Participation Leads to Connections
By Royal Dumas, President

This month I want to talk about the great social opportunities and sections the MCBA offers, but to help with my point, I want to share something that happened to me recently.

One of my partners and I were recently interviewing potential summer clerks. As we waited at a light, a driver behind us laid into his horn shortly after the light turned green. This piqued our interest into who was driving this obviously delayed car. We proceeded slowly through the intersection, if only to fully understand and realize, through a mere glimpse, what hurried state this individually was beset with. Unfortunately, he refused to pass us. We rode, crestfallen, but to our amazement (and delight), the car turned, as if following us, into the law school parking lot – albeit quite a distance away from us. We loitered in the parking lot long enough to catch sight of none other than a freshly shaven, suited, and pressed law school student eagerly heading to an interview.

As we interviewed throughout the day, the incident and individual slipped from my mind until, as you probably have guessed, that same law student confidently strode into the interview room. In a feat of fortitude, my partner and I waited until near the end of the interview to mention the perceived transgression, of which he completely and unmistakably admitted.

I guess there are two different ways to categorize the incident. The first, and the one I see detailed on social media often, is one should exhibit better social skills and restraint when dealing with others since you never know what repercussions your actions will have.

I agree, but I choose to think about it in an alternative category. While my days of law school have long since passed, fortunately, I remember the excitement I felt when applying for clerkships and, in a real sense, a job which would set out my career. More than that, those interviews represented my first connections with Montgomery lawyers, a group I desperately wanted to join. That excitement from a law student I welcome.

Now back to the MCBA - The sections and social events which the MCBA offer are a real attempt to keep that excitement and connection alive. I remember fondly the whiffle ball tournaments at now-Judge Johnson’s house with crayfish boiled by Chuck James. Those events helped build connections and friendships with lawyers that I enjoy on a daily basis.

The Young Lawyer’s and Women’s Sections continue that purpose now, and, as their articles in the coming months will inform you, there are many upcoming events and opportunities to connect with other lawyers. Moreover, the MCBA plans to offer monthly social events throughout the year. I look forward to seeing you at an MCBA event in the near future!
VLP CORNER  by Mike Martin, Executive Director

Last month I wrote of the beneficial aspects of volunteering, most notably the positive effects on one’s mood experienced through assisting someone in need, dubbed ‘the helper’s high’ by Alan Luks in the early 1990s and subsequently assessed biologically in brain imaging studies. I suspect many of you have discovered that small helping actions, like lending a hand to a neighbor, are refreshing. As Emerson wrote, “No man [or woman] can sincerely help another without helping himself.”

Your Montgomery Volunteer Lawyers Program is blessed with attorneys who are willing to give of their time and expertise in service to local economically-challenged residents facing civil legal issues. In return, I have had many of our volunteers express to me the sense of satisfaction they get from helping others who would otherwise be unable to help themselves. We are thankful for these lawyers and their commitment to service, and hope that you will consider becoming an active volunteer with the program.

We have a very active schedule in the coming weeks, and welcome your involvement. As you likely know, we have twice monthly Counsel and Advice Clinics on the first and third Tuesdays of each month, where area residents can sit down with an attorney to discuss their legal issue. Many clients are given advice on how to proceed with their pro se representation, while others have matters which might require a letter from a lawyer or further, extended representation. We don’t require the clinic attorneys to take on extended representation – though many do. In those instances, we seek other counsel willing to accept the referral.

We recently conducted a Wills for Heroes event to benefit the officers of the Montgomery Police Department (South Central Precinct) in preparation of simple wills, advanced health directives and powers of attorney. The officers were most appreciative of this service, as we are for the work they do. We have another Wills for Heroes planned for Friday, March 11 to serve the officers at the main police headquarters downtown. If you would like to join us for this event, please call our office at 265-0222, ext 2, to sign up for a couple of hours. Everything is provided, from software-loaded computers and printers, to witnesses and notaries.

A special thanks to those volunteers who have assisted at our recent clinics: Aigner Kolom, Bill Messer, Joel Caldwell, Laurel Crawford, Joana Ellis, Nicole Bean and Maceo Kirkland. Our first Wills for Heroes event was a success thanks to: Mike Winter, Kelly McTear, Elizabeth Lyerly, Leslie Pitman, Erika McKay, Ryan Beattie, Ryan Kral, and Mark Edward Smith.

As the name of our program implies, we are all about volunteering. With our volunteers we are able to give civil legal aid to those among us who are unable to help themselves. In return, our volunteers experience the pleasure that comes from giving back. As Oscar Wilde put it, echoing Plato, “To be good is to be in harmony with oneself.” Proverbs 11:25 reads, “Those who refresh others are themselves refreshed.” Please consider joining with us.

Mike Martin
We are lucky to have these Volunteer Lawyers!

The following attorneys have accepted cases in 2016:

Nicole Bean E. Nicole Bean, LLC
John Craft Faulkner University—Jones School of Law
Laurel Crawford Law Office of Laurel M. Crawford
Alvin “Peck” Fox Maynard, Cooper, & Gale, PC
Kelly F. McTear Faulkner University—Jones School of Law
Robert Nothcutter Capell & Howard, P.C.
Wesley Pitters A. Wesley Pitters, P.C.

The following attorneys have closed cases in 2016:

Joel Caldwell Copeland, Franco, Screws, & Gill, PA
Roianne Conner The Law Office of Roianne Houlton Conner
Royal C. Dumas Gilpin Givhan, PC
Alvin “Peck” Fox Maynard, Cooper, & Gale, PC
Effie Hawthorne The Law Office of Jeffery D. Duffey
Vania Hosea Shahid and Hosea, LLC
Cowin Knowles Ball, Ball, Matthews, & Novak, PA
James Lampkin Beasley, Allen, Crow, Methvin, Portis, & Miles, P.C.
Matt Matthews The Law Office of Richard F. Matthews, Jr., LLC
Kelly F. McTear Faulkner University—Jones School of Law
Wesley Pitters A. Wesley Pitters, P.C.

Call Barbara Ann Symington at 265-0222, ext. 2 to volunteer for one of the next free legal clinics on March 1 and March 15!

MCBA RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD FOR VLP

The Montgomery County Bar Association was awarded first place for bar associations of 500-5,000 members in the American Bar Association’s 7th Annual National Celebration of Pro Bono awards this year. The credit goes to VLP Director, Mike Martin, and Intake Specialist, Barbara Ann Symington.
As I read with great sadness the news of Nelle Harper Lee’s passing, only a little more than a year after the death of her sister Alice (an Alabama legal giant in her own right), I found myself moved beyond words at the impact of a single novel on the landscape of the legal community. How many of us were inspired by Atticus Finch? So moving was the portrayal of a rural Alabama lawyer that, to this day, when you ask people to name a famous Alabama lawyer, they name not Hugo Black, Maud McLure Kelly, or Bobby Segall, but a FICTIONAL character in a novel written 55 years ago by a non-lawyer.

What is it about Atticus that makes such an impression on the public consciousness? Is it his sense of justice? His commitment to service (remember, Atticus was a state representative before it was quite so lucrative)? The undeniable good looks of Gregory Peck in the film adaptation? How did it come to be that a woman’s semi-biographical depiction of her father became the ideal of a lawyer for so many people? I think it’s because she wrote words like this:

I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It’s when you know you’re licked before you begin, but you begin anyway and see it through no matter what.
- Atticus Finch, To Kill a Mockingbird

She wrote the words we lawyers wished we’d said. She wrote about a man who was also a lawyer and wanted to be good at both. She showed the world that “good man” and “good lawyer” aren’t contradictory terms. She laid bare, for all to see, that pursuit of justice is an end unto itself, without respect to personal beliefs or political affiliation. She talked about the struggle of taking a case and working doggedly to make the system work the way it’s supposed to work, even when you already know it won’t. She wrote about law as a vocation—a calling, not just a job.

And now, Miss Nelle is gone. She will always be remembered, and well. But the mantle is heavy for those of us still here. I hope in another 50 years, when we ask folks (especially lawyer folks) to tell us about an inspirational Alabama lawyer, we hear about colleagues and mentors who paved the way before us—perhaps inspired by Atticus, perhaps not—who were committed to serving the public, fighting for justice, and doing good. I hope we hear about real men and women who, even when they lose, are respected and admired by all because there is no doubt that they worked to the limits of their capacity for a just result.

Thank you, Miss Nelle, for getting us started. Rest well. We will take it from here.

Kelly McTear
The MCBA Women’s Section and Young Lawyers Section have partnered to bring you the

4th Annual
St. Paddy’s Day Social

Thursday, March 17, 2016
The Tavern at The Railyard
5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

Membership in the MCBAWS is always open. Dues are $30.
Pay by cash or check to
MCBA Women’s Section
c/o Treasurer Effie Hawthorne
600 S. McDonough St.
Montgomery, AL 36104

Questions? Suggestions?
E-mail us!
mcbawomen@gmail.com

Stay updated on Facebook!
MCBA Women’s Section
CLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEMBERS

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<td>Everything You Need to Know to Hang Your Shingle</td>
<td>Laura Calloway</td>
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<td>Key Elements in Supervising Mental Health Clients in a Community Corrections Program</td>
<td>Paul Brown</td>
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To preregister for CLEs, please email dotrobinson@mc-ala.org or call the MCBA office 265-4793. The above programs have been approved by the Commission for Mandatory Continuing Legal Education for the stated hours.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Salem Afangideh  Relf Law Firm
Sarita Atkins    The Atkins Law Firm
Kristin Dillard  Capell & Howard, P.C.
Brandon Essig   U.S. Attorney’s Office
Ashley Freeman  Capell & Howard, P.C.
Richard Hill    Capell & Howard, P.C.
Michael Meyer   Alabama Department of Education

Congratulations to Ronald G. Davenport, R. Troy Massey, and Judge Jimmy B. Pool for being named as Fellows of The Alabama Law Foundation. They were selected for having demonstrated outstanding dedication to their profession and their community. Mays Jemison was posthumously recognized.

Congratulations to the newly appointed Montgomery Municipal Judges, Virgil Ford and David Vickers.

YOUNG LAWYERS SECTION

The Young Lawyers Section had a great turnout at the most recent social on February 11th. Many thanks to the Aviator Bar for hosting the event and Partners Realty for helping to sponsor it. I have personally dealt with the folks at Partners Realty, and they are some of the most knowledgeable and professional agents in the state. Justin Moody, an agent at Partners, took the lead on sponsoring the social. You can contact him through the company’s website: www.partnersrealty.info.

We will soon be scheduling a Spring social; which has typically been held at The Pine Bar. The date has not been determined, but it will be on a Thursday in late March or early April. I look forward to seeing you all there. Jesse Anderson, Pres.

Office Furnishings for Sale

- Custom cherry stand-up writing desk 42” tall x 72” wide x 33 “ deep $1,750.00
- 2 Wooden bookcases 7’ high x 3’ wide $200 ea.
- Wood extended drawer file cabinet, 4 drawers, 5’ x 19” $250.00
- Federal leather couch (powder blue) 86” x 27” $1,500.00
- Wood credenza –6 drawers with pull-out keyboard holder $200.00

All items in excellent condition.

Call Ret. Judge William Gordon 334.430.8025