of \$20 WBA members/\$82.50 Nonmembers will be charged for registrations received after Noon on September 8, 2023.

Phone 724-834-6730
Fax 724-834-6855

For refund policy information, or if special arrangements are needed, contact the WBA office at 724-834-6730 or email westbar.org@westbar.org.

JOIN US FOR AN

INNS

“NEW YEAR” KICKOFF
PARTY AT THE WBA!

100 NORTH MAPLE AVENUE, GREENSBURG

SEPTEMBER

19

5 PM

Join in celebrating a new year at the Ned J. Nakles American Inn of Court with friends, live music, heavy hors d'oeuvres, and more. Everyone is welcome! The fun starts at 5 pm, with entertainment until 8 pm.

RSVP to the Bar office (724-834-6730)
or register online at westbar.org
by Tuesday, September 12.

Firearms & Estates: Pitfalls & Dangers

Topics of Discussion:

- The steps that you, as an attorney, should take when firearms are part of an estate.
- The new firearms issues under the ATF's (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives) zero-tolerance policy.



Speaker:
Tom Plaitano, Esq.
Owner, Defenders Armory

LIVE CLE

Tuesday, September 26, 2023 • Noon to 1:30 pm • WBA Headquarters & Via Zoom
1.5 substantive credits • \$52.50 WBA members/\$82.50 Nonmembers

FIREARMS & ESTATES: PITFALLS & DANGERS

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2023 • NOON TO 1:30 PM

Name: _____

Attorney ID #: _____

Email: _____

Seminar fees:

- WBA Member - \$52.50
- Nonmember - \$82.50
- WBA Member Noncredit - \$10
- Nonmember Noncredit - \$20
- Young Lawyer Noncredit - FREE

Choose one:

- In Person
- Via Zoom

Choose one:

- Enclosed is my check made payable to the Westmoreland Bar Association.
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Card #: _____

Expiration: _____ CVV: _____

Billing Address: _____

Lunch will be provided.

To qualify for **pre-registration fees**, return this form and your payment to:

Westmoreland Bar Association
100 North Maple Avenue
Greensburg PA 15601-2506

by **Noon on September 25, 2023**, or register online at westbar.org.

Walk-in fees of \$67.50 WBA members/\$82.50 Nonmembers will be charged for registrations received after Noon on September 25, 2023.

Phone 724-834-6730
Fax 724-834-6855

For refund policy information, or if special arrangements are needed, contact the WBA office at 724-834-6730 or email westbar.org@westbar.org.

Help for the Helper

The Effects of Trauma and Compassion Fatigue on the Lawyer Who Cares

Topics for Discussion:

- The early warning signs of impairment, with special emphasis on stress, burnout, trauma, and compassion fatigue.
- The free services that Lawyers Assistance Programs provide to lawyers, judges, their family members, and law students.
- A close look at what barriers exist that prevent lawyers and judges from seeking the help they need.
- The role that education plays in breaking the stigma and fear associated with addiction and mental illness in the legal profession.
- How best to approach the impaired individual.

**Speaker:****Brian S. Quinn, Esquire**Education and Outreach Coordinator, Lawyers Concerned for
Lawyers of PA, Inc.**LIVE CLE**

**Thursday, October 5, 2023 • Noon to 1 pm • WBA Headquarters & Via Zoom
1 ethics credit • \$35 WBA members/\$55 Nonmembers**

HELP FOR THE HELPER**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2023 • NOON TO 1 PM**

Name: _____

Attorney ID #: _____

Email: _____

Seminar Fees:

- WBA Member - \$35
 Nonmember - \$55
 WBA Member Noncredit - \$10
 Nonmember Noncredit - \$20
 Young Lawyer Noncredit - FREE

Choose one:

- In Person
 Via Zoom

Choose one:

- Enclosed is my check made payable to the
Westmoreland Bar Association.
 Bill my credit card for \$_____.

Card #: _____

Expiration: _____ CVV: _____

Billing Address: _____

Lunch will be provided.

To qualify for **pre-registration fees**,
return this form and your payment
to:Westmoreland Bar Association
100 North Maple Avenue
Greensburg PA 15601-2506by **Noon on October 4, 2023**, or
register online at westbar.org.**Walk-in fees** of \$45 WBA
members/\$55 Nonmembers will be
charged for registrations received
after Noon on October 4, 2023.

Phone 724-834-6730

Fax 724-834-6855

For refund policy information,
or if special arrangements are
needed, contact the WBA office
at 724-834-6730 or email
westbar.org@westbar.org.

**save
the
date!**

FALL
**QUARTERLY
MEETING**

Includes one FREE
ethics CLE credit for
WBA members who
attend, followed
by drinks and
hors d'oeuvres.

Invitations
will be sent
in late
September.

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24 • 4 PM
LIVE! CASINO AT WESTMORELAND MALL
GREENSBURG, PA**

Survival 101 : Law Practice Emergency Planning for Disability or Death

Lawyers have an ethical duty to take steps to protect their clients in the event of sudden disability or death. This course discusses general emergency planning procedures, and then focuses exclusively on how to preplan to continue to run your office while you are sick, injured or disabled, or how to run your practice as part of the administration of your estate. Buyout, emergency coverage and succession planning for partners is also discussed. This course explains your obligations and provides specific details about what you need to do, and how to do it. Attendees will be provided with practical information and forms which can be put to immediate use at the firm to make compliance easier.



Speaker:
Ellen Freedman, CLM
 Law Practice Management Coordinator
 Pennsylvania Bar Association
Ms. Freedman will be joining us via Zoom

LIVE CLE

**Tuesday, December 12, 2023 • Noon to 1 pm • WBA Headquarters & Via Zoom
 1 ethics credit • \$35 WBA members/\$55 Nonmembers**

SURVIVAL 101

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2023 • NOON TO 1 PM

Name: _____

Attorney ID #: _____

Email: _____

Seminar Fees:

- WBA Member - \$35
- Nonmember - \$55
- WBA Member Noncredit - \$10
- Nonmember Noncredit - \$20
- Young Lawyer Noncredit - FREE

Choose one:

- In Person
- Via Zoom

Choose one:

- Enclosed is my check made payable to the Westmoreland Bar Association.
- Bill my credit card for \$ _____.

Card #: _____

Expiration: _____ CVV: _____

Billing Address: _____

Lunch will be provided.

To qualify for **pre-registration fees**, return this form and your payment to:

Westmoreland Bar Association
 100 North Maple Avenue
 Greensburg PA 15601-2506

by **Noon on December 11, 2023**, or register online at westbar.org.

Walk-in fees of \$45 WBA members/\$55 Nonmembers will be charged for registrations received after Noon on December 11, 2023.

Phone 724-834-6730
 Fax 724-834-6855

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