

# NHCBA

*Encouraging Each Other to Excess...*

## MARBLE CHIPS

THE NEW HAVEN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION APRIL 1, 2009

### State to Bail Out Local Bar Association

*by Bernie Maddox*

**T**he Connecticut Judicial Branch has agreed to bail out the fiscally troubled New Haven County Bar Association (NHCBA) in an amount not to exceed \$500,000.00.

Floundering since its investments in local hedge funds soured with the September '08 market crash, the local bar faced closing its doors unless funding was located from an independent source. Without funding the bar will be unable to finance its now legendary fact-finding junkets for the Executive Committee. Last summer, the local bar sent its Executive Committee to Mississippi on a private Lear jet to hear, among others, Blind Willy Walker sing his renowned blues saga, the *Legal Aid Blues*.

"The planned redecoration of my corner suite has been stalled pending these funds," said Executive Director Carrie Witt. "We had ordered imported mahogany paneling from Ghana and a wet-bar previously used in the Taft Hotel Ballroom. These items were essential to the operation of my offices," she added.

The bail-out will also release the promised bonuses to NHCBA staff and incentive awards to committee chairs, all of which totaled \$250,000.00 in this year's budget. "It is always a pleasure to support local lawyers and their associations which seem to be in tough financial straits", Governor Jodi Rell quipped today.

This action will likely place on hold a planned merger of the NHCBA with the Putnam County Bar Association, which

Executive Director Witt had touted as a solution to local monetary deficiencies. "Putnam has lots of cash and nowhere to spend it. Have you ever been in Putnam?", she noted.

Local Bar Association member Joseph Dobrowolski has agreed to secure payments of the bail-out with his pending negligence case files, provided local members of the Bar drive him home each night.

### Chief Justice Announces Mandatory Steroid Testing

*by Barry Rodriguez*

**I**n a move that promises to evoke strong reactions from the New Haven legal community, Chief Justice Chase Rogers has implemented a pilot program of mandatory steroid testing for attorneys in the New Haven Judicial District. The program will take effect on April 1, 2009.

The new policy, announced in the wake of the Alex Rodriguez disclosures, will require random testing of all local attorneys. The tests will be conducted in the lockup of the GA 23 Courthouse at 121 Elm Street.

*Continued on page 4*



### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**April 12 - Bruce Jacobs Goes Skiing**

**May 1 - Jane Milas's Annual Shoe Sale**

**May 17 - Preparing the Hon. Jon Silbert for Jeopardy**

**June 10 - Carrie Witt's Pedicure & Manicure**

**July 22 - Seminar: Navigating the Courthouse  
Metal Detectors: what NOT to wear**

**\$\$ MASSIVE BAIL-OUT ISSUE \$\$**



# News Briefs

## TAKE A JUDGE TO WORK DAY

by Edward Whalley

The NHCBA has announced an extension of its very successful "Take a Child to Work Day" Program. The innovative new program, entitled "Take a Judge to Work Day", will be implemented on April 1, 2009. It's goal, said NHCBA spokesperson Wally Ballou, is to allow members of the bench to re-live the joys of private practice.

Judges will be teamed with a private practitioner. As implemented the program will begin at 5:00 pm when the judge will meet at the attorney's office and participate in making and receiving telephone calls to and from unhappy clients. Part of the program will consist of asking when the fee will be forthcoming, and explaining why, although the armed robber in Montville got a suspended sentence and an apology, a similar offer will not be forthcoming in the New Haven Judicial District.

Participating judges will meet their partners at GA 23 at 9:30 am the following morning to wait in line to speak with prosecutors and to try to explain why speeding cases do not need "victim contact" or 25 hours of community service.

Thereafter the judges will visit 235 Church Street, third floor, to engage in attempting to resolve domestic relations cases with an emphasis on dividing silverware and furniture.

Lunch will be provided in the form of a Hershey Bar, which is to be consumed on the way to Rockville to address the motor vehicle problems of the attorney's distant relatives. Cell phone use will be prohibited during travel times with the exception of child care emergencies, communications from court personnel about missed appearances and default judgments, or bookkeepers relaying complaints of unpaid bills.

The day will be concluded with a return to the lawyer's office for a repeat of the previous night's telephone ritual. ☺

## SPECIAL DISCOUNTS OFFERED NHCBA MEMBERS

by John Dixwell

NHCBA Executive Director Carolyn Witt has announced that the Association has established a significant number of "Preferred Vendor" relationships with many new businesses. These relationships, she explained, will benefit members by providing savings discounts for many necessary and useful supplies, services and other items.

The newly-linked vendors are Mory's, Audubon's, 500 Blake Street, W.T. Grant Co., Shartenberg Department Store, The Waldorf Cafeteria, The Toddle House, Malley's, The Edge Tadoo Parlor, Loew's Poli, The Yale Cop, Douglass-McDaid, Fenn-Feinstein, The Yankee Doodle, Cooley Chevrolet, and The Yankee Silversmith.

"This," said an excited Witt, "is just one of the many benefits we provide our members. Discounts at these prestigious businesses in this financial climate present an opportunity for substantial savings on much-needed items." ☺

## PLANS ANNOUNCED FOR WCC PROPERTY

by William Goffe

The new owners of the Woodbridge Country Club have revealed plans to convert the club's property, including the expansive golf course, to a combined motocross course and monster truck area. Plans call for the conversion to be completed by late summer of 2009, in time for the Monster Truck Superbowl presently scheduled for Labor Day.

Opposition to the plans materialized quickly. Many Woodbridge residents bemoaned the planned conversion of the pastoral 18-hole golf course into, as one resident described, "a

cesspool of noise, mud and dirt." Others were more sanguine.

"Look," said Mrs. Mavis Froible of Ansonia Road, "it's an idea whose time has come. It'll give the kids something to do and keep them off the computers and text messaging. Besides, this will bring a lot of new jobs into the area, and Lord knows we need them."

The new plans required a significant investment of time, money and diplomacy. As one spokesman who asked not to be identified said, "Look. We laid out a lot of do-re-me for this deal, and getting the Super Bowl up from Dothan, Alabama took a lot of doing."

A unique feature of the new facility will require that motocross drivers participate without helmets, and seatbelts have been outlawed for monster truck participants.

The Connecticut Trial Lawyers Association is supporting the conversion of the club. ☺

## BLAGOJEVICH ANNOUNCED AS YALE CHUBB FELLOW

by A. Geronimo

Former Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich has been invited to Yale as a Chubb Fellow, a prestigious recognition. He will visit the Campus either during spring break or, if that doesn't work out, for a one-night appearance on the evening of the NCAA Basketball Final Four.

Blagojevich, recently impeached by the Illinois Legislature after failing to appear to defend himself from charges alleging political corruption, is expected to deliver a speech entitled "The Rule of Law: How to Use the Media to Change Public Opinion and Build Up Your 401K."

Although previous Chubb Fellows were not compensated for their participation, it has been reported that the former governor will receive a six-figure appearance fee. ☺

## MARBLE CHIPS

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NEW HAVEN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

APRIL 1, 2009

### NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

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*This is an April Fool's issue, obviously, and any relationship to persons living or dead was intended to be humorous. The stories are fictitious, and, if you missed the point, consider medical school.*

## PARKING VOUCHER

**Concerned about Downtown Parking while you are at Court?**

*No Problem! We're here to help!*

**Just bring this Voucher to the NHCBA offices along with Verification that you were either at Federal Court, GA #23 or Superior Court in New Haven, and Your Association will refund your Parking Fees.**

(Tickets for unauthorized parking not included).

Void where prohibited by law.

Expires 1/1/1999



## Elliot Spitzer Named Speaker for Annual Dinner

President Jane “Midnight” Milas has announced that former New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer has accepted her invitation to become the speaker at this year’s forthcoming annual NHCBA dinner. “Mr. Spitzer represents all that we admire and hold dear in a well-respected member of the Bar,” she stated.

“His reputation is one which, over many years, has withstood the challenges of stress and opportunism from outside sources,” according to Bar Association spokesman Jack Keyes. “We are proud that he has agreed to highlight our next annual dinner.”

Acknowledging that Mr. Spitzer recently resigned from the New York Attorney General’s Office in disgrace over a dalliance with a prostitute, President Milas noted that Mr. Spitzer was “yet another victim of a liberal press corps clamoring for the blood of lawyers. That’s what sells newspapers,” she added.

Mr. Spitzer is not expected to attend the event with his wife or family, but the NHCBA has obtained a room for him that can be rented by the hour in an as yet undisclosed location for dinner with a companion. Attendance at the event is expected to reach levels not yet seen by the event in the past, and President Milas added that a decision may be made shortly as to the possibility of moving the dinner to the banquet facility at the Mayflower Truck Stop.

The recipient of the Liberty Bell Award, the Bar’s most prestigious annual award, has not been determined, but unnamed sources predict that the award will be given *en masse* to the Madison Police Department. ☺

## Governor Proposes More Cutbacks

by I. Boesky

In keeping with the implementation of “voluntary furloughs” for State of Connecticut employees, Governor M. Jodi Rell has implemented a unique furlough option for attorneys of the Public Defender Services. Although under this plan, Public Defenders, like judges and other state employees, are required to “volunteer” to work one day without pay, there is an alternative which can save the attorneys’ lost income. If the attorney removes a case from the jury list and convinces a client to plead guilty, the furlough requirement will be waived.

When questioned about the perceived coercive and colorably unconstitutional plan, a spokesperson for the Governor’s Office said, “You can lead a horse to water but you can’t look him in the mouth.”

The Judicial Department announced it had convened a Commission to examine the Governor’s proposal, consisting of 76 individuals representing the judiciary, the public defenders, the East Haven VFW, and the North Branford 4H Club. The Commission’s report is expected in early 2011. ☺

## Governor Announces Further Cuts to Judicial Department

by Roy Bean

After an unsuccessful attempt to close the Meriden Courthouse, Governor Jodi Rell has announced alternate planned financial cutbacks which will affect the Judicial Department. The cutbacks, extensive and far-reaching, have evoked mixed responses.

As of April 1, 2009 the size of juries in both criminal and civil trials will be reduced. Criminal trials will require juries of three, not six, and the verdict need not be unanimous. In civil trials, where only money is at stake, the jury size will be reduced to two. In the event of a hung jury, the decision will be based on a coin-flip. Judges presiding in these trials will be issued a Connecticut half-dollar for this purpose.

A spokesperson for Governor Rell, in announcing the cuts, said “Constitution, Smonstitution. Do you realize how much we can save by streamlining the system this way? Our biggest expense will be the coins and that’s just a one-time investment.”

The Connecticut Civil Liberties Union, predictably, reacted strongly against the plan, threatening a demonstration at the Rte. 80 Wal-Mart, and “if that doesn’t work, we may actually go to court.”

The ever-cautious Judicial Department has announced the appointment of a Committee of 65 individuals from the bench, bar, The Elizabethan Society, and the Woodbridge Garden Club to study the matter.

The study will be expected to be concluded in 2012. At a press conference the Connecticut Trial Lawyers Association and the Connecticut Criminal Defense Lawyers Association issued the following joint statement in reaction to the proposal: “Phooey!” No follow-up questions were allowed. ☺

## Preparing for Summer Outing 2009



Team Captain Judge Jon Silbert, and Judges Art Hadden, Brian Fisher and Roland Fasano (left to right), are still searching for a Spiker for their volleyball team. (Judge Matt Frechette was absent for photo session.)

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**\$\$ 2009 STIMULUS CHECK INSIDE \$\$**



### Scenes from 2008 Cabaret

*Executive Director Carrie Witt tries to reassure Rick Roberts before he delivers the soliloquy from Hamlet at the Bar Foundation's Cabaret.*

### SPECIAL NOTICE TO MEMBERS: PRESTIGE BAILOUT AUCTION

**T**hrough a Special Arrangement with the former Board of Directors of Lehman Brothers, late of New York, the NHCBA is pleased to announce a private Auction available only to members of the association of the following rare items:

1. Lear Jet 4500, seats 8, valued at \$2.6 million;
2. One 46 foot Morgan Ketch, personally inspected by Michael Sulzbach, Esq., valued at \$790,000;
3. Four Matisse prints, valued at \$2 million each;
4. One *Mad Magazine*, original cover, from 1963;
5. One signed letter from Tapping Reeve to Judge John Dixwell regarding a potential plea bargain;
6. One femur from the skeleton of Chief Running Water from the collection the Chocolate Pudding society at Dartmouth College; and
7. One 1962 Silver Cloud Rolls Royce, mileage 32,500 used only to transport mergers and acquisitions clients to the Hamptons.

### **Steroid Testing**, *continued from p. 1*

“We want to get ahead of the curve,” said a spokesperson for the Chief Justice. “We want to make sure that recent implementation of e-filing and fax-filing is not abused, and what better way than to monitor artificially-enhanced aggressive tendencies. Lord knows, with the economy the way it is, anything can happen.”

Many local attorneys are up in arms and are contemplating a boycott. The Judges' Association, in response, has formed a committee composed of 56 judges, attorneys, members of the New Haven Chapter of PETA and the Grove Street Cemetery Association. The Committee's report will be released on Bastille Day, July 14, 2013. ☺

Government Stimulus Checks, when received, will not be accepted toward purchases. Offering by sealed bid only at the offices of Stratton Faxon, which has pledged to donate 25% of the proceeds of each winning bid to the Ron Popeil Foundation to Combat Male Pattern Baldness. ☺