MCBA SPRING CHARITY RAISES $23,000 FOR BRANTWOOD

The Montgomery County Bar Association presented a check to Brantwood Children’s Home on Monday, May 11, in the amount of $23,000. Four years ago, a desire to make an impact on the local community inspired the MCBA to establish an annual charity fundraising event. Past beneficiaries include MANE, Child Protect, Family Sunshine Center and the Family Guidance Center. The theme of this year’s event was “Les Bon Temps,” and featured a crawfish boil, jazz music, and a silent auction.

The MCBA generally chooses a charitable organization that works with children and/or families, because “a lot of lawyers work with domestic cases, or with children in some way, or families, so that’s very important,” says Suzanne Duffey, MCBA Executive Director. “Our members were interested in helping people in our community, in a way that will directly impact our community locally, and that’s how this event was created,” she says. “We were so pleased with the response this year, especially in this tough economy, and that everyone really reached out to support this effort and help those who need it.”

Sponsors of this year’s event were: Platinum – Beasley Allen; Gold – Alabama Association of Justice, Balch & Bingham; Copeland, Franco, Screws & Gill; Freedom Court Reporters; McPhillips Shinbaum, L.L.C.; Pro Legal Copies; Rushton, Stakely, Johnston & Garrett; Sasser, Sefton, Connally, Tipton & Davis, P.C.; Silver – Aldridge Borden & Company, P.C.; Donald R. Jones, Jr., P.C.; Haskell Slaughter; Law Office of Patrick Mahaney, LLC; Nix, Holttsford, Gilliland, Higgins & Hitson, P.C.; Ryals, Plummer, Donaldson, Agricola & Smith, P.C.; Hill, Hill, Carter, Franco, Cole & Black, P.C.; Slate Kennedy LLC; Bronze – Anderson Law Firm, L.L.C.; Ball, Ball, Matthews, and Novak, P.A.; Beers, Anderson, Jackson, Patty & Fawal, P.C.; Bradley Arant Boul Cummings LLP; Capell & Howard, P.C.; Kim and Marty Fehl; Haislip, Ragan, Green, Starkie & Watson, P.C.; Frank H. Hawthorne, Jr.; Hugh Nickson – Jones Walker, LLP; James & Pittman; Legal Imaging LLC; Edwin K. Livingston; Oakley W. Melton; Merrill; Parnell & Crum, P.A.; Bobby Segall; TTL, Inc.; Steiner, Crum & Byars; and Blanchard & Associates, LLC.

Pictured left to right are: Suzanne Duffey, MCBA Exec. Dir.; MCBA Board members Mike Winter, Adrian Johnson, and Kim Fehl; Patrick Setton, Pres. MCBA; Kelly Pate, YLS Charity Event Committee; Bill Robertson, Pres. YLS - MCBA; Paul Clark, Vice-Pres. MCBA; Louis Calligas, 2009 MCBA Spring Charity Chair; Tom Methvin, Chairman of Brantwood Board of Directors; and Kelly Pate and Felicia Long, YLS Charity Committee, making the presentation to Kim Herbert, Exec. Dir. of Brantwood Children’s Home.
Words from the President

In a previous edition, I expressed my opinion that lawyers should be conscientious in providing leadership on matters of public policy. I believe there is a heightened need for lawyer opinion and action regarding any issues concerning our profession and the judiciary.

I am personally pleased to report the passage of legislation in the recently concluded Alabama Legislature that establishes basic experience qualifications for State Court Judges. I note that this legislation was sponsored by a Birmingham lawyer and State Legislator, Paul DeMarco.

Finally, as summer is now upon us, I hope you will be able to take some time away from the rigors of every-day law practice and spend time with family and friends. While this recent economic downturn has provided many lessons, I think one of the biggest will be that money and other things by which we often define success are fleeting. In my judgment, “at the end of the day,” the real legacy we leave should be focused on our families, our faith and whether we have made our community a better place to live. Best wishes for a great summer!

Pat Sefton

CLE OPPORTUNITIES COMING IN THE FALL

August 26 (tentative date) 1:00 p.m.– Putative Father’s Rights– by Professor Shirley D. Howell

Sept. 10 – 12:00—Securities Litigation: In the Wake of the Market Downturn – by Jay Aughtman

Sept. 17 – 12:00– Ways to Mitigate Costs in Civil Suits Related to Home Construction–by Robert Wheelan, Forensic Engineer

October 7 – 12:00—Elder Law: Guardianship and Conservatorship - by Jay Ott

Oct. 16 – 2009 Bench and Bar Conference at The Legends Golf Course (CLE classes 8:00-12:00, Golf 1:00 til ?) Details TBA

Oct. 29– Update on Child Support and Visitation Rights-  by Aimee Cobb Smith

Nov. 10– Pharmaceutical Liability Litigation – by Leigh O’Dell

Welcome, New MCBA Members!

Chris Brodie—Craddock, Davis, and Krause
Anthony Brian Bush—Law Offices of Jay Lewis, LLC
Mandy Chambliss—
Mary Connor Pool—Bond, Botes, Shinn, and Donaldson, PC

Please encourage your new associates to join their local professional organization and take advantage of free CLE seminars.

Membership forms may be downloaded from www.mcbar.org.
Dear MCBA Members:

I’ve started this note several times, only to delete it and begin again. I’m struggling to put into words how grateful we at Brantwood Children’s Home are for Montgomery County Bar Association’s efforts in raising money for our very real need of improved transportation. How can I communicate the change that takes place in a teenager’s life when their transportation is no longer a point of distress? Imagine being sixteen and having a large white, well used, extended van with over 200,000 miles on it pick you up and drop you off each day from school and work. Our youth are no different from any other– they desire to fit in and be accepted by their peers. Sometimes Brantwood’s vehicles make that difficult because of their look and working condition. Traditional family vehicles will help us accomplish our goal, having each youth find a home at Brantwood and feel wanted and loved by removing the stigma created when traveling in institutional type vehicles. Improved transportation will also decrease costly repair bills, allowing funds to be spent on the youth in different areas. There simply are no words to adequately describe the value of making a positive change on someone’s life; and that is exactly what your organization has accomplished. The $23,000 donated will be used to improve our mode of transportation which will directly improve the lives of youth living at Brantwood.

A special note of thanks goes out to Pat Sefton and his fundraising committee of Tom Methvin, Gibson Vance, Kendall Dunson, Adrian Johnson, Bill Robertson, Paul Clark, Louis Calligas, Ben Schoettker, and Kim Fehl. I also need to thank Suzanne Duffey and her staff for their efforts. So many others like Mr. Mike Winters, Kelley Pate, Mark Moody, Felicia Long, Trish Romano, and Tripp Vickers were instrumental in making the evening a success. There is an old adage that says “some people want it to happen, some people wish it to happen, and others make it happen.” Thank you for being those who made it happen. In a time when donations and financial giving have slowed, you raised the funds to meet one of our top needs. Brantwood has been Montgomery’s children’s home since 1917. A key to our success has been the continuous support of community members and local organizations, such as the Montgomery County Bar Association. Thank you for naming Brantwood Children’s Home as the recipient of the proceeds from the 2009 “Les Bon Temps” fundraising event. Together we will change the lives of children who are in need of a home.

Kim Herbert, Executive Director

Right, Kim Herbert presents a plaque to the MCBA Board recognizing Montgomery County Bar Association’s donation to Brantwood. Pictured left to right are:

Karen Chambless, Kendall Dunson, Patrick Sefton, Kim Herbert, Paul Clark, Suzanne Duffey, Adrian Johnson, Mike Winter, and Ben Schoettker.

To the left and below are two poems by Denise, a resident at Brantwood. The contrast in the tone of the two poems demonstrates the change that has occurred in this girl’s life in one year.

“[I’m lost can’t you help me...”

There was little girl you once knew
But what happened to her
What can you do?
She is lost in her soul and can not be found
I’m sorry mom but this is the truth
I scream and shout begging to be free
But there is no one who hears me.
I wait and wait for something to happen
But day by day nothing happens.
I’m stuck in a world you can not see
But why, why aren’t you helping me?
I beg and beg of you please, can’t you just stop and help me?

“My family...

It is the family you thought you could never have...
It is the family you look up to when things are looking bad.
When things go wrong they are always there
They tell you “I love you and will always care.”
This is my family...
The one I love and care for.
This is Brantwood Children’s Home.
Young Lawyers Section Plans Events

The Montgomery County Bar Association’s Young Lawyers Section has planned several events for this summer and for the remainder of the year. Looking back, an after-work social was recently held at the Marina on April 30th and a great time was had by all who attended.

Just ahead on Thursday, June 4th, the YLS will head to Atlanta for our annual Braves trip to watch the Braves take on the Chicago Cubs. We will have group seating in Turner Field, and have a chartered bus from Capital Trailways for the trip to Atlanta and back. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Mark Moody (mmoody44@gmail.com) or Megan McCarthy (mmccarthy@nixholtsford.com) to purchase tickets and secure a seat on the bus.

An exciting social for the month of June is currently in the works, and has tentatively been set for Thursday, June 18th at the Law Firm of Kaufman, Gilpin, McKenzie, Thomas, Weiss, P.C. Kaufman Gilpin’s office is located on the third floor of the Lakeview Center on EastChase Parkway, and it has graciously offered its spacious patio overlooking East Montgomery to the YLS for the after-work gathering. Those on the YLS email list will receive definitive notice soon.

The MCBA YLS will also host its Annual Charity Golf Tournament at Capital Hill (Judge Course), which will take place on Friday, July 31st. The tournament proceeds will go to benefit Brantwood Children’s Home. If you would like to play, sponsor, or if you have any other questions about the golf tournament, please contact this year’s chairman Clay Barnett (clay.barnett@beasleyallen.com). Another annual event, the MCBA YLS Annual Wiffle Ball Tournament, is also in the works. More details on this event are soon to follow. However if you have any questions, feel free to contact this year’s Wiffle Ball Tournament chairman Tripp Vickers (tvickers@sasserlawfirm.com).

As you can see, the MCBA YLS is looking forward to another eventful summer. We hope that you can attend as many events as possible, as it is a great way to network with other young lawyers in the Montgomery area. The YLS events also provide summer clerks with an opportunity to meet our local young lawyers as well as other summer clerks in town. If you are currently not on the YLS email list and would like to be added, please contact Bill Robertson (bill.robertson@beasleyallen.com) or Megan McCarthy (mmccarthy@nixholtsford.com).

Bill Robertson, Pres.
Young Lawyers Section, MCBA

The MCBA Board of Directors is accepting applications for the 2010 Charity Fundraiser Recipient.

Members are asked to nominate Montgomery area charities that would benefit from our fundraiser event. Information needed from the nominating member includes:

1. cover letter expressing the needs of the nominated organization
2. Pamphlets, flyers, and other information about the organization

All nominations are due no later than July 10, 2009. Send to Suzanne Duffey, Montgomery County Bar Association, P.O. Box 72, Montgomery, AL 36101-0072.

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July 30, 2009
5:30-7:30 p.m.
Save the date!
Location TBA
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MALS HOSTS LEGAL PROFESSIONALS WEEK EVENTS

During Legal Professionals Week, March 31 – April 2, Freedom Court Reporting sponsored Coffee with the Judges on March 31st, and provided wonderful pastries and coffee mugs for all in attendance. Around ninety attorneys and judges participated in this fun event, and the members of MALS look forward to doing it again in October.

On April 1st, Robert Longshore with the Alabama Board of Pardons and Paroles spoke to twenty legal secretaries, paralegals, and other legal staff members about the duties of the Board.

At the Awards Luncheon on April 2nd, Linda Lund, Director of the Alabama State Bar Volunteer Lawyers Program, was honored with the NALS Foundation Scales of Justice Award, which is presented to persons who improve access to justice, improve the quality of legal services, promote the legal profession, and support the community where they work and live. Linda’s involvement in the Wills for Heroes program made her the perfect candidate for this award. Past President of the Alabama State Bar, Sam Crosby, assisted in presenting the award to Linda.

(A Alabama State Bar Past President, Sam Crosby; Linda Lund; MALS President, Kristi Skipper, PP, PLS)

Kristi Skipper, PP, PLS was the recipient of the MALS Member of the Year Award. Myra Beckham, PP, PLS, President of AALS (state association) attended the Awards Luncheon and assisted Member of the Year Chairman Barb Hanley in presenting the award.

Stephanie Pitts, daughter of Cindy Pitts, PLS, and Christopher Hanley, son of Barb Hanley-Vogel and Jerry Vogel, were each awarded an educational scholarship from MALS at the Awards Luncheon.

AALS President, Myra Beckham, PP, PLS; Kristi Skipper, PP, PLS; and Barb Hanley.

The members of MALS awarded the 2009 Boss of the Year Award to Adrian Johnson of Parnell and Crum, P.A. Adrian had to go out of town unexpectedly for a deposition, so MALS President Kristi Skipper, PP, PLS and Legal Professionals Week Chairman, Donna DeShields, PP, surprised Mr. Johnson with his award at a Montgomery County Bar Association board meeting on April 3rd.
REYNOLDS, REYNOLDS & DUNCAN, LLC

is pleased to announce that

Gilbert C. Steindorff IV and J. Heath Loftin

have joined the firm as associates.

Mr. Steindorff is a graduate of the University of Virginia (J.D. 2004, B.A. 2001) and has practiced law in Alabama for five years. Mr. Steindorff serves clients in the areas of creditor’s rights, banking law, and commercial litigation from the firm’s Tuscaloosa office and from Birmingham, where he resides. The firm also welcomes J. Heath Loftin to its Montgomery Office. Mr. Loftin is a graduate of Auburn University (B.A. 2003) and Cumberland School of Law at Samford University (J.D. 2007). Prior to joining the firm, he practiced law with Copeland, Franco, Screws & Gill, P.A. in Montgomery, Alabama, and now serves clients in the areas of creditor’s rights, bankruptcy, commercial law, real estate, corporate law and collections from the firm’s Montgomery office.

Reynolds, Reynolds & Duncan, LLC dedicates its practice to the representation of creditors, financial institutions, and corporate clients in the areas of bankruptcy, banking law, loan documentation, loan workouts, commercial litigation and real estate. The firm serves clients statewide from its offices in Tuscaloosa, Huntsville, and Montgomery.

JUNE CLE SEMINARS

On June 4, 2009 Bill Furlow of Furlow Communications in Natchez, MS will present a CLE seminar, “When Legal Problems Threaten a Client’s Reputation: Communicating in a Crisis” at noon. He will cover such topics as why reputation matters, how public opinion is formed, the best ways to handle bad news or controversy, and techniques for dealing with reporters. Your pre-registration is helpful in preparing adequate handouts. This will be in the jury assembly room. (one hour CLE)

Judge Tracy McCooey will host a “Nuts and Bolts” seminar regarding criminal law issues on June 30, 2009, from 8:30 a.m. to noon in the jury assembly room at the Phelps-Price Judicial Center. Lunch will be provided after the CLE. The topics to be covered include the “Nuts and Bolts” of practicing criminal law, drug court, mental health court, pre-trial diversion, and community corrections. Also, a special presentation will be made by Mr. Clay Wiggins who is an internationally certified data forensic expert. This seminar is an excellent opportunity for new lawyers to get helpful information on practicing criminal law and a good time for experienced lawyers to brush up on old information and learn about new programs being offered. If you are interested, please contact the MCBA office (265-4793 or email dotrobinson@mc-ala.org so that we can get an accurate headcount for handouts and lunch. For further information about this seminar, contact the office of Judge Tracy McCooey who is organizing this event. This will count as four CLE hours.