MCBA HAS BUSY FALL AHEAD

I hope that your Fall is off to a great start! As of the time of writing this article, Auburn and Alabama have perfect records through the first four games of the year and excitement is running high on the local talk radio waves. Fall is my favorite time of the year, especially when Auburn and Alabama are winning!

The activity level of our bar association also picks up considerably in the next two months. I hope you will find some time to participate. First, the Bench and Bar Conference is scheduled for October 16. Please be sure to register, as this event has evolved over the past six years into one of the best opportunities for our bar and the local judges to fellowship. We have intentionally kept the cost as low as possible to encourage maximum participation. Please encourage the young lawyers in your firms to attend this meeting. What a great way for them to not only pick up CLE hours, but also to meet our judges. Thanks to Paul Clark for organizing this year’s meeting. Please feel free to call him at 834-6500 with any questions.

The evening before the Bench and Bar Conference is our First Annual Pro Bono Party. You will be given free admission to this party at the Renaissance Hotel on October 15 by simply agreeing to join the Volunteer Lawyer Program (VLP). If you are already a member, your name will be on the list and you will be given free admission in honor of your commitment. If, for some reason, you cannot commit to being a member of the VLP, you can simply buy a ticket at the door for $10. All proceeds from the ticket sales will be donated to Legal Services.

Related to our efforts at increasing the involvement in the VLP, is the first of what we hope will be many legal clinics targeted toward low income citizens in Montgomery County. We will be hosting the first clinic November 3 at 1061 Adams Avenue (the Head Start Educational Building) between 3:00 p.m-6:00 p.m. Many thanks to our Pro Bono Committee Chairperson, Royal Dumas, for organizing this event. Please feel free to contact Royal at 834-7600 if you have any interest in participating. He and his committee have been hard at work for several months putting this together.

Finally, I want to recognize the members of the MCBA Grievance Committee. For those of you that don’t know, our bar is one of the few local bars in the state that has the authority to conduct its own investigation and make recommendations to the state bar in cases of alleged lawyer misconduct. In my opinion, this privilege that has been so generously given to us by the Alabama State Bar serves the best interests of both our local bar and the public. Without a doubt, this privilege has been made possible by the service of many of our colleagues who spend many hours working on this committee. We truly appreciate these men and women and the sacrifice they invest in their time to accomplish this committee’s purposes.

Pat
The Alabama State Bar will celebrate National Pro Bono Week October 25-31, 2009. This celebration recognizes the valuable work lawyers do throughout the year to represent those who cannot afford civil legal assistance. The event provides a time to reflect on this core value of our profession, celebrate the achievements of pro bono activities, and elevate them to even higher levels of service. This is a time to both educate the public about the pro bono services attorneys provide, and to celebrate those providing those services—Alabama Lawyers.

Alabama was the first state in the nation to officially designate Oct. 25-31, 2009 as Pro Bono Week, with a proclamation signed by Gov. Bob Riley.

Pro Bono work is a priority for the Alabama State Bar, and is accomplished through the Volunteer Lawyers Program (VLP). The VLP works to meet the needs of low-income Alabamians with the active participation of our members, who donate their time to ensure the underserved have equal access to justice. Our clients are low-income persons who cannot afford an attorney and who have wide range of legal problems including consumer, domestic, housing, and probate matters.

As part of Pro Bono Week, the Bar set a number of goals designed to help those in need, to promote Volunteer Lawyer service to our colleagues in the legal community, to help increase funding for these services, and to raise public awareness of pro bono work.

Outreach activities will include a partnership with every circuit in the State, and all five law schools to provide pro bono services in their communities. VLP clinics will provide free legal services all over the state within the 60-day timeframe surrounding Pro Bono Week.

In Montgomery County, the Thomas Goode Jones School of Law will host a Professionalism Seminar on Public Interest Practice on Wednesday, October 28. The seminar is directed towards students and will provide information about service-oriented legal careers. It will feature panelists John Davis of the Attorney General’s Office, Jim Frye of Legal Services, and Bill Blanchard, a local attorney who handles court-appointed criminal defense cases for indigent clients.

In addition to participating in hands-on service events, Bar members also will speak to members of the media, as well as to civic clubs and organizations, and Public Service Announcements about Pro Bono Week will be broadcast throughout the state on television and radio. These efforts will help raise the profile of the legal profession by illustrating the good work attorneys do within the community, while helping to educate the public about the varied nature of pro bono work and the many people it serves.

The Alabama State Bar has set up a special web site with more information about plans for the National Pro Bono Celebration, including a calendar of events that will be taking place throughout the state. Visit http://www.alabar.org/ProBonoWeek/index.cfm.

The important mission of Pro Bono Week is an ongoing commitment for Alabama lawyers. In November, Montgomery County Volunteer Lawyers will begin hosting monthly clinics to provide pro bono services to those in need of access to justice in our area.

Our Montgomery County Bar Association has recently formed a Pro Bono Committee, tasked with increasing participation in the Alabama State Bar Volunteer Lawyer Program (VLP). If you are not already a part of this program, please consider joining now and taking an active part in National Pro Bono Week activities, and ongoing pro bono legal services clinics. For more information or to commit your services, contact Royal Dumas at 334-834-7600 or email rdumas@hillhillcarter.com.
This October, the Alabama State Bar is celebrating pro bono service among Alabama lawyers. This celebration highlights the Bar’s motto, “Lawyers Render Service.” At Faulkner University Jones School of Law we are striving to make service central to our students, as a matter of excellent education and as a matter of our Christian mission.

The Preamble to the Alabama Code of Professional Conduct declares that lawyers are “public citizens,” who, in our many roles, “should be mindful of the deficiencies in the administration of justice and of the fact that the poor, and sometimes persons who are not poor, cannot afford adequate legal assistance and should therefore devote professional time and civic influence in their behalf.” In our clinical programs at the School of Law we take these virtues out of an abstract classroom discussion and apply them directly in service to real clients in need.

In legal clinics, our students work under faculty supervision to provide legal services and counseling to clients who have limited access to legal services. The School of Law has three clinical programs: The Mediation Clinic, the Family Violence Clinic, and The Elder Law Clinic. These three programs teach different aspects of lawyering and professional skill, and they extend the mission of the school to serve the vulnerable and marginalized in our community.

In 1997 we launched the Mediation Clinic as part of the Alternative Dispute Resolution program. In the Mediation Clinic, law students train in the art and practice of alternative dispute resolution. The students then work in county and municipal courts to mediate cases between parties in conflict. As mediators, the students work to bring litigants to a common ground where the parties can create their own solutions and settlement, instead of fighting in court. The students in the Mediation Clinic work to bring peace to adversaries in conflict, while saving public resources and alleviating antagonism within families and communities.

In the Family Violence Clinic, founded in 2004 with a federal grant and assistance from Legal Services of Alabama, law students represent victims of domestic violence in court as they seek civil protection orders and provide counsel and advice to parents and children trying to escape dangerous relationships. In this work, the students take up the cause of women, children, and families endangered by abuse and work to liberate victims imprisoned by violence and coercion. They work to encourage the oppressed by petitioning courts for legal protection, by standing beside alienated victims and by promoting safety and peace for their families.

In the Elder Law Clinic, launched in 2007 with an extensive federal grant, law students provide legal services to people over 60 with limited or fixed means. The students draft legal documents, analyze problems, and give counsel to clients to promote their independence and autonomy. Our students care for the widows, and other aging neighbors, as they encounter complex problems of aging. The students also present community education programs to empower elders to be their own advocates before they face hardships and legal quandaries.

At the School of Law we work to inculcate a spirit and calling of service in our students, equipping them for meaningful and fruitful careers. Our students graduate with an ethic of service, prepared to work in their communities as citizens who will lead their communities, improve the law, ease access to justice and serve the “least of these” among us.
**WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!**

Montgomery County Bar Association is pleased to welcome these professionals as new members:

- Lee Barnes, retired
- Winn Faulk
- Peggy Givhan
- Hugh Maddox, retired justice
- William Vines, Montgomery District Attorney’s office
- Mary Windom, Justice, AL Court of Criminal Appeals

Members, please be sure to welcome these new members, and encourage your peers who are not MCBA members to join.

**MCBA Website Update**

The MCBA website has been upgraded, and we hope that you will find it more user friendly. One of the new features of the website is a pictorial directory of the members. If you have a photo you wish to be posted, please email it in jpg format to Suzanneduffey@mc-ala.org. If you don’t have a photo to use, we will be taking photos October 20-23 from 8:30 A.M.—12:30 P.M. at no charge. Contact Suzanne Duffey or Dot Robinson at 265-4793 to make your appointment.

Another feature to be added to the website is a listing of your areas of practice/expertise. Members may have up to five areas listed. We will be sending more information about this in the near future.

**Blood Drive—Please Give**

Glenda Pogue, the triplet sister of MALS members, Linda Teague and Brenda Martin, was hospitalized for necrotizing fasciitis on June 12, and is currently at a rehabilitation facility in Houston, TX.

The members of MALS are hosting a blood drive in honor of Glenda on **Wednesday, October 14, 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. at the Center for Commerce, 401 Adams Avenue, Room 382.** Anyone may give blood, and the members of MALS would appreciate your support. To schedule an appointment, please contact Barb Hanley at 293-0545 or go online to [www.givelife.org](http://www.givelife.org) and select sponsor code GLEN-DAPOGUE.

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**MCBA’s First Annual Pro Bono Party**

October 15, 2009

5:30-7:30

Renaissance Hotel

Admission free to VLP participants

$10 for all others
Save the date!
MCBA Holiday Gala—Dec. 10

Toys for Tots Collection, too!

The Docket
Is the official organ and publication of the Montgomery County Bar Association, Inc., P.O. Box 72, Montgomery, AL 36101, and is published monthly. 
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Looking ahead, the MCBA will join up with the YLS again this fall to host a new-admittee social. Please make plans to attend this event to meet the new lawyers in the Montgomery area. Additionally, the YLS is currently making plans for a “cook-out” style social to held later this fall. More details for that social will be announced soon.

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. If you are currently not on the YLS email list and would like to be added, please contact: Bill Robertson (billrobertson@beasleyallen.com) or Megan McCarthy (mmccarthy@nixholtsford.com)

The Montgomery County Bar Association’s Young Lawyers Section has wrapped up another eventful summer, and is currently planning its events for the remainder of the year. Earlier this summer, MCBA YLS held after-work socials at the Marina, the Renaissance, and at the law firm of Kaufman Gilpin, who graciously hosted a social for the YLS at their office.

In June, the MCBA made its annual trip to Atlanta to watch the Braves take on the Cubs. Unfortunately, the game was eventually cancelled due to inclement weather; however, the young lawyers made the most of the trip and still managed to have a good time.

The MCBA YLS held its 8th Annual Charity Golf Tournament on Friday, July 31 at Robert Trent Jones Golf Course– Capital Hill (the Judge Course), and on August 17, members of the YLS Board presented a check in the amount of $4,300 to Brantwood Children’s Home. The YLS enjoys supporting Brantwood as its charity, as Brantwood has been providing a safe, stable, structured environment for abused, neglected, and other at-risk youth. Currently Brantwood serves children and youth ages 10-21. Brantwood offers programs which are designed to help these young people cope with and succeed in society.

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