

Okaloosa-Walton Bar Association

President: Wanda Clapp
Vice-President: Ashley Smith-Herndon

Secretary: Martin W. Lester
Treasurer: Coy H. Browning

November 2005 Edition

Next Meeting

When: Tuesday, November 8, 2005

Where: Two Trees Restaurant
(we fear change)

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Cost: \$10.00 per person

RSVP via email to Marty Lester at OWBA@cox.net

OWBA TREASURER REPORT

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE HON. HOWARD LAPORTE!

The OWBA extends a hearty congratulations to our own Howard LaPorte on his elevation (enthronement?) to the Circuit Bench. Of course, we all KNEW Howard would be selected. We've ALWAYS said that he was the SMARTEST and FAIREST candidate. Really, we did. Plus, we hear how good he looks in a black dress, which is important for a judge.

Judge LaPorte's investiture is scheduled for 3 p.m. on December 15, 2005, at the Chautauqua Building, Museum Room, 96 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs. However, we didn't want to wait until then to shower him with praise and adulation. Therefore, we have cancelled plans for a speaker at the November meeting so that Judge LaPorte can have the floor, if he wishes, and tell us how the law will be laid down on the mean streets of DeFuniak.

In an effort to promote fiscal responsibility, your Board hired a team of former Enron accounts to audit our books. (Hey, they came cheap.) To our surprise, we have discovered that the Bar account, due to massive losses from our offshore Cayman Islands subsidiaries, currently stands at a negative balance of \$15,546,279.03. However, in the interests of full disclosure, we should note that the OWBA Officer Margarita Slush Fund stands at \$8,917.01.

If you wish to help with our fiscal crisis, please send your dues to:

Coy H. Browning, Esq.
Coy H. Browning & Associates, P.A.
418 Racetrack Road NE, Suite B
Fort Walton Beach, FL 32547

LAWYERS ON THE MOVE

Fleet, Spencer & Kilpatrick, P.A. is pleased to announce that Whitney L. Hipsh has joined the firm as an associate attorney. Whitney graduated from the University of West Florida in 2001 and received her law degree from the University of Florida in 2005. She works out of the firm's Shalimar office and practices in the areas of real estate and business law.

We also have a rare husband-wife tandem move to report this month. In order to restore domestic harmony, Steven Copus and Jennifer Hanson Copus have left the Public Defender and State Attorney offices (respectively) for the glamorous and alluring life of private practice. Steven is now an associate at Chesser & Barr, P.A., while Jennifer will begin the new year as an associate at Ketchel & Lester. For their benefit, as well as that of others who make similar moves, we hereby reprint the Three Rules of Private Criminal Defense, courtesy of our own George Dewrell:

1. Get the money up front.
2. If someone goes to jail, make sure it isn't you.
3. Get the money up front.

BAD STUFF TO FEEL GUILTY ABOUT

Please remember how important it is to pay your court reporters in a timely matter. Many times, when a bill is left unpaid, the court reporter is told that the invoice has been sent directly to the client. Shockingly, sometimes clients are remiss in paying these invoices. Out of professional courtesy, attorneys should take the responsibility to make sure the court reporter is compensated. Failure to do so could lead to strange and unexplained errors in transcripts.

We have received an update from Ross Goodman, the First Circuit representative to the Board of Governors, concerning issues addressed at the October 21 meeting in Palm Coast. Highlights include a proposed rule amendment affecting first appearance bonds for those charged with violent felony offenses and an appeal from Bar President Alan Bookman for applicants to fill vacancies on the JNC. The full text of the update is too lengthy for inclusion here, but will be provided by e-mail to those who request it. Anyone interested in JNC nominations, whether for yourself or others, or with other Board of Governors questions, should contact Ross directly at rgoodman@uwf.edu.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“It must be admitted that there were some very bad juries in Ireland, and I have seen some very bad ones in this country as well. But the Irish juries, even when bad, had sometimes the mitigating grace that they added to the gaiety of the Court. There was the very rural jury in Listowel that once was assisting Judge Shaw to try a case of rape. ...

The prosecutrix gave her evidence with a complete absence of embarrassment, and with such readiness to go into detail, that the Judge turned in disgust to the Jury and said, ‘Ah, gentlemen, you daren't hang a dog upon evidence like that.’

The jury colloqued; then the foreman said, ‘Your Honour, we're unanimously of the opinion that the boy didn't do it; but should your Honour be wishful to hear any more evidence, we wouldn't be stopping you.’”

-- *Maurice Healy, King's Counsel
(1887-1943)*

BOARD OF GOVERNORS UPDATE

***We are only as strong as our weakest link...please support your local
Bar Association.***