

April - June 2019

RICHBARNEWS

Newsletter of the Richland County Bar Association

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On the Cover

Photo by Lucas Brown of Kickstand Studio



From the Editors

by Mike Polk & Van Horger



An active membership is the lifeblood of any organization. And, like membership in most organizations, you get out of it what you put into it. We would like to take this opportunity to encourage and to challenge you to become more involved this year. If you haven't been to an event in a while, we would love to see you. If you haven't been involved with the RCBA in the past, please reach out to any of the people listed below to see how you can help. It is well worth the time and effort.



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From the President

Thoughts of Summer: Remembering What Makes Life Fun

by *Kristen Horne*



By the time you read this, I hope to be settled into the slightly slower pace of summer. Right now, however, I am working fast and furious on a new initiative, partnering with my colleagues on 2025 planning, winding down the school year with our four girls including end-of-year projects and performances, and starting summer activities like swim team. Here at the RCBA we are finalizing plans for events like the annual Memorial Service and, in conjunction with our brand-new Wellness Committee, everyone's favorite zoo outing. We are also distilling down the information you shared during our focus groups in the spring and working with the Weathers Group to shape it into some driving priorities for the bar. Our committees and court liaison groups are planning gatherings and events, our fall ethics CLE is being built...the list goes on and on! There is so much great work happening, and we hope that you're feeling the benefits.

We often have a tendency to fill our time and minds with all of the things we are doing. Your list is just as long or longer than mine. In a recent conversation, a mentor asked me when I'm having any fun. It's such

Upcoming Events

Judicial Reception

Tuesday, September 17, 2019 | Columbia Museum of Art

Farm-to-Table Dinner

Thursday, October 10, 2019 | City Roots

Ethics CLE

Friday, October 25, 2019 | USC School of Law

Annual Meeting/Holiday Party

Wednesday, December 4, 2019 | Columbia Museum of Art

a powerful question, so I'm asking all of you:

What makes you feel great?

My answer is at least as long as the list of what I'm doing. I'm trying to be mindful of all the little moments of joy that pop up all around me. If you're interested, here are some of my favorite things in summertime.

- The smell of rain on hot bricks.
- Salted slices of Johns Island tomatoes.
- People wearing dapper hats, extra points if paired with seersucker.
- Hugs from kids in wet bathing suits.
- The magic of fireflies at dusk.
- Cool crisp sheets after a long day.

Every day at work and out in the world, each of you is doing good. I hope you're doing something that makes you feel good too. Feel free to drop me a line and tell me about it. It would make me feel great.

Kristen Horne is an Assistant Vice President and Senior Counsel for Unum Group, which includes Colonial Life, Unum US, and Unum UK. She can be reached at khorne@unum.com.



Bar Bites:

Direct Examination

by Jamie Smith

As attorneys, we have a continuing duty to stay abreast of changes in the law, and as professionals, we are on a continuous journey to become the best advocates we can be. So beyond attending required CLEs, we strive to integrate legal education into our daily routines and are always on the look-out for new techniques and strategies to incorporate into our respective practices. Like most of us, I keep up with advance sheets, attend seminars, read countless books and blogs, join list serves, and pick the brains of other Bar members in order to glean as much legal knowledge as I can. And now, thanks to three of state's brightest (and most hilarious) attorneys, I begin each week with an entertaining dose of professional enlightenment by listening to the *Direct Examination* podcast, with new episodes dropping each Monday.



If you haven't listened to *Direct Examination* yet, you need to. Now in its second season, the podcast is hosted by attorneys Dayne Phillips (Price Benowitz LLP), Amber Fulmer (Moore Taylor Law Firm, PA), and Joseph Bias (Vernis & Bowling of Columbia, LLC), who interview South Carolina's legal "celebrities" on topics ranging from practice pointers, to lawyer discipline, to politics, to war stories. As a true crime fan-girl,

I was thrilled to listen to the *Direct Examination* episodes in which Dick Harpootlian and Jack Swerling discussed their respective roles in the Pee Wee Gaskins trial, and the podcast's interview with North Carolina attorney David Rudolf, who was part of the defense team in the Michael Peterson murder trial made famous by the riveting documentary *The Staircase*. That said, *Direct Examination* is by no means a true crime podcast; its guests include well-known lawyers from a variety of practice areas, as well as judges, politicians, Bar and ODC staff, and even rapper Ducati James (commonly known to his fellow SC Bar members as Eric Poston, Esquire).

In addition to gaining insight into the practice and profession from some of South Carolina's greatest legal minds, listeners are guaranteed to get a few chuckles as well. The show takes on a light-hearted—even comedic—tone, and it is evident that the hosts and their guests are enjoying themselves. The conversation is personable and, at times, personal (did you know that Justice Few wore the Blue Devil mascot costume for Duke University?). Having had the privilege of working with the *Direct Examination* team as a guest on their "Plaintiff Roundtable" episode, I can say with certainty Dayne, Amber, and Joseph are folks who can get down to business while having a good time. And so, wanting to find out what they do for fun off the air, the podcast hosts let me interview them for Bar Bites—check out what they had to say below. Then be sure to download and subscribe to *Direct Examination* on iTunes, Stitcher, Spotify, or wherever you get your podcasts!

As always, your fellow Bar members want to know what you have been loving lately—whether it is an album, book, concert, film, podcast, restaurant, or local hotspot, we want to hear about it! Please email your recommendations to me at JSmith@mklawgroup.com or to Jess Gooding at JGooding@goingslaw-firm.com.

What's your favorite watering hole on a summer day in the Midlands?

Dayne: "No favorite place. I'm a beer or bourbon guy depending on the occasion."

Amber: "Being pregnant keeps me from enjoying finer beverages at the moment, but I do love a Pelican Snoball – half strawberry and half mango is my poison of choice!"

Joseph: "The Aristocrat."

What's at the top of your summer reading list?

Dayne: "My future is filled with many pages of discovery and transcripts to read. Sad, but true."

Amber: "I try to read as much as I can, so here is the very scattered list that's on my bedside table for now: *A People's History of the United States*, *Watership Down*, *Black Hawk Down*, and *The Light We Lost*."

Joseph: "Looking forward to Shea Serrano's *Movies and Other Things* book in October, before that going to be reading *Hamilton* by Ron Chernow."

Apart from *Direct Examination*, what's your favorite podcast?

Dayne: "*The Maximum Lawyer*. It's a podcast for solo/small law firms addressing issues related to managing and growing a law practice."

Amber: "Other than our podcast I've listened to *Up and Vanished*, *Serial*, and *That's Lit*. Other than that, I'm an NPR girl."

Joseph: "*One Shining Podcast*. (But a shout out to our producer Brindy's *That's Lit* podcast, which is fun even though I don't read much)."



Say it, Don't Type it, With Dragon:

Why Should I Care About Dictating?

by Bill Booth

So, what is the normal routine for you as you start the day practicing law? Responding to emails, adding time entries, reviewing emails sent as reminders or follow-ups, and providing instructions for staff. Yes, the most common task for the lawyer beginning each day is dealing with communications. How do you do this? Inputting by typing on a keyboard or just talking to your staff? Consider using Dragon NaturallySpeaking for increasing your productivity for these daily tasks.



Most lawyers have heard of Dragon and many lawyers either use Dragon or had a bad experience trying to use Dragon several years ago. Maybe the voice recognition was not as good as expected, or Dragon was slow on startup, or occasionally crashed in the middle of a lengthy document. Whatever your experience was, if you are not using Dragon you should consider that it has improved such that reviewers find using Dragon is equivalent to typing at 100 words per minute. The time freed up through dictating can make a big difference to what you can do in a day.

Dictation Basics

You can use Dragon to dictate text into most Windows applications in just three steps.

1. Open the application you want to use.
2. Click inside the window or field where you want to dictate.
3. Turn on Dragon's microphone and speak! As you dictate, try to speak at a normal pace and in phrases or complete sentences. When dictating, you can use Dragon commands for common formatting:

For including punctuation with your dictation, just say what you want, and where you want it. For most

SAY	TO
New line	Start a new line – this is the same as pressing the Enter key once.
New paragraph	Start a new paragraph, including space to offset it from the previous one. Dragon automatically capitalizes the next word you speak.
Tab or Tab key	Enter a wide space, usually to align text. This is the same as pressing the Tab key.
Space bar	Add a space

dictation, say “period” or “question mark” in the appropriate places as you dictate.

Current Versions

Dragon Naturally Speaking 15 is the current version and there are two choices for getting the most out of Dragon: Dragon Professional Individual and Dragon Legal Individual. The legal version is almost twice the cost of the professional version, but may not be necessary for the typical lawyer. Both versions are typical desktop programs.

For setting up your Dragon software at a law office, using a USB headset is recommended, and the application runs best on a computer with an i3 processor and at least 8gb of memory. There is a mobile app called Dragon Anywhere and this application integrates with the desktop application for producing a document or memorandum. The mobile Dragon Anywhere application is ideal for creating case information when waiting or dealing with being in the courthouse. The Dragon Anywhere mobile application requires a monthly subscription fee.

Suggestions for buying and implementing Dragon

Dragon software can be purchased directly from retail online sites such as Amazon.com. But a third-party seller will usually include initial support for installing and getting started with Dragon. One third-party seller is Tekton Systems with an office in Columbia (800-888-1778), and the website is www.tektonsystems.com. An online demo can be scheduled using an online scheduling system, and usually there are one-hour time slots available at several times during the week. For self-taught, there are numerous videos available on YouTube. The main website for Dragon is www.nuance.com/dragon, and on the page for use by lawyers, there is an excellent testimonial video by Robert D’Auria, a Bedford, Massachusetts-based lawyer, discussing how he and his law firm have been using Dragon for the past several years.

Dragon includes access to an Interactive Tutorial which allows the user to be trained with progressive simulations for most features of Dragon. One caveat is that most cloud-based practice management services are not compatible with voice dictation technology. There is a work around requiring the use of the dictation box for transcribing and then adding the text into the cloud-based system.

Other Uses for Dragon

The use of custom commands allows the user to have inserted text after you say a custom text command. An example would be to say, “Enter Signature” and then Dragon will enter a specific signature block for email communication. Dragon can also give voice commands through Windows for opening a site in

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Say it, Don't Type it, With Dragon (...continued from page 8)

email communication. Dragon can also give voice commands through Windows for opening a site in Google or to search in Google. You can also use Dragon to initiate an email by simply saying "send an email to John Smith," and Outlook will open with an email ready to add content and send to John Smith.

So, is it important to you to be more productive and give your fingers a rest from typing so much? The Dragon NaturallySpeaking product gives you the ability to do things faster and perhaps bypass your staff for doing many tasks during the day. There are several easy ways to get a demonstration of Dragon's abilities, including the use of a third-party seller or third-party consultant to guide you through getting started. Good luck if you are interested or decide to discover if there are other features of Dragon you have not used yet.

William E. Booth III can be reached at bill@boothlawfirm.com and 803-791-9211.

Lowcountry Boil

A Lowcountry Boil honoring our local judiciary was held on May 16th at Hunter-Gatherer Brewery at the Hangar.



Checking In With Past Presidents:

Danny Crowe

What are you up to these days?

After three decades in a big firm, I now am in my fifth year with my own small and energetic firm and still enjoying representing cities and serving as a mediator.

What hobbies do you enjoy, or more generally, what interests do you have outside of law?

My hobbies are walking at the Riverfront Park, reading, travel, and showing photos of my adorable grandchildren to anyone who will look at them.

What is the best piece of advice you have ever received?

The best piece of professional advice I ever received was provided to me by my mentor Roy Bates: If you don't know the answer to a question, say "I don't know, but I will find out." Do not guess or blow smoke.

What is your favorite book, movie, or music and why?

My favorite movie, as a lifelong romantic and idealist, is "Casablanca."

What was your favorite RCBA memory or accomplishment?

My favorite RCBA memories are my service as the President in 1997 and my selection in 2002 as the first lawyer recipient of the Mathew Perry Civility Award. Both are high honors in my book.

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Checking In With Past Presidents:

Frank Knowlton

What are you up to these days?

I am just finishing my 26th year at Nelson Mullins and now have the privilege of being a team leader with team members in DC, Florida, Tennessee, and SC. George Cauthen was my predecessor as team leader and my mentor throughout my career here. The firm has grown a great deal since I started and it continues to be an exciting and rewarding place to be. My children have all graduated from college and moved to different cities. My daughter just moved to Charleston after 8 years in Jackson Hole and my two sons are in Denver and Wyoming. Keeping up with them is always a priority for me.

What hobbies do you enjoy, or more generally, what interests do you have outside of law?

I still enjoy running, but found rock climbing several years ago and am dedicated to that sport. It's been a long progression from running to triathlons to mountaineering and now to rock climbing. I met my wife





through rock climbing, and we climb frequently in the Red River Gorge (in Kentucky, where she owns a house), as well as in other parts of the country, France, and Switzerland.

What is the best piece of advice you have ever received?

“Absorb the energy.” We encounter many folks in our profession and in life who have high emotions over issues for reasons you can’t always appreciate or understand. This advice helps reinforce the discipline to absorb that high energy without letting it get in the way of your understanding their position or issue.

What is your favorite book, movie, or music and why? [Or lunch spot or dinner spot]

I recently finished *Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah. It is an historical fiction novel about the impact of WWII on the civilian population in France and told from a woman’s perspective. It was very well written and extremely powerful. If you read it in public, say on an airplane, be sure to have some Kleenex around (according to a friend). As for lunch and dinner spots, we always enjoy the Gourmet Shop for lunches and brunches and dinners at some of the new spots like Hendrix and Halls, as well as the old standbys like Motor Supply and Mr. Friendly’s.

What was your favorite RCBA memory or accomplishment?

One of my favorite memories was when we formed the Friends of the Richland County Courthouse. The purpose was to study the potential for building a new courthouse to replace the one that we have which has far outlasted its intended 25 year useful life span. During this process, the entire RCBA Executive Committee was very involved and got to work closely with Justice Toal who was (and remains) a passionate advocate. Unfortunately, our timing was not the best as the great recession hit us just at the wrong time, but I understand the process is on-going.

Building Strength: Practicing Yoga in the Light

by Tina Cundari

For years, I kept my yoga practice a secret. I did not tell anyone outside of my close circle of family and friends that I was practicing yoga. I especially did not talk about yoga at the office. Perhaps it was because of the stereotypes about yoga and the people who practice yoga. Some might think yogis are weird, flaky people who cannot keep a job. Others might think of yogis as hippies or sun worshippers who contort their bodies into strange shapes.



Another reason I may have been keeping my yoga practice a secret was because I did not want anyone to know how badly I needed to be doing yoga. I did not want anyone to know that I was struggling with the pressures of practicing law. I did not want anyone to know how nervous I was before big events such as trial or hearings, or that at times I had difficulty catching my breath. I did not want anyone to know how panicked I was on the inside as I tried to hold it all together on the outside.

When I first began practicing yoga, I did not know how much it would help me. I practiced yoga to stretch and to relax. I thought it would be a nice complement to running and other exercise.

What is yoga? Yoga can be defined in many ways. The word “yoga” comes from the Sanskrit word “yuj” which means to bind, to connect, or to unite. So one way to define yoga is that it is a practice of connection, a practice of connecting the mind, the body, and the spirit. As B.K.S. Iyengar wrote, “We need sound bodies so we can develop sound minds.”

Yoga has many benefits. Yoga builds strength and flexibility, improves respiratory and cardiovascular functions, and increases energy. Yoga calms the mind and improves the ability to focus. Yoga helps alleviate tension that accumulates in the body.

I have experienced these benefits and more. Yoga has provided me with tools to manage stress and to respond to difficult situations with steadiness and ease. Yoga has taught me to welcome fear rather than to be afraid of it. Yoga has increased my confidence and taught me to stand tall, physically and from within. Perhaps most importantly, yoga has helped me find my breath.

The beauty of yoga is that it meets you where you are. No matter how tight your hamstrings, you can practice yoga. Yoga is not a performance sport, and you do not have to master every pose on the first day. A skilled teacher will show you how to modify the postures so they are accessible.

A key to experiencing the benefits of yoga is finding the right teacher for you. A good yoga teacher is

someone who has a strong yoga practice herself and who is knowledgeable about the body and about the philosophy and history of yoga. A good yoga teacher is someone who is professional, ethical, and inspiring.

A common misperception about yoga is that it is only about stretching and relaxation. Although it is true that a yoga class will leave you feeling open and relaxed, yoga is challenging. It requires a lot of strength. Have you ever heard of warrior poses? Another common misperception is that you must be able to touch your toes before you can start. If that were true, very few people would be practicing yoga. (By the way, if you can't touch your toes, try bending your knees. And if you still can't touch your toes, then you really need to be doing yoga.)

In 2014, after practicing yoga for ten years, I decided to become certified to teach. I did not know if I would ever teach, but I knew that the teacher training would be a way to deepen my practice and to spend time doing something I love. Many people gave me the courage to teach. First is Stacey Millner-Collins. Stacey has been my primary yoga teacher for 14 years, and after leading me through teacher training (along with four other excellent teachers), she invited me to teach a weekly class at her yoga studio, City Yoga. Next is Beth Padgett, Director of Lawyers Helping Lawyers. Beth encouraged me to teach to lawyers and law students. A yoga teacher herself, Beth understands how helpful yoga can be to people struggling with mental health issues. Finally, I would not be teaching without the support of fellow lawyers Shannon Bobertz and John Hearn. Shannon and John have encouraged me every step of the way and helped me make an "office yoga" video for the Bar.

If you want to try yoga but taking a class at a yoga studio is too big of a leap, there are many resources available. Stacey Millner-Collins teaches a class called Yoga in Practice that airs on SCETV weekday mornings at 6:30 a.m. and weekends at 9:00 and 9:30 a.m. Another great resource is glo.com. This is a website with a variety of yoga teachers and classes. The cost is \$22.99/month, about the price of two public yoga classes. A free online option is Yoga with Adriene. An internet search will lead you to this lovely, skillful teacher.

And if you're ready to take the leap and "go public," I'd love to see you in one of my classes. I teach a Basic Yoga class at City Yoga every Saturday morning at 8:30. There's no hiding my yoga practice any more.

Tina Cundari is an Assistant United States Attorney in the U.S. Attorney's Office in Columbia, where she was recently named Chief of the Civil Division. Tina co-chairs the RCBA's Wellness Committee. She can be reached at tina.cundari@usdoj.gov.



Attorney Wellness:

Present and Future Challenges for the Profession

by Mike Polk and Van Horger

Observing that “To be a good lawyer, one has to be a healthy lawyer,” the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being published its 2017 report, *The Path to Lawyer Well-Being: Practical Recommendations For Positive Change*. The report is extremely comprehensive and serves as both a reminder and a grave warning of the pressures we face in this profession, citing studies finding that nationally between 21% and 36% of attorneys qualify as problem drinkers, that 28% struggle with some level of depression, and that 19% struggle with anxiety.

The report specifically noted South Carolina’s efforts in tackling the issues of lawyer wellness:

The South Carolina Bar’s Lawyer Wellness Committee, launched in 2014 and featuring a “Living Above the Bar” website, is a good model for well-being committees. In 2016, the ABA awarded this Committee the E. Smythe Gambrell Professionalism Award, which honors excellence and innovation in professionalism programs.

We reached out to South Carolina Supreme Court Justice John W. Kittredge, who is attuned to and has worked with the wellness issue. Justice Kittredge noted that, like everyone, he struggles to find the time to do everything he wants to do, underscoring the need to support the “wellness” effort.

Justice Kittredge chairs the commission on the profession. About eight years ago, the commission discussed the pressures of practicing law. Many well-known and respected attorneys vented about the constant pressure caused by the need to be available 24/7. The lawyers expressed that, because of the presence of cell phones, email, and other communication devices, they had no opportunities to untether themselves from work. Given the genuine angst that emerged from this discussion, coupled with the reputation of these great lawyers, Justice Kittredge took action. He went to then-Chief Justice Toal and to Bar Director Bob Wells. These meetings led to the formation of the Wellness Committee, a formal committee of the Bar. Mike Etheridge was tapped to lead the Wellness Committee, and Justice Kittredge noted the fabulous job Mike and the other outstanding committee members have done, culminating in the award mentioned above. Wellness presentations are becoming increasingly frequent at CLEs and JCLEs. In fact, the Court has altered the CLE ethics/substance abuse and mental health requirement to be expanded to include a wellness component.

Justice Kittredge also highlighted South Carolina Appellate Court Rule 428 for us. Through the commission on the profession, the Court implemented the rule in light of the wellness challenges facing attorneys and a desire for a compassionate response when a lawyer needs help. The traditional model has been a



knee-jerk complaint to the Office of Disciplinary Counsel (ODC) when a lawyer is in trouble, but sometimes an ODC complaint is overkill, particularly if there has been no harm to a client. The Court wanted an alternative to the punitive ODC option by providing a more compassionate path between doing nothing, often as the attorney spirals, and a formal complaint. Rule 428 is designed to accomplish that. The Rule provides a mechanism for reporting a lawyer when there is concern about a lawyer's possible impairment. The rule could be used if it appears a lawyer is in cognitive decline. It could also be used to help a lawyer who, struggling with the pressures of practicing law, turns to alcohol. Rule 428 is designed to allow the Bar to help the lawyer in need and hopefully avoid a spiral causing ODC involvement. The procedure is simple: there is an initial report to the Bar's Executive Director. From there, friends/lawyers in the community are called upon to assist. The response is tailored to the particular situation, but all with the ultimate goal of helping the lawyer without discipline. The 428 approach makes sense when there has been no harm to a client. Where a client has been harmed, the traditional ODC referral will most likely be needed.

Justice Kittredge noted that "wellness" covers many areas. We are trying to fashion rules and approaches that respond in an effective way to the real-world pressures of lawyers. Responding to help lawyers with grace and compassion should be viewed as a strength in our profession. Further, investing in others to create a healthier community of lawyers serves both lawyers and our clients.

In addition to emphasizing Rule 428, Justice Kittredge discussed with us many additional facets relating to the lawyer well-being. We hope to be able to highlight many of these in future issues. In addition, the RCBA has created its own wellness committee, about which you will see much more in the future.

Richland County Common Pleas Jury Verdicts

17-CP-40-0984

Andrea Flores, et al v. Dietrich Lake

Attorneys:

Plaintiff: Ashley Bramsen, et al.

Defense: Brett Bayne

Cause of Action: Automobile, Personal Injury

Verdict: For Plaintiff

Actual Damages: Andrea Flores - \$16,000; Yuris

Anzora - \$12,000; Yuris Anzora as Guardian -

\$4,600

16-CP-40-2694

Cecelia Pate Edwards, et al v. Thomas P. Giudice,

M.D., et al

Attorneys:

Plaintiff: Jennifer Burnett

Defense: James Clement, James Hood

Cause of Action: Personal Injury, Medical

Malpractice

Verdict: Split Verdict

17-CP-40-7238

Wanda Moody v. Kaori Sullivan

Attorneys:

Plaintiff: Zachary Dean Linowski

Defense: Kelley Cannon

Cause of Action: Automobile, Personal Injury

Verdict: For Plaintiff

Actual Damages: \$8,000

17-CP-40-1510

Barbara Ulrich & Michael Ulrich v. Samuel

Chiropractic Clinic/Virginia K. Samuel, DC DABCI

& Felicia Gaines

Attorneys:

Plaintiff: Susan Lipscombe

Defense: Jack Gresh and Derek Newberry

Cause of Action: Personal Injury, Medical

Malpractice

Verdict: For Defendant

17-CP-40-5787

Warren C. Myers v. Allen L. Meyer

Attorneys:

Plaintiff: William E. Booth III

Defense: B. Allen Bullard, Jr.

Cause of Action: Contract, Property Disclosure

Case Settled.

17-CP-40-3271

Onita Janeska Nelson v. Wajid Ali Siddiqui

Attorneys:

Plaintiff: David Marshall

Defense: Michael Coulter

Cause of Action: Automobile, Personal Injury

Verdict: For Plaintiff

Actual Damages: \$15,000

18-CP-40-0323

Ira Goodwin & Christopher Jacobs v. April Smith

Attorneys:

Plaintiff: Garry L. Wooten

Defense: Rogers E. Harrell, III

Cause of Action: Automobile

Verdict: For Plaintiff

Actual Damages: Ira Goodwin - \$39,951.09

Christopher Jacobs - \$8,939.69

16-CP-40-5416

Rhonda L. Meisner v. Deborah Gunter

Attorneys:

Plaintiff: Pro Se

Defense:

Cause of Action: Personal Injury, Libel and Slander

Verdict: For Plaintiff

Actual Damages: \$2,607.99

15-CP-40-1449

Thomas Jackson, et al. v. Joe Henry

Attorneys:

Plaintiff: John Charles Ormond, Jr.

Defense: Joseph Henry

Cause of Action: Other, Legal Malpractice

Verdict: For Plaintiff

Actual Damages: Thomas Jackson - \$2,500 and
Christopher Mitchell - \$13,000

17-CP-40-6201

Matthew Gerry, et al. v. Ameris Bank

Attorneys:

Plaintiff: Charles McDonald

Defense: Kirby Shealy

Cause of Action: Contract

Verdict: For Defendant

12-CP-40-6008

David Ray Tant v. William Frick

Attorneys:

Plaintiff: Thomas William Winslow and Allie Argoe

Defense: Gene Matthews and Jasmine Wyman

Cause of Action: Personal Injury, Gross Negligence

Verdict: For Defendant



Noteworthy News & Announcements



Several members of the Richland County Bar received **2019 Compleat Lawyer Awards from the University of South Carolina's School of Law**. The Award, established in 1992, is the law school's highest recognition of professional achievement and civic leadership. Those recognized were: **M. Malissa Burnette, Burnette Shutt & McDaniel PA; John T. Lay Jr., Gallivan White & Boyd PA; Matthew T. Richardson, Wyche PA; Allison P. Sullivan, Bluestein Thompson Sullivan LLC; and Sheila Willis, Fisher & Phillips LLP.**

Laura Baer has joined **Collins & Lacy** as an associate in the Retail & Hospitality Practice Group. Baer joins the firm from the State Treasurer's office. Attorneys in the C&L retail and hospitality group defend leading national and regional brands operating retail, hotel, food service, bar, and entertainment establishments. She graduated from Clemson University with a political science degree and earned her J.D. from the University of Baltimore School of Law. Baer was staff counsel for the Office of the South Carolina State Treasurer before joining Collins & Lacy, and she has also worked for the South Carolina Commission on Indigent Defense in its Division of Appellate Defense.

Joseph Bias, attorney at **Vernis & Bowling of Columbia, LLC** was one of two recipients for the SC Bar's Young Lawyer of the Year. According to South Carolina Bar leadership, he exemplifies what it means to represent the Young Lawyers Division in the most outstanding manner throughout South Carolina and the nation.

Celeste Bowers, an associate with **Robinson Gray** law firm, is pleased to announce that the South Carolina General Assembly has passed legislation creating flat, predictable recording fees for documents filed in Register of Deeds offices across the state. The legislation was a top legislative goal of the Palmetto Land and Title Association, an organization that works to maintain professional standards and ethics in the title industry in South Carolina, providing educational programs and industry information for its members, and otherwise promoting the advancement of the industry. Bowers is a director of PLTA and serves on its legislative committee, and was instrumental in helping pass the new legislation. She focuses her practice at Robinson Gray on commercial transactions, real estate development, and real estate litigation.

Burr Forman McNair announces that **Corky Klett** has joined the firm's Columbia office as partner located at 1221 Main St., Columbia 29201.

Abigail Carson has joined **Bruner Powell Wall & Mullins, LLC**, as an associate in the firm's Administrative & Regulatory, Professional Malpractice, Construction, and Health Care practice areas. Prior to joining the firm, Abigail served as a judicial law clerk to the Honorable H. Bruce Williams

of the South Carolina Court of Appeals. She graduated cum laude from Coastal Carolina University with a marine science degree and received her J.D., cum laude, from the University of South Carolina School of Law.

Cavanaugh & Thickens, LLC announces that **Steve Krzyston** has joined the firm's Columbia office located at 1324 Gadsden St., Columbia 29201.

Chappell Smith & Arden, P.A. announces that **Jacob D. Born** and **Peter P. Leventis IV** are now partners at the firm's Columbia office located at 2801 Devine St., Ste. 300, Columbia 29205.

The Dessausure Law Firm, P.A. announces that **Darrell Furgess, Jr.** has joined the firm's Columbia office as an associate located at 1928 Barnwell Street.

Harry Dixon has joined **Callison Tighe** as an associate. Licensed in South Carolina, Virginia, and Georgia, his practice focuses on commercial real estate transactions and a wide variety of litigation. Dixon joins Callison Tighe after clerking in the federal court system for Judge Dennis W. Shedd of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit and for Judge Terry L. Wooten of the United States District Court for the District of South Carolina. During law school, Dixon also completed an externship with Judge David R. Duncan of the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of South Carolina and worked for the Securities Division of the South Carolina Attorney General's Office. Dixon graduated from Hampden-Sydney College and received his juris doctor from the University of South Carolina School of Law, graduating magna cum laude. He earned prestigious CALI Awards in capital

markets, constitutional law, family business law and partnership taxation.

Finkel Law Firm, LLC announces that **Steven E. Price** has joined the Firm's Columbia office as an Associate located at 1201 Main St., Ste. 1800, Columbia, SC 29201.

Gallivan White Boyd announces that **J. Clayton Mitchell** has joined the firm's Columbia office as an associate attorney located at 1201 Main St., Columbia 29201.

Ashley Johnson, an associate attorney with **Robinson Gray Stepp & Laffitte** has been named to the city of Columbia's Design Development and Review Commission. The commission reviews and approves work proposed within Columbia's historic districts, urban design areas, and designated landmarks. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of South Carolina and her juris doctorate from the USC School of Law. Ashley was a law clerk to the Honorable DeAndrea Gist Benjamin, South Carolina Circuit Court Judge for the Fifth Judicial Circuit.

Will Johnson, shareholder at **Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd, PA** has joined The Original Six Foundation board of trustees. The Original Six Foundation, founded by then Governor Nikki Haley, serves as a catalyst for change by uniting public, private and civic partners and resources with rural communities to improve education for every child, regardless of where they are born and raised. Will joins other leaders from across the state who are committed to supporting South Carolina's children. A leader of the firm's Economic Development practice group, he focuses his practice on economic development, corporate law and tax matters.

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Noteworthy News & Announcements (...continued from page 20)

McAngus Goudelock & Courie is pleased to announce that attorney **Brett Bayne** was honored by *SC Lawyers Weekly* with a "Leadership in Law" Award. The event recognizes attorneys from across the Palmetto State who have achieved success in their law practice, made contributions to society and had an impact on the legal profession. Bayne was also selected out of the class of honorees as the "Lawyer of the Year." Bayne, a litigation attorney and certified Circuit Court Arbitrator, is extremely involved in the legal community. His practice focuses on general civil litigation defense, including automobile negligence, premises liability, products liability and construction defects. Bayne teaches Trial Advocacy at the USC School of Law and has served as Faculty Advisor and Head Coach of the Mock Trial Bar since 2013. During this time, the Mock Trial Bar has won nine regional and national championships, repeatedly placed as finalists or semifinalists in numerous competitions and his students have won multiple outstanding advocate awards. He was recently honored by the South Carolina Bar with the Trial and Appellate Advocacy Award.

The MGC Long Run, presented for the sixth time by **McAngus Goudelock & Courie**, has raised \$25,491.60 for USO South Carolina. For over 77 years, the USO has been the nation's leading organization to serve the men and women in the U.S. military, and their families, throughout their time in uniform. The MGC Long Run has raised more than \$150,000 for nonprofits since it began in 2014. This year, MGC Long Run committee presented the check at the USO Center at McCrady Training Center, one of four USO locations in South Carolina, and were able to witness first-hand the importance of this contribution. This year's 15k race had 744 run-

ners and walkers and 197 volunteers.

Tyler S. McDonald has joined **Constangy, Brooks, Smith & Prophete, LLP** as an associate. He is focusing his practice on employment litigation prevention and defense as well as Affirmative Action/OFCCP compliance. Tyler received his B.S. in Accounting from College of Charleston in 2014 and his J.D. from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 2017. Prior to joining Constangy, Tyler clerked for the Honorable Aphrodite K. Konduros at the South Carolina Court of Appeals.

McWhirter, Bellinger & Associates, P.A. is pleased to announce **Melissa Garcia Mosier** has been named its newest shareholder. Ms. Mosier has been with the firm since 2010 and has significant experience litigating in appellate, state and federal courts in South Carolina. She earned her B.S. with honors from the South Carolina Honors College and is a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society. She proceeded straight to the University of South Carolina School of Law as a merit scholar, where she earned 5 CALI awards. Since graduating from law school in 2010, Ms. Mosier has developed a niche practice focusing on transportation litigation, catastrophic injury claims and insurance coverage disputes.

Yani G. Mouratev, a long-time Columbia resident and graduate of the University of South Carolina School of Law, has joined **Callison Tighe** as an associate. His practice will focus on litigation. Previously, Mouratev was an assistant solicitor in the First Circuit Solicitor's Office, representing the state in criminal trials and hearings. He interned with the Honorable Robert E. Hood of the 5th Judicial Circuit and

has also worked for the 5th Circuit Public Defender's Office. Mouratev earned his Bachelor's degree in English from the University of South Carolina.

J. Scott Pierce has joined **Collins & Lacy** as an associate in the Retail & Hospitality Practice Group. The firm's Retail and Hospitality Practice Group defends leading national and regional brands operating retail, hotel, food service, bar, and entertainment establishments. Pierce clerked for the Honorable L. Casey Manning (Fifth Circuit); worked as a policy specialist for the Federal Emergency Management Agency; and as a tax associate for PricewaterhouseCoopers. He earned a psychology degree from University of South Carolina Honors College and his J.D. from the University of Southern California, Gould School of Law. While at the University of South Carolina, he was a four-year letterman of the men's Track and Field team.

Robinson Gray Stepp & Laffitte, LLC is pleased to announce **Bobby Stepp** was honored at the *South Carolina Lawyers Weekly's* 2019 Leadership in Law awards dinner. The Leadership in Law awards honor outstanding members of South Carolina's legal community who have achieved success in their law practice, made contributions to their community, and had an impact on the legal profession. The honorees are professionals who consistently go above and beyond in their work. Stepp has consistently been recognized by *Chambers U.S.A.* America's Leading Lawyers for Business and Best Lawyers in America. He was also named a Bet-the-Company Litigation "Lawyer of the Year" by *Best Lawyers in America*. Stepp focuses his practice on commercial litigation, appellate, and professional liability and ethics.

Susan Strom announces the opening of **Strom Fam-**

ily Law located at N. Beltline Blvd. Strom Family Law also notes that Patricia Morr will be joining the practice following the bar examination. Ms. Morr was presented the Compleat Lawyer Bronze Medal at commencement. The Bronze Award is presented to three graduating law students who, through their performance in law school and their relationships with students and professors, have demonstrated their potential to be outstanding attorneys. These recipients possess the highest standards of ethics integrity, and professionalism.

Beth B. Richardson, a member with **Robinson Gray** Law Firm, has joined the Midlands Spring 2019 Class of the Riley Institute's Diversity Leaders Initiative. Started at Furman in 2003, the program's more than 2,000 graduates have included a wide array of business, governmental and community leaders. Participants gather for several day-long sessions during the semester, during which they learn to understand their diversity and inclusion "blind spots" and how to suspend assumptions. They come away with focused decision-making skills and deep knowledge of how to effectively manage and lead increasingly diverse workers, clients and constituents. Richardson received her undergraduate degree in Women's Studies from Duke University and her juris doctorate from Washington University Law School in St. Louis.

The U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of South Carolina has appointed **Kerk Spong**, a member of **Robinson Gray** law firm in Columbia, to a committee that advises the court regarding its rules and practices. The court's Advisory Committee on Local Rules and Practice is charged with studying local rules and procedures and submitting its suggestions to the court regarding them.

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Veteran tax attorney **Timothy C. Thompson** has joined **Robinson Gray** law firm as Of Counsel. This will be a new practice area for the firm, and Thompson brings extensive and diverse experience to the task. A 1993 graduate of The Citadel, he obtained his Juris Doctor degree from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 1996 before proceeding to earn a Master of Laws degree in taxation from the University of Florida School of Law (School of Taxation). He has practiced with private law firms and served as managing counsel for the SC Department of Revenue.

Margaret Pope, an attorney concentrating in public finance with **Pope Flynn**, has received "Lawyer of the Year" in Public Finance Law for Columbia, South Carolina from *The Best Lawyers in America*® 2019. The designation is given to only a single lawyer in each practice area in each community, and is "based on particularly impressive voting averages received during the exhaustive peer-review assessments." Pope has been listed in *Best Lawyers*® for public finance law since 2003. She graduated with a degree in political science from Emory University, then went on to receive a JD from USC's School of Law.

La'Jessica Stringfellow has joined **Robinson Gray** law firm as an associate. Her practice will focus on commercial litigation and insurance defense. La'Jessica was previously an assistant solicitor in the 11th Circuit Solicitor's office and before that, served as a law clerk to the Honorable John Cannon Few with the South Carolina Court of Appeals and the South Carolina Supreme Court. She is a graduate of Virginia State University, and received her Juris Doctor from the University of South Caro-

lina School of Law. She is active in the Young Lawyers Division of the South Carolina Bar, serving as co-chair of the Publications Committee and is a 2018-2019 American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division Scholar.

Kyle Watson has joined **Baker, Ravenel & Bender** as an associate. He joins the firm as a litigator, bringing extensive experience from his participation in trial advocacy competitions in law school. He will be practicing in the areas of insurance defense, including automobile liability, premises liability, product liability, and dram shop liability. He will also provide representation in criminal cases. Kyle received his bachelor's degree from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and his juris doctorate from the University of South Carolina School of Law. In law school, he received the D. Reece Williams III Trial Advocacy Award for winning a mock trial competition, the Best Advocate Award in the Buffalo, N.Y., competition, and two Most Professional Awards in the national William Daniel competition. He also received CALI Awards for Excellence in Advanced Evidence: Law and Strategy, Trial Advocacy, and Torts.

Congratulations to the following RCBA members recognized in the Columbia Business Report's 2019 Class of Icons & Phenoms: **Leslie Simpson, McAngus Goude-lock & Courie; Becky Laffitte, Robinson Gray Stepp & Laffitte LLC; Ron Scott, Scott & Corley, P.A.; Seth Rose, Attorney at Law; and Lisa Hostetler Brown, Lawyer Lisa LLC.**

Congratulations to **all Richland County Bar Attorneys** recognized as Super Lawyers!

Women in Law Networking Event

The first RCBA & USC Law School Women in Law networking event was held February 20th at the Law School. A panel discussion with RCBA members began the evening. Panelists discussed opportunities, challenges and varied experiences as successful female attorneys. Following the panel, a networking event was held that included RCBA attorneys and more that 50 law school students. The evening was success!



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Yani represented the State in a range of criminal cases as an assistant solicitor in the First Circuit Solicitor's Office. His experience in the business world includes work in the insurance industry—helping him prepare for a legal practice focusing on general litigation. He joins an experienced team at Callison Tighe, poised to represent you in all state and federal courts in South Carolina. Learn more about Yani and our litigation practice at callisontighe.com.

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HARRY A. DIXON.

—
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Callison Tighe is pleased to welcome Harry Dixon as an associate. Harry's practice focuses on commercial real estate transactions and a wide variety of litigation. Prior to joining Callison Tighe, Harry clerked on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit and the United States District Court for the District of South Carolina. Harry is licensed in South Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia. To learn more, visit callisontighe.com.

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Supreme Court Beautification Project Update

Over the past year, South Carolina county bar associations, law firms, and individual lawyers have banded together to make over 160 separate donations to fund our Supreme Court beautification project. All have been moved by the need to provide a safer, healthier, and more attractive place for the members of our highest court and their staff to work. We have placed a line of trees and planters along the tree bed at First Citizens Bank that will grow and provide much-needed afternoon shade from the Columbia sun. We have removed the advertisement banners that formerly hung in front of our court. We have established formal plans to complete work in the near future.

While we are not there yet, we are getting close. If you or your firm have yet to donate, then please consider doing so. All donations are tax deductible and every penny goes toward bricks and mortar. The result will be improvements we all can be proud of, enhancements that will last for the next century.

2019 Memorial Service

The following individuals were remembered and honored at the 2019 Richland County Bar Association Memorial Service on Friday, June 7, 2019 at the Richland County Courthouse.

William George "Bill" Besley
BG William "Bill" Holman Gibbes, USAR
Robert Lee "Bob" Jackson
Herbert Vincent Jervey
Edgar Salter Kneece
Sarah E. Leverette
M. Joyce Marshall
Thomas English McCutchen, Jr.

Julius "Jay" Walker McKay
William Shannon Nelson II
James Carlisle Oxner, Jr.
DuVal Cravens Ravenel
Gerald Frederick Smith
Curtis Cooper Stewart, Sr.
Douglas Steven Strickler