



LegalEase

April 2021

Newsletter of the Peoria County Bar Association, an Accredited Provider of Continuing Legal Education.

President's Message

More than most years we can share the confusing and disorienting sentiments expressed by Japanese poet and haiku master Kobayashi Issa when he authored "What a strange thing! To be alive beneath cherry blossoms." One message Kobayashi conveyed was that the natural world around us continues no matter how we may feel or think. The need for awareness of the full 360-degree circle drawn around each of us has increased due to the continuing public health challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. If you are less fond of cosmology, you may find yourself more closely aligned to the views expressed by the master poet from Chile, Pablo Neruda, who intoned a famous line. "You can cut all the flowers but you cannot keep Spring from coming." So after we remind ourselves once again of the need to move forward, we can then lean on a point of wisdom from one of Russia's great novelists, Leo Tolstoy. He viewed Spring as a time for action like our area farmers. "Spring is the time of plans and projects." The Peoria County Bar Association has taken that lesson to heart and mind and acted on it throughout this time span. When you check the www.peoriabar.org website you will find many items to help you plan the next phases of your practice and office management. Now is the time to start using what the PCBA provides as resources to plan and complete your Spring office and practice organization projects.



First, the PCBA online directory contains data you can quickly download on the counsel whom you may regularly contact as part of your practice. There is no need for you to struggle finding contact data when your paper and digital PCBA directories have almost all the contact data that your office needs. Second, you will find CLE resources from the past and present. The CLE resources keep expanding and are all superb in quality. For example, the Brown Bag seminars have all been top-notch in quality and filled with practical data and tips for all PCBA members. If you missed any, go to the PCBA website and find out what you can still learn. Third, you will find a digital calendar with upcoming PCBA events and meetings of many types. Your review of the PCBA calendar will have the likely side-effect of you reaching out to contact your fellow colleagues and the PCBA office. That is a good thing for you and your stationary and portable offices.

Finally, I want to thank the dozens of attorneys who took my calls. While each call covered a variety of topics across a wide range of different experiences, each member told me that they value the PCBA. Based on such responses, I encouraged each attorney to reactivate their individual and firm membership with the Peoria County Bar Association. The positive responses were great to hear and suggest that we are slowly yet determinedly on the way back to more fully engaging with each other on all professional levels. Thank you all for letting me interrupt your overly busy days. We'll talk again soon.

Court News *By Chief Judge Katherine S. Gorman*



1. The Peoria County Probation and Court Services Department has promoted Robert Askins to the position of Adult Chief Probation Officer. Askins replaces Francine Neal, who will retire from her position on April 30, 2021. Rob Askins will be sworn into his new position on May 10, 2021.

2. Peoria County Family Court Judicial Coordinator, Hon. Suzanne Patton, is pleased to announce that the Tenth Circuit Family Online Resolution Center program is now available to all litigants through a new portal. This program assists parties in preparing a complete and/or partial parenting plan through a guided process. It provides a neutral platform for the parties to negotiate and resolve disputes which is then automatically submitted to the court

for its review and entry. If you are interested in logging into this new program, please email your request to DissolutionCourt322@peoriacounty.org or DissolutionCourt323@peoriacounty.org. The court clerks will forward your request to Judges Patton and Doscotch. Once approved, you will receive an email inviting you to log into the program.

Schedule of Events & Court Holidays

April

2 Good Friday – Courts & Courthouse Closed/PCBA Office Closed

Committee Meetings

All meetings are through Zoom unless otherwise noted

April					
6	Real Property	15	Fitness, Health & Wellness	22	Pro Bono
8	YLC	20	Board	27	YLC – Meet the Judges
13	Diversity	20	Foundation Trustees		
14	Family Law	21	CLE		

Committee Reports

Annual Meeting

Save-the-Date! The 2021 Annual Meeting will be Thursday, July 15 at Obed & Isaac's in their Bocce Garden. More details to come!

By-Laws Committee

The Board of Directors recently approved some changes to the PCBA By-Laws. Please keep an eye out for an email explaining these changes. A special meeting will be called in May for the membership to approve these changes before the Annual Meeting in July.

Communications & Technology

The 2021 Attorneys' Directories are now available! Please contact the PCBA office at pcbaasst@mtco.com to coordinate pick-up for your office.

Entertainment – Golf Outing

Save-the-Date! The PCBA Annual Golf Outing is being held Friday, September 10 at Mt. Hawley Country Club! Mark your calendars now!



Fitness, Health & Wellness by Robert Everett, Committee Chair

With the weather starting to warm up, we are issuing a fitness challenge to PCBA members. Please keep track of the miles you walk, jog, or bike, or the number of laps you swim from the 1st of the month through the last day of the month. Please report your monthly totals to Stephanie at pcbaasst@mtco.com by the 5th of the following month. Members with the highest totals in each category will be listed in the following PCBA newsletter.

Lincoln Memorial Banquet & Pillars of the Bar

The Lincoln Memorial Banquet & Pillars of the Bar event this year has been canceled. The next Lincoln Memorial Banquet will take place in February 2022 and the Pillars of the Bar will take place in the spring of 2022.

Local Continuing Legal Education

2021 May Professional Responsibility Webinar – Our Spring Professional Responsibility Webinar will be **Friday, May 14 from Noon – 2:05 p.m.** through Zoom. In the first half of this 2-hour webinar, Mark Brown, Bradley University Human Resource Specialist, will join PCBA member, Mike Lied, to discuss diversity & inclusion of lawyers with disabilities. Retired Judge Jerelyn Maher will also present and speak on implicit bias. In the second half of this webinar, PCBA members Katherine Swise, Ann Pieper and S. Linn Perkins will discuss ethical rules as they pertain to working with self-represented litigants in and outside of court. The webinar will conclude with a judicial panel. Register online now by clicking [here](#), or visiting www.peoriabar.org and clicking on the event calendar.

Cost - \$65 PCBA Members | \$80 McLean County Bar Members | \$95 Non-Members

2021 Brown Bag Seminars – The entire 2021 Brown Bag Series is now available on Vimeo! To access the recordings and course materials, please visit www.peoriabar.org and click on “Free CLE Hours” under the CLE tab. You must log in with your username and password to access this page. Contact Stephanie at pcbaasst@mtco.com for assistance.

Membership

We received an application for membership from Gabrielle Neace and an application for student membership from William Bailey. Gabrielle Neace is a law clerk for Hon. James Shadid and William is a student at the University of Illinois College of Law. If there are no objections, their names will be submitted to the Board in May for approval.

Memorials



On March 24, 2021, a member of the Association, Verne E. Dentino, passed away. Verne attended St. Mark Grade School and graduated from Spalding Institute in 1965. He then obtained a B.A. in psychology from Wabash University in 1969 and his J.D. from DePaul University College of Law in Chicago. He began his legal career with the Illinois Attorney General's office and later worked for the State's Attorney's Office in Peoria County. After that, he opened up his own, private practice where he spent over 30 years. Contributions to the Peoria County Bar Association Foundation may be made online by clicking [here](#) or by sending a check to the Peoria County Bar Association Foundation in memory of Verne E. Dentino. *The PCBA has made a \$100 contribution to the Foundation in memory of Mr. Dentino.*

Memorial Service

There will be two Memorial Services this year. The first one will be on Thursday, September 2 and the second one will be Thursday, September 16. Both will take place in the afternoon in courtroom 210 of the Peoria County Courthouse. A reception will immediately follow each service in the Renaissance Room (3rd Floor) of the Janssen Building. More details to come.

PRAIRIE STATE LEGAL SERVICES

RECENTLY CLOSED PRO BONO CASES

Prairie State Legal Services (PSLS) would like to thank the following attorneys who have provided free legal assistance to low-income persons through our Pro Bono Program and have recently closed their pro bono cases: Valerie Moehle of Moehle, Swearingen & Lobacz, Ltd.; Don Driscoll formerly of RLI Corp.; and Abigail Fleming of Fleming Law Office.

INTRODUCING PSLS' NEW PRO BONO COORDINATOR

Beginning in February 2021, Laura M. Lutkowski took over for Lydia Wagenbach as the Pro Bono Coordinator for the Peoria/Galesburg PSLS office. Prior to assuming this role, Laura was a legal secretary for PSLS.

Laura has a long-held passion for assisting low-income individuals in obtaining access to justice. Laura obtained her bachelor's degree in Social Work from Southern Illinois University in 2015. Following this, Laura assisted with medical-legal partnerships and housing projects at Land of Lincoln Legal Aid and Indiana Legal Services as an AmeriCorps VISTA, law student intern, and paralegal. Laura also has experience in the private law sector as a paralegal for family law and personal injury law firms.

Originally from Springfield, Illinois, Laura and her fiancé, Ryan, have recently settled into the Peoria area. Laura is enjoying exploring this beautiful, lively, and diverse part of Illinois. Laura and Ryan are getting married this upcoming month, so keep an eye out for future correspondence from Laura Mandera!

OPPORTUNITIES TO VOLUNTEER

In lieu of the cancelled in-person sealing/expungement clinics, PSLS is offering a pro bono opportunity to advise sealing/expungement clients on their record over the phone. PSLS will investigate the client's eligibility to file a Request to Expunge/Seal and if eligible, PSLS will prepare the court documents. We will email the client's documents to you well before you plan to call the client, and we will answer any questions you may have before you call the client. Once you have advised the client over the phone regarding the documents, the client will be empowered to then file the pro se documents. This pro bono commitment typically takes about an hour.

If you would like to volunteer, please call Laura at (309) 621-4015 or email Laura at lutkowski@pslegal.org. Your pro bono service will help PSLS provide legal assistance to individuals within our community who may not otherwise be able to afford legal representation.

Other News

If you anticipate filing numerous Eviction cases when time allows. Please email the clerk in 203 at probatecourt@peoriacounty.org to obtain block time.

Directory Changes

Michael Fleming - New Office address is 411 Hamilton Blvd., Suite 1510, Peoria, IL 61602. All other information remains the same.

Mike Lied – 6941 W. Dickison Cemetery Rd., Dunlap, IL 61525 Phone: 309-243-9716 Email: mrlied@gmail.com

Yolanda Riley – The Law Office of Yolanda J. Riley, LLC – 2601 W. Lake Ave., Suite A6 #202, Peoria, IL 61615. Phone: 309-643-2355 Email: info@yolandarileylaw.com

Richard Zuckerman - New Office address is 411 Hamilton Blvd., Suite 1510, Peoria, IL 61602. All other information remains the same.

Cusack, Gilfillan & O'Day – New Office address is 411 Hamilton Blvd., Suite 1510, Peoria, IL 61602. All other information remains the same.

2020-21 Board of Directors

Ambrose V. McCall – President
Emily H. Wilburn – President-Elect & Budget
Michael A. Fleming – Second Vice President
Aliesha N. Graves – Secretary-Treasurer
Michael D. Gifford – Past President & Nominating Chair
Anne Mergen – By-Laws
Katherine Legge – Communications & Technology
Melodi Green -- Diversity
Kevin Elder – Entertainment (Golf)
Dennis Merkley – Entertainment (Holiday Party)
Robert Everett – Fitness, Health & Wellness
Joshua Herman – Government & Public Interest Law
Carol Perkins – Lawyer Referral Service
Mitch Gilfillan – Lincoln Memorial Banquet

William Loeffel – Local Continuing Legal Education
Seth TeBeest & David B. Mueller –
Membership & Memorials
Kerrienne Waters – Pro Bono
Kevin Day – Public Relations
Joe Gilfillan – Real Property
Thomas McConnaughay – Substantive Law
J. Logan Block – Young Lawyers
Katherine Swise – Director at Large
Syed Ahmad – Director at Large
Charles Schierer – Director at Large
B. Kip Shelby – Director at Large
Christopher Oswald – Director at Large