



# LegalEase

February 2021

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

## **CALL FOR JUSTICE 2021**



At the start of 2021, we find ourselves continuing to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic in unique and challenging ways. Imagine being a self-represented litigant with challenges of inadequate income or unemployment, housing, family issues or domestic violence, lack of health care and facing insurmountable legal challenges. In 2020 and 2021, the Courts have seen an increasing number of self-represented litigants in civil legal proceedings who are in dire need of legal representation. We thank and applaud all of the attorneys in the Tenth Judicial Circuit who have accepted a referral from Prairie State Legal Services and represented those in need through the Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI) and the Tenth Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee.

The Tenth Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee is asking each attorney and law firm to consider representing those who are in need of legal representation and most vulnerable in our community. If each attorney answers this “Call for Justice” and takes one case for legal representation or extends assistance at a Self-Represented Litigant Help Desk or clinic, what a difference this will make to those in need during this unique time in our nation and community.

So, now is the time to act and answer the “Call for Justice 2021” with just a click of a button contained below.

**To Volunteer at Prairie State Legal Services, Inc., click here:**

<https://www.pslegal.org/psls-volunteer-opp.asp>

**To Volunteer through the Tenth Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee:**

<https://pili.org/pro-bono/judicial-circuit-committees/10thcircuit/pro-bono-volunteer-opportunities-in-the-tenth-judicial-circuit/>

Lisa Wilson

Associate Judge and Chair of the Tenth Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee [lwilson@peoriacounty.org](mailto:lwilson@peoriacounty.org)

## **President’s Message**

Judge Wilson raises great points that go to the core of why each of us should consider undertaking some pro bono work this year. The reasons for doing so are compelling every year. This year such reasons are only heightened with the COVID-19 pandemic, episodes of social unrest, and the renewed quest for equality and justice for all. There are also positive factors you may consider when reviewing pro bono opportunities. One such factor includes the ability to educate a fellow citizen or resident about our legal system. More than anyone else, only an attorney can help those in need of legal counsel or representation feel a part of the legal process. Without your involvement, such persons in need will find themselves alone and lost in the hallways of a courthouse or the offices of a government agency. Another factor is that you may learn just as much or more from your pro bono client. Your interactions with your pro bono client will educate you about life experiences that you may not have previously experienced, felt, known, or understood. Another plus is that you have a chance to not only collaborate with your pro bono client, but also consult and share insights with the excellent attorneys and staff at Prairie State Legal Service, PILI, and our PCBA members who are career pro bono counsel volunteers. Each of them are simply amazing.



Practical reasons also support reviewing pro bono assignments, especially if you are a firm leader. Many new attorney recruits ask if your firm or office promotes pro bono opportunities. New attorneys will notice if your firm or office has an active pro bono program. Moreover, your new recruits will have the opportunity to learn new skills while receiving your supervision and input from the assigning attorneys, personnel, and staff. Each of us also know that after taking and completing a pro bono assignment, we are reminded why we decided to start practicing law -- to help people. Upon completing such an assignment, you receive a sense of personal and professional self-fulfillment that is real. You will find it impossible to replicate that feeling in any other context. Please reach out this year and design a pro-bono commitment or plan that works for you and your practice. You will help others and yourself in the process. Let's encourage each other and make the PCBA one of the leaders in providing and supporting pro bono legal services.

## Court News *By Chief Judge Katherine S. Gorman*



1. Thank you, Judge Gilfillan, for your leadership and excellent representation of the Tenth Judicial Circuit to the bench, bar and public.
2. The Peoria County Courthouse is open for court business with a hybrid of remote and in person hearings with a goal to gradually increase in person access while complying with safety precautions. This situation will be re-evaluated regularly as it continues to evolve considering vaccine distribution, COVID-19 metrics, and input from local health departments. See A.O. 2021-02.
3. Onward to 2021!

## Schedule of Events & Court Holidays

### February

6 2021 Winter Series – Civil Practice Seminar, 8:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. through Zoom

15 Presidents' Day – Courts & Courthouse Closed, PCBA Office Closed

## Committee Meetings

All meetings are through Zoom unless otherwise noted

### February

2	Real Property	10	CLE	17	LMB
3	Commercial Law & Lit.	11	YLC	18	Diversity
8	Pro Bono	16	Board	24	Public Relations

## Distinguished Community Service Award (DCSA)

Nominations are open for the 2020 Distinguished Community Service Award. The recipient will be announced at the Lincoln Memorial Banquet & Pillars of the Bar event in May. If you know an attorney who deserves this award, please visit the PCBA website at [www.peoriabar.org](http://www.peoriabar.org) and click on DCSA under the members tab. Here, you can submit your nomination online or download the form and submit it to the PCBA office. Nomination deadline is 5:00 p.m., Monday, April 5, 2021.

## Committee Reports

### Communications & Technology

The 2021 Attorneys' Directories are now available! Please contact the PCBA office at [pbaasst@mtco.com](mailto:pbaasst@mtco.com) to coordinate pick-up for your office.

## Fitness, Health & Wellness by Denise Conklin, Committee Member

### Celebrate a Fitness-Friendly Valentine's Day!

Don't forget Valentine's Day this year! Despite the COVID pandemic, are you trying to maintain a healthy work-out life and healthy relationships? Valentine's Day offers a unique opportunity to make both happen! With help from [eliteclubs.com](http://eliteclubs.com), here are **5 Fitness-Friendly ways to spend Valentine's Day** with someone you love: <https://eliteclubs.com/fitness-friendly-ways-spend-valentines-day/>

## Lincoln Memorial Banquet & Pillars of the Bar

The Lincoln Memorial Banquet Committee has decided to postpone the Lincoln Memorial Banquet & Pillars of the Bar until late spring. The event is now scheduled for **Thursday, May 27** at the **Par-A-Dice Hotel & Casino in East Peoria**. Mark your calendars now!

## Local Continuing Legal Education

**2021 Winter Series**- Final Seminar in the Series!

**Saturday, February 6**, 8:30 – 11:45 a.m. – Civil Practice \*Registration price increases by \$15 on 2/1/21\*

**2021 Brown Bag Seminars** – These seminars will take place through Zoom this year, which means we don't have to cap the attendance like normal! They are scheduled for every **Wednesday in March from Noon – 1:00 p.m.** Registration will open in February and as always, these seminars are FREE for all PCBA Members!

**March 3** – OurFamilyWizard **March 10** – An Overview of Recent Changes to the PAAR Residential Sales Contract and Related Amendments **March 17** – Commercial Law & Litigation **March 24** – Real Estate Tax Assessments **March 31** – Criminal Law

## **Membership**

We have received an application for membership from Robert Bulanda, an application for membership renewal from Siobhan Smith and Kathleen Carey and an application for student membership from Luke Patty. Robert is an attorney at William C. Connor, Attorney at Law, P.C., Siobhan is an attorney with Hasselberg, Rock, Bell & Kuppler, Kathleen is a solo practitioner and Luke is attending the University of Illinois College of Law and expects to graduate in 2023. If there are no objections, their applications will be presented to the Board in March for approval.

## **Memorials**



On January 18, 2021 a member of the Association, Hon. James D. Heiple, passed away. Judge Heiple graduated from Bradley University and received his law degree from the University of Louisville. He practiced law in Pekin from 1958 to 1970 and then served as Circuit Judge until 1980. From 1980 – 1990 he served as an Illinois Appellate Court Judge before being elected a justice of the Illinois Supreme Court. In 1997 he served as Chief Justice of the Illinois Supreme Court. 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 Hon. James D. Heiple.

*The PCBA has made a \$100 contribution to the Foundation in memory of Mr. Heiple.*

On January 24, 2021 a member of the Association, Frederick W. Allen, passed away. Fred attended law school at Northwestern University and began practicing in 1949 at the law firm of Louis Knobloch in Peoria. He eventually started his own law firm where he worked primarily as a plaintiff's attorney. He was part of numerous legal groups throughout Illinois, including the Illinois Trial Lawyers Association, Society of Trial Lawyers, Illinois State Bar Association and Inner Circle of Advocates. 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 Frederick W. Allen.

*The PCBA has made a \$100 contribution to the Foundation in memory of Mr. Allen.*



## **Nominating Committee**

On November 13, the Nominating Committee met for the purpose of selecting an attorney who will fill the role of Secretary-Treasurer next year, and annually thereafter move into the offices of Second Vice President, President-Elect and President of the PCBA. The nominee should be someone from our association with past measurable involvement with the PCBA's committees and activities, someone with demonstrated legal experience and abilities, and someone who exemplifies the character of the membership sufficient to lead the association in furtherance of all the association's endeavors. The Nominating Committee is pleased to report that it has selected Joshua Herman as its nominee for the position of Secretary-Treasurer for the year 2021-2022. The committee has spoken with Josh who has agreed that if he is so nominated, he will accept the position.



**The 2020-21 Nominating Committee Members:** Michael D. Gifford, 2019-2020 Immediate Past President & Chair, Richard W. Zuckerman, 2018-19 President; Michele A. Miller, 2017-18 President; Hon. Jerelyn D. Maher, 2016-17 President; Timothy J. Howard, 2015-16 President; Two members under age 36 appointed by the chair: David Wiest and Melissa Schoenbein.

## **2020-21 Board of Directors**

Ambrose V. McCall – President  
Emily H. Wilburn – President-Elect & Budget  
Michael A. Fleming – Second Vice President  
Aliasha 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  
Kerriane 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