

# *the*WRITS

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BUCKS COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION



WINTER 2020

## **BATTLE BUDDIES**

### **BUCKS COUNTY VETERANS COURT**

Young Lawyers' Division Recap  
Bucks 4 Kids



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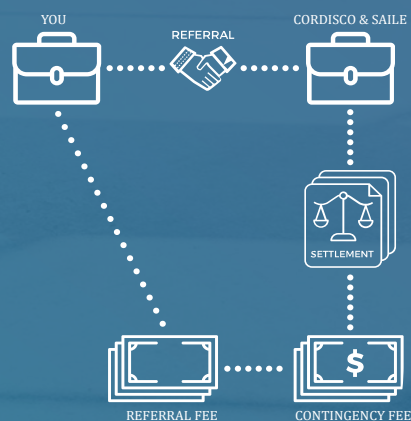
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## **FEBRUARY**

Estate and Elder Law  
Symposium

## **MARCH**

Health Law  
Institute  
Medical Marijuana  
and Hemp Law  
Symposium

## **APRIL**

Intellectual Property  
Law Institute  
Environmental Law  
Forum  
Civil Rights Symposium  
Family Law Institute  
Employment Law  
Institute

## **MAY**

Workers' Compensation  
Practice & Procedure  
Nonprofit Institute  
Public Utility Bench  
Bar Conference

## **JUNE**

Criminal Law Symposium

# 2020 INSTITUTES

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



**Daniel Keane**  
*Bucks County Bar  
Association President*

## My Fellow Members of the Bar:

By the time you read this, we will be a few months into 2020, which means that I will be wondering what I was thinking agreeing to become President of this Association. Numerous people warned me about what I was getting into, so I have no one to blame but myself. But I just couldn't resist the chance to work with our Executive Director, Greg Nardi, and our wonderful staff who

put so much effort into ensuring that this Association continues to thrive and be a vital resource to Association members and the Bucks County community, as it has been since 1853. So I endure.

The truth is that I am proud to be this Association's 80th President. We help people find competent and experienced representation through the Lawyer Referral and Information Service. We assist people with resolving their problems through our mediation programs. We work with people to keep their homes by providing the setting for the mortgage foreclosure program. And we volunteer our time to represent people involved in Protection from Abuse matters. This just names a few ways that we use our unique talents to support our community.

This year you will notice several new initiatives. Some are designed to better organize and recognize services that the Association has always provided, like our newly established Veterans Affairs Committee. Others are being created to fill a gap in our local system of justice, like the Child Advocacy Initiative. The Bucks County Bar Foundation will continue to grow and play a larger role in the Association with Jessica Pritchard at the helm. The bottom line is that our members give back to the community in so many ways and part of my job is to ensure that those opportunities continue to be available.

Another part of my job is to provide opportunities for our members to have fun and you picked the right man for the job. I'm Generation X and our motto is work-hard, play-hard. The Foundation's St. Patrick's Day Party

**I welcome you to call me if you want to discuss the Association. So far I've been pleasantly surprised by the number of Association members, sponsors and members of the community who have reached out to me about Association business, and I hope that continues throughout my term.**

(March 12) and Golf Outing (June 15 at Jericho National Golf Club) are always great times. The BCBA Softball game (June date TBD) will undoubtedly result in another Seasoned Lawyers win. Bench Bar 2020 (September 24-26 at Skytop Lodge Resort) will be the best bench bar since Hershey under the innovative leadership of Jeremy Puglia. I can confidently say that any member who is not taking advantage of these opportunities to network and have a good time is truly missing out.

I welcome you to call me if you want to discuss the Association. So far I've been pleasantly surprised by the number of Association members, sponsors and members of the community who have reached out to me about Association business, and I hope that continues throughout my term. I want to hand over this Association to the next president, Sean Gresh, in a better position than how I received it, just as every president before me did, and I welcome everyone's help in achieving that goal. 🚀

— Daniel Keane  
*Bucks County Bar  
Association President*

## We Welcome Your Feedback!

Thanks for your interest in *theWRITS*.  
Please send all comments, questions,  
submissions to: [WritsEditor@BucksBar.org](mailto:WritsEditor@BucksBar.org).





# From the Editor...



**Jason R. Weiss**  
Editor, Bucks Writs

**Welcome to a new decade... or maybe not.**

It would seem perfectly reasonable to believe that 2020 is a new decade. After all, we went from 2019 to 2020, a nine to a zero. This rolling over undoubtedly signals the beginning of a new decade. Or does it? The answer seems to depend on the interpretation of when "time" began. While no one will dispute that a decade is ten years, our current

calendar began in year one. While seemingly insignificant, beginning in year one means that the next decade must have started in year eleven as opposed to year ten.

Accordingly, subsequent decades, as well as centuries and millennia, would then occur in years ending in one as opposed to zero. If you insist that a decade must begin with a year ending with a zero, blame basic mathematics, as well as Dionysius Exiguus and the Northumbrian monk Bede, who together failed to include the year zero when popularizing the modern day calendar. For what it's worth, it appears that the Farmers' Almanac and the US Naval Observatory side with mathematics and confirm that the new decade will not take place until our next new year. But, what is time anyway?

Happy New Year to all of our members and readers. Regardless of your philosophical beliefs, let's make the '20s a roaring good time. 🍷

— Jason R. Weiss



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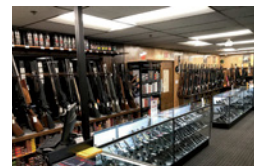
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## Need a Lawyer?

Welcome to the **Bucks County Bar Association's Lawyer Referral and Information Service (LRIS)** serving all of Bucks County. The LRIS is a public service of the non-profit Bucks County Bar Association. Each year the LRIS responds to thousands of callers, referring them to attorneys with experience in the appropriate area of law or to area agencies able to provide assistance.

Persons identified as needing legal representation and who do not claim inability to pay an attorney will be referred by LRIS to a participating attorney. LRIS participation is open to all Bucks County Bar Association members having their primary office in Bucks County.

You can contact the LRIS at  
**215-348-9413.** 🍷





# Pro Bono Honor Roll

October 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019

THANK YOU to all of the attorneys who have volunteered valuable time to provide high quality legal representation to Bucks County residents to ensure that there is justice for all. You've obtained final Protection from Abuse orders for victims of domestic violence, prepared wills for senior citizens, obtained bankruptcies or expungements, assisted in the Mortgage Foreclosure Diversion Program to help homeowners stay in their homes, and represented tenants in the fledgling Bucks Eviction Stability for Tenants (BEST) eviction prevention program. You are all truly making a difference. Thank you too to all those who provide financial assistance through donations and arbitration allowances that allows Legal Aid of Southeastern PA (LASP) to continue to provide high quality legal representation. We could not assist as many individuals without all of you.

— Jennifer Pierce, LASP Doylestown Managing Attorney & BCBA Pro Bono Committee Chair

## A

Anita Alberts  
William A. Allen, II  
Judith A. Algeo  
William Anthiel  
Michael Applebaum

## B

Timothy Barton  
Sheena Bediako  
Ronald R. Bolig  
Kevin Bradway  
H. Jeffrey Brahni  
Christopher Brill  
Paul Brownstein  
Dawn Burke

## C

Joseph P. Caracappa  
Maureen Carlton  
David Caro  
William H.R. Casey  
Catherine Cavella  
Dale Caya  
Jahn Chesnov  
Peter Classetti  
Patricia Cooley  
William Cowan, Jr.

## D

Robert M. DeBias  
Grace Deon  
Thomas Donnelly

## F

Ellen Fanning  
Nicole Feight  
Scott L. Feldman  
Christine Finello  
Jacqueline Fishman  
Marianne Flood  
Elizabeth Wood Fritsch

## G

Martin Ghen  
William L. Goldman, Jr.  
Julie Goldstein  
Sean Gresh  
Mary Ann Grossman  
Vincent Guarna

## H

Judith Hayman  
Elissa Heinrichs

## J

Jamie Jamison  
Colin Jenei  
David J. Juall

## K

Morris Kaplan  
Robert Katzenstein  
Dermot F. Kennedy  
John J. Kerrigan  
Robert N. Kim  
Barbara M. Kirk  
Michael Kracht

## L

Kimberly D. Litzke  
Barbara N. Lyons

## M

Scott MacNair  
Amanda G. Malamud  
Susan Maslow  
Tina Mazaheri  
Marybeth McCabe  
Kellie McGowan  
Diane Mellott  
Barbara Merlie  
Kristine Michael  
Gregory F. Mitsch  
Karen Model  
Hillary Moonay  
William Moore  
Julia Morrow  
Robert B. Mulhern, Jr.  
Kevin Murphy

## N

Stephen L. Needles  
Brian Newman

## O

Elliot Olen  
Ethan O'Shea  
Richard Osterhout

## P

Dawn E. Padanyi  
Michael Parlow  
Jessica A. Pritchard  
Jeremy Puglia

## Q

Shauna Quigley

## R

Joseph Ramagli  
Jonathan Reiss  
Robert Repko  
Stefan Richter  
Marc Rickles  
Deborah Romanski  
Catherine B. Roth  
Fredric Rubin  
Jonanathan J. Russell  
Michael Ruttle

## S

Christopher Serpico  
Lawrence Scheetz  
Carol A. Shelly  
Linda Shick  
Chris Little Simcox  
Arlene Simolike  
Ronald J. Smolow  
Manuel Spigler  
Amir M. Stark  
Gregory Sturn

## T

Eric Tobin  
Jeffrey Toner  
David Truelove  
David Twer

## V

Joseph Visco

## W

Sara Webster  
Clair Wischusen  
Jeffrey Williams  
Shari Gelfont Williams  
Cheryl Wolf  
Josephine Lee Wolf

## Y

Andrew Young  
Brittany Yurchyk





# Minute with a Member

## Susan Dardes, New Board Members



**Picture or design on your phone case?** Flowers (I'm a very girly feminist. They do exist.).

**Describe the picture on your home screen:** My two dogs, Yogi and Maisie.

**Your most-used app?** eBay. ←

One more package through the door and my husband of 27 years will set his hair on fire, I'm sure.

**Number of unread emails?** None at work. Home....? Can't guess. Don't know.

**First app checked in morning?** Wells Fargo.

**Last app checked at night?** See Number 3!

**Most essential travel app?** I think the Continental site. But I am a techno-phobe, really.

**Craziest place you ever lost your phone?** I never have.

**Most recent Uber trip?** From Philadelphia back home. I was sober. My companions, not so much.

**Favorite emoji?** The Winking face or the nerd with glasses.

**App you wish someone would invent?** You're asking a techno-phobe? Dunno.

**Strangest autocorrect mishap?** Ha! There are so many. "As long as the kids q e God" was supposed to be "as long as the kids were good" sent to our dog sitter.

**Favorite photo on Instagram or Facebook?**

I'm lucky I know what they are. I don't do FB or Instagram. Ask my husband.

**Favorite Instagram feeds?** See above.

**Cities listed in weather app?** New York, Doylestown, Philadelphia and New Hope.

**Favorite fitness app?** Oh, please. Does Weight Watchers count?

**Most-listened to track?** I really like U2. It's got to be an age group-thing.

**How do you book restaurant reservations?**

You pick up that ancient thing called a "landline" and you ask nicely for availabilities!

**Most recent podcast?** I actually listened to one created for the Bucks County YWCA, about a year and a half ago. 🦋

## In Memoriam 2018–2019

**John Fedorko**  
Dec 25, 2018

**Samuel M. Snipes**  
Dec 31, 2018

**Mark Weber**  
Mar 20, 2019

**Hon Donald W. VanArtsdalen**  
May 21, 2019

**Howard T. Gathright**  
June 3, 2019

**Peter N. Harrison**  
August 27, 2019

**Thomas Hecker, Junior**  
November 29, 2019

# Bucks County Bar Association Annual Meeting and Dinner

By Bob Repko

On Thursday, December 5, 2019 the Bucks County Bar Association held its Annual Meeting and Dinner. The event started in the Bucks County Justice Center, where new attorneys were admitted to the Bar of the Bucks County Court. Thereafter, our annual meeting commenced so that all business could be completed in time for the annual dinner. Of course, all BCBA members were invited to attend and participate in the annual meeting to offer their insight, comments and to vote on pending matters.

The meeting itself started off with the acceptance of the minutes from last year's meeting, our Treasurer's report on the financial status of the BCBA, the approval of the 2020 Budget, the reports from our Section, Division and Committee chairs, the recognition of new members admitted to the BCBA in 2019, and my final report to the BCBA as the outgoing President.

From there we took a "break" to honor **Morris J. Kaplan, Robert L. Katzenstein, Ronald J. Smolow and Eric R. Tobin** with **Pro Bono recognition awards**, presented by Jennifer Pierce, head of the Doylestown Legal Aid Office and Chair of the BCBA Pro Bono Committee. All four attorneys named were recognized for their continued commitment to the mission of Legal Aid and to those in our Bucks County community who are unable to afford legal representation.

Following this, we joyously recognized our **50-year members** with the presentation of a gift and an opportunity for them to offer us some sage wisdom and thoughts on their tenure as Bucks County lawyers and members of the Bar Association. For 2019, those attorneys honored for their 50 years of membership were: **Gerald E. Bloom, Steven A. Cotlar, Denis W. Lanctot and John VanSciver.**

We then took some time to reverently honor those members of our Association who passed away during 2019. **John M. Fedorko, Howard T. Gathright, Peter N. Harrison, Samuel M. Snipes, Mark B. Weber** and



**Hon. Donald W. VanArtsdalen** were all remembered with amazing and moving **Memorial Resolutions** about their service to our Association, the Bucks County legal community, their neighbors and their families. At the end of the Resolutions we also unveiled the portrait of **Judge VanArtsdalen**, which was commissioned and produced through the tireless efforts of our BCBA History Committee and the family of Judge VanArtsdalen, and which will hang proudly on the walls of our Justice Center.

Thereafter, we resumed with the election of our new Executive Committee members and members of the Board. Specifically, the BCBA members in attendance voted to approve **Sean Gresh as Vice-President/President Elect, Julie Goldstein as Secretary and Lawrence Scheetz, Jr. as Treasurer**, along with **Susan Dardes, Frank Sullivan and Jeremy Puglia** as three-year members of the BCBA Board of Directors. Congratulations and welcome to you all!





Finally, our **incoming President Dan Keane** offered a few words on his goals and priorities for the BCBA in 2020. Dan enthusiastically offered a positive message to us all about the future of our Association and displayed a true commitment to improving the Association for the benefit of all its Members, as well as working with the Bar Foundation to increase our presence in, and support of, the Bucks County community at large.

As in years past, the annual dinner was sponsored by our friends at USI Affinity and catered by the owners of Penn Tap Room who, as usual, did not disappoint. Dinner was excellent in every respect, as was the company amongst all those in attendance. Many a laugh was heard as everyone enjoyed a night of friendship and camaraderie.

We also had the opportunity to honor some of our BCBA members, as well as the members of the community, with awards for their service to the Bar Association, the practice of law in Bucks County and/or the community in which we live.

### THE FOLLOWING AWARDS WERE PROUDLY PRESENTED:

The **Mark. E Goldberg Community Service Award** was presented to **Tina Mazaheri** for her continued community service efforts throughout Bucks County, both individually and on behalf of the BCBA/BCBF.

The **Arthur B. Walsh Pro Bono Publico Award** was presented to **Martin Ghen** for his tireless service to indigent defendants in PFA cases here in Bucks County.

The **William H. Eastburn, III Award** was presented by the Honorable Rea B. Boylan to the **Tim & Judy Rudderow Foundation, Inc.** for their support of our Bucks County Drug Court program and their tireless commitment to helping those in our criminal justice system who suffer from substance abuse and addiction issues.

The **BCBA Women Lawyer's Division Harriet M. Mimms Award** was presented to **Maureen Carlton** for her support of, and leadership in, the Women Lawyer's Division, the Bucks County Bar Foundation and the Bucks County Bar Association over the years.

The **Annual Foundation Award** was presented to **Dermot Kennedy** for his continued commitment to the mission of the Bucks County Bar Foundation and the entire Bucks County community.



Finally, as outgoing President, I was honored to present the **President's Award** to my good friend and colleague **Adrian Meyer** for his constant and unwavering support, leadership, guidance and friendship to the BCBA.

### ***Congratulations to all of this years' award winners!***

We also had the honor to recognize retiring **Judge Rea B. Boylan** during the Annual Dinner, where she was presented with a plaque thanking her for her many years of dedicated service to our legal system, as well as all of Bucks County. Again, thank you for your tireless efforts in providing fairness, justice and compassion to all who have appeared before you.

Finally, as outgoing President I took this one last opportunity to offer a final "thank you" to everyone for their support, wisdom and kindness during my year as president. I also offered a special thanks to our **Executive Director Greg Nardi, the entire BCBA staff, our Board of Directors, my Executive Committee, my firm, my family and most of all you, the members,** for allowing me the honor of serving as President of the BCBA in 2019. It was a wonderful year that ended with a great event, and I have no doubt that 2020 will be even better under the leadership of our new President Dan Keane. Best wishes Dan for a great year — I have no doubt the best is yet to come for the BCBA! 🍷



# BCBA ANNUAL MEETING & DINNER

*December 5, 2019*









# Young Lawyers' Division

## 2019 Recap

By Jeremy D. Puglia, 2019 YLD Chair, 2020 Bench Bar Chair

### **T**he YLD had an active year in 2019.

In January and February, Erin Aronson ran the Mock Trial Program and did a fantastic job. The YLD Executive Board and Advisory Committee stepped up to a challenge set forth in the beginning of the year for each member to volunteer as a Bailiff/Juror at least 3 nights each. This provided Erin with an initial base of support where 10 members volunteered 3 nights each, causing 30 slots to be filled from the jump. With the help of the Mock Trial Happy Hour (organized by Gabe Montemuro and Michael Shelton and sponsored by PNC Wealth Management), Erin did the rest and made it look easy! We are excited for her leadership in 2020 as she becomes the YLD Chair.

The YLD also teamed up with Member Services, and the BCBA as a whole, to attend the Bridge the Gap program on March 25th. The goal was to get newly admitted attorneys to become members of the BCBA. We all look forward to this becoming an annual event that the YLD can throw its weight behind.

In June, the 3rd Annual Judge John J. Rufe Softball took place. The weather cooperated with us (for the most part). PNC Wealth Management sponsored the entire event, including paying for T-Shirts for all the players, and for a "Happy-2-Hour" at Giuseppe's Pizza in Warminster. This was a new location that seemed to get great reviews. Congratulations to Breandan Nemec for, once again, being carried by Larry Scheetz to a victory. The YLD looks forward to getting back on the winning side of things in 2020. Note: The YLD would also like to announce a fundraiser for 2020, the proceeds of which will go to purchase Chris "Bubba" McGinley a new set of cleats.

In July, the YLD participated in a Multi-County "Young Lawyer Summit." It was a Quizzo night and The Bucks team won! About 40 people were in attendance, with 10 members from our Association. Thank you to Esquire Depositions for sponsoring the event, and to Mitch Baylarian for coordinating.

August brought us another Happy Hour in the lower-end at the Green Parrot. Chris Mahoney took the reins on this



event, coordinating the entire thing. Thanks, Chris! We look forward to you joining the Executive Board in 2020.

The BCBA Bench Bar Conference took place in September. What a great time at Seaview! It was, without a doubt, the best Bench Bar since Hershey. The YLD was well represented at the Conference, and brought a new event with it: LEGAL QUIZZO! Jen Severens (Pierce) and Elaine Yandrisevits Co-Chaired the YLD Bench Bar Committee and did a fantastic job getting together more than 40 questions and answers for the legal trivia game. We'd also like to thank the other members of this committee: Josephine Lee, Erin Aronson, Jeremy Whalen and Michael Shelton. The YLD raised more than \$1,000 with its Basket of Cheer this year, with a bottle of Johnnie Walker Blue Label as a centerpiece.



The YLD uses these funds to provide scholarships to the Bench Bar Conference each year.

In December, the YLD partnered with Member Services (Chair: Larry Scheetz, Esq.) to throw a year-end Holiday Bash along with Phone Calls from Santa! More than 30 children in the area were called by "Santa," and the YLD was able to raise \$500.00 for the Bucks County Opportunity Council, a group whose mission is to reduce poverty in the Bucks County area. More than 50 BCBA Members attended the event, eating and drinking for free due to the sponsorship of PNC Wealth Management. Thanks Boe and Steve!

Finally, I want to say a personal thank you to the YLD 2019 Executive Board and Advisory Committee. None of the events we put together could have been possible if not for the time you sacrificed. Thank you to Erin Aronson, Emma Kline, Bianca Roberto and Mitch Baylarian — the Executive Board, and to the 2019 Advisory Committee, which continued to grow throughout the year:

Megan Brooks	Josephine Lee	Aimee Schneck
Christina Cozzetto	Chris Mahoney	Michael Shelton
Rob Gordon	Jennifer McCracken	Robin Weiss
Britain Henry	Gabe Montemuro	Jeremy Whalen
Gabrielle Kelerchian	Kaitlyn Naso	Elaine Yandrisevits
Macy Laster	Jen Pierce	

With the strong numbers and work ethic evidenced by this group in 2019, I believe our Bar Association will be in good hands in the years ahead. Thank you for allowing me to serve. See you at Skytop (September 24th – 26th). 🐿



# Marathon Day

December 18, 2019









# BUCKS COUNTY VETERANS COURT

By Chris Serpico

**Lawyers and citizens of Bucks County are fortunate to have one of the most innovative specialty courts in the Commonwealth operating in our criminal courtrooms.**

For the past seven years, Veterans Court has, where appropriate, assisted military veterans find successful treatment options as an alternative to more traditional sentencing procedures, such as incarceration or extended periods of probation or parole supervision.

The Veterans Court program is the brainchild of Chief Deputy District Attorney Bob James. A veteran of the United States Air Force, he saw action during the Gulf War before “enlisting” in law school. It was after he began working for the Bucks County DA’s Office that Bob happened to watch an HBO documentary that detailed the unresolved issues that many veterans encounter in civilian life upon discharge from military service. That viewing experience inspired him to see what could possibly be done to help veterans in Bucks County who faced criminal charges.

As a prosecutor, he had first-hand knowledge of cases involving veterans who had been arrested and required to appear in criminal court, sometimes repeatedly, for crimes where the underlying cause was clearly related to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). After investigating Veterans Court programs available at that time in Philadelphia and Montgomery Counties, he was able to cobble together a program for Bucks County using the best ideas taken from our neighboring courts. He calls the Veterans Program “a labor of love” that was motivated by his own military background.

The program’s goal is to help vets who had been unable to successfully address substance abuse issues by steering them to individuals and agencies that would work with the Court to insure that men and women who had honorably served our country could find the support they needed to address underlying issues that may have led to their criminal behavior. The program relies heavily on the support of a group of twelve mentors, so called “battle buddies”



**The program relies heavily on the support of a group of twelve mentors, so called “battle buddies” who have military backgrounds and are willing to lend a guiding hand to fellow veterans in trouble with the law.**

who have military backgrounds and are willing to lend a guiding hand to fellow veterans in trouble with the law. The mentors’ role is similar in scope to those dedicated individuals who act as sponsors for AA participants.

In Judge Bateman’s courtroom, I had the chance to observe the interactions of mentors Elwood (Woody) Hippel, US Air Guard Colonel (retired); Francis X. Dufner, US Customs Service Special Agent (retired), and BCBA Executive Director Greg Nardi, US Army Lieutenant Colonel, 1995–2017.

I watched as Clyde Craddock, a disabled Korean War vet, agreed to schedule a mental health evaluation, submit to random drug screening and complete 25 hours of community service as an incentive to having his theft and receiving stolen property charges reduced to a summary offense, despite having a lengthy criminal history. I also observed three other veterans, previously screened for the Veterans Court program, obtain the Court’s permission to defer sentencing on their criminal cases to allow them time to comply with treatment options offered in lieu of jail or probation. Most veterans who participate in the program are required to obtain a mental health evaluation (paid for by the VA), and seek intervention whenever a drug or alcohol dependence or PTSD disorder is diagnosed.





Subsequently, they may be required to perform community service, undergo random drug testing where appropriate, and they must communicate with their assigned mentors on a consistent basis.

Among the more popular treatment options available are performing community service hours at Shamrock Reins, an equine therapy treatment facility in Pipersville that caters to veterans, first responders, and policemen, and Healing Ajax, a counseling center in Philadelphia which offers group therapy and one on one sessions specifically tailored to meet the needs of veterans.

As the program now heads into its seventh year, Veterans Court has been steadily improved by the dedication of many individuals, including several members of the Bucks County Bar who offer their legal services pro bono to veterans accepted into the program, and the Public Defender's Office who work to have those veteran defendants who might benefit from offered services apply to the program and follow those clients through to completion. However, the most important addition to the program has been Carolyn Debuque, who has served as the Veterans Court Mentor Coordinator since 2014. As a thirty-two-year veteran of the Air National Guard (Master Sergeant), and a Juvenile Probation Officer for the past fourteen years, she deserves credit for bringing the program to a level that could only have been imagined when Bob James first came up with his idea.

As a veteran with five overseas deployments (Afghanistan, Border Patrol, and Kuwait, three times), she's seen the correlation between veterans suffering from PTSD and criminal behavior. Recently, she's been made aware of an increasing number of women who developed PTSD resulting from sexual assaults experienced during their time in the service. Too often, she's seen these women attempt to diffuse their painful memories by self-medicating and engaging in illicit drug or alcohol use resulting in criminal prosecution.

In Veterans Court, these women, as well as other qualified male candidates, get a second chance. As relapse to drug and alcohol abuse is often a pattern for veterans suffering from PTSD, it's not unusual for participants to earn the opportunity to remain in the program even after initial failure so long as they demonstrate a willingness to stay with the program.

The Bar Association hosted a Graduation Dinner on January 22, 2020 in honor of those veterans who successfully met all program requirements and were able to have their criminal charges adjusted. Besides the guests of honor, other invitees included Judges Bateman, Finley, and McHugh, who preside in Court on their cases, program mentors, administrators, volunteer lawyers, and DA Matt Weintraub. Congratulations to the graduating veterans and thank you to everyone involved for making this very important program a success. 🦋

# Bucks 4 Kids

By Nancy Larkin Taylor, Executive Director, Bucks for Kids

I ran into one of my favorite Bucks Countians at the gym, writer Marian Callahan. She was taking her first gym class after an emergency appendectomy. I lent her my hair clip. After class Marian told me of a piece she was writing for the *Intelligencer* that features the numerous local Back to School donation drives for kids in need. I was reminded that we live in a generous community, due perhaps to the area wealth or to our Quaker heritage; probably a combination of both. Every year, hundreds of Bucks County students receive Back to School supplies from a variety of sources.

United Way's Stuff the Bus United Way project, run efficiently by Executive Director Danielle Bush, is probably the godfather of local Back to School drives. Every July, Bucks United Way asks all of its associated nonprofits to donate backpacks, gift cards and school supplies. The response is astounding.

Volunteers and staff stuff hundreds of brand-new backpacks, with all kinds of goodies, from spiral notebooks to highlighters to pencil cases stuffed with gel-cap pens. They are safely stored in a warehouse until a particular Monday in August. On that day, a trail of vans and SUVs driven by social workers, caseworkers, teachers and pastors head to Bensalem. Taking as many backpacks as they can carry, these volunteers distribute them to kids they know need them but who can't afford them.

Diane Meyer of Children and Youth, who is in charge of picking up Bucks for Kids backpacks each year, characterizes the giveaway scene, "As a madhouse, worse than Black Friday. But what a great thing for each kid." We really do appreciate it, Diane. (Diane has an SUV and three 13-year-old sons to shoulder this burden.)

Imagine not having your school supplies on the first day? Social faux pas. Embarrassing. Doylestown restaurants, stores, law firms and the Bucks Co. Bar Association are just a few of the many backpack collectors and distributors. It's a September tradition.

This generosity reappears at Christmastime. During my time, a local family was chosen by a business or a parish. You were handed a scrap of paper with the age and sex of the child you were buying for. You didn't know anything else about her or him. One day a church deacon stopped by



the office to pick up the gifts. The gifting was pretty labor intensive and lacked content as you never found out if the child liked the gift. Now, it's so much easier to write a check or buy a gift card. Donations make us feel good and these contributions are worthy causes.

At Bucks for Kids, we supply these types of nice surprises all year-round. Every month we meet to review and approve requests for hundreds of little and not so little items and services for kids receiving care, soccer cleats, tutors, money for class trips, ballet lessons so a little girl can get out of the house on Saturday wearing her pink tutu and her Mom doesn't have to worry about paying the tuition, as the class is already paid for. We visualize the circumstances.

Starting 30 years ago, I wish we had kept track statistically of various grant categories: age, gender, geographic location. Parents: deceased, incarcerated, addicted, disappeared, on disability. What a treasure trove for academic analysis. Whatever. The data points don't matter. All the applications are cries for help. The reward is the cumulative effect of good done for Bucks County's future adults.



*Bucks 4 Kids grant requests have two “High Seasons” too. In April we are hit with dozens of requests for summer camp tuition and in September dozens seek school supplies and clothes. Plus, we must stash money for the June flood of scholarships, driving lessons and various post graduate needs.*

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We worry about these kids all year. Our checks (yes we still use checks) are payable directly to the various providers: YMCA, Karate School, Pop Warner, Northampton Baseball League or the caseworker. Never have we had a leftover backpack. Our challenge is stretching the dollars and keeping some in reserve.

It's a unique way to give. In brutish terms, the “needy child” has been prescreened. This is a kid already receiving help. This kid may not need a backpack or a Christmas gift. This kid may need to pay for SATs. She is working two jobs and graduating from high school in June. This kid needs to meet his two brothers at Hershey Park on the anniversary of their Dad's death so they can remember and honor their Dad's memory in a fun place.

Bucks 4 Kids is like a quick, local “Make a Wish Foundation.” But no one is flying to Hawaii or meeting a sports star. Instead, they are trying on a baseball uniform or registering for softball. The kids are having normal experiences that positively shape their lives. With Bucks 4 Kids, you get the most impactful bang for your charity buck.

We are all volunteer. We have been at this for 30 years. We are local. We are a United Way Associate.

Donate through our website [Bucksforkids.org](http://Bucksforkids.org). Donate often. Donate easily. Donate through Amazon Smile. Donate by waiving your juror pay. Support us by voting us Best of Bucks. Join our mailing list. Attend our Designer Bag Bingo at St. Cyril's on April 24 or one of our other events. Touch the future. Help the children of Bucks County who need it most. 🐘

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# Honoring Judge Donald VanArtsdalen



Honoring the past leaders of the legal profession is an important part of each year's Annual Meeting of the Bucks County Bar Association. The meeting on December 5, 2019 was no exception as the portrait of the Honorable Donald W. VanArtsdalen (Artist: Joseph Routon of Haddonfield, New Jersey), former Bucks County District Attorney and Federal District Judge of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania from 1970 – 1999, was unveiled during the meeting.

It is a tribute to Judge VanArtsdalen's outstanding and historic accomplishments that his is only the second portrait hung in the Bucks County Justice Center of a person who did not serve on the Bucks County bench. George Lear (1818 – 1885), who also served as Bucks County District Attorney, Bar Association President, and later as Pennsylvania Attorney General, was the first to be so honored.

Donald W. VanArtsdalen, a descendant of Holland Dutch settlers in Bucks County, was born in Doylestown and graduated from Doylestown High School in 1937. While a junior at Williams College in 1940, well before Pearl Harbor, he joined the Royal Canadian Artillery, serving as an anti-aircraft gunner in London during the German Blitz. In 1941 he transferred to the United States Army and joined Darby's Rangers.



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During the Mediterranean invasions he participated in four "first wave" beachhead landings ahead of the main forces in Algeria and Italy. He was awarded nine medals and citations, including a Bronze Star Medal for valor in action.

Despite not having graduated from college, after the war he was accepted at the University of Pennsylvania Law School where he earned the Order of the Coif and graduated at the top of his class in 1947. After graduation he practiced law with his father, Isaac VanArtsdalen, and later with other partners until 1970. From 1954 to 1958 he also served as District Attorney of Bucks County. From 1968 to 1969 he served, as his father had before him, as President of the Bucks County Bar Association.

In 1970 Judge VanArtsdalen was appointed to the Federal District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. He chose senior status in 1985 but continued to work periodically thereafter. On the federal bench Judge VanArtsdalen presided over thousands of civil, criminal and constitutional cases, including: the historic twenty-year environmental battle over the construction of the mid-county expressway (the "Blue Route") from the Turnpike to I-95; the largest antitrust price-fixing class action in the history of the federal judiciary at that time; and the attempt by Philadelphia archdiocesan high school lay teachers to unionize, triggering First Amendment church and state issues without legal precedent.

The portrait was donated by the Judge's family, the Judge's loyal law clerks and the Bucks County Bar Association. In attendance at the unveiling were Beth Meininger, Judge VanArtsdalen's Executrix, Goddaughter and Niece, the judge's clerks Joe Stapleton, Esq., Lou Pichini, Esq., Phil Kircher, Esq., Denis McLaughlin, Esq., Michael Kunz, Esq., and Kathryn Auerbach, niece of Judge VanArtsdalen. Many thanks to J. Lawrence Grim, Jr., Esq., Frank Gallagher, Esq., and the Hon. Hart Rufe for leading the BCBA History Committee's efforts to have this painting placed in the Bucks County Justice Center and to Stephen G. Heckman, Esq., Bucks County Court Administrator. 🖼️



The Bucks County Mediation and Arbitration Center (BCMAC) is owned and operated by Barbara N. Lyons, Esq. She is certified, skilled and experienced in neutral arbitration, mediation and case evaluation. Attorneys work closely with Barbara from initial contact to the conclusion of their case.



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# Just Mercy

By Scott L. Feldman

**I**t is not entirely clear why Bryan Stevenson chooses to go to Monroe County, Alabama shortly after graduating Harvard Law School in 1988. After all, he was raised in Delaware. But we should all be glad that he did.

Shortly after arriving in town with little more than a modest grant and some nice suits, he begins interviewing various death row inmates at Holman Prison.

*Just Mercy* is based on Mr. Stevenson's 2014 memoir of the same name and relates the underlying case, appeal and ultimate exoneration of convicted murderer, Walter "Johnny D" McMillan. McMillan was arrested and convicted for the 1986 brutal assault and murder of a young white female employee of a dry cleaning establishment. After many months, the local sheriff was under much pressure to solve the heinous crime. Despite an alibi, no motive, and the utter impracticality of McMillan being at that location at that time, he was nonetheless charged. The cast is of the powerhouse variety, with Michael B. Jordan ("Creed") starring as Stevenson and Jamie B. Foxx (Oscar award winner for "Ray") as the death row inmate, McMillan. Though somewhat underutilized, Brie Larsen (Oscar award winner for "Room"), plays Eva Ashley, who along with Stevenson, volunteers for and is a founder of the nonprofit Equal Justice Initiative.

Stevenson was hardly a popular figure upon his arrival in Monroe County. The various Sheriff's department, District Attorney and



*"For every nine people who have been executed in the U.S., one person on death row has been exonerated and released, a shocking rate of error."*

—*Just Mercy*, post-credits text

prison employees he encounters all display varying degrees of hostility to the pro bono attorney. Ironically, several such employees are quick to mention how Monroe County was the home of Harper Lee and the setting for *To Kill a Mockingbird* (renamed as Maycomb County). They suggest that Stevenson visit the local Mockingbird museum where "he could stand right where Atticus Finch once stood" when he delivered his impassioned closing argument on behalf of Tom Robinson.

A minor quibble, perhaps, but almost every secondary character is portrayed as black or white; That is, with few shades of grey or nuance. The "bad guys", and there are a lot of them, are generally irredeemable. One minor exception is a young

white prison employee who seems to undergo a bit of transformation after witnessing the execution of a death row inmate. In a prolonged series of scenes reminiscent of *Dead Man Walking*, an inmate's final appeal is denied and the macabre pageantry leading to his demise in the electric chair is painstakingly depicted. Stevenson is clearly impacted, and so are we.

Despite the many roadblocks, delays and overt racism in the local criminal justice system, Stevenson's diligent research of the underlying facts and details of McMillan's case ultimately lead to an appeal to be heard outside of Monroe County. Only then, does his incredible uncovering of blatantly false and coerced "witness" testimony and a dearth



of other evidence find a receptive audience. Even the felon whose false testimony placed McMillan at the murder scene was revealed to be a sympathetic figure and yet another victim of a corrupt law enforcement and prosecutorial system. Stevenson was also helped by an Ed Bradley reported 60 Minutes piece which shed a national spotlight on the McMillan travesty of justice.

One of the first and most shocking abuses revealed is that McMillan was held in a cell on death row even prior to his trial. *Just Mercy* does a credible job allowing this and other blatant racist acts speak for themselves.

Stevenson ultimately achieves success for his client and in a closing montage, it is revealed that another Holman death row inmate (whose backstory is only alluded to in the

movie) was himself exonerated after thirty years behind bars. Bryan Stevenson has indeed been a force for justice reform and continues his efforts through the Equal Justice Initiative. According to its website, "Mr. Stevenson and his staff have won reversals, relief, or release from prison for over 135 wrongly condemned prisoners on death row and won relief for hundreds of others wrongly convicted or unfairly sentenced".

*Just Mercy* is certainly well acted and tells a moving and important story. What stuck with me, however, other than the aforementioned execution scene, is the final post-credits text:

*For every nine people who have been executed in the U.S., one person on death row has been exonerated and released, a shocking rate of error.*

There are indeed a stunning number of false convictions coming to light. Investigative journalism and first person accounts have resulted in numerous other movies, television shows and books with similar tales of malfeasance, corruption and mistake that have innocent people convicted of crimes they did not commit. Netflix features numerous such documentaries. In the vast majority of instances, it is pro bono attorneys whose dedication and diligence ultimately result in these reversals and exonerations. John Grisham's most recent novel, *The Guardians*, tells the story of two different death row exonerations and is closely based on the life and career of James McCloskey, founder of Centurion Ministries, with 63 reversals/exonerations to its credit.

Shocking indeed. 📌



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## Legal Aid of Southeastern PA Names New Managing Attorney for Bristol Office **Joshua Goldblum**

Joshua Z. Goldblum has joined Legal Aid of Southeastern PA (LASP) as Managing Attorney of the Bristol Office. After a long stint in private practice in Lower Bucks, he returns to where he started his career: public interest law.

After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania Law School, Goldblum began his career at the Defender Association of Philadelphia. He was a staff attorney for Bucks County Legal Aid Society, the predecessor to LASP, from 1979–1981. In 1981, he opened his own office in Levittown, and maintained his office in Feasterville from 1990–2018. In his solo practice, Josh continued to help people in Bucks, Montgomery and Philadelphia with their personal financial and family problems concentrating in consumer bankruptcy law, divorce and related family law matters, wills and estates.

He served for more than 30 years as a board member and officer of A Woman's Place, volunteering frequently as a pro bono attorney for domestic violence survivors in Bucks County.

"I am thrilled to continue my work at LASP," Josh said. "I have always been a legal services attorney at heart."

He noted, "I was a staff attorney at Bucks County Legal Aid Society when its offices were in the One Oxford Valley Building, and at One Pond Street in Bristol Borough."

He opened his first office in 1981 on New Rodgers Road (now Veterans Highway) in Levittown, just two miles from the Bristol LASP office. He also maintained offices in Langhorne and Trevoise, and later on Bustleton Pike in Feasterville. "I am proud to have been a lawyer for so many Bucks County residents for over 40 years," Goldblum said.

Shawn Boehringer, LASP Executive Director, said, "We are thrilled to have Josh as part of the LASP team. His significant legal experience and community connections in Bucks

County will enhance the services we provide in Lower Bucks, and he will undoubtedly be a valuable resource for all staff in the program."

### About Legal Aid of Southeastern PA

Legal Aid of Southeastern Pennsylvania (LASP) provides free civil legal services in Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery counties. LASP has offices in Bristol and Doylestown, in addition to Norristown, Pottstown, West Chester, Media and Chester city. Through a centralized Helpline (1-877-429-5994), online application portal ([www.lasp.org/apply-here](http://www.lasp.org/apply-here)) and attorneys based in all four counties, LASP provides quality legal representation to low-income and vulnerable clients in cases involving domestic violence, public benefits, housing, consumer and bankruptcy, employment, health, wills/powers of attorney, juvenile and elder law. ➔

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*"I am thrilled to continue my work at LASP. I have always been a legal services attorney at heart."*

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# WLD Sip and Shop

— November 7, 2019 —





# Bucks County Human Relations Council Presents "Pros & Cons of Rapid DNA"

— October 22, 2019 —





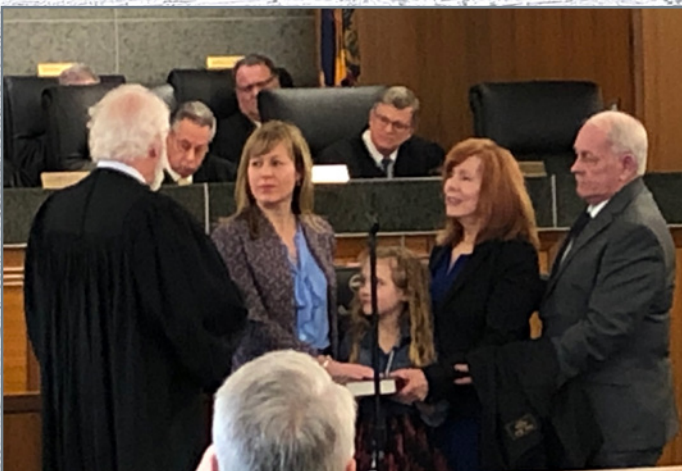
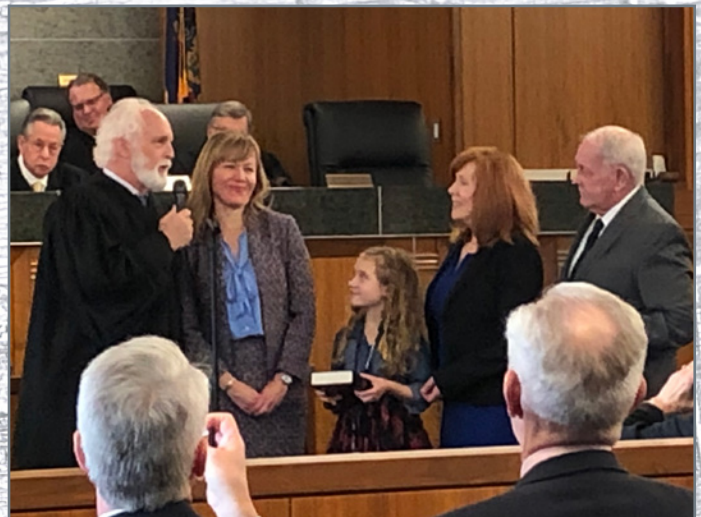


## Pro Bono CLE, Awards Presentation





## SWEARING IN OF BUCKS COUNTY'S NEWEST JUDGES







# Bucks County Bar Foundation Continues its Success

By Jessica Pritchard

As I take over the presidency of the Bucks County Bar Foundation, I would be remiss if I did not reflect on the woman who came before me. More specifically, past President Tina Mazaheri who, through her hard work and dedication, set forth a legacy of leadership and philanthropy.

When Mazaheri took over as Foundation President four years ago, she shouldered the responsibility of increasing the endowment and continuing the community outreach for which the Foundation is known. Accepting that challenge, she doubled the Foundation's endowment to \$100,000. Under her direction, the "Learning with Lawyers" program, wherein attorneys go into local underserved schools and teach a lesson on the United States Constitution, increased as to both the number of schools served as well the number of BCBA attorneys participating in the program. Under her leadership, in 2019, the Foundation donated \$25,000 to the Legal Aid Society of Southeastern Pennsylvania. Her efforts on behalf of the Foundation are laudable and she has earned my gratitude.

The mission of the Bucks County Bar Foundation, a 501(c)(3) charitable entity, is:

To promote and support programs, organizations, and individuals throughout Bucks County who are engaged in activities designed to foster respect for the rule of law, the advancement of rights, liberties and protections under the law as well as activities which have as a principal purpose the advancement of social justice for the individuals, families and communities of Bucks County.

Thanks to Mazaheri and the rest of the Trustees, the Foundation sits poised to expand its central goals and mission.

In 2020, the Foundation will be working more closely with its counterparts in the Bucks County Bar Association in furtherance of its mission. The leadership of the two organizations realize that the Foundation must be provided a clear direction. As such, at its first Board meeting of



The Bucks County Bar Foundation Board of Directors.

the year, the BCBA Board of Directors passed a resolution directing that the Foundation increase its endowment to \$500,000 by January 2026. This is a lofty goal and one for which the Trustees of the BCBF are ready and willing to undertake. I will be seeking the assistance of the Association's members to move forward in this endeavor and look forward to having record attendance at our annual St. Patrick's Day event, scheduled for March 12, 2020 at Hops/Scotch in Doylestown. It is my hope that I can rely on members to attend and to assist moving the BCBF towards meeting the new goals.

Lastly, I would like to thank other Trustees that will be leaving the Foundation Board after years of selfless service. Many thanks to Barbara Lyons, Carol Shelly, Maureen Carlton, Ryan Mellon and Keith Williams. I anticipate that they will continue to support our mission, but are happy to eliminate one meeting from their calendars. 🍷



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