



Oakland County Legal News

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SHORT TAKES

Judge Warren to address Rotary Clubs, guests

Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Michael Warren, recognized author of "America's Survival Guide: How to Stop America's Impending Suicide by Reclaiming Our First Principles and History," will be speaking Thursday, Feb. 12, to Rotary Club members and their guests on the topic of "Preserving Our Liberty at a Time of Crisis."

He will be featured today at noon for the Rotary Club of Pontiac at the Auburn Hills Marriott Pontiac at Centerpoint, and at 6:30 p.m. for the Rotary of Beverly Hills at Jimi's Restaurant in Royal Oak.

Warren explains that "we cannot underestimate the importance of understanding our liberties and protecting them at a time of our economic and military crisis. In particular, we need to ensure that we adhere to our First Principles of the rule of law, unalienable rights, the Social Compact, equality, and limited government in challenging times. Otherwise, whatever actions we take will be self-destructive."

Warren is a former member of the State Board of Education and has been serving as an Oakland County Circuit Court judge since 2002. He has written various commentaries and opinions on subjects regarding the law, education and American Civics, published in, among others, the Oakland Press, Detroit News, and Detroit Free Press, and authored various education policies and reports. "America's Survival Guide" is available at www.AmericasSurvivalGuide.com. He also blogs at <http://americassurvivalguide.blogspot.com/>.

COURTS CLOSED

The Oakland County Circuit and Probate Courts will be closed Monday, Feb. 16, for Presidents Day.

All offices of the United States District Court and the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Michigan will be CLOSED on Monday, Feb. 16, in observance of Presidents Day. In case of emergency, call (313) 234-5656.

The Michigan Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, and State Court Administrative Office will be closed on Monday, Feb. 16, in observance of Presidents Day.

'Search Engine Marketing for Law Firms' offered at OCBA

LexisNexis will sponsor "Search Engine Marketing for Law Firms" presented by Stephanie Fraley on Tuesday, Feb. 24, from 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Oakland County Bar Center in Bloomfield Hills.

Those attending will learn:

- What search marketing is and how it works.
- How to generate leads from the Web using search engine marketing.
- What the "drivers" of searching are.
- The difference between search engine optimization (SEO) and pay-per-click (PPC).
- SEO & PPC best practices.

Oakland County Bar Association (OCBA) members who pre-register pay only \$15; OCBA student members who pre-register pay \$10; and non-OCBA members who pre-register pay \$20. At the door, OCBA members pay \$25 and non-OCBA members pay \$35.

To register or for additional information, call (248) 334-3400 or visit www.ocba.org.

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RESTORE

Foundation created to help fund drug court programs

By TOM KIRVAN
Legal News

Alan Ackerman, noted eminent domain attorney whose son recently gained a share of national fame, harbors no illusions that the task he has embarked upon will be easy.

It's a fund-raising journey he is sharing with Ven Johnson, a partner in the Southfield firm headed by Geoffrey Fieger.

The two, along with many other prominent members of the area legal community, have joined forces to support funding efforts for the drug court programs in Oakland County. State and federal grant support for the programs has been slashed over the past two years as governments grapple with revenue shortfalls associated with the real estate crisis and overall economic downturn.

"In this kind of economic climate, we can't expect the state with all of its budget issues to come to the rescue for these types of programs," Ackerman said. "We need private involvement to restore the level of funding that these programs have received over the years from government sources. The private sector needs to step up and I'm happy to do what I can to help out."

Johnson, a civil litigator with a practice known throughout the state, is like-minded,



At the January 28 graduation ceremony for the Adult Treatment Court in Oakland County, Circuit Court Judge Joan Young (left) congratulates one of the successful participants in the program.
Photo by John Meiu

hoping to tap into the generosity of the metropolitan legal community for the longterm benefit of the drug court programs.

"This is such a phenomenal program that has helped so many people get back on track, that I felt a sense of duty to get involved," said Johnson, the father of two children. "Everyone has someone in their family or their circle of friends who has been affected by the problems of alcohol and drug abuse. It cuts through society and we need to ensure that these people receive the proper professional help so that they can become productive again. No one is

immune from these problems."

Last summer, Oakland County Circuit Court Chief Judge Wendy Potts spearheaded efforts to create the RESTORE Foundation, a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization dedicated to providing financial support for the juvenile and adult drug court programs in the county. Its 501(c)(3) status was granted by the IRS in September and the 11-member Foundation board held its first meeting in November, according to Potts.

"The need to create the Foundation was in direct response to the significant funding challenges that we have been facing each year as grant support has declined," Potts said. "We have seen the positive impact that the programs have had on individuals, and we needed to take action to ensure that the good work continues uninterrupted."

In short, its mission is straightforward and, yet, profound: "Restoring hope and dignity by helping individuals overcome substance abuse to the benefit of themselves, their families, and society by continuing the Oakland County Drug Courts."

Mike and Marian Ilitch, the founders of Little Caesars and owners of the Detroit Tigers and Red Wings, are on board. They have agreed to serve as "Honorary Co-Chairs" of the RESTORE Foundation Boards, lending their names and reputation to the worthiness of the cause.

Potts is president of the board of directors, while William Matthews serves as treasurer and Alan Ackerman as secretary. Other board members include Dr. Shukri David, W. Frank Fountain, Vinnie Johnson, Michelle Mio, Judge Colleen O'Brien, David Provost, Judge Edward Sosnick, and Judge Joan Young.

Young presides over the male participants in the Adult Treatment Court program, while O'Brien directs the female members. Sosnick presides over the juvenile court component of the program.

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Randy Secontine (left), a former assistant prosecutor in Oakland County, was honored by Circuit Court Judge Colleen O'Brien with a plaque for his many contributions to the success of the drug court program. The presentation took place at the recent ATC graduation ceremony.
Photo by John Meiu

Law Review hosts symposium on centennial of Boundary Waters Treaty

By JOHN MINNIS
Legal News

The Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 has guided U.S. and Canadian international policy for 100 years, but is it still useful today? Or is it a relic of a bygone era?

Those questions and many more were addressed Thursday, Feb. 5, by a score of legal experts and treaty commissioners at the Boundary Waters Treaty Centennial Symposium presented by the Wayne Law Review in association with the law schools at Wayne State University and the University of Windsor.

"This is one of several collaborations between our law school and the University of Windsor," said WSU Law School Dean Robert Ackerman. "Right here in Detroit we sit on one of the busiest international borders in the world. The environmental law issues we face are very much at the center of that."

After thanking the Wayne Law Review staff and editors Matthew Moussiaux and Charla Burill for their work in organizing the event, Ackerman welcomed two distinguished guests — Canadian Consul General Robert Noble and the Rt. Hon. Herb Gray, former minister of parliament and permanent Canadian chairman of the International Joint Commission.

Gray gave a brief history of the Boundary Waters Treaty and its negotiation by Elihu Root, Secretary of State under President Theodore Roosevelt, and the Rt. Hon. James

Herb Gray speak with us today," Ackerman said. "Robert Noble, consul general of Canada, was instrumental in funding for the symposium along with the Wayne State Student Council."

Wayne Law Professor Noah Hall also thanked the Law Review staff and the student council. "Without their support, this would not have been possible," he said.

Noble, the Canadian consul general, said the 100th anniversary of the Boundary Waters Treaty was "a truly significant milestone."

"Both our countries have been strengthened by this collaboration," he said. "The treaty has served as a model of binational cooperation."

Such examples of binational cooperation include NAFTA and the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, as well as NORAD, which has been "tracking Santa Claus since 1958 even in times of government cutbacks."

Noble introduced the Rt. Hon. Herb Gray as the "Minister of Just About Everything" in recognition of his 39 years as M.P. and numerous high governmental posts, including deputy prime minister. Gray retired in 2002 to become permanent Canadian chair of the International Joint Commission.

Gray gave a brief history of the Boundary Waters Treaty and its negotiation by Elihu Root, Secretary of State under President Theodore Roosevelt, and the Rt. Hon. James

Bryce, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at Washington for His Britannic Majesty King Edward VII.

"After protracted and sometimes heated discussions, the agreement was signed Jan. 11, 1909," said Gray, 77. "And despite what some people think, I was not there at the time."

He said the treaty was in response to two

large disputes. One involved the hydroelectric use of the Niagara River and the other agricultural water use of the St. Mary and Milk Rivers along the Montana border with Alberta and Saskatchewan.

"The treaty is a remarkable document. It is well written," Gray said.

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Robert Ackerman (left), dean of Wayne State University Law School, welcomes distinguished guest Rt. Hon. Herb Gray to the Boundary Waters Treaty Centennial Symposium presented Thursday, Feb. 5, by the Wayne Law Review.
Photo by Rick Bielaczyc, courtesy of Wayne State University

OK from NBA

Attorney sees certification as 'logical extension' of his experience

By CHRISTINE L. MOBLEY
Legal News

Local entertainment attorney Henry Baskin recently made a slam dunk by receiving his certification.

The certification comes from the NBA Players Association and qualifies Baskin as a licensed player agent.

Baskin, a principal of the Baskin Law Firm P.C., has represented athletes and entertainment professionals throughout his career, which spans more than 30 years.

Baskin received the certification last fall. He had to complete an application and then endured a rigorous review and interview process that took somewhere between three and four months.

"What (The NBA Players Association) is trying to do is protect their players in so far as who's going to represent their players in the NBA," Baskin said of the certification requirement. "They want to make sure that there is a certain competency level, obviously, as well as an ethical and moral level."

Licensing has been required by the association for those acting as players' agents since March 1986.

According to www.nbpa.com, the association's Web site, the rules mandating agent certification were established "to address the abuse occurring in relations between agents and players."

"I thought this would be another way to expand our base of operation," Baskin said of his decision to get certified. "If I was doing legal work (for the players), I might as well qualify as an agent so that the opportunity would be there to negotiate contracts for them."

"(Certification) opens a field that is compatible with my past practice," Baskin noted. "Whether you negotiate a music contract for Marvin Gaye or the Temptations or a rock band, it's all about the individual and the company and it's the same thing here. It's all about representing your client."

"I just figured a logical extension of contract negotiation would be the National Basketball Players," he noted. "I saw it having the national scope, but it's also international."

Baskin's roster of NBA player clients span the globe and can be found as far away as Europe and the U.K.

"There are other opportunities out there for lawyers," Baskin said. "I see this as an opportunity to expand the practice and continue in the natural course of doing what I've been doing for the last three decades."



BASKIN

Judge Remembered

Judge Kaye Tertzag remembered by hundreds at memorial service.

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Graveline Appointed

Berg appoints Graveline as new assistant U.S. attorney.

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Bioscience Help

Michigan's bioscience industry could lead to economic bright spot.

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