OCBA Nominations & Election Committee Announces Candidates for 2019-2020

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From the President

When Did You Decide to Become a Lawyer

By President Sheila Stinson

The last week of May, I volunteered on staff at the American Legion Auxiliary Oklahoma Girls State. It is a weeklong program for 450 incoming high school seniors to learn about politics, government, elections, patriotism, and advocacy. For those who are unfamiliar with the program, it is a mock state government where all local, county, and state level political positions are filled over the course of the week. Positions are elected or appointed, just as they would be in real government. The elected or appointed judges get to hear arguments from attorneys at a moot court. We also have attorneys in the metro area give their time to speak to the young ladies about their practices, their careers, and a U.S. Supreme Court case of their choosing.

This experience of seeing our profession through the eyes of high school seniors is an awe-inspiring opportunity. Witnessing the judges build confidence in their questioning, witnessing the attorneys develop and implement their arguments, and witnessing the pride of success for the attorneys that win the competition are a few of the reasons I stayed on the staff of this program for 21 years.

On days when our jobs are hard or the hours are long, when we’re frustrated at each other or tested by our clients, I encourage you to volunteer with the youth of Oklahoma. The joy and pride demonstrated by high school kids when they get to do the jobs we do every day reinforces the joy and pride I have to be a member of this profession. Some of these ladies come back and tell me that this program was the reason they went to law school. And some had never met a lawyer until this week. Many of these young ladies have gone on to be lawyers, politicians, and advocates in our state. The young people that watch us in our profession may someday join our profession. We must remember this and set the example of professionalism and civility that we hope young people will emulate.

I asked some of my friends when they first decided to be a lawyer. For some it started in high school mock trial programs. For others it was because their fathers were attorneys. For others it was their bosses or friends encouraging them to go back to school. For a few it was television shows like Perry Mason and Matlock. One friend became a lawyer from watching President Kennedy and the lawyers that surrounded him make the American Dream available to more Americans. Another friend decided to go to law school after watching a family member get a divorce. A former judge decided to become a lawyer after finding some Pacific Reporters in his parents’ attic and being captivated by reading the cases.

So the lesson I propose is that whatever it was that made each of us choose this path, we’re on it. We have to be on it together. If we can volunteer an hour, an afternoon, or a whole week to help a program to show the young people of our city and state that lawyers are helpful, necessary, and a strong force when we work together, then we are setting the best example for them we can.

If you are looking for opportunities to help our youth, contact the Oklahoma County Bar Association office. We have volunteers helping throughout the Oklahoma City area. If it’s volunteering at your children’s school, at your church, reading at the local library, with mock trial, or a myriad of other possibilities, find something you like and take a little bit of time every so often to do it. I promise you’ll find it rewarding. Or maybe you won’t. But the only way you’ll find out you don’t like it is to try it. It’s like broccoli.
STUMP ROSCEO

By Roscoe X. Pound

Dear Roscoe:

Who is the wealthiest among the Supreme Court Justices? $50 may be riding on your answer. K.T., Oklahoma City.

K.T.: Much like the Constitutional status of the Oklahoma courts, we here at Roscoe's have no previous questions at face value and provide answers without sale, prejudice or delay, if I may paraphrase your State Constitution a bit. In other words, I don't care why you ask, and the fact that $50 might ride on my answer is of no interest to me (unless of course that $50 is to end up in my pocket).

So who's potentially the wealthiest? If we're talking potential, no contest. Ruth Bader Ginsburg leads by a wide margin, her potential net worth topping out in the neighborhood of $18 million. Nice neighborhood-right?

Last time I checked, each of the eight Associate justices make about $213,909 in judicial salary. Better than the proverbial poke in the eye with a sharp stick. But wait! There's more. They can also receive tens of thousands of dollars from speaking fees, professorships and book deals. For example, RBG currently sits atop a mountain of $20,000 in speaking fees and royalties. So, the Justice disclose ranges of income as opposed to fixed numbers. It's possible that she won't reach that full potential, particularly given her illness this past year. She may actually have to learn to subsist on as little as $600,000.

The Center for Public Integrity and the New York Times reported that Supreme Court justices' annual worth lies south of $1 million, perhaps as low as $600,000. Ruth Bader Ginsburg is reported to have a net worth of $58 million, while her probable maximum is north of $5 million.

Estimates at the time of Justice Scalia's death were that he held assets of $100 million. If my math is correct, that is perhaps as low as $60 million. So just how much is a million dollars? As Justice Scalia, my probable maximum is that $60 million. But is that all? Could anyone put a value on that?

As I already stated, I was tasked with examining files of the Stasi or East German secret police. Zersetzung referred to a technique employed by them to disrupt or discourage opposition groups or critics of the regime.

Mr. Ridley: I'm sorry, Your Honor, but this has to stop. It's prejudicial value clearly outweighs its probative value. The leeway you granted should not go beyond this point or you'll be crossing the line into mistrial territory.

Mr. Comer: The State is also operating in a zone of logical fallacy. It's playing the Hitler card. First the references to Germany, then talk of secret police, and Stasi even romances with Nazi.

THE COURT: Mr. Coleman?

Mr. Coleman: First of all, the Italian dish "limuni" technically rhymes with the Fascist dictator Mussolini, but I doubt anyone would confuse one with the other, or contend that only Italian dictators enjoy Italian food.

Certainly, no one on this jury would. Also, if the image defense counsel complains of taking root in the mind of anyone, they did that when they argued this objection—which, by the way, involves the logical fallacy of the "red herring"—in open court without asking to approach for a sidebar.

Mr. Comer: It's the duty of this Court to ensure the fairness of the proceedings before it.

THE COURT: But it's not this Court's duty to help you try your case or to second-guess what may well have been a tactical choice on your part. The objection is overruled, but just so everyone knows, particularly you Mr. Coleman, the leeway leash is a short one. Ask your next question.

Mr. Coleman: Yes, Your Honor. Now, how many cases of Zersetzung, if that's the correct way to group them, did you study?

Witness: No way to tell exactly. I examined dozens of files for the years 1945-1989.

Q: And you described this Zersetzung as a technique for disrupting opposition to the East German regime?

A: Yes, sir.

Q: Please tell us how it worked.

A: The simplest way to describe it would be to render the opposition ineffective. In the case of a group, distrust leading to disunity would be fostered. For individuals, it might involve causing psychological or emotional instability, paranoia, or isolation.

Q: Let's talk about the individual. Hypothetically, if I wanted to render a person ineffective in whatever pursuit they engaged in, what steps would I have to take?

A: First you would have someone like me do some background research and investigation. This could include speaking with friends and family, public record searches, perhaps even burglarizing or otherwise obtaining confidential information from say, a medical file.

Q: And then...?

A: Then the real work begins.
Pot, Grass, Hash, Joint
Let’s Make it Legal

The Oklahoma County Bar Association has an interesting program in store for those attorneys who attend the February 22, 1973 noon luncheon to be held at the Skirvin Hotel. Oklahoma City District Attorney Curtis Harris has agreed to a presentation of the merits of legalized marijuana (sic) with Eric Groves, a local defense attorney.

Mr. Harris is, of course, an outspoken foe of the drug culture and a proponent of stiff penalties for the use, as well as sale, of drugs. Mr. Groves, a 1970 O.U. law graduate will attack the present drug laws for their severity and their lack of success in controlling drug abuse. The debate will be preceded by a factual discussion of the present Oklahoma City drug scene by Mike Shannon, reporter for the Okla. Times.

Many lawyers will be happy to note that the YWCA cafeteria will no longer be in operation after January 31, 1973, consequently, arrangements have been made to have the February 22nd monthly luncheon of the Association in the Skirvin Plaza Hotel, Section B of the Imperial Ballroom. Cost of the luncheon will be $3.00 per person.

Events & Seminars

June 21, 2019
2019 Annual Awards Luncheon
12 Noon, Petroleum Club Events Center
4040 N. Lincoln Blvd.

July 26, 2019
OCBA Night at the OKC Dodgers
7:05 p.m.
Chickasaw Bricktown Ball Park

August 15, 2019
Striking Out Hunger Bowling Tournament
6 – 8 p.m.
Heritage Lanes Bowling Center

September 20, 2019
Raising The Bar 2019
6 – 8:30 p.m.
Gaylord Pickens Museum, OK Hall of Fame

September 30, 2019
2019 Annual Golf Tournament
River Oaks Golf Course

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By Bill Gorden

The Castle on Sunset

For some 90 years there has been a presence on the Sunset Strip, even before there was a Sunset Strip. Situated originally at the end of paved road, originally just outside the jurisdiction of The City of Los Angeles, The Chateau Marmont. (The name Marmont, like so many things in Hollywood, was contrived completely off-hand, from a street that ran behind the hotel.) There was no restaurant till very late in its time, no “gym” till later, other amenities depended on the wealth and needs of the individual.

If you are squeamish about learning some not-so-nice things about your favorite star or personality, you might want to just keep shopping. From Harlow to Bogart to Lohan, it is all here. It is definitely one of those can’t-look-away reads. One even feels a little sad for all the celebrity takes on these all too human folk. Not all of them wanted the trappings of fame, and some just wanted to hide from the world. The story of this hotel is sort of a mirror world to Hollywood, part commonplace, part bizarre, part sad. The American Dream on, shall we say, steroids?

The Flight Portfolio

Here is our author. Before her is a dazzling historical figure, a larger than life war story, and a heart pounding love story, fictional but intense. Which one should be written? The history of mixing these is spotty at best. One either gets Casablanca or Pearl Harbor. Mixing love story with war story seldom works. One tends to get something that is neither. For every Gone With The Wind there are thousands of very average mixes of historical events with love stories. This love story is same gender, but with the same result.

This book tries really hard to make the cut. In order to keep all readers content, it takes 576 pages. The historicity of the events is such that even the editors wanted to present every little detail. Even historians don’t like to be bored. There is a constellation of lesser characters, as the historical tale is about an American trying to get people out of Vichy France in 1940. However odd some of the small details of these writer’s and artist’s lives, though, we don’t need all of them. Even the descriptions of the towns and buildings and such seem a little wooden, like the places were memorized. Natural Resources, just be due to the smaller and smaller number of persons able to describe those places as set in time.

The main character is Varian Fry, an American who indeed worked very hard to get artists, writers, and other “undesirables” out of Nazi clutches. Among them were Hannah Arendt and Marc Chagall. There has already been much written about him, and he was the first of the “Righteous Among Nations” to be honored at Yad Vashem, the Israel Holocaust Remembrance site. A made-up love story will have a hard time in comparison. Finally, the denouement of the plot seems contrived. There is so much else going on. So much juggling.

The Hundred-Year Marathon
Michael Pillsbury, Henry Holt, 2015, Hardback, 319 pages, $35.00

Sometimes a book slips through. A number of years ago, in this corner several books on China were reviewed, such as China Road, and Charm Offensive. The current book under review dates from 2015, but there is reason to believe that the thesis in this book is under current consideration.

That thesis is that China has been following a policy of quiet accretion of power of various kinds, since 1949, with the goal of global dominance by 2049. That is a lot to put forward. The idea is supposed to have come through from older Chinese thought, formed through the “Warring States” period. The purpose every move is to accrue power, but quietly, even surreptitiously. Even backtracking is possible. No challenge is to be made until all is in position. The author tends to over sell, in that he also says there has never been anything like this before. That is less than accurate, as the U.S. engineered “Manifest Destiny”, the Panama Canal, and our part of the Industrial Revolution, without leave of the dominant Empire, the British. Likewise, the history of the Punic Wars between Rome and Carthage indicates that both sides engineered something like what the Chinese may be up to. Seeing this does not take away from the urgency of the thesis here. Language differences may well have obscured the inquiry. Certainly the qualifications of the author and his history would say he is one to ring this alarm bell.

This particular bell deserves attention. Demographics, Natural Resources, and Language will be influential, but long range plan, even more a stealthy long range plan, makes great headway. This is not a conspiracy theory type book. It deserves the attention.
The Oklahoma Legislature wrapped up the first regular session of the 57th Legislature a week early on May 23rd. One of the last items it passed was the budget for fiscal year 2020. The $8.2 billion budget provided for $200 million to go into savings, a $203 million increase to public education, $10 million for “smart on crime” programs, and $15 million for digital transformation. The funds for education included a $1,200 teacher pay raise, which is a goal Governor Stitt set in his State of the State address earlier this year.

This budget is at its highest level in ten years. According to the Oklahoma Policy Institute, much “of the credit for the prosperous fiscal situation is due to rising oil and gas revenues.” Specifically, restoring tax rates and growth in production have contributed $583.9 million to the FY2019 General Revenue Fund, which is 132% above FY 2018 and $200 million above the certified estimate.

It is important to understand that this is only a portion of what one might understand of government expenditures in Oklahoma. For example, “Oklahoma’s 528 school districts are funded from state aid and property taxes, often with federal money as well.” Cities and towns are funded via sales taxes, and counties obtain funding from the state, property taxes, and other sources. There are approximately 1,900 entities that provide public services in Oklahoma.

Another item Governor Stitt set out in his State of the State was criminal justice reform. Many proposed bills stalled in the Legislature; however, one bill that did pass was HB1269. This bill makes State Question 780 – which reclassified certain property offenses and simple drug possession as misdemeanors – retroactive. To accomplish that, the bill requires the Oklahoma Pardon and Parole Board to undertake certain actions. HB1269 further provides for expungement of crimes which have recently been changed from felonies to misdemeanors to help citizens clean up their criminal records. Given that Oklahoma continues to lead the nation (and also the world) in incarceration rates, and that Governor Stitt has identified this issue as a priority, I anticipate further efforts to address incarceration in next year’s session.

Another issue that may come up in next year’s session is Medicaid expansion. Supporters of expansion state that “In Oklahoma, this means that more than 100,000 working Oklahomans are uninsured because the state hasn’t yet expanded access to care.” Opponents argue that the federal portion of the funding may not be permanent, and may cause fiscal problems down the road. Governor Stitt has stated that his goal is to “deliver a plan by October.”

The 2019 Legislative Session appeared to be more genial than the last session. No doubt some of the Legislative collaboration is due to being able to put more funds into the government as opposed to negotiating cuts. It probably also helps that we are unlikely to need a special session later this year. Hopefully we can continue the positive momentum into the next session.
Feeling a Little Melancholy

by Michael W. Brewer

As I sat to write this editorial installment for your OCBA Briefcase, I reflected over the last several months of constant thunderstorms, rain, floods, and tornado watches, warnings, alerts and actual touchdowns. This really is the annual ritual of springtime in Oklahoma. Growing up in Tulsa, moving to Norman for college and then permanently locating our family in Oklahoma City, weather was simply something we dealt with, not to downplay the damage and harm caused. For the first time in my life, we have our own storm cellar. A few years ago, Kelly prevailed upon me to get an underground storm cellar built in the garage. It’s roomy, clean, and I’ve only been in it to clean it. That’s Oklahoma, we go from hiding our cars and trucks from golf-ball size hailstones to standing out in the yard or on the porch looking for the tornado. Then we repair, rebuild, pray, and continue with our lives. Some people move out of tornado alley, while others choose to stay.

Lawyering is a similar experience. This is an extremely stressful profession that begins with law school and bar exams. The constant adversarial nature of the practice, changing workplace, and client demands, all take their toll. Anger at unfair outcomes and injustice are daily feelings. Many choose to move on from this profession after a few distasteful experiences or negative encounters. But others, and most of you reading this, choose to learn, repair, rebuild, and continue the practice. Like other things in life, this cycle can take its toll. When, as a legal professional, you work around the clock to reach goals set by others, and some set by yourself, only to have those goals moved by outside forces. Spending more time on preparation for a large project or for a jury trial, only to settle during the first day or on the eve of trial, can be less than satisfying. It may be a good result for the client, but it offers no resolution for you to determine whether your sharpened trial skills work. Mediation after mediation that settle, don’t settle, result in a mediator’s proposal that is later accepted or rejected, don’t quite get you to the finish line, either. Much has been written about work-life balance. In my experience, there is work and there is life and there is never balance. Lawyers do have another shelter option available from these storms. Good professional relationships and collegiality will help a lawyer navigate the ups and downs.

I suspect the true cause of my melancholy was a series of events superimposed over the typical work stress. A little sadness and retrospective observation related to deaths, funerals, and memorial services for acquaintances, friends, and relatives of friends is not uncommon. By definition, feeling melancholy has no obvious cause. However, here it seems that there were too many potential causes to pick out an obvious cause.

Some of those we’ve lost recently were taken too young, for unknown reasons, and others lived long lives. Some were happy and fulfilled and some not so happy or fulfilled. You’ll read elsewhere in this Briefcase of the loss of former OCBA Executive Director Bobby G. Knapp. Bobby is one of the reasons I actively volunteer for your OCBA. Back when I was a much younger lawyer on the OCBA and OBA Young Lawyers Boards, I remember that Bobby was hired to become Executive Director after a particularly bad set of circumstances at our OCBA. He recruited me to fill one-year of a three-year term vacated by a board member who was moving up to be on the OBA Board of Governors. After that one-year commitment, I was elevated to my own three-year term which coincidently intersected the occurrence of the Murrah Building bombing. Out of those sad ashes and rubble, BobbyKnapp led your OCBA to volunteer and provide legal services to those in need. Lawyers from all size firms, solo, and various practice areas volunteered to provide counseling services and meet other legal needs, not to mention handing out food to search and rescue workers for several weeks. There are many individual stories of OCBA lawyers who went in to help survivors out of the building, transport them to emergency room facilities, donated blood, donated their time, and also lost love ones in the bombing. Because of my OCBA activities, I got to know and become friends with many lawyers (including opponents) and judges. I will always be thankful to Bobby for twisting my arm to become an active OCBA member. Sometimes it seems like being Oklahoma-born, you’re genetically inclined that in the worst of times we give our best efforts. What a great trait to have at your disposal all of the time and not just when in dire straits. But also having the support of your col leagues, when you need someone to lean on, is essential to professional success.

We now have our first group of lawyers who were not yet born when the Murrah Building tragedy occurred. It was recently pointed out to me on Facebook that certain young lawyers were not born during the year appearing on the wine label photo I posted. (Yes, I post food and beverage experiences on FB – happy things, not politics.) How, then, do you convey this history of service and professionalism to younger generations of lawyers? How do you help them recognize and incorporate a coping trait and the availability of a support system that all practicing lawyers need to survive the day to day storms of our profession? Many can and should turn to friends, family, and their faith for support. Here is my suggestion for an additional tool for the toolbox: be relational with your adversaries, colleagues, and judges, and create support and mentoring systems you can rely upon. Everyone is fallible and everyone needs some measure of success. Become an active part of your professional volunteer bar association – the OCBA – and recommend joining to non-members. This will make your professional path more bearable. And lastly, if you are feeling a little blue, reach out to someone and let them know. We can all use a little help from time to time. As the President-Elect of the OCBA, I want to provide you with an early invitation to the OCBA Annual Dinner Dance at the Gaylord-Pickens Museum in Oklahoma City on Friday evening, September 20, 2019. It is never too early to mark this event on your calendar. This is a great opportunity to meet and get to know lawyers and judges in your OCBA. Why not?

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Our “Boss” Bobby Knapp

By Pam Bennett

May was a hard month for us here at the OCBA. If you saw the various announcements, you’ll know that we lost several great attorneys. We also lost our former executive director, Bobby Knapp.

Bobby was executive director for 16 years, after spending 28 years in the Air Force and retiring as a Lt. Colonel. In this “second career” he took the best he had learned from the military and used it to help shape the OCBA that exists today.

He also was a great influence on the staff that he put in place before he left. Bobby was definitely a people person. He was friendly and funny, personable and patient, a mentor and instructor. He had a lot of faith in this writer. He hired me, a newly single mother with two young children and no human resources experience, to assume the role of Legal Placement Director with the OCBA. His trust in my abilities will never be forgotten and I hope I’ve made him proud.

His sense of humor kept us laughing, as well as on our toes, as Debbie Gorden relates:

While riding in his pick-up to whatever adventure laid ahead, Bobby would suddenly say “I’ll honk, you wave.” While that doesn’t sound risky, I would often begin to wave without looking and realize that the person I was waving to was not someone I would usually give a wave to. Then Bobby would begin laughing his ‘onery laugh.

When Bobby first came to the OCBA, there was a very ugly yellowish-brown couch in his office (but that’s a different story). Around 2 p.m., I would go in and sit on that couch and we would have a small staff meeting with just the two of us. Quite often, about 10 minutes into Bobby’s talk, I would drift off. When I would wake up about 10-15 minutes later, Bobby was sound asleep in his chair. I guess we could bore each other to death!

The very last Bench & Bar Conference we had at Texoma, Bobby woke me up at 5:30 a.m, and said “We’ve got to get out of here. Call Connie & Pam and get dressed.” We all struggled down to the lobby to discover that the water main to the lodge had been ruptured and Bobby wanted to be gone before anyone woke up. We were all sitting at the Denny’s drinking coffee by 6:30 that morning.

The first time we decided to hold the Bench & Bar Conference at Fountainhead Bobby and I went down to check things out. It was a nice autumn day and the leaves had just begun to fall. I started down towards the lake when Bobby mentioned that there were probably lots of snakes in those leaves. I made it back to the parking lot in about three big hops. Bobby just stood there laughing and told this story often! On our way back to OKC, there were some persimmon trees/bushes(?) on the side of the road and Bobby stopped to pick some as his mother used to use persimmons for some recipe.

See OUR “BOSS”, PAGE 14
A Final Salute to Colonel Bobby G. Knapp

Steven L. Barghols (June 1, 2019)

The Oklahoma County Bar Association sadly bade farewell last month to Colonel Bobby G. Knapp. Bobby served as our esteemed Executive Director from February 1989 through June 2005.

Few OCBA members recall our organization’s introduction to Bobby. Even fewer are aware that, because of defalcation, the OCBA then was in desperate financial condition.

A search committee chaired by D.C. Thomas was tasked with identifying and recruiting, and recommending for hire to the OCBA board of directors, a candidate for executive director who had the background, experience and savvy to rebuild the organization’s cash reserves and reorganize its business, accounting and financial practices.

A 53-year old native of Seminole, OK, and an Oklahoma State University graduate, Col. Knapp had just completed a distinguished 28-year career in the United States Air Force. Following personnel-management assignments at Dobbins AFB GA and Portland, OR International Airport and a 1965-1966 tour of Vietnam (marrying his beloved Donna along the way), Bobby was assigned to the faculty of the Air Force ROTC program at the University of Oklahoma during America’s tumultuous Vietnam War years (where he became acquainted during his two-year stint there with future OCBA leaders Bill Conger, Clark Musser, Pat Ryan and Reid Robison).

Later, Bobby was reassigned at various points to increasingly demanding personnel-management positions at Maxwell AFB AL, Randolph AFB TX and the Alaskan Air Command. Ultimately, with numerous commendations and awards, Col. Knapp retired from Tinker AFB in March 1988.

After dabbling in “retirement” for less than a year (including fishing at his lake cabin and volunteering at Sunbeam Family Services), Bobby was ready to undertake a new challenge in life.

In response to the OCBA’s ad for its executive director position, 134 individuals applied. Bobby was interviewed by OCBA officers and directors (including D.C. Thomas, Judge Leamon Freeman, Judge James Blevins, John Goodman, Peter Bradford, David Cheek, Howard K. Berry, III and other OCBA board members).

Col. Knapp was hired for what then must have been a monumental challenge. He was charged with fixing the broken OCBA. Pat Ryan, OCBA president in 1989, recently told me: “Once we met Bobby, the decision was easy. Time proved us right.”

Bobby and his staff promptly proceeded to rebuild cash reserves, institutionalize sound accounting practices (with able assistance by OCBA Treasurer Bob Nelosn), computerize business operations, establish a membership database, update the OCBA’s boardroom and offices, and undertake an ambitious long-range planning process.

OCBA membership programs and services proliferated. Law Day activities expanded. Law-related education programs were planned and presented. The Bench & Bar Conference became a favorite of OCBA lawyers and judges (even joined in by the Tulsa County Bar Association in 1997).

With organizational assistance and active promotion by Bobby, community-service opportunities offered by the OCBA received wide participation by our members (including coordinated OCBA responses to the 1995 Murrah Bombing, the 1999 EF-5 killer tornado, and 2001’s September 11 attacks).

Conceived by Mona Lambird, the first “Women in Law” Conference was organized by Bobby and presented in 1991 by the OCBA—and later emulated by the Oklahoma Bar Association. The OBA Young Lawyers Division’s “Voices for Children: Tour,” produced by Annette Jacobi in 1997, and aided by OCBA logistical assistance, was the genesis of Oklahoma Lawyers for Children.

Thanks to Bobby’s vision and the leadership of OCBA presidents Joe Crosthwait and Jim Blevins, the Oklahoma County Bar Foundation, after years of dormancy in the 1980s and early 1990s, was reconstituted and reorganized as part of the OCBA’s ambitious long-range planning agenda of that era. The Foundation’s entire $38,000 of assets was deposited in a designated fund to be managed by the Oklahoma City Community Foundation. Just over 20 years later, even following grants aggregating many tens of thousands of dollars to local causes advancing the administration of justice in our community, that fund now totals almost $500,000.

Bobby worked with the OCBA’s leadership to serve our local judiciary. Our bar became active in judicial-candidate qualifications polling and periodically surveying our members regarding performance by Oklahoma County judges. The OCBA also designed and implemented a rapid-response apparatus to come to the aid of local judges being attacked in the media.

To say he successfully completed his mission of fixing the OCBA is an understatement. The many accomplishments of Bobby and his staff alone have been of reflection and commendation. However, who in those dark early days of 1989 possibly could have imagined that, in the ensuing 16 years, our members, leaders and staff would come to love Bobby—not the bar executive, but the man?

Bobby is remembered for more than his expert organizational, financial and personnel skills, proficiency and achievements. Instead, he is best remembered for the countless meaningful personal relationships he forged.
with local lawyers and judges and his staff colleagues.

Think of this: Bobby worked every day for 16 years as the at-will employee of more than 2,000 lawyers. He routinely “handled,” in a variety of professional, business, social and personal contexts, the biggest egos in our legal profession. There never was any ambiguity or doubt regarding who employed whom. Paradoxically, however, there also never was any question of who was in charge.

In approaching this tribute to Bobby, I asked a longtime Knapp family friend if she might locate the scrapbook the OCBA presented Bobby at a retirement party co-hosted by several former OCBA presidents and given in Bobby’s honor on the evening of May 21, 2005, in the home of then OCBA president Brooke Murphy and her husband Mike Murphy. The scrapbook was readily located. Local lawyers, judges of various state and federal district and appellate courts, national and local bar executives, law school faculty members, area business people with whom he worked, and his staff colleagues wrote letters, notes and cards to Bobby that were assembled in that scrapbook. I was more than a little pleased—and moved—that, 14 years later, the scrapbook’s cover is well-worn. Many of the congratulatory notes speak of their authors’ high regard for Bobby’s successful tenure as OCBA executive director, his various achievements, his organizational skills, his work ethic, and his right to enjoy a well-earned retirement.

Several of the scrapbook contributions fondly recall specific bar events—luncheons, the annual dinner/dance, bench & bar conferences, holiday receptions, golf tournaments, etc. They remark that Bobby always made them feel personally welcome at every gathering. Often mentioned are Bobby’s big smile, his warm handshake and twinkling eyes, and his wisdom and wit.

Former OCBA president Jerry Durbin recalled, following the September 11 attacks, asking Bobby if consideration...
OCBA COMMITTEES/SECTIONS/ DIVISION 2019-2020

Next month you will get an opportunity to sign up for an OCBA Committee which enables you to become part of the heartbeat of the OCBA. Please look through the following list and see what interests you and SIGN UP!

Awards Committee
This committee is responsible for OCBA Award nominations, the OBA Award nominations and the Leadership in Law Awards.

Bench & Bar Committee
Working to improve relations between the bench and the bar, this committee has two major projects. During election years, judicial candidate opinion polls are taken with results being released to the public in an effort to provide public information. This committee is also responsible for the bi-yearly Bench & Bar Conference.

Briefcase Committee
This committee is responsible for the monthly publication Briefcase. They recruit articles, write articles, edit and proof each month.

Continuing Legal Education Committee
Responsible for providing quality CLE programs to OCBA members at discounted prices, this committee plans sessions each year through the months of October through February.

Community Services Committee
This committee plans community services projects such as assisting the local youth shelter. This committee works with the Juvenile Justice Center in providing incentives for their teens on probation as well as providing parties for nursing home residents.

Fee Grievance & Ethics Committee
Comprised of lawyer and non-lawyer members, this committee investigates complaints of clients against attorneys who are OCBA members. They are deputized through the OBA to investigate and recommend disposition of such cases.

Law Day Committee
This committee is responsible for all Law Day activities which include the Law Day Luncheon, Ask A Lawyer Program, student mentoring program and civic group speakers.

Lawyers Against Domestic Abuse
This committee works to raise awareness of domestic abuse. Working with the YWCA and Attorney General’s Office, the committee provides training of attorneys & judges in dealing with domestic abuse situations and provides resources online and on the 1st floor of the Oklahoma County Courthouse for victims. They also work to provide victim advocates and a Bench Book on Domestic Violence Cases for Oklahoma County judges.

Lawyers for Learning
This committee is involved with Reading Buddies in the OKC Public School’s Community Involvement initiative working with Adams, Buchanan, Lee and Hillcrest Elementary Schools. The Lawyers in the Classroom and Voices for Children are also included under this committee.

Lawyers Against Domestic Abuse
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Veterans’ Issues Committee
Works closely with the OBA Oklahoma Lawyers for America’s Heroes Program in providing legal assistance to veterans. This committee is new and is also trying to find other ways to assist veterans.

Bankruptcy Section
This section meets 10 months a year at the U.S. Bankruptcy Court to discuss current issues in the bankruptcy area. There is a membership fee of $120 which provides for lunch at these meetings.

Corporate Counsel Section
This section involves in-house corporate attorneys and offers a chance for them to network with each other in a social setting. They also provide special CLE pertaining to Corporate Counsel.

Family Law Section
This section works with the judges of the Family Law Division in providing up-to-date information to those attorneys practicing in the family law area.

Young Lawyers Division
This hard-working group of young lawyers takes on many projects each year. Some of these projects include the Harvest Food Drive, Striking Out Hunger Bowling Tournament in the summer and Chili Cook-off in the winter. The Community Service Subcommittee plans 3 community service projects each year.

Robert D. Singletary joins Crowe & Dunlevy's Oklahoma City office expanding the firm's Energy, Environment & Natural Resources Practice Group capabilities.

With nearly two decades of environmental legal experience, including as General Counsel of the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, General Counsel of the Oklahoma Water Resources Board, and as an Environmental Attorney for the U.S. Army Environmental Command, Robert offers clients invaluable counsel in all aspects of environmental regulation and water rights administration.

We welcome Robert to the firm.

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Volunteer Opportunities

The OCBA has many opportunities to volunteer with their Community Service Committee, Law Related Education Committee, Lawyers For Learning Committee and Voices for Children Committee. However, this new monthly column will list other opportunities for our members to help the community.

If you know of something that should be listed here, please contact the Bar Office at 236-8421 and we will add it to this new monthly Briefcase column.

OCBA-CANDIDATES continued from page 1

President-Elect Michael W. Brewer, serving as Chair of this year’s Nominations & Election Committee, has announced the slate of candidates approved by the Board of Directors. Ballots will be mailed the first week in July and should be returned no later than July 31, 2019. Election results will be announced in August and elected officials will take office September 1, 2019. The candidates and their qualifications are listed here:

PRESIDENT-ELECT
Don Andrews, Oklahoma County District Court House. J.D. – Oklahoma City University 1989. OCBA activities include: Board of Directors, 2016-2019; OK County Delegate to OBA House of Delegates, 2015-2018; Lawyers Against Domestic Abuse, Founding Member; Board of Trustees for the OK County Law Library, 2018. Other Legal/Community Activities include: Oklahoma Judges’ Association, President 2016-2018; Kiwanis Club of Downtown OKC, President 2001-2019; Downtown OKC Exchange Club, President 2016-2017.

VICE PRESIDENT
Shanda McKenney, Angela D. Ailes & Associates. J.D. – Oklahoma City University 2002. OCBA activities include: YLD, Chair 2005-2006; Board of Directors 2017 – present; The Briefcase Editor 2016-present; Pro Bono Award 2005; Annual Dinner Dance ad hoc Committee 2018; Delegate to OBA House of Delegates.

LAW LIBRARY TRUSTEE
Gary W. Wood, Riggs Abney Neal Turpen Orbison & Lewis. J.D. – University of Oklahoma 1995. OCBA activities include: Community Service Committee; Continuing Legal Education Committee; Young Lawyers Division. Other Legal/Community Activities include: OKC Metro Alliance; American Heart Association; Leadership Oklahoma City.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Zane Anderson, Crowe & Dunley. J.D. – Oklahoma City University 2012. OCBA activities include: Young Lawyers Division Board of Directors. OBA activities include: Young Lawyers Division, Member.

Other Legal/Community activities include: PHi Delta Phi Legal Fraternity; Phi Kappa Honor Society; Commercial Real Estate Council.

Lorenzo Banks, Banks Gilbert & Gillett PLLC. J.D. – Oklahoma City University 2011. OBA activities include: Oklahoma Lawyers for American’s Heroes Volunteer. Other Legal/Community activities include: Oklahoma Criminal Defense Lawyers Association; Board of Directors; Ruth Bader Ginsburg Inn of Court; Oklahoma City Chapter, Association of Black Lawyers; Lawyers in the Library; Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma, Make a Will Workshop.

Jeff Curran, GableGotwals. J.D. – University of Oklahoma 1997. OCBA activities include: Board of Directors, Past Member; Member of OCBA 1987 – present. OBA activities include: OBA Insurance Section, Secretary. ABA activities include: Product Liability Section, Vice Chair; TIPS. Other Legal/Community activities include: Children’s Center Rehabilitation Hospital, Board of Directors; Defense Research Institute, member; International Association of Defense Counsel (IADC); Federal of Defense & Corporate Counsel (FDCC).

Michael Raye Ford, Hall Estill Harwicke Gable Golden & Nelson, PC. J.D. – University of Oklahoma 1978; LLM – George Washington National Law Center 1979. OCBA activities include: Ask A Lawyer Panel, 3-5 years; OCBA Ski Trip Seminar, participant and presenter. OBA activities include: Tax Section, Chairman; Lecturer at several OBA CLE seminars; OBF Sustaining Member. ABA activities include: Closely Held Businesses Committee, Chair & Vice Chair; Professional Services Committee, Chair & Vice Chair; American Law Institute, member; Section of Taxation, Lecturer; Real Property and Probate Section. Other Legal/Community activities include: St. Luke’s Methodist Church Chancel Choir; Oklahoma City Community College, President Board of Trustees.

Benjamin R. Grubb, DeWitt Parullo & Meek. J.D. – Oklahoma City University 2013. OCBA activities include: Young Lawyers Division, Chair; Board of Directors, YLD Liaison. Other Legal/Community Activities include: William J. Holloway Jr. America Inn of Court, Barrister.

Hailey Hopper, Pierce Couch Hendrickson Baysinger & Green. J.D. – University of Oklahoma 2012. OCBA activities include: YLD Chili Cook-Off; Striking Out Hunger Bowling Tournament; Bench & Bar Conference. OBA activities include: Litigation Section; Insurance Section. Other Legal/Community activities include: Oklahoma Association of Defense Counsel; DRI; USLaw Network.

Tracey D. Mullins, Mullins Mullins Sexton & Reaves PC. J.D. – University of Oklahoma 2002. OCBA activities include: Young Lawyers Division, Board Member, Vice Chair 2007-2008, Secretary/Treasurer; Family Law Section, Chair 2015-2016; Awards Committee; Fee Grievance & Ethics Committee 2007-2008; Law Related Education Committee. Young Lawyers Division, Board Member, Vice Chair 2007-2008, Secretary/Treasurer; Family Law Section, Chair 2015-2016; Awards Committee; Fee Grievance & Ethics Committee 2007-2008; Law Related Education Committee. OBA activities include: Young Lawyers Division, member, Liaison to Member Services Committee; Family Law Section.

Peter L. Seimeca, Fellers Snider. J.D. – Oklahoma City University 2007. OCBA activities include: Young Lawyers Division. OBA activities include: Criminal Defense Section. Other Legal/Community activities include: OCDLA; Gerry Spence’s Trial Lawyers College; Criminal Justice Act Panel Attorney.

Ronald T. Shinn Jr., McAfee & Taft. J.D. – University of Oklahoma 2002. OCBA activities include: Past Contributor to The Briefcase; Young Lawyers Division; frequent participant in OCBA events and activities. Other Legal/Community activities include: Frequent participant in CLEs, seminars and webinars.

Kendall A. Sykes, Christensen & Associates PC. J.D. – Oklahoma City University 2007. OCBA activities include: The Briefcase Committee; Law Day Committee; Ask a Lawyer. OBA activities include: Family Law Section; Criminal Law Section; OBA Leadership Academy Graduate 2017-2018; Resolutions Committee 2017-present. Other Legal/Community activities include: Oklahoma Guardian Ad litem Institute, Board Member, CLE Committee Chair; Ruth Bader Ginsburg Inn of Court, Barrister.

Curtis J. Thomas, McAfee & Taft. J.D. – University of Oklahoma 2009. OCBA activities include: Young Lawyers Division 2012-2016, including Chair; Law Day Committee, Chair; Bench & Bar Committee. ABA activities include: Member.

Matthew B. Wade, Abel Law Firm. J.D. – University of Oklahoma 2005. OCBA activities include: Bench & Bar Committee. OBA activities include: Insurance Law Section, Chair; Legislative Monitoring Committee; Law School Committee; Law Day Committee; Civil Procedure Committee. Other Legal/Community activities include: CASA Board Member; Oklahoma Lawyers for Children; Oklahoma Association of Justice Board Member; American Association of Justice.

Travis Weeden, Oklahoma Corporation Commission. J.D. – Oklahoma City University 2014. OCBA activities include: Member since 2014; Community Service Committee, volunteer at St. Edwards Redeemer Nursing Home, volunteer at Family Junction Youth Shelter, Law Day Committee. OBA activities include: Member since 2014; Environmental Law Section; Government & Administrative Law Practice Section. Other Legal/Community activities include: William J. Holloway Jr. American Inn of Court, Barrister Member & Membership Administrator; Oklahoma City Mineral Lawyers Society; OCU Law Alumni Association Board of Directors; Kiwanis Club of Oklahoma City, President-Elect; Sycamore Square Home Owners Association, Board of Directors, Vice President; Leadership Oklahoma City LOKAL Class XIII Graduate.

Daniel G. Webber, Jr., Ryan Whaley. J.D. – Georgetown University 1993. OCBA activities include: Board of Directors, 2010 – 2013; Delegate to OBA Convention; Co-authored article for The Briefcase. OBA activities include: Oklahoma Bar Journal, co-authored two articles. Other Legal/Community activities include: Federal Bar Association, Oklahoma City Chapter, President 2015-2016, Board of Directors, 2010 – present.
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started going down the highway, yellow jackets started swarming the cab of the pickup. Bobby yelled to roll down the windows and pulled over to the side of the road. Those persimmons were full of yellow jackets. Now, that was an adventure! I have many fond memories of Bobby G. and his laughter and wisdom. Some things are better left as memories. He was a wonderful mentor and a warm and kind human being. I will definitely miss you, Boss!

Connie Resar has some great memories as well!

We had our office Christmas lunch and watched ‘White Christmas’ one year. I looked over towards the end of the movie, and he was crying. I realized in that moment how much that movie must have triggered some special times and memories for him.
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