

JOURNAL

Newsletter of the Fairfax Bar Association www.fairfaxbar.org April/May/June 2018

**FAIRFAX BAR ASSOCIATION
NEW OFFICER & BOARD MEMBER CANDIDATES 2018-2019**

**NOTICE OF ELECTION
RULES OF ELECTION**

FBA INTERNET VOTING PROCESS FOR VICE PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Fairfax Bar Association Online Board of Directors election will begin on Tuesday, June 19, 2018 at Noon and will end on Friday, June 22, 2018 at 4:00 PM. Pursuant to our Bylaws, only Regular and Honorary Members of the FBA are eligible to vote. In order to vote, Regular and Honorary Members must have a valid email address on file with the Fairfax Bar. Each eligible voter will receive an email prior to the opening of the online election with login, username, and password information needed to vote. This email will also contain detailed information on the election process and the candidates. The candidate information also will be placed on the Association's website, www.fairfaxbar.org. Members may vote from any location providing Internet access. A computer will be made available at the FBA office for voting, should any members need to vote at that location.

**CANDIDATE FOR
VICE PRESIDENT (UNCONTESTED)**



Donna R. Banks, Esq.
Fairfax County Attorney's Office

Donna R. Banks grew up in Fairfax County, VA. Upon graduation from West Springfield High School in 1982, Donna attended the University of Virginia, obtaining her degree in 1986. Donna attended Howard University School of Law in Washington, DC, becoming Managing Editor of the *Law Journal*, prior to receiving her deegree in 1992. Upon serving as a Magistrate within the 19th Judicial District, Donna moved on as an Assistant Attorney General/Special Counsel with the Virginia Attorney

continued on page 4

CANDIDATES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Richard F. Gibbons, Jr., Esq.
Richard F. Gibbons, Jr., P.L.C.



Sarah A. Hensley, Esq.
Fairfax County Attorney's Office



John A. Kassabian, Esq.
Kassabian & Kassabian, P.L.C.



Kara Lee, Esq.
Maddox & Gerock, P.C.



Elanna Weinstein, Esq.
The Myerson Law Group, P.C.



Robert M. Worster, III, Esq.
Cooper Ginsberg Gray PLLC

Please see BOD bios on page 4

President's Column

Thomas W. Repczynski, Esq.



Fellow Members of the FBA:

A year ago, my FBA presidency had not yet started. A year ago, our annual convention at Nemaocolin, for all the planning we'd already done to that point, was still little more than a hope and an expectancy of what was to come. A year ago, I knew dates on the calendar and, if pressed, would probably have conceded I had at least a general idea of what was in store (luncheons, meetings, and a different perspective from behind the microphone at the Bench Bar Dinner Dance!). A year ago, the FBA's Judicial Funding Task Force (JFTF), (headed by former FBA President Jay Myerson for the past several years) already knew its mission and its funding limitations. This time last year Jay and his JFTF knew they would likely have to do more with less, much less, in fact, if they were to maximize our chances of securing authorization and funding for much-needed judicial appointments here in our Fairfax Circuit and District Courts. Unlike the previous two fiscal years, this year's FBA budget did not include an allocation to fund a lobbyist in Richmond to assist in the effort, a line item which at one point exceeded \$40,000.00. The efforts of Jay and the dedicated team of JFTF volunteers have been nothing short of remarkable, dedicating hundreds of hours to the cause. The recent budget news out of Richmond is unquestionably the result of a lot of closed-door "politicking"—and exactly who agreed to what with whom might never be known!—but, collectively, we are all indebted to Jay Myerson and the entire JFTF, as their efforts, at the very least, assisted in a budgetary win for not only Fairfax and the Fairfax Bar Association, but also for every bar association and court in the Commonwealth.

On May 30, 2018, after a decade of authorized but unfunded Virginia judgeships, the General Assembly agreed to a budget that would fund all 435 authorized trial court judgeships by July of next year. Following the incredible news, I was approached by a reporter from *Virginia Lawyers Weekly* and gave the following statement:

"The budget vote reflects the culmination of a substantial effort over several years on the part of the FBA's Judicial Funding Task Force, spearheaded by our Past President Jay Myerson, who has put in countless hours coordinating this session in particular with the VBA and other local Bar organizations."

"We couldn't be more pleased with the ultimate decision to fund all of the authorized judicial vacancies statewide. Of course, we recognize and have long touted the specific benefits this will mean to our Fairfax County courts, sitting judiciary, and the general public and community at large, but it is especially gratifying for the FBA to have played such a key part this session in developing sufficient bi-partisan support and recognition by our legislative leaders in Richmond for a fully-funded judiciary statewide. Everyone involved in the effort has much to be proud of with this result."

"Now, of course, we turn our attention to the appointment process where we hope to achieve similar bipartisan support to get these seats filled on an expedited basis. Our FBA judicial selection process identified many exceptional candidates to fill the Fairfax vacancies. I'm just hoping our local delegation, and ultimately the entire General Assembly, can see fit to agree on those who will serve and do so without delay for the sake of all involved."

This budgetary news will take a huge weight off of the shoulders of FBA members and staff; by not having to worry about funding, we can focus all efforts on ensuring that our FBA Judicial Screening Process continues to be respected, remain relevant, and looked to and duplicated as a model vetting process. The efforts of those serving on the Judicial Selection Panel under the leadership and direction of its Chairman Wayne Travell and Vice-Chair Mike Shevlin, Courtnie Norris, Jana Seherer and the FBA staff, and of all those of you who took the time to consider and cast your votes were not for naught.

continued on page 14

FAIRFAX BAR JOURNAL

Official Newsletter of the
Fairfax Bar Association

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Hon. Gerald Bruce Lee (Ret.)

Retired Judge, U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Virginia

The Honorable Gerald Bruce Lee (Ret.) admirably served for nineteen years on the bench of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia. Prior to his appointment to the federal judiciary, Judge Lee served for over six years as a judge for the Fairfax Circuit Court, and before that, he was a trial lawyer representing individuals and businesses in complex civil disputes. Throughout his illustrious career, Judge Lee served his community on various boards and committees, including the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, as Chairman of the Virginia Judicial Conference Judicial Education Committee, and as a member of the Virginia Circuit Court Judges Benchbook Committee. Judge Lee now brings his record of excellence and achievement to The McCammon Group to serve the mediation, arbitration, special master, and judge pro tempore needs of lawyers and litigants throughout Virginia, D.C. and beyond.

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CANDIDATE FOR VICE PRESIDENT

DONNA R. BANKS, ESQ. BIO

continued from page 1

General's Office, Division of Child Support Enforcement. Donna has been with the Office of the Fairfax County Attorney since 2001, as an Assistant County Attorney representing the Department of Family Services on almost a daily basis within the Fairfax Court system. Donna has served on the FBA Board since July 2012. Donna is married to Richard Mey, a former Fairfax County Law Enforcement Officer, now with Fairfax County Public Schools, and resides in Fairfax along with her daughter, Ruby Langston Mey.

Please state your FBA involvement, including committee work, programs, and project participation and initiative.

FBA Board of Directors (2012-present). FBA Executive Board (2016-present); Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Committee: 2001-2006, 2008-2018 (Committee Chair 2010-2011; Committee Co-chair 2011-2012), compiling *Fairfax Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Manual* (2011-2016); assisted in the planning committee for the Fairfax Bar Conference, "Roll the Dice" in Las Vegas, NV; authored Abuse and Neglect Section of the *Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Manual* (2006); authored multiple sections within the proposed *Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Manual*, for roll out in June of 2016; speaker for the Juvenile and Domestic Relation District Court Manual Seminar, "Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children" (2002); Annual Criminal Law Seminar (1997); speaker for Elder Abuse Prevention Program by Adult Protective Orders (2015); Board Liaison for the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Committee (2013-2018); Board Liaison for the Legislative Committee (2014-2015); Board Liaison for the Continuing Legal Educational Committee (2015-2018); Model Judge Participant in the Model Judiciary Court Program (2014, 2016, 2017, and 2018).

What do you see as the FBA's priorities?

The FBA must instill and support communication within its body to ensure that it continues to be an essential organization to its members by providing all of its members with opportunities for educational exchange, as well as networking and mentoring opportunities. These communications must encompass communication among practicing attorneys, improve diversity within its programs and include communication with the Bench. As the needs of a more diversified community change, and in the face of technological advances and budget constraints, there needs to be greater opportunity for outreach and communication within the legal community and the non-legal community as well. Greater access to continuing legal education as well as an acknowledgement of diversity is key, in addition to the freedom to exchange ideas for the betterment of the organization. ■

CANDIDATES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RICHARD F. GIBBONS, JR., ESQ. - *Richard F. Gibbons, Jr., P.L.C.*

Richard has served on the FBA Board of Directors since 2013, and he is currently Secretary to the Board. He had extensive involvement with the Legislative Committee where he served as Chair (2003-2005 and 2008-2010), Co-Chair (2005-2006), and Vice-Chair (2002-2003, 2007-2008). Richard is the principal of the law offices of Richard F. Gibbons, Jr., PLC in Fairfax, VA. His practice is predominantly in the areas of family law and criminal law. He earned his B.A. degree from the College of the Holy Cross (1984), and his J.D. degree from the College of William & Mary (1987). A native of Fairfax County, he resides in Oakton with his wife, Cynthia Bailey, and their three children.

Please state your FBA involvement, including committee work, programs, and project participation and initiative.

I have been actively involved in the FBA for over 17 years. During this time I served as the Chair for the Legislative Committee for four years, and I was either Co-Chair or Vice-Chair of that committee for another three years. In addition, I have served on the Circuit Court Committee since 2007. I have been a member of the FBA Board since 2013, and I am currently Secretary to the Board.

What do you see as the FBA's priorities?

The FBA has four priorities: (1) to educate our members about recent developments in the law across a wide spectrum of practice areas; (2) to foster opportunities for networking and collegial relationships among members of the Bar; (3) to support programs and efforts that provide legal services for those who face financial or other obstacles to the legal system; and (4) to advocate for resources for Fairfax County Courts, including the full staffing of the judiciary, and to provide input on selection of judges.

SARAH A. HENSLEY, ESQ. - *Fairfax County Attorney's Office*

Sarah began her involvement with the FBA in 2007 as a Board Member of the Young Lawyer's Section. For the past several years, she has served on the Circuit Court Committee, first as the Civil Litigation Subcommittee Chair (2015-2017) and currently as Chair (2017-2018). This year, she is serving as one of the Co-Editors-in-Chief of the Ninth Edition of the *Circuit Court Practice Manual*. Sarah also enjoys participating in performances of *Joey Wolfcryer* in elementary schools around the County as a volunteer for the FBA's Law Related Education Committee.

continued on page 6

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CANDIDATES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sarah A. Hensley, Esq. Bio continued from page 4

Please state your FBA involvement, including committee work, programs, and project participation and initiative.

When I first joined the FBA, I served on the Young Lawyer's Committee. Upon returning to practice in Fairfax a few years ago, I joined the Circuit Court Committee. I initially served as Chair of the Civil Litigation Subcommittee. During my term, the Subcommittee proposed changes to motions day procedures, which ultimately resulted in changing some motions to compel to one-week motions. For the past year, I've served as Chair of the Circuit Court Committee. In this role, I've led two major projects: creating and proposing changes related to audio recording in the courtrooms, and serving as one of the Co-Editors-in-Chief of the *Circuit Court Practice Manual*. I've also volunteered with the mock trials put on during the Chocolate Lovers Festival and at local schools.

What do you see as the FBA's priorities?

The biggest priorities are responding to members' concerns and providing a platform to engage the bench and the bar. Educating members is also key: CLEs improve everyone's practice by teaching how to be more efficient in litigation, staying abreast of changes in the law, encouraging more congeniality, and serving our clients' needs.

JOHN A. KASSABIAN, ESQ. - *Kassabian & Kassabian, P.L.C.*

John Kassabian is a partner at Kassabian & Kassabian, P.L.C., engaged in the general practice of law with an emphasis in criminal defense. He is the Fairfax City Prosecutor and, since 2007, has regularly served as a substitute judge. John is a former Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney for Fairfax County and Prince William County. He serves on the Virginia State Bar Disciplinary Committee, the Virginia State Bar Special Committee on Lawyer Referral Service, the Fairfax Bar Association Board of Directors and the Circuit Court, General District Court and Juvenile Domestic Relations District Court Committees of the Fairfax Bar Association. John is the Ombudsman of the FBA General District Court Judicial Feedback Program and recipient of two FBA President's Awards. John is a member of the George Mason American Inn of Court and a lifelong resident of Fairfax County.

Please state your FBA involvement, including committee work, programs, and project participation and initiative.

Board of Directors, 2015 to Present; Circuit Court Committee, 2015 to present; General District Court Committee, 2008 to present; Chairman of the General District Court Committee, 2009-2013; Co-Chairman of the General District Court Committee, 2013-2014; Vice Chairman of the General District Court Committee, 2008-2009; Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Committee; Ombudsman of the General District Court Judicial Feedback Program; Mentor of the Fairfax Bar Association Mentorship Program; Co-editor of the *2012 Updated Manual of Pre-trial Sentencing & Screening Programs*; worked with members of the General District Court Committee, General District Court Judges, Clerks and members of the bar implementing DWI/DUI procedures in the General District Court; worked with members of the Circuit Court Committee updating the criminal section of the *Circuit Court Practice Manual*; participant in Color of Justice Program and Devonshire Program.

What do you see as the FBA's priorities?

To bring members of the bar together to meet, interact, and build lasting relationships. To collectively work with judges, clerks, court personnel, and members of the bar in an open and transparent process and to offer thoughtful insight and solutions to important issues that arise concerning the administration of justice in our court system. To ensure the highest level of ethics, integrity, fairness, and professionalism are met, maintained and promoted. To ensure open access to legal services. To increase and enhance the legal skill of our bar members. To offer continuing legal education programs.

KARA LEE, ESQ. - *Maddox & Gerock, P.C.*

Kara has been active with the FBA since before she was even an attorney, joining the FBA while she was still in law school. Immediately upon graduation, she joined the FBA Young Lawyers Board, where she served as a Director from 2012 to 2015. She coordinated and ran a variety of events, including Breakfasts and Cocktail hours with the Judges, Lawyerpalooza, CLEs, and events to encourage new membership and camaraderie. In 2016, she was honored to serve as President of the Young Lawyers Board, and she presently sits on the FBA Board of Directors in her role as Past-President of the Young Lawyers Board. She has also served on the Color of Justice Subcommittee, the Law Foundation 5k Committee, and regularly attends and volunteers at FBA events (Law Day Weiner Roast, Jazz for Justice, etc.)

Please state your FBA involvement, including committee work, programs, and project participation and initiative.

I have actively served on the FBA Young Lawyer's Board since 2012, and served as President of the Young Lawyer's Board from 2016-2017. I presently sit on the FBA Board of Directors, albeit in my role as past president of the Young Lawyers Board and in an *ex officio* capacity. I have planned and volunteered with the Color of Justice Program; planned, coordinated, and moderated CLEs, have volunteered for the Law Foundation 5k for the majority of the last 5 years, and even served on the 5k subcommittee.

What do you see as the FBA's priorities?

Community involvement, outreach, finding ways to serve those who need legal assistance, as well as serving our members and ensuring the already difficult job of being an attorney advocate is a little more efficient, perhaps easier, and certainly kinder.

continued on page 8

LAWYER REFERRAL SERVICE NEWS

By William A. Musto, Esq., Roeder, Cochran, Phillips, PLLC. and
Donna J. McBride, Director, FBA LRS

From its humble beginnings in the early 1980's when a Rolodex file of attorneys was used to assist with citizen queries, the FBA Lawyer Referral Service (FBA LRS) has grown to provide thousands of citizens each year with assistance in obtaining legal help. In any given year, approximately 2,500 referrals are processed by FBA LRS employees and four to five times that number of phone calls and Internet requests are fielded from those requesting general information and referrals to consumer, governmental, and other agencies.

The FBA LRS has continued to improve its operations and has morphed into one of the country's premier referral services. We continue to be certified by the American Bar Association as meeting its standards for a referral service, something achieved by only a fraction of the referral services nationwide. Additionally, our panel members have benefited from recent sources of advertising through our marketing endeavors. In the past couple years, we have chosen to focus on Internet-based referrals and have implemented a successful Google AdWords campaign. The Courts, as well as other consumer and governmental organizations, also continue to provide a strong sources of referrals.

The FBA LRS continues to have an exceptionally low "no show" rate of 3-5 percent and its record of approximately 20 percent of referrals resulting in attorneys being retained by the clients is in line with nationwide statistics. In the past few fiscal years, FBA LRS referrals have resulted in annual income to member attorneys of \$1.4 to \$1.6 million.

Each year, the American Bar Association sponsors a national workshop for referral services that operate in all areas of the country. This meeting allows referral services to compare their best practices, as well as financial and statistical results, with others nationwide and to share ideas for improvement.

At the 2017 ABA National Lawyer Referral Workshop, Stephen Steinberg, Chair, ABA Standing Committee on Lawyer Referral and Information Services, presented results of their first ever "comprehensive data study on the collective impact of lawyer referral services nationwide." Data, including referrals, panelists, fees, marketing, revenue, etc., was collected from approximately 55 percent of all LRS programs. The conclusion was that lawyer referral programs "have a dramatic impact on the delivery of legal services and access to justice, including vetted attorneys, alternative legal and community resources, as well as attorney members' business development efforts and retained casework."

The survey discovered the following:

- 1,522,796 people contacted LRS programs in 2017 via email and telephone;
- 522,150 were referred to community-based, *pro bono* legal services, governmental, or social services organizations;
- 561,825 were referred to a lawyer;
- Of those referred, 119,179 individuals retained an LRS attorney;
- 18,210 attorneys participated in the surveyed LRS programs;
- LRS programs spent an average of \$20,000 annually to market their services;
- Top referral sources were courts, attorneys, legal aid, and the Internet;
- For those programs charging referral fees, costs ranged from \$15 to \$50 for the initial consultation;
- The average net income for those LRS programs collecting percentage fees was ten times that of those not collecting such fees and it was determined that percentage fees were essential in order for LRS programs to be financially self-sustaining.

The survey was undertaken in order to provide program directors with data by which to compare their individual LRS programs with nationwide trends and to "highlight the enormous impact LRS programs are having."

As the FBA LRS continues to strive to provide this vital public service, we appreciate the support of our members, as well as those attorneys not a part of our service who use the LRS as a resource to refer clients they are unable to assist. If you are contacted by a potential client and find that the matter is outside your particular area of practice, we certainly would appreciate you sending that potential client to the FBA LRS. They can call us at 703-246-3780 or direct them to the FBA website at www.fairfaxbar.org. If you have any questions about the FBA LRS or would like to become a part of this service, please call us at 703-246-3784 or email our director, Donna McBride at dmcbride@fairfaxbar.org. The application for membership is located on the FBA website under Member Services – Lawyer Referral Service. ■

CANDIDATES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

continued from page 6

ELANNA WEINSTEIN, ESQ. - *The Myerson Law Group, P.C.*

Elanna Weinstein is a senior associate with The Myerson Law Group, P.C. Elanna has been on the Circuit Court Committee since 2009 and has been a member of the Domestic Relations Subcommittee since 2012. She is currently a co-chair of the Domestic Relations Subcommittee. Elanna is listed as a contributor to the 2014 *Fairfax County Circuit Court Practice Manual*, assisted with revisions to the next edition of the *Manual*, helped organize numerous CLEs, and was a speaker at one of the CLEs she organized. She has also served as the chair of the FBA'S Legislative Committee since 2016. Elanna has been a member of the FBA's Judicial Funding Task Force since 2014 and focuses on funding for judgeships on the Circuit Court. She served on the Board of the Young Lawyers Section from 2010 through 2014. Elanna resides in Northern Virginia with her husband, two children, and rescue dog, Snoopy.

Please state your FBA involvement, including committee work, programs, and project participation and initiative.

I have been a member of the Fairfax Bar Association since 2008. I was on the Board of the Young Lawyers Section from 2010 through 2012. I have been on the Circuit Court Committee since 2009, and a member of the Domestic Relations Subcommittee since 2012. I am currently a Co-Chair of that subcommittee. I was Vice-Chair of the Legislative Committee from 2014 through 2016 and have been Chair of that committee since 2016. I have also been a judicial funding liaison for the Circuit Court.

What do you see as the FBA's priorities?

I see the FBA's priorities as increasing member benefits; increasing community support; retaining current members and obtaining new members; providing learning opportunities; creating networking opportunities; promoting relationships between members of the Bar; and enabling interactions between members of the Bar and the Bench.

ROBERT M. WORSTER, III, ESQ. - *Cooper Ginsberg Gray PLLC*

Rob Worster is an attorney and partner with Cooper Ginsberg Gray PLLC and holds an "AV Preeminent Rating" from Martindale-Hubbell. Rob joined the Fairfax County Board of Directors in 2017 and the Fairfax Law Foundation's Board of Directors in 2018. Rob is actively involved in the FBA's Circuit Court Committee, Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Committee, Domestic Relations Subcommittee, *Pro Bono* Subcommittee, *Pro Se* Subcommittee, Fairfax Law Foundation, and the Circuit Court Judicial Feedback Program (Ombudsman to Judge Randy I. Bellows).

Rob also serves on the faculty of the Virginia State Bar's Carrico Professionalism Course and is Secretary to the Fifth District Disciplinary Committee.

Rob Worster was recently named *Pro Bono* Lawyer of the Year by the Northern Virginia *Pro Bono* Law Center. In addition to his legal career, Rob is a musician, artisan, and youth coach.

Please state your FBA involvement, including committee work, programs, and project participation and initiative.

Director, Fairfax Bar Association Board of Directors (2017 to present).

Ombudsman of the FBA's Circuit Court Judicial Feedback Program (J. Bellows).

Member, Fairfax Bar Association (FBA) (2006 to present).

Member, Fairfax Law Foundation (FLF) (2018 to present).

Member, FLF Ad Hoc Committee on Grants (2017 to present).

Member, Joint FBA/FLF Task Force on *Pro Bono* Funding (2018 to present).

Member, FBA Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Committee (2017 to present).

Member, FBA Circuit Court *Pro Bono* Committee (2016 to present).

Member, FBA Circuit Court Committee (2008 to present).

Co-Chair, FBA Circuit Court Domestic Relations Subcommittee (2016–2017).

Co-Chair, FBA Circuit Court *Pro Se* Subcommittee (2016–2017).

Volunteer, Domestic Violence Attorney of the Day (2010 to present).

Volunteer, *Pro Bono* Legal Services, Neighborhood Outreach Program (2017 to present).

Volunteer, Chipping in to End Domestic Violence golf tournament (for the benefit of the Fairfax County Homeless Shelter).

What do you see as the FBA's priorities?

It is critical to preserve the financial resources that have been built up over many years of consistently prudent stewardship. Only then will adequate resources exist during economic downturns to continue investing in all FBA priorities.

It is also imperative to preserve and enhance the reputation of the FBA. The integrity and proud tradition of the FBA has not been challenged in recent memory.

Next, the board should routinely insist that the staff of the FBA is competitively paid and that any barriers to job satisfaction are promptly removed.

continued on page 10

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Please see additional photos on page 13



It's a Family Matter



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2018 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

The Fairfax Bar Association (FBA) has established two \$500 scholarships to benefit its members. The scholarships are available to students who demonstrate diligence and commitment to their studies and academic excellence, as well as an interest in the pursuit of law related studies.

Applicants must either be a current member in good standing of the FBA, or related to (as defined by Va Code 16.1-228) a current member in good standing of the FBA. Neither members of the FBA Board of Directors, nor anyone related to a member of the FBA Board of Directors, are eligible to apply.

Applicants must have been a student with a grade point average of at least 3.0 during high school (and college or law school, if applicable), and must be accepted, or expect to be accepted, for the 2018 fall semester into post-secondary education or training, and be pursuing education in law related study.

An original application must be postmarked or otherwise submitted no later than July 31, 2018 by mail: Fairfax Bar Association, 4110 Chain Bridge Road, Suite 216, Fairfax, VA 22030; by fax: 703-273-1274 (fax); or online: www.fairfaxbar.org.

To obtain a scholarship application, please call the FBA office at 703-246-2740 or apply online at www.fairfaxbar.org. ■

CANDIDATES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Robert W. Worster, III, Esq. Bio continued from page 8

The FBA should seek to exceed its stated mission, to serve its members by:

- Cultivating professional competence, collegiality and diversity;
- Facilitating interactions between its members and members of the Bench;
- Fostering the public's understanding of the practice of law and the judicial system;
- Operating a public law library; and
- Serving as a leading voice of the legal profession.

Finally, it should be responsive to its membership and the public at large. ■

SECRETS TO A GREAT CLE

By James N. Markels, Chair, CLE Committee

What makes for a great CLE? There are several factors to consider.

Maybe it's the speakers. Members of the Fairfax Bar want to see experienced practitioners talking about the craft, with many years of war stories bolstering the learning one receives from reading case law and statutes. It's one thing to know a rule, and another to have seen the rule in action. What about those cases that fall "between the cracks" of what appears to be an established precedent or rule? Experienced practitioners are expected to have seen it all, or at least have a good feel for how things will play out in an untested case. And it always helps if that panelist is also engaging with good presentation skills.

Bar members also want to hear from the judges on the bench who handle the areas of law that practitioners are engaged in. Not only are those judges experienced as former practitioners, but they now have the new perspective that comes from presiding over cases rather than making a case. Judges see the mistakes that practitioners tend to make over and over. They also see examples of particularly good advocacy. That is a big reason why FBA CLEs always strive to have a judge on the panel.

Or maybe it's the topic. We have all seen a title of a CLE and immediately thought, "Wow, that's totally up my alley!" As diverse as our practices are, and as specialized as some of us get in those areas, a topic that resonates with the problems you face is always a welcome sight. Perhaps there was a nagging issue in your case that you weren't sure how to resolve, or there was a question you wanted to ask but didn't want to ask it in the heat of a hearing or trial, when it would be too late to change course. Sometimes providence brings you a CLE perfectly trained on the topic that might help you solve those conundrums. (Or, even better, you can suggest them yourself on the FBA web site at: <http://www.fairfaxbar.org/page/CLEProposal>).

Or maybe it's the handouts. You could have a great speaker give a great presentation on a topic that matters to you, but a year later when a problem comes up and you have some sort of vague memory of it being discussed at a CLE, where can you turn? Hopefully you keep your written materials from your CLEs (which is even easier now that the FBA emails you links to the materials online—now you can just save them on your computer for easy reference), and can flip back and see what was discussed. Good CLE materials can make a difference down the line and help you solve issues long after your memory has faded, or at least help get you on the right track toward an answer.

Doubtlessly all of these are important. But one factor that I think can make the most difference is the audience. The CLEs I remember best are the ones where the audience got involved, early and often, asking tough questions and sharing their own experiences (without grandstanding, of course). After all, the panel is not the only source of expertise on a subject. Sometimes there are issues that the panelists have not considered. And sometimes the most important lessons from a CLE didn't come from the agenda at all, but from a dialogue that delved deeper into a topic.

In other words, your participation in a CLE can be the thing that makes a good CLE a great one. Find the CLEs that make a difference in your practice, and then be an active part of the learning process. Our shared wisdom is a powerful tool in making us all better practitioners, and better able to serve the legal needs of our communities. See you at the next CLE! ■

THE STATE OF *PRO BONO* ADDRESS

By Arlene K. Beckerman, Esq., Director of Pro Bono Activities

The Fairfax Law Foundation and the Northern Virginia *Pro Bono* Law Center were the recipients of a generous matching grant from the FBA in the amount of \$40,000 for the 07/01/17 – 06/30/18 fiscal year. This enabled the Law Foundation to reach its fundraising goal of \$80,000 in this campaign, an important part of the funding for the Law Center. The FBA stepped in to assist the Law Center at a particularly difficult moment. A prior grant of \$80,000 had not been renewed and this created a huge gap in the Law Center's annual budget. The FBA recognized the importance of the legal community's ongoing obligation to support access to justice and provide civil legal assistance to those most in need. This matching contribution encouraged donors to come together and help ensure that the work of the Law Center would continue.

The Law Center is closely aligned with the FBA. Its work is funded through the Fairfax Law Foundation, the nonprofit arm of the FBA. FBA members provide the core group of *pro bono* attorneys who carry out the work in support of its mission. The FBA *Pro Bono* Advisory Committee provides valuable assistance to the program, and the two organizations share an Executive Director.

The Fairfax Law Foundation and the Northern Virginia *Pro Bono* Law Center were able to raise the matching funds from both individuals and groups who gave generously. The Law Center is grateful both to the FBA and the many others who supported this campaign, and appreciates all of the contributions. Of particular note, the Law Center wishes to thank the Venable Foundation for an award of \$10,000, and McGuire Woods, LLP for a gift of \$5,000. Additionally, those who donated \$2,000 or more are:

Morrison & Foerster
Hunton & Williams LLP
Troutman Sanders LLP
Odin, Feldman & Pittleman, P.C.
Catherine Reese, Esq.

William P. Daly, Jr., the President of the Fairfax Law Foundation, reflected on the work of the FLF as he nears the end of his term. He noted that the FLF has a number of excellent programs and projects, but none more important than providing hundreds of thousands of dollars annually in legal work by Fairfax Bar Association (FBA) members to charitable organizations and citizens of Fairfax County that are less fortunate. He added that in order to provide this tremendous legal assistance to those in our community, professional staff is necessary. Arlene Beckerman, Director of *Pro Bono* Activities, and *Pro Bono* Assistant, Laura Greer, provide the necessary and time-consuming tasks involving intake, initial case reports, coordinating with charitable organizations, and more. On the other side of the equation, the staff solicits and coordinates the efforts of numerous attorneys and paralegals who provide hundreds of hours of volunteer time, including top-quality and practical CLEs to train attorneys to provide the necessary services.

Mr. Daly acknowledged that previous assistance had been provided during the first year of the potential crisis by a generous donation to the FLF and the *Pro Bono* Law Center by the firms of Kelly & Crandall PLC and Consumer Litigation Associates, P.C. in the amount of \$60,000.00.

The FLF and the Northern Virginia *Pro Bono* Law Center are now happy to report that the Consolidated Community Funding Pool (CCFP) of Fairfax County, through the Board of Supervisors, has approved funding for Fiscal Years 2019 and 2020. In addition, the Law Center is the recipient of a grant from the Community Foundation of Northern Virginia. This new funding enables the FLF and the *Pro Bono* Law Center to continue providing excellent services to those individuals and families in need in our community and to some of the charitable organizations that assist them.

The work of the Law Center is necessary and ongoing. It provides vital legal assistance to clients who often have nowhere else to turn. Through its various programs, *pro bono* lawyers donate their time in serious and important matters. The volunteers help clients avoid wrongful evictions, provide for a safe and stable future for children, sever unhealthy and dysfunctional relationships, terminate claims for unjustified debt collection, counsel employees, and more. The Law Center provides important life planning documents for low-income seniors and disabled persons through Wills on Wheels, meets clients in safe and convenient spaces in their neighborhoods, works with micro businesses trying to get started, and more.

As always, any assistance you can provide, either in the form of time or money, is greatly appreciated for the significant work being performed through the Fairfax Law Foundation and the *Pro Bono* Law Center. If interested in providing either financial support or volunteering your time, please contact Courtnie Norris at 703-246-2732 or Arlene Beckerman at 703-246-3779 or by email at abeckerman@fairfaxbar.org. ■

NEW MEMBERS

FEBRUARY

Benjamin Ader
Dipo Akin-Deko
Olivia M. Bean
Eugene Benick
Gregory Caffas
Randolph T. Critzer Jr.
Nora E. Kelly
Julia S. Kopcienski
Omar Koussa
Juliana Lyons
Bret Marfut
Elizabeth McCall McCauley
Tatiana Pavlova
Sarah Silberman
Jakob T. Stalnaker
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Leslie Tope
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Lesa Yeatts

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Catherine Chapple
Scott Dinner
Sherry R. Fitzgerald
Oliver Garcia
Kathryn Humphrey
Willie A. Mejia
Olha Melnychuk
Ryan Rafferty
Paula W. Rank
Stuart Rosenburg
Rachel E. Rubinstein
Keith A. Schostag
David I. Whiting

APRIL

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Carolyn Bostick
Kathleen Brown
Alisa Chunephisal
Rebecca Cusey
Michael Fay
Larysa Kautz
Susanna Lansley
Timothy Parr
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Jack Goehring
Brandi Howell
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Bench Bar

"Black & White Ball"

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Cameron | McEvoy PLLC

DIAMOND "EXCLUSIVE BAND" SPONSOR - \$5,000
Offit Kurman P.C.

PEARL SPONSORS - \$2,500

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Marks & Glass
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Odin, Feldman & Pittleman, P.C.
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Law Office of Aaron Christoff, PLLC
Sonya M. Duchak, Esq.
The Geller Group, PLLC
Law Office of Jennifer S. Joffe PLC
ShounBach

Bench Bar Dinner Dance Recap

By Jason A. Weis, Esq.

Saturday March 3, 2018, the Fairfax Bar Association once again hosted its annual Bench Bar Dinner Dance. Themed “Black & White Ball” by the Bar Association, this year’s event at the Fairview Park Marriott allowed guests to show-off their black and white best (and notably muted the colorful dress attire of past years).

Hosting almost 500 judges, attorneys, and legal community members, the Bench Bar Dinner Dance is the largest social event in the Northern Virginia legal community. It provides an annual opportunity for lawyers and judges to mingle in an informal setting, albeit in formal attire. Several dozen generous sponsors helped make the night a bit more dazzling, including notable donations from Cameron/McEvoy PLLC, who provided guests with a delicious chocolate dessert imprinted with its firm logo, and Offit Kurman P.C., who accented the lively band’s performance with a custom light display.

“The members of my firm look forward to the Bench Bar Dinner Dance every year,” noted Edward W. (Sunny) Cameron, Esq. of Cameron | McEvoy. “It is one of the only opportunities throughout the year to interact with many of Fairfax’s finest. Courtnie and the entire FBA staff do a masterful job of organizing and overseeing the event and making it the truly great success that it is year after year.”

Tom Repczynski, Esq. of Offit Kurman P.C., President of the Fairfax Bar Association graciously toasted the evening’s commencement and paid special tribute to the tireless service of Courtnie Norris. “While it is always great to see my colleagues in a non-adversarial setting, the highlight of my evening was paying tribute to Courtnie Norris’ 20 years of dedication to the FBA,” observed Robert Worster, Esq. of Cooper Ginsberg Gray PLLC.

The night’s menu included passed hors d’oeuvres during an open bar reception featuring specialty drinks such as “White Knight” and “Black Magic” followed by a three-course plated dinner in the hotel’s main ballroom. The night’s band “Kristen and the Noise” hit things off a bit later than in years past, but offered an eclectic assortment of songs that kept the energy high and attendees entertained. Souvenir photographs were once again provided by Anne Lord Photography.

“Being a judge can be very isolating and we judges really enjoy getting together with the lawyers that we usually only see in a professional setting,” explained the Honorable Judge Bruce D. White. “The Bench Bar Dinner Dance is also a great opportunity to interact with some of the younger lawyers who are new to the bar and may not have yet appeared before us. Unfortunately, the event is always on the same night as the North Carolina vs. Duke basketball game, which means my wife ends up paying a little more attention to checking scores than she does to listening to my fascinating war stories.”

This year’s event enjoyed a boost of youthful enthusiasm thanks to a donation of tickets to the Young Lawyers Section of the Bar Association. Young lawyer Jenna Maresco, Esq. of Curran Moher Weis echoed the sentiments of many first-time participants. “This having been the first year that I attended the Bench Bar Dinner, it was great to see the Fairfax legal community come together for a fun event outside of the professional setting where we normally interact. The Bench Bar Dinner was an enjoyable night of eating, socializing, and dancing where those attending were able to catch up with old friends and make some new friends as well. I am happy to have attended this year and look forward to making it an annual tradition.”

All participants emphasized their appreciation for the Bar Association staff, who clearly worked hard to ensure a delightful time was had by all. A special debt of gratitude should be paid to all of the Bar Association staff members, including Courtnie Norris, Jana Sehrer, Caitlin Warren, Brianna Allen, Kerri Yates, and Arlene Beckerman. Plans for the 2019 Dinner Dance are apparently already underway. If anyone has comments, suggestions, or recommendations for themes, bands, etc., they can be forwarded to jsehrer@fairfaxbar.org. I look forward to seeing everyone next year. ■

HEROES v. VILLAINS

photos continued from page 9



A VOLUNTEER LIKE NO OTHER

*By Sonya M. Duchak, Esq.
and the Entire Law Related Education Committee*

The Law Related Education Committee would like to take the opportunity to say thank you to all of the volunteers who have given so much of their time this past year to the Court Tours, the Devonshire Program, the Elementary Mock School Trials, the Middle Schools Speakers Program, the High Schools Speakers Program, Chocolate Lovers Festival, and the many moot court and other school competitions. To date, over 175 individuals have volunteered over 400 hours to these programs. The recipients have been our most cherished members of the community—our students. Thank you all for giving back like no other group to the community.

The LREC would also like to send a very special thanks to the one volunteer who is an inspiration to us all—Suzy Swain. In 1995, when the Fairfax Bar Association began its long tradition of sponsoring the Court Tours, Suzy was right there alongside every court tour guide. Now, even after retiring 3 years ago after more than 35 years with the General District Court, Suzy is still there for every court tour. She greets the students. She makes sure there is an empty courtroom available for them to enter. She finds a deputy to open the holding cell so the students can see what it looks like up close and personal. Suzy takes the time to explain to the students the entire Fairfax County Courthouse system—the three separate courts, the relationship between them, the types of cases heard—and recalls some of the more “interesting” cases heard at our courthouse. If a J&DR judge is not available to present the mock trial to the students, Suzy looks in every courtroom for a General District Court judge who might have a few minutes free. She spends at least two hours at every court tour, of which there are 50 or more per school year. This is dedication to its fullest. She does all of this because she knows how important it is to the students and the teachers. Suzy, the entire community is extremely grateful to you for all that you do for the students.

The LREC is always looking for volunteers. It continues to work with Fairfax County Public Schools and other education groups to provide a meaningful law related educational experience for students of all ages. We ask that you think of Suzy and her countless hours of volunteering and let her be an inspiration to you, too, to come join us in one of our many programs. ■

President's Column

continued from page 2

Our collective sense is that while there certainly appears to be a healthy dose of political wrangling impacting the judicial selection and appointment process once the FBA and local Bars here in Fairfax have completed our own substantial vetting process, there is, to my knowledge, universal support and appreciation across party lines among our local delegation for the process itself and the assistance our process ultimately provides the members of the delegation in reaching informed decisions about who best to seat on our three local courts in the 19th Circuit and District—regardless of whether they can agree on who that may end up being.

The final weeks of my FBA presidency have been eventful to say the least. I am indebted to the hard work and grit shown by our members during this hectic and chaotic period. Before I sign off and before I officially turn over the gavel to our President-Elect Christie Leary, I would be remiss if I did not say the following: As FBA President I have the privilege of publicly recognizing and awarding outstanding commitment over the course of the year by individuals whose dedication to the Bar, its mission, and its ideals, rise to extraordinary levels. To be sure, we as an organization and as a legal community are truly blessed with an abundance of good will and selflessness of hundreds of volunteers whose laudable efforts, commitment and achievements, we recognize in many ways—such as our annual *pro bono* service awards and the annual Kassabian award, to name just a couple examples—but not so often that another public shout out here could reasonably be considered inappropriate. So, I conclude my presidential year as I began it, with a heartfelt and much deserved “thank you!” to all of you who have given and continue to give of yourselves to one or more of our FBA programs, causes, sections, committees, and/or countless initiatives and undertakings. Without each of you and the energy and commitment you bring to your FBA service, this past year as your President would have been both utterly impossible for me and easily forgettable. Moreover, we wouldn't be the premier local Bar organization we are today. So, to paraphrase the inimitable Bill Murray, from *Caddyshack*: “We've got that going for us...which is nice!” I'm out. ■

UPCOMING EVENTS & CLEs

June 19

ANNUAL MEETING LUNCHEON

12:00 PM - Registration & Social Reception

12:30 PM - Luncheon Program

Maggiano's Little Italy,
2001 International Drive
McLean, VA 22102

\$40 FBA Members; \$45 Non-Members

June 29

2018 9TH EDITION FAIRFAX CIRCUIT COURT PRACTICE MANUAL CLE

2:30 - 6:45 PM - CLE

6:45 - 8:00 PM - Reception

4.0 MCLE (1.0) Ethics) Credits (*Approved*)

Fairfax County Government Center
12000 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, VA 22030

\$300 - FBA Attorney Members

\$375 - Attorney Non-Members

October 24-27

2018 FBA ANNUAL CONVENTION

Omni Nashville Hotel
250 5th Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37203



Congratulations both to Offit Kurman's own

THOMAS W. REPCZYNSKI

on your successful year as President of the Fairfax Bar Association

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10621 Jones Street, Unit 201-A - 950 SF main flr. unit w/efficient layout! Lrg. recep/admin area, privt. office, lrg. conf. rm. w/built-in book-cases, stor. clst, eat-in kit/break room, BA & util. clst. Plenty free surface parking and uniform exterior signage available. Paint will be touched-up and suite cleaned prior to occupancy. 2 - 5 yr. term. **LEASE - \$1,345/mo per unit + elec, cln, phone & internet paid by tenant.**

4122 Leonard Drive (at Judicial Drive) - 1,100 SF on main lvl. directly across from FFX Crths! Townhouse-style office in Lawyers Row; Main lvl/Suite 100 has 2 offices, conf. rm, recep. area, admin area, BA, shared kit/brkm. & stor. closets. Newly painted & owner will replace carpet in tenant's choice of color w/2-yr min. lease. **LEASE - \$1,500/mo + 50 % util. & cln. paid by tenant.**

3919 Old Lee Highway, Unit 83-C - Close to FFX County Courthouse! Lovely upper lvl. End unit has high ceilings & great windowline for lots of natural light, 3 privt. offices, lrg. recep/waiting rm. or meeting space, admin. office or file rm, storage clsts, kitchenette & BA. Plenty parking & ext. signage allowed. **LEASE - \$1,750/mo + elec, cln, phone & internet paid by tenant.**

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