St. Petersburg

Two Ways to Find a Way to Work that Works for You – By Nora Riva Bergman

Balancing Work and Personal Lives – By Brandon Vesley

Work / Life Balance Do's and Don'ts – By Amanda Taylor

Living and Working in Harmony With a French Twist – By Marcia S. Cohen

LinkedIn and Facebook and Twitter - Oh My! The Value of Social Networking Sites as Marketing Tools– By Jowita L. Wysocka

Bill Reischmann - Still in the Trenches – By Charles M. Samaha
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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## Contents

### Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author/Author(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Two Ways to Find a Way to Work that Works for You</td>
<td>Nora Riva Bergman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Balancing Work and Personal Lives</td>
<td>Brandon Vesley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Work / Life Balance Do's and Don'ts</td>
<td>Amanda Taylor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Living and Working in Harmony With a French Twist</td>
<td>Marcia S. Cohen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>LinkedIn and facebook and Twitter - Oh My! The Value of Social Networking Sites as Marketing Tools</td>
<td>Jowita L. Wysocka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Don't Print that E-Mail</td>
<td>James W. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The Debt Considered in a Bankruptcy Case May Surprise You</td>
<td>Camille J. Iurillo and Gina M. Pellegrino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Lawyer Jokes</td>
<td>Lois A. Sears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>10 Things That Are Important to a Judge That I Wish I Knew in Private Practice</td>
<td>John A. Schaefer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Age Does Matter When it Comes to Tire Safety. June is Tire Safety Month - Have you Checked Your Tires Today?</td>
<td>Henry N. Didier, Jr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Bill Reischmann - Still in the Trenches</td>
<td>Charles M. Samaha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Around the Bar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Bar and Court News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Upcoming Section Meetings to Be Held at the St. Petersburg Yacht Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Florida Board of Governors Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Swearing in Ceremony Photos</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### In Every Issue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>President's Message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Rainmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Community Law Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>St. Petersburg Bar Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Paraclete Parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>What’s Up and Who’s New</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Classifieds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Editorial Policy: The Paraclete is published for the members of the St. Petersburg Bar Association. The magazine is published 10 times per year and welcomes submissions for publication. Publishing and editorial decisions are based on the editors’ judgment of the quality of the writing, the timeliness of the article, and the potential interest to the readers of the magazine. From time to time the Paraclete may publish articles dealing with controversial issues.

The views expressed in the Paraclete are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the editors, executive committee or officers of the St. Petersburg Bar Association. No endorsement of those views should be inferred unless specifically identified as the official policy of the St. Petersburg Bar Association.

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President's Message

By Jeannine S. Williams

Reaching Within for a Better Bar, Reaching Out for a Better Community

It seems like yesterday that I stood at the Museum of History with plans in place. I did not foresee the changes ahead. Who knew that we would search for an executive director or experience such a downward spiral of the economy? Our growth in the midst of these changes is a testament to our strength. I have thoroughly enjoyed leading you through this transition. I am grateful for how many of you stepped up to the plate to ensure our success.

I thank our Executive Committee for being wonderful stewards of our bar’s resources. Our current bottom line is a direct reflection that these outstanding leaders took their fiduciary duties to heart. I also thank our Search Committee, Camille Iurillo, John Biesinger, Sarah Williams, Jim Thaler and Tom Masterson for evaluating more than 60 applications, conducting several interviews and staying late into the night (several nights) to find our new executive director, Chip Collins. Chip quickly immersed himself into everything St. Pete Bar. He, and our faithful staff, JoAnn, Kathy and Marilyn, have worked extremely hard this year, especially due to the surge of activity of our sections and committees. Many thanks for your dedication and commitment.

Words cannot express how pleased I am with your answer to my call to “reach within for a better bar.” Many of you thanked me for re-energizing our sections and committees. The gratitude should be given to our outstanding chairpersons who provided great opportunities for our members. We have offered more CLE hours than ever before. Several sections, such as the Real Property section (led by Bob Shumaker and Erica Smith) and the Probate Section (led by Trish Dockery), hosted a CLE program every month. The number of active members has grown by leaps and bounds. Our mentoring program is back and stronger than ever. I am awed by your overwhelming support.

Most of all, I thank you for answering the call to “reach out for a better community.” We have become more invested in our community through a number of new efforts. Many of you have volunteered with our new legal seminar series for the public (led by Jim Thaler). Volunteers with the “Choose Law” program, organized by our young lawyers (led by Kim Gustafson), encouraged middle school students to consider a career in the law. Our family law section (led by John Tuthill) volunteered to assist the Pinellas County School Board with parenting plan issues. Our international law section (led by Marcia Cohen), along with Chief Judge Robert Morris, served as the legal ambassador for a Turkish delegation visiting our country. Our business law section (led by Jim Martin) has developed a wonderful partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and the Stetson University College of Law. The fruits of their labor will culminate this fall with a public forum for local businesses.

Our bar also provided opportunities for you to individually connect with members of the community. You showed up in great numbers for our many “Law Month” activities (led by David Blum). You have volunteered with Lawfest, Homeless Coalition workshops, Habitat for Humanity, the LifeSkills Center, Great American Teach In, Lawyers for Literacy, the Pinellas Secondary Middle School, the Community Law Program, Mayors Mentors and More and many other programs. Thank you for lending your time and talents in so many ways.

Special thanks also goes to Gay Inskeep, our staff and the Paraclete editorial board for producing our incredible magazine. This issue focuses on the balancing act we face as lawyers. Just as our bar balanced meeting the needs of members and the community while watching our bottom line, so must we walk the tightrope of life. True balance is only achieved with the support of others. My life partner, my husband Al, has been incredibly supportive. Without his help behind the scenes, I could not have enjoyed this wonderful ride.

Many of us respond to the needs of our families, churches, practices, organizations and others. I know there are times when we must do a little juggling and interruptions make balancing difficult. As much as possible, we must decide what is the best use of our time at any given moment; stick with that decision; and give it our all until we decide there is a better use of our time.

Hopefully, some of those moments will involve continuing to support the bar. As I pass the torch to our very capable president-elect, Jim Thaler, I thank you for the privilege of serving as your president. My last request is that you continue to support our bar with the same enthusiasm. With your commitment, I am sure that no matter what life throws our way, our strength as an association of dedicated members will guarantee our continued success.

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Two Ways to Find a Way to Work That Works For You

By Nora Riva Bergman

It’s Really Not About Balance Anymore

To borrow a phrase from Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz, “Toto, it’s not about work-life balance anymore.” It’s really all about work-life blending. The way of work for attorneys has changed profoundly in recent years. And the changes will just keep coming. The reality is that the gadgets that are touted to give us freedom have become invisible chains keeping us linked to the office 24/7. But it doesn’t have to be that way. You can find a way to work that works for you.

If that means answering email from home first thing in the morning before you go for a run or a swim, just do it. Perhaps for you it’s stopping at Starbucks on your way to the office. But instead of grabbing your Venti Latte and running out the door, you sit at a comfy chair with your Daytimer or iPhone and take 15 minutes to plan your day. Industrial researchers tell us that the return on investment for planning is 4-to-1. Every 15 minutes spent planning will result in one hour re-captured from your day. And you know when you hit the office you won’t have an uninterrupted 15 minutes to plan your day. So start thinking about how you can use technology to truly free yourself from the office. I know this is radical thinking for lawyers, but you can do this. Take that step today. Start looking for ways to blend your work and your life into one harmonious whole. You’ll be happier, and if you’re happier you’ll be serving your clients better.

Integration v. Disintegration

Much of the stress so many attorneys feel in the day-to-day practice comes from what Steven Keeva, author of Transforming Practices: Finding Joy and Satisfaction in the Legal Life, refers to as disintegration.

According to Keeva, signs of disintegration include:

- Feeling like you don’t know yourself
- Feeling like your life is living you, rather than vice versa
- You don’t really feel aware of what’s going on around you
- You feel out of control of your life
- You rarely, if ever, take time to reflect on the big questions
- You exhibit some type of obsessive behavior

While such thinking may seem very “new age” to many attorneys, it is not. Oliver Wendell Holmes gave similar advice many years ago in a letter to a young man just starting his legal career: “For your sake I hope that when your work seems to present only mean details, you may realize that every detail has the mystery of the universe behind it and may keep your heart with an undying faith.” Holmes also believed that no other profession “gives such scope to realize the spontaneous energy of one’s soul.” Celebrate your profession and your life by honoring both.

As a business coach, and practice advisor with Atticus, Nora Riva Bergman is dedicated to helping attorneys create the lives and law practices they dreamed of when they were in law school. She knows the frustrations that attorneys experience every day and is committed to helping them change their lives for the better. Nora has practiced as an employment law attorney and certified mediator and has served as a professor at both Stetson University College of Law and the University of South Florida, teaching courses in alternative dispute resolution and negotiation. In addition, Nora has been a speaker at conferences for the American Bar Association and The Florida Bar. She has also served as the Executive Director of the St. Petersburg Bar Association.

Nora is a graduate of the prestigious Leadership Development Program (LDP) at Eckerd College, and is certified in the Conflict Dynamics Profile® developed by the LDP to help individuals and organizations learn how to deal with conflict constructively. She is also certified in the DISC® Behavioral Style Assessment. nora@norarivabergman.com

By Nora Riva Bergman
My legal career began fourteen years ago when I graduated from Stetson College of Law with my soon-to-be wife, Shirin Mohammadbhoy Vesely. Never did I dream at that time that I would eventually become her law partner. That is primarily because we were newly minted lawyers traveling in two different directions in the legal spectrum; she wanted to be a business litigation attorney and I wanted to be a family law practitioner.

Happenstance brought our worlds together in 1998 when I left a clerkship at the Second District Court of Appeal. I was looking for a job and happened to speak with Shirin’s senior partner, Michael Keane. Mr. Keane discussed quality of life issues with me and convinced me that the large law firm environment really did not comport with the plans I had for my life and my family. Before long I joined Mr. Keane’s law firm and began my career as an appellate lawyer here in St. Pete.

Henceforth, Shirin was not only my wife and the mother of our children, but my law partner working two doors away. We learned that the arrangement had its advantages and disadvantages. We certainly enjoyed seeing each other more often than we had when we were practicing separately, but we tended to bring our work home more often too. However, what was odd and sometimes difficult at first soon became routine and easy. We found the balance needed to make it work.

That balance can be summed up in one word – teamwork. Sometimes that means we have to assume each other’s responsibilities at the law firm. Other times it means that we have to fill-in for each other at school or at home. We are not one unit per se, but we are always there for each other lending a helping hand when needed. It also helps to have the support of our other law partners, Mr. Keane and Charles Gerdes. They understand the burdens we face as a two-lawyer family and allow us the flexibility to meet our obligations. We are blessed to have our practices at Keane, Reese, Vesely & Gerdes, PA. and we are blessed to have a wonderful family at home. We know that as long as we work together to meet the demands of both our personal and professional lives we will be able to keep the ship upright for many years to come.

Balancing Personal and Professional Lives

By Brandon Vesely
Work / Life Balance: Do's and Don'ts for the New Associate

By Amanda Taylor

When I first received the e-mail asking if I would be willing to write an article for the Paraclete on work/life balance, I laughed – out loud and probably a bit too loudly for the office (oh who am I kidding, my corner of the office laughs all the time). When Ms. Williams’ e-mail also stated that someone (I have my suspicions) contemplated that I would be a good person to tackle the subject, I thought, “I must put on a pretty good front.” From my view on the 16th floor of the Bank of America building, my weeks, months—heck, past couple of years—seem to tip the scale well in favor of work.

Most people would consider that I don’t have many “life” responsibilities that interfere with work—no husband, no kids—just two puppies and a house built in 1925. I should be billing 2500 hours per year! And according to a partner around my office, there’s no way that a fourth year associate knows anything about “real” responsibility at the office either. So in light of my carefree lifestyle, I offer the following, non-solicited advice for maintaining a (precarious at times) work/life balance to those new associates who probably should be frantically billing time instead of reading this article:

• Find some way to enjoy work (daily). Okay, so being a new associate isn’t quite what you thought it would be, but whether it’s the free coffee in the office or the thrill of finishing a thirty page research memorandum on Canadian regulations governing the importation/exportation of cheese (true story), find something at work, every day, that makes it just a little bit enjoyable. Our jobs are not stress free, or always pleasant, but I make an effort everyday to do something that makes me laugh (see note supra concerning noise level in my corner of the office). I take my work seriously, but not myself.

• Make friends at work—if you think this is impossible at your firm, leave immediately. I work with a fantastic group of people. Not everyone has to be your BFF (if you don’t know what that stands for, you’re probably too old to be reading this), but it is very nice to have friendly faces at work that can share your frustration with thirty page memos on cheese laws (or that bad, but still free, coffee). I also know I can depend on my friends at work to help me out when that old work/life cruise ship capsizes starboard toward life—and they know I will do the same for them—cue theme from Gilmore Girls.

• Do not go home and sit on the couch every night—I like doing that too (House on Monday night, Real Housewives of New York on Tuesday) but it’s too easy at the end of the day to feel absolutely exhausted and want to do nothing but watch reruns of Family Guy. Go work out or go have a drink; one may be a healthier choice than the other, but both are a nice way to transition from work to home. Have some “me” time. I used to have an hour long commute that was, fortunately, on mostly open highway. I love to drive—fast—and I still sometimes miss that forced break everyday between work and home. I didn’t feel like I had to immediately jump from work to doing chores at home—I would drive at high rates of speed, singing along with Lil’John (King of Krunk). I just don’t miss the speeding tickets.

• Go home and sit on the couch—ignore the advice given above, go home and do absolutely nothing. Or go get your toes done at the nail salon and read gossip magazines—very relaxing. Occasionally take that well deserved break after a rough day of sweat-inducing hearings on unopposed motions to withdraw as counsel. You deserve it! (your pets/significant others will appreciate seeing you and if you feel up to it, you can even communicate with them—talk, chat, don’t cross-examine—my puppies get nervous on the witness stand).

• Be a part of the community—firms love this “client development” stuff and it’s an excellent excuse to get out of the office. But seriously, be a part of other organizations, whether they be charitable, sociable or purely for fun. You will meet (non-lawyer) people that can become good friends (and maybe, one day, clients) and you’ll remember there is a world beyond your office.

• Make time to do what you enjoy—I never miss home Florida football games. If some catastrophe/client emergency/grumpy partner at work intends to ruin your weekend, work all night on Friday, find someone to drive you to Gainesville so that you can work in the car and then get yourself back to St. Pete at 5:00 a.m. on Sunday morning, but don’t completely cancel your plans. Make it happen.

Now, quit reading this article, finish that memo, drink a cup of bad coffee and then go have a real drink before running (literally—can’t miss a workout) to that next committee meeting for the 5th Annual Save the Dogs/Cats/Trees/St. Pete Pier Gala!

Amanda Taylor joined Trenam Kemker in February 2006 and practices in general business litigation with an emphasis on real estate and lending based litigation along with complex contract based disputes. Amanda has a background in agricultural law, along with experience in representing clients in international arbitrations and compliance with International Traffic in Arms regulation.
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Living and Working in Harmony: With a French Twist

Four years ago, I embarked on a dangerous experiment. Could I spend a month in Paris every three months and still practice without jeopardizing my law license?

A friend and I had purchased an apartment in Paris, the fulfillment of a practically life long dream of mine. She is a lawyer with a large firm in Tampa and couldn’t spend more than two weeks twice a year in Paris. For her, the apartment was primarily an investment (and a good one, I might add; Paris prices have not declined as have Florida prices). But for me, it was different. I wanted to feel that I lived in Paris, albeit part time.

So, armed with a laptop computer and a telephone with a 727 area code, courtesy of Voice Over Internet Protocol technology, I installed myself in our petite gem of an apartment in a charming market street on the left bank in Paris. One entire suitcase is always full of my files and my office computer files travel with me on a flash drive. My clients are aware that I will not be physically present in the St. Petersburg office, but they can easily reach me via internet and local call, as long as they remember Paris time is six hours later than Florida time. I can even attend depos and hearings by webcam.

My 727 area code phone allows me to call in to my office voice mail daily and return calls. Legal research can easily be accomplished by internet and briefs can be drafted as well in Paris as in St. Pete. If important mail arrives in my office, a staff member can scan and email it to me. The only down side of having all this electronic equipment is that I spend a significant part of my days in Paris working instead of browsing the museums and shops.

More recently, another potential career has blossomed in Paris. As many of my colleagues know, in February I sang in some jazz clubs and rock bars with an Italian rock star, Max Zanotti, lead singer of the Italian group Deasonika. It was a thrill I could never have experienced if I had not had the opportunity of spending significant time in Europe. Now I will be doing some singing during my month in Paris as well as practicing law.

What a harmonious way to balance my legal work life! Merci Paris!

Marcia S. Cohen holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education from Roosevelt University of Chicago, a Masters degree in Music Composition from Northwestern University, and received her Juris Doctor degree from Stetson University College of Law in 1984. Since becoming a member of The Florida Bar, she has practiced almost exclusively in the area of labor and employment law with a concentration in employment discrimination and sexual harassment. A more recent focus of her practice has been in the area of international law. She has the distinction of having had a successful case before the U.S. Supreme Court, and is a certified mediator and a certified arbitrator.

Ms. Cohen has been Chair of the International Law Section of the St. Petersburg Bar Association in the years 2006-09, and is a member of the French-American Business Council of West Florida. As a part-time resident of Paris, France, she has spoken there on equal opportunity and the promotion of diversity. She has been a guest lecturer on U.S. civil rights and employment discrimination law at the University of Paris at Nanterre, and is of counsel to Cabinet Cimadevilla, a Paris law firm specializing in international law.
ST. PETERSBURG ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL SUPPORT SPECIALISTS

The St. Petersburg Association of Legal Support Specialists monthly meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month. Meetings are held at Orange Blossom Catering. The next meeting is:

**Date/Time:** Tuesday, July 7, 2009 – 6:00 p.m.

**Speaker:** Dr. William Kelly

**Program:** Pharmacology

**Location:** Orange Blossom Catering
220 4th Street North, St. Petersburg

Reservations are required. Contact Susan Batchelder for more information at 727-502-8219.

PINELLAS COUNTY PARALEGALS

The Pinellas County Chapter of the Paralegal Association of Florida, Inc., meets on the second Tuesday of each month. The next meeting is:

**Date/Time:** Tuesday, July 14, 2009 - 6:15 p.m.

**Speaker:** Susan S. Demers, Esq.

**Topic:** TBA

**Location:** Holiday Inn Select
3535 Ulmerton Road, Clearwater

Paralegals, student paralegals, non-members and attorneys are always welcome. For further information or to make reservations, please call Teresa Smith at: 813-344-8107 or e-mail: teresa.smith@sembler.com no later than five days in advance of the meeting. For more information on the Pinellas Chapter visit the Paralegal Association of Florida website at www.pafinc.org.

ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL ADMINISTRATORS – SUNCOAST CHAPTER

The Association of Legal Administrators - Suncoast Chapter meets the second Wednesday of the month. There will not be a July meeting. The next meeting will be:

**Date/Time:** Wednesday, October 14, 2009 – 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

**Program:** Suncoast Chapter ALA Education Conference

**Location:** Hilton, St. Petersburg, Carillon Park

For more information please contact Peggy Baier at 727-796-1000 or pbaier@dalan-katz.com or visit the ALA website at http://www.alasuncoast.org/ for more information.

WILL SEARCH

Anyone with information regarding the Last Will and Testament of Theodore Andrew McLeod, please contact Lisa A. Hoppe, Esquire at 2816 Beach Boulevard, St. Petersburg, Florida 33707 or call 727-327-7800. Mr. McLeod was a resident of Pinellas County, Florida, who passed away on February 20, 2009.
LinkedIn and Facebook and Twitter – Oh My!
The Value of Social Networking Sites as Marketing Tools

by Jowita L. Wysocka

It begins innocently enough. You read an article on Law.com or in the ABA Journal extolling the virtues of various online social networking sites, and it piques your curiosity. You decide to register on Facebook and create a page of your own just to see what all the buzz is about (Facebook seems to be the most oft-mentioned one, and it's also a convenient way to find out what your teenager really thinks about you).

Within hours, you receive a deluge of friend requests from anyone and everyone you've encountered since junior high. You may recognize some of the names and vaguely recall them from a Greek Mythology class in college or that summer job at Busch Gardens.

After spending half the night catching up with random faces from the past, you begin to wonder if there's any actual marketing or business development value in the online social networking phenomenon, or whether it's just another distracting byproduct of technology.

The following provides an overview of the most popular networking sites and offers ways to maximize their professional marketing potential without taking over your life.

Which Sites Are Best?

Whether you maintain a page on just one networking site or have multiple pages on several sites, they all offer the ability to post quick updates about new opinions, upcoming speaking engagements, and other newsworthy events, along with links to useful resources for clients and colleagues.

Selecting one or more sites is a matter of personal preference, but the most common ones at this time are Facebook and LinkedIn, with Twitter gaining rapid ground.

Facebook was created in 2004 for Harvard students but expanded quickly among teenagers and college students. Until fairly recently, MySpace seemed to be the preferred site among teens, but Facebook has since overshadowed it.

LinkedIn, by contrast, was designed specifically for professional networking, containing more career-development tools to allow users to post resumes and more easily connect with current and former co-workers as well as classmates from college and post-graduate programs.

Twitter is the newest social networking site to emerge, but it is quickly becoming the site of choice among professionals, particularly the thirty-somethings. Twitter offers very few features; unlike its counterparts, it does not offer the opportunity to upload photographs, resumes, or other information. Rather, users are limited to posting up to 140 characters at a time, but that post can include links to blogs, websites, videos, articles, and any other information. The most significant benefit to Twittering is that “Tweets” can be transmitted and received through cell phones and other handheld devices, offering greater mobility and utility for busy professionals on the go.

Tips for Success

1. Friend With Caution.

When using the more socially-geared sites like Facebook, be selective about accepting friends. One of the best aspects of online networking is the ability to reconnect with remote family members, former classmates, co-workers, and other acquaintances with whom you've lost contact. The drawback is that it can quickly become a time-wasting distraction if you're not careful.

2. Separate Work and Play.

Consider creating separate accounts for personal and professional use to minimize distractions. Additionally, Facebook allows users to limit the amount of personal information displayed to the public (such as date of birth).

3. Be Consistent.

Like blogs, newsletters, and other marketing communications, online networking sites are only useful if you update them regularly. Set aside time each week to cultivating your page on one or more online sites. Though some marketing professionals devote as many as 20 hours each week to keeping their personal or firm/company sites current, most are able to do so in five to ten hours per week.

The key is to reach out to professional colleagues as well as current and prospective clients on a regular basis through various media to remind them who you are and how you may assist them.

Rule 4-7.2 of the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar prohibits including statements about past results and client testimonials in any form of advertising and unsolicited written communication. This rule has sparked questions—and even a lawsuit—about its applicability in online public forums such as Facebook, where comments by clients and others are often beyond an attorney’s control.

On April 1, 2009, a consumer rights group called Public Citizen filed a complaint in federal court challenging the Florida Bar’s prohibition against posting client testimonials online. The suit stems from a letter the Bar sent to an attorney in West Palm Beach advising that recommendations his former clients posted on his Avvo.com page violated Rule 4-7.2. (Avvo declined the attorney’s request to remove the recommendations.) In its complaint against the Florida Bar, Public Citizen alleges that the advertising rules violate attorneys’ “First Amendment right to engage in truthful commercial advertising on the Internet,” and that they also “restrict competition by making it more difficult for consumers to make informed choices on legal representation.”

Opponents may argue that the rules should be enforced as to online forums because they carry the potential for abuse and inaccuracy. For example, short of hiring a metadata expert, it is difficult to verify the authenticity of an online comment to show that the testimonial was actually written by a former client. Thus, such comments should be prohibited to avoid misleading and inaccurate statements.

Until the court resolves this issue, and in light of the Florida Bar’s historically proscriptive treatment of print and online advertising, practitioners should err on the side of caution and avoid invitations or other opportunities for clients to post comments online that could in any way violate the rule against testimonials.

5. Remember the World is Watching.

As a final note, avoid posting anything you may regret in the future. Although some sites require permission to access someone’s profile, that is not always the case, and posts remain on the site indefinitely. Anyone, including clients, employers, and opposing counsel, can potentially access your site, and the contents of that site are subject to discovery.

Jowita Wysocka is an attorney and marketing/business development consultant in St. Petersburg. She practiced commercial litigation in New York City and the metropolitan Washington, D.C. area before relocating to Florida four years ago. Jowita may be reached at J@KetchCom.net or (727) 823-5809.

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ii Public Citizen website, Florida Bar’s Advertising Rules Unconstitutionally Restrict Free Speech on the Internet, at http://www.citizen.org/pressroom/
Don't Print that E-Mail!

By James W. Martin

I don’t know about your office, but email carries 90% of what goes in and out of mine. So we really don’t need to print to paper. In fact, we don’t even need a paper file. Your Outlook email software is its own email filing system and has everything a good filing system needs: folders and subfolders to separate by client and matter; sort by date or person; and search the text.

1. File It, Don’t Pile It.
A study identified "pilers" as persons who leave incoming email in their Inbox and "filers" as persons who move their email into folders and subfolders. Now you can be whatever you want to be, but if you want to use your Microsoft Outlook or other email software as your filing system, then you better be a filer. How? You create folders and subfolders within your Outlook: click File | New | Folder and type in the folder name. To create a subfolder, just right click on the folder and click New Folder and enter the subfolder name. Give each client a folder by name and each matter a subfolder under the client.

2. Deal With It.
Your goal is to keep the Inbox empty. You do this by reading then dealing with each email in one of three ways: do it, delegate it, or delete it. All the usual rules, tips and tricks of time and work management apply here. The fewer times you look at the email, the more efficient you will be. Don’t keep going back to it over and over, musing over what to do. If you think it will take more than a minute to deal with, add it to your list of things to do and go on to the next email. But move it to the client/matter subfolder before you do. It’s on your to do list so you won’t forget about it.

Now that you’ve entrusted your email filing to Outlook, you need to restore that feeling of security that tons of paper tucked away in paper file after paper file of filing cabinet after filing cabinet gave you when you used to print out your email onto paper. All you need to do is copy the Outlook data file to an external hard drive, to a CD, to a network folder or to some other place that you want to keep as a backup. Outlook stores all your emails, all their attachments, all your email folders, and even all your contacts and tasks and calendar in a single file on your computer probably named Outlook.pst. (Talk to your IT person if you use Microsoft Exchange.)

4. Archive It.
You need to preserve your Outlook records for professional, business and tax purposes. One way to do this is to burn a CD with your PST data file on it from time to time. But before doing that, make a copy of the PST file and name it something like “Outlook Betty’s Archive 12-31-08”. Then you will be able to open that file in Outlook in the future by selecting it (click File | Open | Outlook Data File) and read its email contents. But you should not keep it open because it will have duplicate entries for contacts, calendars and tasks. To close it, just right click and select Close. Here is something to avoid: do not let Outlook do the archiving for you. I recommend setting Outlook so that it does not archive anything on its own.

5. Make It a Policy.
You want your emails to be your business records, your office file, your client file, your evidence. To avoid any dispute about this, you need to make it your standard practice by putting in writing, as an office policy, that your email folder is your official file. If you already have an electronic file policy, you can amend it. If you don’t have one yet, you can adopt one.

Conclusion.
A wonderful side benefit to this email filing approach is that it is good for the planet, it saves trees, and it’s green.


Note: Abbreviated version of article published in ALI-ABA The Practical Lawyer. See www.jamesmartinpa.com for full version.
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Over 20 years of experience
The Debt Considered in a Bankruptcy Case May Surprise You

By Camille J. Iurillo and Gina M. Pellegrino

Generally speaking, if an individual debtor, having primarily consumer debt, files a Chapter 7 bankruptcy and his or her income is above the mandatory median income then a presumption of abuse arises and a motion to dismiss the case may be filed by a party in interest, such as the Chapter 7 Trustee, the U.S. Trustee, or a creditor. The Bankruptcy Code, specifically section 707(b)(1), provides that the bankruptcy court may grant such a motion to dismiss if the court finds that it would be an abuse of the Bankruptcy Code for the debtor to obtain Chapter 7 relief. See, 11 U.S.C. § 707(b)(1). However, generally speaking, if an individual debtor has primarily business debt then that debtor is not subject to the mandatory median income in order to file a Chapter 7 bankruptcy. This article does not focus on what constitutes “abuse” under the Bankruptcy Code; rather, this article focuses on further understanding the phrase “primarily consumer debt,” and whether equitable or contingent debt is to be considered when calculating the amount of debt owed.

This article is intended only as a starting point and is by no means an exhaustive discussion of primarily consumer debt or section 707(b)(1) of the Bankruptcy Code.

11 U.S.C. § 707(b)(1) states, in pertinent part, “[a]fter notice and a hearing, the court, on its own motion or on a motion by the U.S. trustee, …or any party in interest, may dismiss a case filed by an individual debtor under this chapter whose debts are primarily consumer debts, or, with the debtor's consent, convert such a case to a case under chapter 11 or 13 of this title, if it finds that the granting of relief would be an abuse of the provisions of this chapter…”

In addition, the Bankruptcy Code defines “debt” as “liability on a claim.” 11 U.S.C. § 101(12). Moreover, the Bankruptcy Code defines “claim” as the “right to payment, whether or not such right is reduced to judgment, liquidated, unliquidated, fixed, contingent, matured, unmatured, disputed, undisputed, legal, equitable, secured, or unsecured; or…” 11 U.S.C. § 101(5)(A) (emphasis added).

If a debtor’s non-filing spouse owns real property in his or her own name, and is solely obligated on the note and mortgage, is this deemed an equitable debt of the debtor that may be considered by the court when it is determining whether the debtor has primarily consumer debt? In other words, is equitable debt and contingent debt considered by the court in making its determination as to whether a debtor’s debt is primarily consumer debt for section 707(b)(1) purposes? If the debt is a marital liability incurred during the marriage, then it is arguable that the debtor has an equitable obligation to pay the mortgage on the real property titled solely in the non-filing spouse’s name, in which case, such debt would be deemed equitable debt. According to the applicable law, equitable debt and contingent debt...
should be considered by a court in making its determination as to whether a debtor’s debt is primarily consumer debt. See, In re Hall, 258 B.R. 45, 48-9 (Bankr. M.D. Fla. 2001); see also, 11 U.S.C. § 101(12) and 11 U.S.C. § 101(5)(A).

In Hall, the U.S. Trustee moved to dismiss the debtor’s Chapter 7 bankruptcy case, pursuant to section 707(b) of the Bankruptcy Code, claiming that the debtor’s bankruptcy filing was a substantial abuse of the Bankruptcy Code, as the debtor’s debts were primarily consumer debts and the debtor had the present and future ability to pay creditors. Hall, 258 B.R. at 46. However, in response, the debtor argued that her debts were primarily business debts, making section 707(b) of the Code not applicable. Id. at 47. In ruling on the motion, the Court in Hall first had to determine whether the debtor’s debts were primarily consumer debts. Id. at 48.

In Hall, the debtor had mortgage debt on her marital home, but since the divorce court had ordered only her former husband to pay the mortgage on the marital home, the debtor reasoned that the mortgage debt was merely a contingent debt and should be excluded from the Court’s determination. Id. at 48. The Court in Hall disagreed with the debtor, relying upon the leading case, In re Kelly, 841 F.2d 908, 913 (9th Cir. 1988), wherein the Ninth Circuit considered the definitions of “debt” and “claim” as set forth in the Bankruptcy Code and concluded that debt secured by real property should be included in the determination of whether a debt is primarily consumer debt. Id. at 48. Moreover, the Court in Hall held that a contingent debt must be considered in its determination as to whether the debtor’s debts are primarily consumer debts, under section 707(b) of the Bankruptcy Code. Id. at 49.

In conclusion, it is important to keep in mind that there are instances where a bankruptcy court will consider equitable and contingent debts that the debtor is not specifically obligated on, in his or her name directly, such as, in making its determination as to whether or not a bankruptcy case should be dismissed, pursuant to section 707(b)(1) of the Bankruptcy Code.

Iurillo & Associates, P.A., located in downtown St. Petersburg, is comprised of Camille J. Iurillo, Shareholder, Gina M. Pellegrino, Associate, and Sabrina C. Beavens, as Of Counsel. Ms. Iurillo has been active in the St. Petersburg Bar Association for several years, and she is on the Executive Committee of The Florida Bar’s General Practice Solo and Small Law Firm Section. Ms. Pellegrino joined the Firm in 2006 and is an active member of the St. Petersburg Bar Association Young Lawyers Section.

The primary areas of practice of Iurillo & Associates, P.A. are Commercial and Bankruptcy Litigation and Debtors’ and Creditors’ Rights.
Can a serious lawyer make it big in the world of stand-up comedy?

"Definitely!" say fans of Dean Zona, a local attorney who is pursuing his dream of becoming a professional stand-up comic. Dean is juggling the demands of both fields, working hard to prove it can be done. In law, as in comedy, one is constantly challenging the prospect of rejection. A good sense of humor is a handy prerequisite for survival in both arenas.

During the week Dean works as a legal advocate for the Guardian ad Litem Program in Pinellas County fighting for the rights of abused, abandoned and neglected children. There isn't a lot that prepares anyone for story after story of struggling parents unwilling or incapable of caring for innocent kids. No five dollar cover charges, two drink minimums or one-liners here. Some days it's enough to make a grown man cry.

Dean's weekend "Open Mike" routine steers clear of these things. On a recent Friday night, he joined an assortment of other undiscovered talent including "A.A. Ron," "Mad Mark," and "Gwiggy," who took their turns at Coconuts Comedy Club on Gulf-to-Bay Drive in Clearwater, Florida.

Up on stage, the forty-two-year-old husband and father of three explains that due to hectic schedules, he and his wife recently began to text-message each other. Soon after they started, Dean was befuddled when she suddenly became cold and distant, hardly speaking to him. Dean happened to check his cell phone. He smiles, slaps his forehead and sheepishly confides his discovery. While rushing home from work one evening he sent her a clumsily created message, announcing: "Honey, I'm going homo."

The audience reception is positive. Dean moves on…

To get ready for a stand up routine, Dean prepares at least five to seven minutes of material, sifting through random thoughts and observations—hastily noted on tiny scraps of paper, scribbled on the backs of business cards, and jotted in the margins of yellow legal pads. Constantly reflecting on the absurdities of daily life is a necessary part of the creative process for the truly serious comedian.

One of Dean's major comedic influences is Andy Kaufman, who died at age thirty-five in 1984. Dean also appreciates the work of Lenny Bruce, Sam Kinison and Bill Hicks. He keeps in touch with other lesser-known comedians, mostly locals.

Like lawyers discussing a high-profile case, they analyze. They ponder. They rehash. Overall, they are a distinctly supportive group, often seen clapping and cheering enthusiastically for first-timers at "Open Mike" nights.

The camaraderie is appreciated when a joke flops, especially if it was thought to be a sure winner. Audiences are tough to please. So it is in the courtroom, where the stakes are undeniably much higher. Judges can be as unpredictable as a table of tipsy people at the "Comedy Zone."

In court Dean must be serious. After a long work week, when he's fronting the bright lights and faux brick wall, Dean is decidedly offbeat. He hopes to have his own HBO Special, and for “Dean Zona, Comedian,” to be known in households everywhere. To accomplish that, one of the most important things the stand-up comic, just like the lawyer, always has to know is when it's time to sit down.

Lawyer jokes are a dime a dozen.

Dean Zona is out to show the world that he is one in a million.

For upcoming shows, check out Dean Zona at: www.myspace.com/deanscomedy. Call (727)773-0511 for more information.
SECTION MEETINGS HELD AT THE ST. PETE YACHT CLUB:
Business Law Section
Employment Law Section
Probate & Guardianship Section
Solo, Small Firm & Practice Management Section

For more information on a particular section contact the chairs below or watch the website calendar.

**Business Law Section**
Meetings are held the 4th Thursday of each month unless otherwise noted. This is the last meeting until late summer/early fall.

*Next meeting:* June 25, 2009 - Regatta Room

*Topic:* How the Tampa Bay Rays Were Built

*Speaker:* John P. Higgins, Esq., Senior V.P. of Administration and General Counsel, Tampa Bay Rays Major League Baseball Club

*Chair:* James W. Martin, phone: 727-821-0904, email: jim@jamesmartinpa.com

*Sponsored by:* RICOH

**Employment Law Section Seminar**
Approved for 3.5 hours CLE, including 1 hour Ethics

*Next Meeting:* June 19, 2009 – Quarterdeck Room 12:00 to 3:35 p.m.

*Topic:* Lawyers as Employers - An Introduction to Your Legal and Ethical Obligations When You're Boss - See the flyer insert for more information.

*Chair:* Jesse L. Skipper, phone: 727-896-8781, email: jesse.skipper@skipperlaw.net

*Co-Sponsored by* The Florida Bar Labor and Employment Section

**Probate & Guardianship Section**
Meetings are held the 3rd Thursday of each month unless otherwise noted. This is the last meeting until late summer/early fall.

*Next meeting:* June 18, 2009 - Quarterdeck Room

*Speaker:* W. Fletcher, Belcher, Esq.

*Topic:* To be announced.

*Chair:* Patricia M. Dockery, phone: 727-381-2300, email: pdock@brdwlaw.com

*Sponsored by:* Regions Morgan Keegan Trust

**Solo, Small Firm and Practice Management Section**

*Next meeting:* May 29, 2009 – Quarterdeck Room

*Speaker:* Nora Riva Bergman, Esq.

*Topic:* 48 Ways to Increase Your Productivity, Decrease Your Stress, and Get More Done in Less Time

*Chair:* I.S. Lucas Fleming, phone: 727-323-4020 email: info@fleminglawgroup.com

*Sponsored by:* Regions

Watch for more information on our website calendar at www.stpetebar.com. Membership in the above sections is open to St. Pete Bar members. You do not have to be a member of the section to attend the meeting and guests are welcome. 1 hour General CLE Credit is generally provided unless otherwise noted. To join a section, please feel free to contact one of the chairs above or the St. Pete Bar Office, phone: 727-823-7474, email: info@stpetebar.com.

**NOTE:** Room location is subject to change by the Yacht Club. Please check the marquee or with the staff if we are not in the assigned location.
Rainmaking

Rainmaking 101

Cross-Selling

In the first four issues we have concentrated on “Who to Talk To” in your word-of-mouth marketing campaign. In this issue we will discuss several ways to market your services to existing clients. This is called “cross-selling” and is one of the least expensive marketing options available to you. Why? Because you’ve already spent the time, money and effort to get the client in the door – there are minimal marketing costs associated with continuing to serve that client and therefore they are more profitable.

In cross-selling you educate your present and past clientele about your range of services, with the hope that they will want to use more of what you have to offer. This includes clients who might need advanced services in the same practice area you’ve served them in the past and clients who could be served by another practice area altogether.

Cross-Selling Your Client Base

Select past clients by looking at your client lists. If your client information is on a database that allows you to sort by given parameters or fields, it will be easy to generate reports or lists of those who meet specific criteria. If you are not that well organized, delegate a staff member to hand sort your files using your list of criteria.

For example, an Estate Planner could search for past clients that might need advanced estate planning services by sorting through the following criteria: age, asset level, past service provided by the law firm, whether the past client is a business owner, whether it is a family-owned business, etc. Develop similar lists of attributes that are reliable predictors of your client needs and then strategize about cross-selling or upgrading these groups.

There is a great deal of hidden revenue to uncover in this process.

Once the sorting is complete, the next step is to re-establish communication with the targeted group of clients. There are several ways to do this, but most of our clients find that it is most effective to reconnect with a group by sending a letter. Add as much personalization as you can to your letter to increase its effectiveness – this should include the client’s name and perhaps a brief handwritten note which states something like: “I look forward to hearing from you,” or, “I have some interesting new tools (or strategies) I’d like to discuss with you.”

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Cross-Selling Letter #1

The following is a sample letter from a real estate attorney informing his client of further services provided by the firm and offering a complementary consultation. This letter is sent as part of the post-closing process -- before the relationship with the client fades.

Dear ___________ (name):

We at (firm name) enjoyed meeting and working with you on the purchase of your new home. We want to take this opportunity to again offer our congratulations. In addition to real estate transactions, our firm has expertise in a wide variety of legal matters including the following:

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Paraclete Article Submission Deadlines

- September 2009 Issue.............Copy must be received by noon, July 15th, 2009
- October 2009 Issue.............Copy must be received by noon, August 15th, 2009
- November 2009 Issue............Copy must be received by noon, September 15th, 2009

- Copy and ads received after the deadline will run in the next issue –
• Corporate Law
• Estate Planning & Probate
• Family Law

We would be delighted to assist you in any future matters or transactions in which you may need the assistance of an attorney. We offer an initial 1/2 hour consultation at no charge to you.

Please give us a call if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

(name)

Cross-Selling Letter #2

This letter invites past clients to a small, informal, information session. Typically these information sessions are held in your conference room, accompanied by simple refreshments and involving less than 10 people at a time. You can also let your clients know you will meet with them individually to answer further questions.

Dear _________ (name):

The new ______ law is becoming more and more complicated. There are many aspects of it that may affect you (or your interests). Because you have placed your trust and confidence in me in the past, I feel I should keep you informed of changes in the law that may have important consequences for you (or your business).

Many people are not making the best use of this law simply because they are uninformed. I believe you should have the opportunity to learn what your options are and how this change affects you.

In order to remedy this situation I am holding a small, informal information session at my office on _____ at ____. Please join me and get your questions answered. Give us a call at _________ to RSVP?

I look forward to seeing you again.

Sincerely,

(name)

Cross-Selling Letter #3

This letter is for the attorney who is cross-selling within his own client base, but it can be modified to suit cross-selling a client who has worked successfully with one member of a legal firm and is judged to be a candidate for other firm services.

Dear _________ (name):

Here at (firm name) we’ve begun the process of updating our past client files. We realized we had not heard from you for some time. We would like to take this opportunity to say we’ve enjoyed working with you in the past and express our willingness to assist you in any further legal matters.

Our firm has grown and we now include _____ (list of practice areas) as part of our services. Give us a call or drop by if we can be of additional help. We will make a 1/2-hour complimentary consultation available to you if you need to have any questions answered.

Please give us a call at __________. We look forward to seeing you again.

Sincerely,

(name)

The Next Step

Compose a customizable form letter inviting your clients to:

• Call and schedule an appointment with you, or
• Attend a small, informational session in your office conference room

Remember: buried within your client files is a great deal of potential business. It is up to you to access it. Cross-selling is one of the easiest, least expensive and most ethical ways to market your services.

Mark Powers, President of Atticus, Inc. and Shawn McNalis, co-authored “The Making of a Rainmaker: An Ethical Approach to Marketing for Solo and Small Firm Practitioners,” and are featured writers for Lawyers, USA and a number of other publications. To learn more about the work that Atticus does with attorneys or the Atticus Rainmakers™ program, please visit www.atticusonline.com or call 352-383-0490 or 888-644-0022.
10 Things That Are Important to a Judge That I Wish I Knew in Private Practice

By the Honorable John A. Schaefer

Reflecting back after 9 years as a Judge, I thought it may be helpful to select 10 areas that are important to a Judge that could help a lawyer who appears in court on a regular basis.

The vast majority of cases are resolved short of a fully-contested jury trial. Cases are dropped voluntarily, settled or resolved with or without judicial rulings.

I have heard that it's difficult to participate in the required number of jury trials for some board certifications due to the lack of cases being tried before a jury. Over the past nine years, there have been on average 85 circuit civil jury trials per year in Pinellas County. Each circuit civil judge carries an average of 2,672 pending cases. Of course, we have been dealing with a foreclosure explosion. Prior to the foreclosure filing increase, the average pending cases were around 1200-1300 per judge. In any event it is evident that very few cases reach a jury. Additionally, fewer than 85 per year result in a jury verdict as cases sometimes settle after voir dire but prior to the jury verdict.

Therefore, unless you are independently resolving all of your clients’ disputes, your effectiveness as an advocate before the Judge will be critical to your success; whether through motion practice, summary judgment proceedings or non-jury trials. These points may seem fairly basic but reflecting on them may be helpful guidance for the trial lawyer.

My personal top ten areas of importance to a judge are as follows:

1. The most critical factor is reputation. It also encompasses the reputation of your firm, partners, associates and staff.

Judi"es don’t talk about the topics of critical importance to all practicing lawyers – salary, bonuses, overhead, profit – that is, anything to do with money. Judges talk about their cases and the lawyers appearing before them. Some judges ask other Judges about prior dealings with a particular attorney to get feedback about the attorney’s reputation as a practitioner.

Be forthright in your dealings with everyone in the judicial system. You want your word to be trusted without question.

2. Organization is key. An attorney who is prepared and on time, cell phone off, and who presents concise well thought out arguments is someone a judge listens to. An organized attorney has an “aura” of reliability.

It’s difficult to follow a disorganized, fumbling, bumbling, rambling, incoherent argument, much less gain confidence in the merits of the argument.

3. Stress your strong points. Keep them to 2 or 3 if possible. Don’t ignore your weaknesses. If your opponent brings up a major soft point without you mentioning it first, it appears that you are hiding something. Deal with it.

4. Judges sometimes cannot read everything that is submitted prior to a hearing. A lot of factors impact upon how much a judge can read before you arrive.

If you think that a judge has absorbed a 30 page motion for summary judgment and a lengthy response with accompanying cases – re-think. Maybe. Be ready to “spoon feed” your argument logically step-by-step. Clearly explain why you should win using statutes first, case law next and law review articles and treatises if you’re hurting for any authority.

Quite frankly, in a significant hearing, with memoranda submitted prior to the hearing, I will review the major points and wait for the arguments. If it’s not a clear cut decision after hearing argument, I will take a more in depth review of the material.

A time line chart is a good idea if it’s not easy to follow the factual background.

5. Precisely request what relief you desire in case you prevail. Once I’m convinced who should win, my focus turns to the relief sought.

6. For short motion practice, give your best argument right out of the box in the first 30 seconds.

7. If you’re pursuing sanctions, highlight dates and times, and if there is outrageous conduct, pick your best material and discuss it immediately. Don’t nit-pick.

8. Judges like copies of cases. Second DCA decisions are preferred. I also prefer highlighted portions that you believe are significant. I don’t have a problem with a question from counsel as to my familiarity with the area of law being discussed. Don’t assume the Judge is familiar with a topic unless you know for sure.

If you’re fighting an uphill battle against case law your opponent has argued, explain why your case is different.

9. When you prevail, prepare the order or final judgment for collectability purposes if appropriate. It also helps you in case your opponent appeals. Of course, be consistent with any oral pronouncements.

10. Be absolutely professional with everyone. Judges recognize you are in a stressful profession. Keep your cool. Unprofessional behavior is discussed and relayed to others. If you are rude to the Bailiffs or JAs or your staff is rude, try another day job. That doesn’t mean you can’t have a bad day. An apology and
At its April 3 meeting in Coral Gables, The Florida Bar Board of Governors:

• Heard Bar President Jay White announce that he has appointed a special task force to study the Clients’ Security Fund program, which is facing both more claims and a higher amount of claims. Board member Greg Coleman, chair of the task force, said the program will have to dip into its reserves for the first time in several years, or it won’t be able to pay the maximum guaranteed reimbursement of $25,000 to all claimants this year. He said the task force would have recommendations for the board’s May meeting.

• Approved in concept having a Bar-sponsored voluntary self-disclosure form for candidates running for election for the trial courts, upon the recommendation of the Program Evaluation Committee. The PEC is still studying a specific candidate questionnaire recommended by the Judicial Evaluation and Administration Committee. The self-disclosure questionnaire is aimed at helping educate voters about candidates in judicial elections.

• Approved a new legislation position proposed by the Attorney-Client Task Force to back expanded protection for the attorney work product for government lawyers advising public bodies. But the board stopped short of agreeing to a proposal to keep confidential details of meetings between public agencies and their attorneys, unless a court ordered a transcript of those meetings released. However, the new position calls for allowing more parties to participate in those closed sessions. Legislation Committee Chair Greg Coleman said the committee split over that task force proposal and is continuing to study it.

• Deferred action on a rewriting of Ethics Opinion 90-6, which governs an attorney’s duty when he or she discovers a criminal defendant client is proceeding under a false name. The Board Review Committee on Professional Ethics was unable to make a recommendation to the board on the issue after a member was delayed getting to that meeting by an auto accident, resulting in the BRCPE lacking a quorum.

• The board voted to approve guidelines recommended by the Professional Ethics Committee for “offshoring” legal work to another country. Those guidelines will now be posted on the Bar’s website and otherwise disseminated. The ethics panel is continuing to work on possible rules for offshoring legal services.

• Approved a recommendation from the Program Evaluation Committee to end the annual Midyear Meeting, beginning in the 2010-11 Bar year, a move that reflects falling attendance at the Bar’s three main annual gatherings (General Meeting, Midyear Meeting, and the Annual Convention), increasing use of tele- and video conferencing, and which will save the Bar around $50,000. The action has the approval of more than 80 percent of the Bar’s committee chairs.

• Approved the Bar’s 2009-10 budget. Budget Committee Chair-elect Jake Schickel said the $38 million budget is projected to have a $290,000 deficit, for which the Bar has more than adequate reserves. The budget does not have an annual membership fee increase, raises the amount of annual fees allocated to the Clients’ Security Fund from $20 to $25, and allocates funding to overhauling and improving the Bar’s website. The board will consider member comments on the budget at its May meeting.

• Heard a report that the Bar is monitoring a petition filed at the Supreme Court asking the court to order Gov. Charlie Crist to fill a vacancy on the Fifth District Court of appeal from a list of six candidates submitted by the Fifth DCA Judicial Nominating Commission. Crist has declined to make the appointment, saying he wants a more diverse list of candidates, but the JNC has refused to change its nominations. Bar President Jay White said the Bar is unlikely to take any action unless and until the Supreme Court decides whether it will accept jurisdiction on the case.

continued from page 22

corrected behavior can erase previous foibles. Also, keep your clients under control if they are present. Dumb behavior isn’t helpful. (Probably clients should be present for a major hearing. It’s always curious to me when no clients are there or even listening by phone in a multi-million dollar case. Is it important to them?).

Lastly, don’t be shy about asking for feedback after a case is concluded. I think most Judges would be happy to discuss your presentation. In 9+ years I have had only 2 attorneys request comments. If you don’t know what your decision-maker thinks you do well or not so well, it’s tough to improve.

John A. Schaefer, Circuit Judge, Sixth Judicial Circuit, Clearwater (2000-present); presently serving in Civil Division, previously served in Felony Criminal Division, Family Law Division, ad Drug Court. B.S., United States Military Academy at West Point (1974); J.D. (magna cum laude), University of Miami Law School (1979). Formerly U.S. Army Judge Advocate Generals’ Corps (1979-87); Associate then Partner, Johnson, Pope, Boker, Kuppel & Burns, PA., Clearwater (1987-2000). Board Certified, Civil Trial law 1997-Present.

www.stpetebar.com

Paraclete – June 2009
Transitioning Youth Dependent Project

In 2007, the Community Law Program was awarded a grant by The Florida Bar Foundation along with a partnership through the Statewide Guardian ad Litem Program to implement its Transitioning Youth Dependent Project (Dependent Project) to provide free legal services to foster children, ages 13 to 19 years old, whom reside in Pinellas County. Statistics compiled by Eckerd Community Alternatives for the week ending April 10, 2009, show that 30% of the 2,989 foster children in the Sixth Judicial Circuit qualify for our assistance. As the Attorney ad Litem for the Dependent Project, I am charged with providing a wide-range of legal services to this population, including: special education, medical/mental health/disability assistance, social security, landlord/tenant, contracts, and independent living services. As I have discovered over the last year, assisting this vulnerable population consists of navigating a maze of agencies and attempting to promote advocacy by the foster care professionals.

As background, legislation was passed in 1998 that required all foster children be placed in private care by 2003. The idea was that if foster care services were provided by corporations that had to bid for a contract with the State of Florida every few years, then economic incentives would promote a better system of care for abused and neglected children. Today, there are 21 such corporations, referred to as “lead agencies,” that currently oversee foster care services in the State of Florida. Since privatization, the Sixth Judicial Circuit has had three lead agencies: Family Continuity, Safe Children Coalition (a subsidiary of the Sarasota Family YMCA), and, most recently, Eckerd Community Alternatives (a subsidiary of Eckerd Corporation). Eckerd won the $49 million a year, 3-year contract and began operations on July 1, 2008. In winning the bid, Eckerd was required to keep all existing contracts in place for at least a year. Eckerd contracts out all of its case management services, four separate and distinct companies, for the approximately 3000 children in foster care it is charged with overseeing. In addition to the four primary case management companies, there are a multitude of other contracted foster care providers, which, in turn, often contract out with other providers. Many of these children also suffer from mental and physical illness such that Federal and State agencies are involved to provide benefits, such as Social Security and Medicaid.

The number of people directly assigned to one child is staggering. For example, one of my clients, who has been in foster care most of his life, has the following folks assigned to his case: Assistant State Attorney, Assistant Public Defender (as is not uncommon, this young man has pending delinquency charges), Guardian ad Litem Attorney, Guardian ad Litem Case Coordinator, Guardian ad Litem “courtesy” volunteer (this child resides out-of-county and is assigned a volunteer in the area where he has been placed), a primary Case Manager (the third since my involvement beginning last July; this excludes the primary Case Manager’s 3 supervisors who have also been actively involved in this case), a “courtesy” Case Manager, a Behavioral Analyst, a Therapist, a Psychiatrist (who prescribes and monitors psychotropic medication), an APD Support Coordinator, and myself, the Attorney ad Litem. For almost all of the positions stated above, the assigned individual has changed at least once over the past 12 months, sometimes multiple times. Unfortunately, this is the norm, not the exception.

Hence, while it would appear at first glance that this young man would have his needs met in every regard, what I have encountered is that the more individuals involved with each child, the more likelihood that critical services fall through the cracks. This multi-layered system of care creates a huge need for thorough and zealous legal advocacy. Although there have been a multitude of battles with mixed results, one successful outcome, referred by the 6th Circuit GAL office, was a young man securing a full fee waiver of his Social Security Income benefits for a year, almost $9,000 saved that can be used to aid him as he transitions into adulthood.

To Eckerd’s credit, everyone that is familiar with the history of foster care in the Sixth Judicial Circuit would likely agree that vast improvements have been made to the delivery of foster care services since last summer. There is now, more than ever, an attitude of openness and accountability which has improved the quality of care. Indeed, there is a strong push to provide in-home services to prevent removal of the child in the first place. This new focus in foster care has been premised on the vision of Bob Butterworth, former Secretary of the Department of Children and Families, that there should always be “common sense” and a “sense of urgency” applied to each child that is abused and neglected.

If the child must be removed from the home, Eckerd has implemented a new review process to make sure that case managers are tracking each foster child’s case to ensure either speedy reunification or adoption whenever circumstances permit. To aid in this goal, Eckerd has weekly meetings with all case management St. Petersburg Bar Association www.stpetebar.com
agencies to track each child’s progress in a myriad of ways. There is a renewed sense that a child should not grow-up, and then age-out, in the foster care system.

However, when a foster child does age-out, which means to become an adult while in foster care, legal services must be available to him/her to help with the transition process to ensure that the young person does not become homeless or further victimized because there is not an adequate support. The Dependent Project would welcome attorneys that can provide pinpoint legal expertise to provide much needed legal assistance to this increasingly vulnerable population within our community. Currently, the largest need is advocating for foster children with master trust accounts. These are accounts set up by Eckerd when it receives money on the child’s behalf. We will be conducting a training on this issue in the near future for those of you interested in volunteering.

Up until last October, Eckerd, and the lead agencies before it, never followed the Florida Administrative Code, Section 65C-17.005, which mandates that, before the foster child’s money can be spent, the lead agency must notify the child of what benefits the lead agency is receiving on the child’s behalf (usually social security benefits), how much the lead agency plans to deduct for the child’s cost of care, then inform the child of his/her right to request a fee waiver so that the funds can be spent in the child’s best interests. Interestingly, many of my former-foster clients had no idea they were even approved for benefits, let alone their right to request a waiver.

If you are interested in assisting with the Transitioning Dependent Youth Project or would like more information, please contact me at 727-582-7837, or Elizabeth Porcelli, at 727-582-7480.
The St. Petersburg Bar Foundation has been making efforts to increase the benefits and services provided to our community. The Trustees have made a concerted effort to initiate programs to increase revenues, and with increased revenues our ability to provide greater community service will follow. There are many ways that everyone can help to achieve our goal of expanding services.

Joining the Foundation is an obvious starting point in helping. Serving as a volunteer to assist in making the Foundation projects continue is another way to provide assistance. Donations to the Foundation in lieu of flowers at the loss of a loved one, gifts in memory of someone special to you, providing ideas about ways to expand services or increase revenues are all ways that you can help take the St. Petersburg Bar Foundation to the next level.

Former St. Petersburg Bar President, Bill Walker, recently lost his secretary of over 31 years. Bill wrote a wonderful tribute to Joyce Nelle that appeared in the April issue of the Paraclete. In addition to the Paraclete article written by Bill, he took steps to endow a fitting legacy to Joyce Nelle by the creation a scholarship in Joyce’s name through the St. Petersburg Bar Foundation. The scholarship will provide at least $1,000 annually to a student at the St. Petersburg College Legal Assistant Program. Bill’s efforts provide a tribute to a person who was instrumental in his life, while allowing the Foundation to provide expanded services.

The Foundation is appreciative of the opportunity to assist Bill in making the Joyce Nelle Scholarship a reality. We are hopeful that the Foundation can become involved in similar projects in the future.

It is my hope that a time will come that the St. Petersburg Bar Foundation will have a prominence in the community that will allow the public to appreciate and recognize the positive impact that the legal profession provides. Each new program or project takes us one step closer to that goal. To all of those who have made a contribution to the advancement of the Foundation, I thank you. To the Trustees of the Foundation including Nancy Biesinger, Carin Constantine, Lenny Englander, Greg Hoag, Beth Horner, Camille Iurillo, Rob Kapusta, Eric Ludin and Judy Stanton, we all appreciate your work in meeting the goals of the Foundation. Your dedication will make a difference!
A
s the old adage goes, “there’s a lot riding on your tires.” Many of the safety advances made in recent years, such as Anti-lock Brakes and Electronic Stability Control are dependent upon good interaction between the vehicle and the road surface. When the tire fails, these safety advances are lost or greatly diminished. The tires on your car or truck are the only contact between your vehicle and the road, and when it comes to vehicle safety, nothing is more important.

Tire Aging

The danger of "aged" tires has been an open secret within the tire industry for years, and is only just beginning to come into public view. Aged tires are often unsuspectingly mounted on a vehicle after having served as a spare, being stored in garages or warehouses, or simply having been used on a vehicle that is infrequently driven. In many instances these tires show no visible sign of deterioration, and absent any visible indicators such as dry rot, tires with adequate tread depth are likely to be put into service without consideration of age.

The physical and chemical properties of the rubber and other components in tires change over time, regardless of use. Studies show that tire performance can start to degrade after six years, leading to a greater risk of separation – even if the tire hasn’t been used at all. According to the Massachusetts auto-safety research firm Safety Research Systems, Inc. (SRS), as of June 2008, at least 159 accidents have been linked to tread separation of tires more than six years old, which resulted in 128 fatalities and 168 injuries.

Tire Tread Separation

The tires on your car are a product designed to wear out before they fail because of the serious dangers posed by tire failure. The treads may separate because of a defect that occurred in either the manufacturing or the design process for that tire. For example, the fusing which occurs during vulcanization may not have fused completely or properly. When a radial tire suddenly loses its tread, the driver often loses control of the vehicle. As seen in the Firestone Tires that were widely recalled in 2000, tread separation occurred due to adhesion problems between the steel and rubber in steel-belted radial tires.

Safety experts and NHTSA have taken the position that tires that are over six years old can be “catastrophic.” This is true even if the tire has not been in service for all of those years. Litigation is ongoing against tire manufacturers and retailers for manufacturing and design defects as well as for tread separations because of tire aging. Keep your family and other passengers safe by routinely checking the tread depth and air pressure of your tire and, until changes are made within the industry, learn to decode the DOT code on your tires to determine accurate age, and replace tires before they are six years old.

The Didier Law Firm, P.A. specializes in product safety related claims and represents consumers throughout the State of Florida and nationally in complex product liability cases. In his years of practice as a product safety attorney, Mr. Didier has earned numerous million dollar-plus settlements and verdicts for his clients, including one case that was the catalyst for a 225,000 car recall to fix a safety hazard. Mr. Didier has received many distinctions, including being named one of the Top 100 Florida Trial Lawyers by the American Trial Lawyers Association “Florida’s Legal Elite 2008” by Florida Trend Magazine, and “Best of the Bar” in 2007 and one of “40 Under 40” in 2008 by Orlando Business Journal. He holds an “AV” rating from Martindale-Hubbell, the highest rating an attorney can receive. www.productsafetyattorneys.com
William Reischmann –
Still in the Trenches

William “Bill” Reischmann celebrates his 50th year as a member of the Bar.

I
n 1928, Bill was born in New Rochelle, New York. In 1936, his family moved to St. Petersburg to be located in a warmer climate, which was better suited for his older brother's ill health. The relocation was a positive move as his brother's health subsequently improved and he managed to become a pilot in the Army Air Force in 1942. Bill graduated from St. Paul’s High School in 1946 and attended St. Petersburg Junior College. From 1947 to 1949, he joined his brother on a military base in Japan as his dependent and was employed at the PX automobile garage; he became quite adept at repairing Kaiser-Frazer automobiles. In 1949, after he returned to the United States, he continued working, but in 1951, he was drafted into the Army and was eventually stationed in Germany in a telephone construction unit.

After Bill’s discharge in 1953, he returned to St. Petersburg where he completed his schooling at St. Petersburg Junior College and received his undergraduate degree at Tampa University by 1956. He then entered Stetson’s College of Law in 1956, where his tuition was a mere $250 a semester. The classes were held in a converted stable containing a tabletop on sawhorses with a single-bulb light hanging from the rafters. Dr. Howell, a highly respected professor, taught constitutional law in that location and Bill recalls the difficulty in reading notes due to the lack of light. There were 10 to 12 other students in his graduating class, who either were employed full time or were married with children. Bill worked at night at the post office and attended school during the day. Former Circuit Judge Jack Page was also in his graduating class.

At graduation in January 1959, Dean Harold “Tom” Sebring, a former Florida Supreme Court Justice and judge at the Nuremberg trials, spoke to the graduates and the wives of Bill’s classmates. He warned them that their husbands would undoubtedly have a mistress once they became lawyers. You could hear the gasps of breath and then stunned silence. He continued with his speech clarifying that the law would be their mistress. A sigh of relief burst forth from the spouses.

Bill was one of about 45% of the participants who passed the bar exam and was sworn in at the Florida Supreme Court at Tallahassee on May 25, 1959. Afterwards, he became an associate with Askew, Earle and Holley, where he had clerked after he finished law school. The firm dissolved about nine months later and Bill became a trust officer at Union Trust Company where he was employed for 17 years. Immediately after, he worked at Sun Bank of St. Petersburg for seven years.

In 1984, he joined the Harris Barrett and Dew law firm as a probate attorney. In 1999, he partnered with attorneys D’Arcy Clarie, Tom Graves, and Charles Reischmann until 2004. Then, in July 2004, Bill and his son, Charles, formed Reischmann & Reischmann, P.A., where they continue to handle probate and trust matters. Bill notes that practicing law today has become more specialized as compared to when he started. Bill says, “Nowadays, attorneys focus on one area of the law versus a time when they handled a variety of matters.”

Bill also recalls the Bar Association meetings being held at the Detroit Hotel and various law firms alternating the supply of liquor for the members. The Bar meetings provided an opportunity for lawyers to assemble casually and it was quite common to settle cases informally with a handshake over dinner and a glass of wine. In addition, probate cases were settled in the anteroom at the judge’s chambers. Bill notes this was a special era where there was camaraderie amongst the lawyers and everyone was friendlier compared with today’s litigious legal environment.

To add to his credentials, Bill became chairman to the St. Petersburg Bar’s Guardianship Committee for two terms. He was also a former participant of the Membership Committee when they held personal interviews with all prospective members. In addition, he served on the Legislative Committee through the Florida Bankers Association and on many occasions traveled between St. Petersburg and Tallahassee.

In 1956, Bill married Mary (nee MacPhail) in St. Petersburg. They have two sons, Charles and William Jr. Both sons and their spouses are attorneys. Bill and Mary enjoy spending time with their five grandchildren. Hats off to you Bill Reischmann, for all your continued service to our community!

Charles M. Samaha, © 2009, all rights reserved.
When lawyers throughout the state receive their 2009-2010 Florida Bar fee statement, they can turn it into a statement that says they care about meeting the legal needs of Florida’s low-income children.

Florida Bar President-elect Jesse Diner is asking that members make a voluntary contribution of at least $45, preferably more, to The Florida Bar Foundation’s Lawyers’ Challenge for Children campaign to help bring the benefits of the law and of lawyers to the lives of poor children.

“Lawyers who have been involved in their local Legal Aid programs really understand what a profound difference legal services can make in the lives of poor children,” Diner said. “I hope that in these most difficult of economic times, we’ll see the Bar membership meet the Lawyers’ Challenge for Children with the highest level of contributions ever. These kids need to know someone cares. It’s up to us to show them we do.”

Last year, nearly 3,300 lawyers together contributed more than $159,000 for special legal programs dedicated to serving children with learning disabilities, children aging out of foster care, and abused and neglected kids.

Florida Bar Foundation President Kathleen McLeroy said that while the Foundation continues to fund annual grants for legal representation of children out of IOTA funds, IOTA revenue has never been enough to meet the need, which has only grown greater during the economic crisis.

“One hundred percent of all funds contributed to the Lawyers’ Challenge for Children provide direct support to programs that better the lives of Florida’s children,” McLeroy said. “Unlike many charitable contributions, no administrative fees are deducted from these contributions. Because all of the funds are allocated to address the needs of children, even a small contribution can make a big difference.”

Submitted by The Florida Bar Foundation
of the biggest gifts we can give our children is to teach them the importance of living a healthy, balanced life. The best way to ingrain principles of balance into our children is, of course, to model the proper behavior. That's the tricky part for me, since at 47, I'm still learning. But, to the extent my kids will listen when my actions fall short of perfection, here is the advice I have given them, or plan to give them, to help them achieve balance:

1. Invest in your most important asset - you! You cannot achieve balance if your health is compromised, so you need to do everything you can to take care of your body. This includes putting good things into it and keeping bad things out of it. When making food choices, take a page from Jack LaLane's book (but don't use him as an example because your kids won't know who he is!) who is known to say, "If man made it, don't eat it." And speaking of Jack LaLane, exercise keeps your heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, bones, and muscles young, so get moving. On the flip side of exercise, kids need to know the value of getting rest, since there seems to be a massive conspiracy among them to resist sleep. Your body and mind must have restoration time, and that is only obtained through sleep. Limit alcohol and other substances that take a toll on your liver (you only have one, after all), and for Heaven's sake, don't smoke! Besides the fact that smoking can lead to premature death, it can also prematurely age you, which I don't think contemporary kids will tolerate due to the recent focus on anti-aging. If you want to show your kids the effects of smoking, watch an old movie with them some day. I call it the "Barbara Stanwyck Factor." I caught a 1945 thriller a few weeks ago in which Stanwyck played the role of a platinum blonde femme fatale. She was 38 years old and quite stunning, although I noted that she seemed a bit older than her years, at least by contemporary standards. A few nights later, I saw her in an old 1965 episode of "Big Valley." Stanwyck was 58 years old at that time, but looked much, much older. Her voice, like many female stars of the time, was deep and hoarse from smoking. It is very compelling visual evidence of the effects of smoking. Adding those toxins to their young bodies will interfere with their health, making a life of balance elusive.

2. Surround yourself with positive people. This is something that I learned in law school, of all places. My real property professor, Richard Dillon (whom we all called "Dean Dillon"), imparted this wisdom to me after class one day when I was preparing for the final exam. This seems like obvious advice, but no one other than Dean Dillon had actually put it into words for me like that before. He told me to avoid negative people, and gave me specific examples. Like the people who approached you on exam day asking whether you read the crucial Dunkelberger case (some of you are racing to Westlaw right now, admit it!) and then expressed incredulity and mock concern in response to your blank look. They seemed to delight in watching the color drain out of your face as they hurried into the exam room. "You know the ones," he drawled with a wry smile. And I did. Fortunately, I also knew people who had my best interests at heart, who called to check on me on the rare occasions I missed a class, and who were more than happy to give me the assignments I missed. The ones who offered to study with me (thank you, John, Matt and Kathleen!) and who didn't hold back a coveted outline or thorough class notes. Although Dean Dillon taught us many legal concepts, I must say that I haven't had many occasions to squeeze "fee tail" into a conversation. The more practical advice about surrounding myself with positive, supportive people, however, has come in handy pretty much every day.

3. Select the right partner. This is related to my second point, but runs a little deeper. Yes, it's good to have positive, encouraging friends, but if you are going to decide to spend your life with one person, choose wisely, Grasshopper! This choice will make the difference between a life of drama and a life of balance. You don't have to marry someone just like yourself, because maybe you're not such a peach to be around all the time. My husband and I are pretty much complete opposites in personality traits, yet we share the same core values. Our strengths and weaknesses complement, rather than clash. It's me who gently persuades my husband that a wolf-hybrid puppy is probably not the best choice for our family, and he who suggests to me that maybe having my bangs cut too short is not all that big of a deal. I think of marriage like a teeter totter - you have to carefully balance your own weight with that of your partner at the other end, lest one of you come crashing down or be sent flying.

4. The pursuit of happiness is overrated. I am always surprised at the number of parents who say that all they want is for their kids to "be happy." Don't get me wrong, I certainly don't want my kids to be unhappy, but I believe that pursuing happiness as a goal might not always be the best approach. There are lots of things our kids can find to do or buy that they think can make them happy, like a new video game, expensive clothes, a motorcycle, or even worse things, like drugs or alcohol. As we all come to know, none of these things...
actually provides true happiness, and some are downright destructive and dangerous. I would like my kids to learn to do things that are fulfilling and meaningful, like helping others out of a jam or being nice to the unpopular kid at school. I believe they will find happiness as a byproduct, rather than as the end goal, when they learn to balance their needs against the needs of others.

5. You have control over one thing – yourself! My kids groan and roll their eyes when I say this, because I say it so often, but I think it bears repeating. As a parent, it is difficult to realize that you can't keep your kids from being hurt, being afraid, falling in love with the wrong person, or even getting a parking ticket. What you can teach them is how to appropriately react to life's challenges. Obsessing over things you cannot control is a complete waste of time. Of all the balance lessons I hope my kids learn, this is number one on my list. I shudder to remember how many minutes, hours, and days of my life I wasted worrying over a test score, a teenager who missed curfew, or an upcoming medical procedure. In order to achieve balance, we have to live in the present, and focus only on what we can control.

None of us knows what will happen one day to the next. Life is full of ups, downs, twists, turns, dead ends, and detours. But if you take care of your health, surround yourself with positive people, choose the right partner, serve others, and realize that while you can't control what happens, you can control your reaction to it, you're on track to achieve a balanced life.

Gay Inskeep is the Trial Courts Administrator for the Sixth Judicial Circuit.
TRENAM KEMKER SELECTED AS A 2009 BEST PLACE TO WORK
Trenam Kemker was named a finalist for the Tampa Bay Business Journal’s Best Places to Work. Employees were surveyed to determine the finalists. Trenam Kemker was a finalist in the “Biggest” category (101 and more employees) Finalists were honored at a luncheon in April.

Trenam Kemker is pleased to announce that John Hixenbaugh has joined the firm’s St. Petersburg office. John is a member of the Real Estate and Lending Transactions Practice Group. John’s practice focuses on all aspects of real estate development and redevelopment, including land acquisition, permitting, government zoning approvals, subdivision platting, historic preservation, and site development. He also provides legal assistance in code enforcement matters, requests for zoning variances, alcoholic beverage and occupational licensing, and other matters related to local government.

Fisher & Sauls, P.A. is proud to acknowledge the accomplishments of Nawal K. Batteh who was honored at the annual meeting of the Community Law Program where she received the 2009 Young Lawyers Pro Bono Award for her outstanding dedication in providing pro Bono Legal Services to low-income and disadvantaged individuals.

New and Reinstated Members

BARDINE, JOHNNY
4518 25th Ave. S.,
St. Petersburg, FL 33711
Phone: 727-434-0349; Fax: same
E-mail: johnnybardine@gmail.com
B.A. from American University, J.D. from Stetson University College of Law. Admitted to The Florida Bar in 2009. Mr. Bardine is a sole practitioner.

LAZENBY, WILLIAM GILBERT
721 First Ave. N.,
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
Phone 727-898-7210; Fax: 727-898-7218
E-mail: wlazenby@efpalaw.com
B.S. from the University of South Carolina, J.D. from Florida State. Admitted to The Florida Bar in 2006. Mr. Lazenby is an associate with Englander and Fischer, P.A.

LEVENSON, DAVID COSTA
7932 Sailboat Key Blvd., Apt. 105
South Pasadena, FL 33707
Phone: 727-608-8713; Fax: 727-360-4199
E-mail: davidlevensonesq@yahoo.com
Undergraduate degree from Tufts University, J.D. from St. John’s University School of Law. Admitted to The Florida Bar in 2009. Mr. Levenson is a sole practitioner.

PAOLINO, ERIC JOSEPH
6101 Central Ave.,
St. Petersburg, FL 33710
Phone: 727-381-0906; Fax: 727-345-1782
E-mail: epaolino@ammed.net
Undergraduate degree from the University of South Florida, JD from the University of Miami. Admitted to The Florida Bar in 2008. Mr. Paolino is In-House Counsel for Central Imaging Open MRI.

What’s Up and Who’s New

Stetson Mixer

Thank You to the Sponsors of the Bar & Law School Mixer
“Poolside” at Stetson University College of Law
April 22, 2009

Our appreciation goes out to our sponsors who made this event possible.

Carlton Fields, P.A.
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Stetson University College of Law

It was a beautiful evening for a gathering of approximately 100 law students, faculty members, judges, and bar members at the St. Pete Bar Association’s Annual Bar & Law School Mixer at Stetson University College of Law.
Swearing in Ceremony

Thank you to the Sponsors of the
April 24, 2009
Swearing in Ceremony & Reception

Coordinated by
The Clearwater Bar Association
Young Lawyers Division
&
The St. Petersburg Bar Association
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Sponsors:

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Office Space:

CLEARWATER – Law office for rent located at 814 Chestnut Street, Clearwater. 2000 square feet. Features 2 offices, conference room, reception, separate secretarial room, kitchen, 2 bathrooms. $3013/month, includes CAM and sales tax. Contact Mike Cheek 727-631-7000.

SEMINOLE/BEACHES - Offices for rent. Newly renovated office space available in 2-attorney suite. Two large offices available, both with windows and storage, beginning at $350/month. Share conference room/library and kitchen. Perfect for solo or new attorney or satellite office. Call 727-596-7100.

ST. PETERSBURG – City Center Building – Opportunity to lease or sublease approximately 3,000 square foot law office with two conference rooms, five individual offices, reception area, two secretarial work stations, storage, kitchen and work area. All offices fully cabled for computer connections. Contact Bob Decker for details – 727-551-0665.

ST. PETERSBURG – Historic Kenwood Law Office Space for Rent. 2461 1st Avenue North. Two offices & separate secretarial space. Additional space also available if needed. Corner lot bungalow w/open front porch, hardwood floors, large oak. On-site parking, convenient to courthouse/downtown. For details call 727-321-4443.

ST. PETERSBURG – Senior Practitioner has office space for lease with amenities. Large offices less than 1 block from St. Petersburg Courthouse with assigned off street parking space. Common use of reception area, current Florida library, closing and break rooms, utilities except telephone, included. Contact Joe Lang 727-894-0676 for more details.

ST. PETERSBURG - Aura Executive Suites, Newly Renovated, located at 695 Central Avenue. Fully equipped offices starting at $399.00/month. Two lobbies with receptionist, conference rooms, 24/7 secured access, H/S/ internet, commercial phone lines with access to copiers, faxes & scanner. Virtual offices available $149.00/month. Call Larry Twinney 727-490-2020, e-mail: auraexecutivesuites@gmail.com.

ST. PETERSBURG – Courthouse Square, office space for lease in downtown at 600 First Avenue North, across from the Courthouse. Covered parking, full services. Professional legal office environment, home to some of the "Best Lawyers in Tampa Bay." One 850 sq. ft. and one 2460 sq. ft. suites available. Call 721-821-6699 or email lease@stpetespace.com.

ST. PETERSBURG – For Sale or Rent: Two professional offices, Secretary/Reception area with Kitchenette, Conference Room, Copy/File Room and Bathroom, 945 sq. ft. MOL. Completely gutted and renovated in 2005 (inclusive of new HVAC, roof, security system, and DSL/cable). Frontage and large pylon sign on Central Avenue. Price: $219,000; or $16 per sq. ft. base rent, triple net. Possible turn key (office furnishings extra). Call 727-744-1817 with offer.


Services Available:

Lennon & Honey, P.A. we handle civil and criminal appeals. We will ghostwrite on a contract basis. We offer reasonable fees and accept referrals. Attorneys Simone Lennon and William Honey. 813-765-2555.

Professional Writing Team Available – feature articles, special projects and events, and profiles for publications, newsletters, web content, etc. Lois Sears, attorney, freelance writer; Diane Marcou, author, editor, ghostwriter. Call 727-686-3175.
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www.stpetebar.com
Approximately 175 St. Pete Bar members and guests celebrated Law Day on Friday, May 8th, at the Mirror Lake Lyceum. The luncheon presenting sponsor was Northern Trust. Highlights of this special day were:

- The 2008 Northern Trust and St. Petersburg Bar Association Professionalism Award was accepted by Maryanne Neefe for Joseph D. McFarland and his family
- The Judicial Appreciation Award was presented to the Honorable J. Thomas McGrady
- The Liberty Bell Award was presented to Frank Peterman, Jr.
- Third & Fourth Grade Cheryl Smith-Khan Law Day Poster Contest Winners from local bay area schools
- The James, Hoyer, Newcomer & Smiljanich and Young Lawyers Section Scholarship was presented to Rebeccah Clark
- The Judge Paul H. Roney Essay Scholarship was presented to Lukas Pleva
- Raised approximately $704 and school supplies for F.L.A.S.H., which provides school supplies for homeless children in the community