# The Bar Review

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## From The President

*by Elizabeth M. Carmody, elizabeth.carmody@cookyancey.com*

May is an important month in my family. It is the month that my husband and I married and the month (almost two years later) that our boy-girl twins were born. Our twins were not due to arrive until the middle of June, but they decided to make an early showing. I always like to think of it as God giving me an extra Mother's Day. And in the blink of an eye, those "babies" of ours will be 20 years old this month!

Many of you may remember me waddling around the federal courthouse here in Shreveport when I was pregnant (that is not self-deprecation but rather a factual statement as one of my editors can attest). While I thought managing that part of my life was tricky, it was nothing compared to the juggling act that I would come to, and need to, learn once our children were born and I continued to practice law. Surprisingly, or not surprisingly, motherhood helped me to be a better lawyer.

Motherhood helped me to be both more assertive and more patient. Being a mother honed my abilities to clarify and simplify issues, and to negotiate settlements between two parties in disagreement. Raising two children of the same age at the same time increased my immunity level to sympathetic, yet unpersuasive, pleas. For example, during a deposition of what I believed to be a not so credible opposing party who began to cry while I remained unmoved, opposing counsel implied that my years of practicing law had somehow hardened my heart. I explained that it was not cynicism from my years as a lawyer that prepared me for such moments but rather the many times when I had stood in a grocery store checkout line staring at my two precious toddlers (who absolutely have my heart) begging me to buy some random Pez dispenser and being completely unmoved by their tears when I told them, "No." On the other hand, motherhood also helped me recognize my ability to offer support, remain empathetic and approach problems with practical solutions – even when I can't fix everything.

Motherhood is one of those roles that changes everything. It redefines priorities, reshapes schedules and shifts the way we look at success – not just at home, but at work, too.

No playbook exists for being a mom. Some days feel like wins. Others … not so much. But at the core of it all is this incredible strength that keeps showing up – through the sleepless nights, the school projects, the career pivots and the constant balancing act.

Every mother's path in the legal profession looks different. Some step back from practice for a period. Others launch firms or take on leadership roles while managing the

(L-R) Helen Onebane Mendell, Elizabeth Mendell Carmody, Eunice Felicie LeBlanc and Mamie Baranco Onebane

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demands of young children. Many continue advancing in their legal careers while navigating court deadlines, client meetings and daycare drop-offs. The paths may differ, but the commitment and professionalism remain constant.

As I have written before, I had the benefit of being raised around and, essentially by, multiple generations of strong women in their own various stages of life. My great-grandmother was 91 when she passed away. I was 10 years old at the time. She lived with my grandmother and grandfather. She had an incredible sense of humor and a wicked wit about her. She is rumored to have once told Mama Cass (of the Mamas & the Papas) that she drank too much and needed to stop biting her nails.

My grandmother ("Gammy"), a fellow Taurus with our twins, was a retired high school teacher who could be somewhat canaille[1] in her own right. She was known to be stern as a high school teacher. In fact, an attorney who was one of her former students told me that she could simply look at you from down the hall and you just knew you were doing something wrong. I was very familiar with that "look," and have seen it on our daughter since her infancy (I actually have it captured in a photo of her at less than 30 days old). On the other hand, as a grandmother, Gammy had the unfailing ability to make me laugh and spoil me silly with affection.

During my childhood and teenage years in the 1970s, '80s and very early '90s, my mother was actively practicing law as a partner at my grandfather's firm. At that time, especially early on, very few women were attempting that balancing act. From my perspective as a child and teen, she seemed to manage it with ease and grace. As an adult, I can only imagine how difficult that balance was for her. My mother has always been my best friend, confidante and greatest cheerleader. While my friends adore her, they all knew that no one messed with Helen.

I cannot adequately describe the great impact and significance all three of these wonderful women/mothers (pictured in this article) have had on my life and the lives of others. They have been and will continue to be my role models. I am eternally grateful for the wisdom they shared, and that my mother continues to share, with me. I do not takes those gifts for granted.

The "work-life balance" is not a perfect 50/50 split. That "balance" is a constantly shifting mix of priorities, depending on the season, the day, or even the hour.

Sometimes it means scheduling a meeting around a parent-teacher conference, pep rally, school play or Field Day. Sometimes it's logging back in after the children's bedtime to meet a deadline. And sometimes, hopefully, it's stepping away for a few hours just to recharge.

And that's okay.

Balance isn't about doing everything. It's about doing what matters most, when it matters most, and giving yourself grace when things get messy. It's also about being able to adapt and roll with the punches.

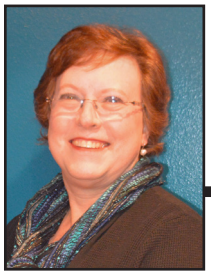
If you're a mom trying to balance a career and family: you are not alone. What you do every day – whether it's seen or unseen – matters deeply. Your ability to lead, nurture and adapt is nothing short of inspiring.

So this Mother's Day, let's celebrate all the moms navigating this beautifully chaotic journey.

Good women – may we know them, may we be them, may we raise them.

Cheers to the mothers and the generations of mothers who raised us!

[1]Cajun French adjective pronounced KAH NAHY meaning, among other things, mischievous (of children). The Cajun French word does not have the strong pejorative connotation it has in standard French. https://www.lsu.edu/hss/french/undergraduate_program/cajun_french/cajun_french_english_glossary.php#FC



# News from the SBA Legal Community Support Staff Committee Update

*by Karen McGee, Committee Chair, kgmcgee2@gmail.com*

The word is spreading in the legal community and the LCSSC continues to grow. Please welcome these newest members

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ronda Bean<br>*Casten & Pearce, APLC* | Callie Jones<br>*Shreveport Bar Foundation* | Michelle Old<br>*Rice & Kendig, LLC* |
| Maria Hawkey<br>*Rice & Kendig, LLC* | Amanda B. Matranga<br>*Rice & Kendig, LLC* | Mayra Costaneda<br>*Rice & Kendig, LLC* |

Members of the Committee attended the April 30 Law Day Luncheon and held their first business meeting on May 1, electing officers and committee chairs, and planning the 2025 calendar. Watch for more information to follow.

Nonlawyers who want to be a part of this groundbreaking committee are encouraged to submit their membership application. As we fully launch the committee this year, dues for the year 2025 are waived. Look out for the SBA Communiqué emails and the SBA newsletter *The Bar Review* for information about professional education, networking, and service opportunities.

# Second Circuit Highlights

*by Hal Odom Jr., rhodom@la2nd.org*

**Forced heirship, the last gasp.** Miller executed a will in February 1996. In it he named his second wife, Cleo, executrix and left her all his community property; made some gifts of his separate property; and named as residual legatees two daughters, the son of his second marriage and one adopted son. However, as to a second adopted son, Darryl, he stated, "It is my wish and direction that my son, Darryl M. Miller, receive no portion of my estate under any circumstances." Miller died in December 2015, and Cleo filed a petition for administration; she was named administrator and probated the will, which was found to be in proper form and self-proving. She was placed in possession of the family home in 2016.

Some 7½ years later, Darryl filed a petition to annul the will, with a rule for accounting and to remove the executrix. He contended that Miller's will did not follow the proper formalities for disinherison, under La. C.C. art. 1621. In essence, the will omitted to state that Darryl, though 44 years old at the time, did not somehow qualify as a forced heir, did not state legal grounds for disinheriting him, and thus the will was invalid. Cleo responded with exceptions of no right and no cause of action. The district court denied the no right but sustained the no cause. Darryl appealed.

The Second Circuit affirmed, ***Succession of Miller,*** 56,139 (La. App. 2 Cir. 4/9/25), in an opinion by Chief Judge Pitman. The court stated that forced heirship, long the law of Louisiana, had been abolished by constitutional amendment in 1995, the change took effect on January 1, 1996, and the specific new law, La. C.C. art. 1493, limited forced heirs to those descendants of the first degree who were (1) 23 years of age or younger, or (2) any age if suffering from mental incapacity or physical infirmity such they cannot take care of their persons or manage their estates at the time of the decedent's death. The court then noted, from the pleadings, that Darryl was 44 years old when Miller executed the will, 63 when Miller died, and 71 when he filed the petition to annul; he did not meet the age cutoff and did not allege he was ever mentally or physically incapacitated. Thus, "he cannot be deemed a forced heir under any circumstances, and the rules regarding disinherison do not apply to him." In short, he lacked a cause of action to challenge the will.

Forced heirship had been the law of Louisiana since its 1808 Civil Code (actually, "Digest of the Civil Laws"), which imported it from French and Spanish antecedents (the "Laws and Custom of Paris"). Efforts to chip at the edges, and ease its restrictions on the ability to dispose of one's property as one sees fit, were extravagantly knocked down, as in *Succession of Lauga*, 624 So. 2d 1156 (La. 1993). The battle over the constitutional amendment, in late 1995, was uncommonly emotional. However, the amendment passed overwhelmingly (68% in favor), and Art. 1493 was enacted. A claim like Darryl's illustrates, for better or for worse, why we held onto the creature for so long. Deep down, some people feel entitled. *Succession of Miller* will show, conclusively, that the testator does not have to tick off the elements of Art. 1493 in order to disinherit a child. "I leave him/her nothing" will suffice.

**The tricky testator.** Valerie was a lady with serious health problems: COPD, cervical stenosis, near quadriplegia, depression and anxiety. For several years, her dad, Bill, had kept her and her mom in Heritage Manor Stratmore but, at the outset of COVID-19, he bought a larger house so Valerie and her mom could live at home. He hired two of the ladies' former carers from Heritage Manor, Debra and Stephanie, to work 12-hour shifts at the house. Debra worked primarily for Valerie. The family situation was somewhat complex; Valerie had a daughter from a prior marriage, and two sisters, who lived in Texas but came to visit about once a month. Valerie's mother died in February 2021.

About two months later, Debra took Valerie out of the house to "run errands," including a doctor appointment; a trip to Valerie's bank, where Debra was added to her account; and then to an attorney's office, to make out a will. Actually, *two wills*. Although Valerie's powers of expression were limited, she and Debra conveyed that her two sisters hated her and that her dad, Bill, was pressuring her to make out a will in favor of the sisters; she wanted to execute a will she could *show them*, ostensibly complying with *their wishes* (the "first will"). This will left two items of furniture to her daughter, Suzanne, and the residue of the estate to the two sisters. Then, however, she wanted to execute a *real will*, which revoked the first will and made the same token bequest to her daughter but left the residue to Debra (the "second will"). Both wills were executed, and when Valerie got home, she showed the first will to Bill and the sisters, never mentioning the second will.

Valerie died a few months later, and her sisters filed a petition to probate the first will. About a week later, Debra filed a petition to probate the second will, and later, a rule to remove the sisters as co-executors. A slew of other motions ensued, and the matter went to a two-day trial in the First JDC. The evidence was long and intricate, and perhaps not flattering to some of the witnesses. The court found that Valerie lacked the mental and emotional capacity to deliberate her actions and "act independently to make an unconfused and uninfluenced decision to execute a will." The court therefore declared both wills null and vacated all prior orders arising from them. Since Valerie died intestate, the entire estate went to her daughter, Suzanne. Debra appealed.

The Second Circuit affirmed, ***Succession of Braswell,*** 56,133 (La. App. 2 Cir. 4/9/25), in an opinion by Judge Thompson. The court first rejected the claim that as "collateral relations," Valerie's sisters had no standing to challenge the second will; as heirs under the first will, their rights were obviously affected if the second will were given effect. The court then rejected the claim that Valerie possessed testamentary capacity when she executed the second will. Despite the presumption in favor of capacity, La. C.C. art. 1470, and the "clear and convincing" burden of proving lack thereof, La. C.C. art. 1482, there is also the vast discretion of the factfinder and no "litmus paper test" for mental capacity, La. C.C. art. 1477, comment (f). Anyone so inclined is encouraged to read the opinion and soak up the intricate testimony, medical and lay, which I will not attempt to summarize in this limited space. The strong evidence of Valerie's diminished mental capacity convincingly undermined any prospect that she could have hatched the elaborate two-will scheme to foil her sisters and reward her caregiver. Finally, the court rejected the claim that Debra did not exert undue influence over Valerie – another manifest error issue.

This case presents a truly clever subterfuge, worthy of a mystery novel or a film noir: execute one will, for public consumption and popular acceptance, and then a second will, along the lines of a counterletter, to negate the first and achieve something much less politically correct. Unfortunately, this testator was too physically and emotionally challenged to pull off the elaborate ruse. With a fully competent testator, what would the result be?

**Removing a succession representative.** Mr. Martin died in September 2012, survived by three children: Martin Jr., from his first marriage, and Lacey and Amy, from his second marriage; at the time of his death, he had recently divorced his second wife, but the estate was not yet settled. (The estate included J.K. Martin Pulpwood Co., a separate asset, and J-MART Enterprises LLC and JKM Trucking Co. Inc., both community assets, a large inventory of movables and, by Martin Jr.'s admission, a mountain of debt.) Days after his father's death, Martin Jr. petitioned to probate the will and to be appointed executor and independent administrator of the estate; these were granted on September 11, 2012.

Nearly nine years later, in June 2021, the other heirs – Lacey and Amy, and the divorced Mrs. Martin – filed a motion to remove the ex-

ecutor, appoint a new executor, and for an accounting. They alleged that Martin Jr., after almost nine years, had made no progress identifying the assets and liabilities of the estate, failed to safekeep the property, failed to act as a prudent administrator, missed annual accountings, and other shortcomings. Mostly, after all this time, he had never concluded the succession. After a hearing, the Eighth JDC (an ad hoc judge) granted the motion and removed Martin Jr. from both positions. Martin Jr. appealed.

The Second Circuit affirmed, ***Succession of Martin,*** 56,115 (La. App. 2 Cir. 4/9/25), in an opinion by Judge Stephens. The main thrust of the argument was jurisprudence holding that "convincing evidence" of mismanagement must be found to justify ousting an executor, *Succession of Houssiere*, 247 La. 764, 174 So. 2d 521 (1965). Martin Jr. contended there was no evidence of fraud, merely speculation whether certain transactions benefited J.K. Martin Pulpwood more than the community enterprises, and he did his best to be fair to all legatees. The court recapped the duties of a succession representative, La. C.C.P. art. 3182 et seq., especially the fiduciary duty, La. C.C.P. art. 3191; the burden of "convincing evidence" when somebody wants to remove one, *Succession of Madden*, 53,353 (La. App. 2 Cir. 3/4/20), 293 So. 3d 665; and the district court's vast discretion in finding such evidence. The court then quoted the trial judge's extremely detailed reasons for judgment, concluding the record was adequate to support the implicit finding of breach of fiduciary duties.

This estate probably was large and complex, especially by the standards of Winn Parish, and Martin Jr. was, by his own admission, no lawyer or accountant. However, nine years of administration, without a conclusion and without regular accountings, will make anybody's seat precarious.

**Administrative negligence as med mal.** Ms. Douglas, a former resident of Heritage Manor South nursing home, suffered a seizure and fell off her bed; she alleged the staff did not respond to her calls for help and delayed, for four days, taking her to the hospital. After she was returned to Heritage Manor, with a diagnosis of a broken hip, she allegedly fell and broke her finger while trying to sit in an unlocked wheelchair. She sued Heritage Manor and Pathway Management, a company that manages multiple nursing homes, including Heritage Manor. As to Pathway, she alleged it forced financial and control policies on Heritage Manor, with the purpose of maximizing profits while minimizing patient care; understaffed the facility; and made operational decisions that undermined Heritage Manor's revenue and staffing. In a series of amended petitions, Ms. Douglas crystalized her claims as "administrative negligence (ordinary negligence)" and added an allegation of intentional fraud.

Pathway and Heritage Manor responded with a motion for partial summary judgment urging any claim of understaffing brought the case under the La. Medical Malpractice Act ("LMMA") but also arguing that the place was adequately staffed by La. Admin. Code standards. Ms. Douglas countered that her administrative negligence claim against Pathway was totally separate from her med mal claims against Heritage Manor. After a hearing, the district court agreed with the defendants, finding that under *Coleman v. Deno*, 01-1517 (La. 1/25/02), 813 So. 2d 303, and *Campbell v. Nexion Health at Claiborne Inc.*, 49,150 (La. App. 2 Cir. 10/1/14), 149 So. 3d 436, these administrative negligence and staffing claims constitute med mal. The court granted PSJ, and Ms. Douglas appealed.

The Second Circuit affirmed, ***Douglas v. Pathway Mgmt. of La. LLC,*** 56,040 (La. App. 2 Cir. 4/9/25), in an opinion by Judge Hunter. After setting out the essential law and definitions, the court turned away Ms. Douglas's claim that Pathway's certificate of enrollment in the Patient Compensation Fund was not authenticated, ergo Pathway couldn't claim the benefits of LMMA. The court found that the certificate was signed, making it prima facie evidence, and the plaintiff offered nothing but argument to rebut its validity; Pathway was covered. The court then addressed the principal issue, whether these claims sounded in med mal, using the *Coleman v. Deno* standard, reaffirmed in *Billeaudeau v. Opelousas Gen'l Hosp. Auth.*, 16-0846 (La. 10/19/16), 218 So. 3d 513. After extensively quoting from three of Ms. Douglas's petitions, the court found these raised more than purely administrative issues: the claims of understaffing "tend to show the degree of care which was, or should have been, provided to plaintiff," and the appropriate standard of care requires expert medical knowledge. The court then addressed the technical issue whether Pathway correctly "referenced" the petitions for consideration on MSJ; under La. C.C.P. art. 966 A(4), the reference was sufficient. Another technical issue was whether the preemption of LMMA could be resolved on MSJ instead of exception of prematurity; under *Billeaudeau*, either procedure may address this. Finally, the court rejected Pathway's belated exception of no cause of action.

The court's meticulous review of Ms. Douglas's multiple petitions shows that "purely administrative" claims of "ordinary negligence" will be very hard to extricate from med mal claims, if the negligent acts led to a patient's injury. A few may survive the exception of prematurity or MSJ, but prudent practice might be to double up with a timely medical review panel request, just in case.

**Deadlines, deadlines.** In November 2017, Mr. Logan was taken to the Richland Parish Hospital ER for a bleeding right ear and nausea. He alleged some attendants placed him in a bed with the head elevated and the rails down. He began to feel nauseated, leaned forward to use the bedpan, but he fell off the side of the bed and struck his head on the floor. A subsequent CT scan showed a large skull fracture; he was carried to Rapides Regional Med Center, in Alexandria, and then to University Med Center, in New Orleans, for surgery and daily injections. He filed a request for medical review panel against Drs. Zeller and Oglesby (the attending physicians at Richland) and Richland's nursing staff.

The MRP found no breach of the standard of care; its findings differed significantly from those alleged by Mr. Logan, notably that before his fall, he was "alert, oriented, ambulatory, with normal systems review and a normal neurologic exam" – no reason to suspect a fall risk – and the nurses said they left his bedrails raised while they went to get his lab results.

Mr. Logan then filed this suit for med mal against Richland and the two doctors (he later dismissed Dr. Oglesby). In January 2023, the defendants moved for summary judgment, attaching the MRP complaint and opinion, the petition and Mr. Logan's answers to interrogatories, and arguing that Mr. Logan had yet to produce any expert opinion in support of his claim. Seeking a phone status conference, counsel argued he had yet to receive all the requested discovery; ultimately, the court ordered Mr. Logan to disclose his experts and reports by December 15, 2023. Later, on February 20, 2024, Mr. Logan opposed MSJ, chiefly disputing Dr. Zeller's statements and the MRP's findings, but also attaching the affidavit of an expert, Dr. Fitzgibbons. The defendants moved to strike this affidavit as untimely. After a hearing, the district court granted the motion to strike and the MSJ, dismissing the suit. Mr. Logan appealed.

The Second Circuit affirmed, ***Logan v. Richland Parish Hosp.,*** 56,127 (La. App. 2 Cir. 4/9/25), in an opinion by Judge Cox. The discussion is a routine focus on abuse of discretion: the accident was in November 2017; the suit was filed in December 2020; the scheduling order was filed on August 31, 2023, setting the cutoff for December 15; counsel didn't file the affidavit until February 20, 2024, long after the cutoff. The court dismissed the argument that the duty judge who signed the order failed to send a copy to plaintiff's counsel; counsel admitted he received a copy before it was signed. Without the affidavit, there was nothing from which to create a genuine issue.

As if the point were not already clear, missing a deadline is probably fatal to anybody's MSJ or opposition thereto. Under Art. 966 A(2), MSJ procedure is "favored" and "shall be construed to accomplish" the ends of the just, speedy and inexpensive determination of every claim. Following Supreme Court guidance, the Second Circuit will adhere to the time limits fixed by the district court or spelled out in Art. 966 B.

# Federal Update

*by Chris Slatten, Chris_Slatten@lawd.uscourts.gov*

**Expert Fees in *Erie* Cases**: Louisiana state courts tax expert witness fees as costs pursuant to La. R.S. 13:3666. The federal costs statute, 28 U.S.C. § 1821(b), is more restrictive and does not allow taxation of expert fees. The federal court might award an appearance fee ($40 a day) and mileage/travel/lodging, but that's about it.

Is the rule in federal court different when a state law claim is at issue? *Erie* requires that federal courts apply substantive state law when adjudicating diversity-jurisdiction claims, but the federal court applies federal procedural law to the case. The 5CA has deemed the cost award a matter of procedural law in most cases.

The go to case is *Cates v. Sears, Roebuck & Co*., 928 F.2d 679, 689 (5th Cir. 1991), which stated that "[a]bsent an express indication from the Louisiana legislature, or its courts, of Louisiana's special interest in providing litigants with recovery of expert witness fees in redhibition cases, the trial court did not err in declining to exceed the statutory witness compensation provisions of section 1821." *Cates* is also famous for marking the beginning and end of Larry Pettiette's foray into being a plaintiff's lawyer.

Since *Cates*, the WDLA typically does not tax expert fees as costs in ordinary *Erie* tort or contract cases. There is an exception for eminent domain proceedings, where expert witness fees have been held to be part of substantive state policy to protect Louisiana landowners' rights to just compensation under the Louisiana constitution. *Chevalier v. Reliance Ins. Co. of Illinois*, 953 F.2d 877, 886 (5th Cir. 1992). Because the expert fees in eminent domain cases are considered part of the substantive law, federal courts will tax them.

Is this a big deal? It can be. For example, in *Williams v. CenterPoint Energy Res. Corp*., 332 So. 3d 238 (La. App. 2d Cir. 2021), a wrongful death case, the court taxed expert fees of more than $238,000. If *Williams* has been tried in federal court as a diversity case, the winning plaintiffs' recoverable expert costs likely would have been a tiny fraction of that amount.

**Unjust Enrichment and Alternative Pleading**: Civil Code Article 2298 provides that a person who has been enriched without cause at the expense of another person is bound to compensate that person. The article adds: "The remedy declared here is subsidiary and shall not be available if the law provides another remedy for the impoverishment or declares a contrary rule."

The plaintiff in *Sodexo v. Allegiance*, 2025 WL 1062907 (W.D. La. 2025) filed a complaint that asserted claims for breach of contract and unjust enrichment. The defendant moved to dismiss the unjust enrichment claim on the grounds that it was subsidiary so could not be asserted when the plaintiff had available other remedies or claims such as for breach of contract. Plaintiff argued that it could assert the subsidiary claim because (1) it might lose on the breach of contract claim and (2) Fed. R. Civ. Pro. 8 allows pleading claims alternatively.

MJ Hornsby reviewed district court decisions on both sides of the issue and noted a recent statement by the 5CA: "While a plaintiff in Louisiana generally may not plead a claim for unjust enrichment alongside another legal theory, La. Civ. Code Ann. art. 2298, unjust enrichment is still available when the at-issue contract is a legal 'nullity.' " *Shaw v. Restoration Hardware, Inc.*, 93 F.4th 284, 291 (5th Cir. 2024). There was no claim the contract at issue in *Sodexo* was a nullity, and a breach of contract claim was pled.

The MJ recommended dismissing the unjust enrichment claim because: "Federal procedural law may allow the pleading of claims in the alternative, but an alternatively pled claim can still be attacked for lack of substantive merit. Louisiana substantive law provides that an available alternative claim, even if it may ultimately lack merit or be time-barred, prevents the assertion of a successful unjust enrichment claim." Judge Doughty adopted the recommendation.

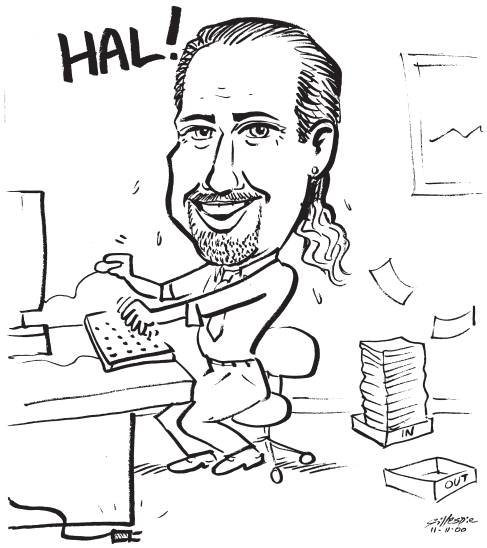
**Sudden Emergency Doctrine**: A beer truck on I-20 swerved into the adjacent lane and hit the plaintiffs' car. The truck driver and other defendants moved for summary judgment based on the sudden emergency doctrine, which is an affirmative defense available to one who suddenly finds himself in a position of imminent peril, without sufficient time to consider and weigh all the circumstances or best means to avoid an impending danger, if he fails to adopt what later appears to have been a better method, unless the emergency is brought about by his own negligence.

The defendants argued that the truck driver had to swerve because (1) a vehicle ahead of him made a mistake that (2) caused the car immediately in front of his truck to slam on the brakes. If the truck driver had not swerved, the defendants argued, there would have been a much more serious accident.

Judge Edwards denied summary judgment. There was evidence that the road was wet, traffic was congested, and the truck was at a following distance of only 5 or 6 seconds. A reasonable jury drawing all inferences in favor of the plaintiffs could find that the truck driver did not maintain a safe following distance under the circumstances. Genuine issues of material fact mean the defendants will have to test their sudden emergency defense at trial. *Rivera v. Ace Property and Casualty*, 22 CV 1943, Doc. 31.

# How Write You Are

*by Hal Odom Jr., rhodom@la2nd.org*




**A place for everything?** This is a simple typo, but it escapes Spell Check, so careful writers will have to proofread. "[A]fter identifying Mr. Videau from his vehicle's license *place*, they obtained a warrant for his arrest[.]" *State v. Hutchinson*, 22-536 (La. App. 5 Cir. 8/18/23), 370 So. 3d 769. Quoting La. R.S. 47:511 A: "A vehicle owned by a resident of another state, * * * may be operated upon the public highways of this state * * * when the vehicle bears approved license *places* of such state[.]" *State v. Strange*, 04-0273 (La. 5/14/04), 876 So. 2d 39. The License Plate Reader System is "a camera system that takes photos of every car's license *place* as it passes through an intersection." *State v. McCoy*, 55,354 (La. App. 2 Cir. 11/15/23), 374 So. 3d 1102.

Of course, the term is license *plate*, as is correctly used in R.S. 47:511. And, with humility, I must plead guilty to missing the error in *McCoy* before it went to press.

In rare instances, the legislature and courts use an alternative term. "Corp. McEntee * * * obtained the Hertz rental agreement for the vehicle with Louisiana *tag* 9551482." *State v. Moore*, 56,106 (La. App. 2 Cir. 2/26/25), 2025 WL 618749. "[T]he assistant secretary of the office of motor vehicles may order the removal of the offending vehicle's license *tag* if the registration is from Louisiana." La. R.S. 32:427 B(2). "The State responded that the stop was valid because the uncontroverted testimony was that there was no license plate or temporary *tag* on the vehicle." *State v. Bradley*, 22-191 (La. App. 5 Cir. 12/21/22), 356 So. 3d 485. However, overwhelmingly – by a margin of at least 100 to 1 – we call it what it looks like – a *plate*. Remember not to make it a *place*.

**Dangler alert.** This sentence appeared in an internal document in our office: "After speaking with all parties, Harper was released and arrested three months later in Bossier Parish." As written, this suggests that *Harper* spoke to all the parties and, as a result, was released, only to be arrested three months later. However, here is the preceding sentence: "The police arrived at Ms. Singleton's home on the night of the incident." What actually happened was that *the police* spoke to all the parties, including Harper, and decided not to arrest him (at least not initially).

This is a grammatical miscue called a dangling modifier, specifically, a dangling gerund. The *-ing* word, called a gerund, should relate to the nearest subject. "After finishing the research, the brief was easy to write." Did the brief perform and complete the research? "While driving to Baton Rouge, my phone ran out of power." Was my phone driving to Baton Rouge?

The fix is to rewrite by clarifying the subject. How would you repair the examples in the preceding paragraph? In the earlier example, the sentence was recast this way: "After they spoke with all parties, Harper was released and arrested three months later in Bossier Parish." *They* clearly referred to the police, as stated in the preceding sentence. *State v. Harper*, 56,060 (La. App. 2 Cir. 12/18/24), 2024 WL 5151686.

**This can't be positive.** Can you be "plussed" instead of "nonplussed"? The question was posed recently on the website Word Smarts. *Nonplussed* means *completely confused, unable even to respond*, and does not often occur in legal writing. It does crop up occasionally. "This aspect of *LeBlanc* left the dissenters * * * completely *nonplussed*." *State v. Balsano*, 09-0735 (La. 6/19/09), 11 So. 3d 475. "In addition, I admit that I am somewhat *nonplussed* by the majority's choice of the bracketed alteration 'constitutional' in its citation to *Marsh*." *Riley v. St. Luke's Episcopal Hosp.*, 196 F.3d 514 (5 Cir. 1999) (Stewart, J, dissenting).

However, the word looks negative; hence, the natural question, can you take off the *non-* and form a positive word, *plussed*? Would such a word mean *unsurprised, unfazed, able to react sensibly*? The view of the World Smarts contributor is no – there is no such word! Bennett Kleinman, Can You Be "Plussed" Instead of "Nonplussed"?, https://wordsmarts.com/plussed-nonplussed (2/24/25). I agree, and I doubt anyone would think of writing, "I am *plussed* by appellee's argument."

There are other "nonpositive" words! A person with a *casual, indifferent attitude* is *nonchalant*, but a person with an *eager, interested attitude* is not "chalant." A crowd that is *unmanageable and rowdy* is *unruly*, but would you call an *orderly, quiet* crowd "ruly"? An action *without forethought* is *inadvertent*, but would you call a *carefully planned* action "advertent"? An object, like an assembly-required furnishing from Ikea, that is *large and hard to handle*, is called *unwieldy*, but if it were *compact and easily handled*, would you call it "wieldy"?

Special mention goes to the word for a person who is *displeased and irritable about it – disgruntled*. Most often, the prefix *dis-* means *not* or it reverses the word. Hence, if a person is *pleased and contented*, you could call him "gruntled." However, *dis-* also can intensify the word. Unfortunately, Oxford English Dictionary gives additional examples of this usage that are archaic in the extreme, such as *disannul* (same as *annul*). "I know no rule better established than that parol evidence shall not be admitted to *disannul* or substantially vary or extend a written contract." *Northern Assur. Co. of London v. Grand View Bldg. Ass'n*, 183 U.S. 308, 22 S. Ct. 133 (1902). Some dictionaries have added *gruntled*, defining it as *happy or contented; satisfied*. Yet they acknowledge this is a backformation from *disgruntled*, and not etymologically sound! I would not use this word, because it sounds pejorative, like the noise of a pig in slop. Perhaps the pig is grunting happily, but the imagery is not pleasant.

If anyone finds a legitimate occasion to use *plussed*, please let me know. If I see it in print, I'm likely to be nonplussed.

# Monroe Inn of Court

*by Hal Odom Jr., rhodom@la2nd.org*

## "Divorcing the Client" – Ethics of Termination

The ethics of ending the attorney-client relationship was the topic at the April meeting of the Judge Fred Fudickar Jr. AIC (Monroe). "The End of the Relationship: Divorcing Clients" was the topic presented by Mike Street, of Watson McMillin & Street, in Monroe.

Mike led off by advising, "The very end of the relationship is just as important as the beginning." He outlined various reasons for termination, beginning with the obvious fact that the matter may be concluded by closure, settlement, judgment, appeal or dismissal. Ethical issues arise, however, when continued representation will result in violation of the Rules of Professional Conduct, or an actual or potential conflict of interest has arisen. Rule 1.16(b) outlines situations in which the lawyer is permitted to withdraw from representation. "The rules don't refine the word 'repugnant,' which describes client conduct that may justify withdrawal, but it must be pretty severe," Mike theorized. Much more common is the client's failure to fulfill an obligation to the lawyer – a situation on which several audience members elaborated.

Mike wrapped up by discussing problems of discharge by a dissatisfied client and the particulars of file retention. "Retain a copy of the file, but you cannot condition release of the file over issues of the expense of copying the file or for any other reason. That includes the payment of fees or costs!" Several members shared their experience – favorable or otherwise – in recovering unpaid fees from former clients.

The meeting was held at the Lotus Club, on the Ninth Floor of the Vantage/ONB Building on DeSiard Street in downtown Monroe. A social hour preceded Mike's presentation, including an open bar and heavy hors d'oeuvres. The 14 members in attendance received their coveted Ethics CLE credit. Mike announced that the final meeting of the season would be the annual crawfish boil, set for May 12.

**Lynette Gregory, of the Gregory Law Office, in Monroe, Judge Jeff Joyce, Fourth JDC, and David Verlander, formerly of McLeod Verlander, were among early arrivals for the meeting.**

**Mike Street, of Watson McMillin & Street, in Monroe, shared some professional views of separating from clients.**

**Hal Odom, James Carroll, of Mixon & Carroll, Columbia, and Mike Street, are shown before the meeting.**

# 6th North Louisiana Appellate Conference
# Presented by The Shreveport Bar Association and Second Circuit Court of Appeal

## August 15, 2025

**Second Circuit Court of Appeal**
**430 Fannin Street**
**Approved by the MCLE Committee of the LSBA for 6 hours credit**
**Including Louisiana Board of Legal Specialization**
**Credit in Appellate Practice**

**8:00 a.m.** **Registration**

**8:30 a.m.** **Preparing and Presenting a Case for Appeal from the Prosecution and from the Defense**
60 Minutes
*Alexandra Porubsky - Caddo Parish District Attorney's Office and D. Lee Harville, Board Certified Appellate Specialist, Certified by the Louisiana Board of Legal Specialization - The Harville Law Firm, LLC*

**9:30 a.m.** **Break**

**9:35 a.m.** **What's Afoot at the Second Circuit Court of Appeal**
60 Minutes
*Robin N. Jones, Clerk of Court and Jenny Segner, Assistant Director of Central Staff - Second Circuit Court of Appeal*

**10:35 a.m.** **Break**

**10:45 a.m.** **Tips from the Trial Bench and Tips from the Appellate Bench**
60 Minutes
*Hon. Danny Ellender, Appellate Judge Louisiana Court of Appeal, Second Circuit and Hon. Charles G. Fitzgerald, Appellate Judge Louisiana Court of Appeal, Third Circuit*

**11:45 a.m.** **Lunch with the Second Circuit Court of Appeal Judges**
75 Minutes

**1:00 p.m.** **First 100 Days as Supreme Court Justice**
60 Minutes
*Hon. Cade Cole - Associate Justice Louisiana Supreme Court*

**2:00 p.m.** **Break**

**2:10 p.m.** **Ethics**
60 Minutes
*Mary Watson Smith - Law Office of Mary Watson Smith LLC and Hon. (Ret) Scott Crichton - Retired Louisiana Supreme Court Associate Justice*

**3:10 p.m.** **Break**

**3:20 p.m.** **Professionalism**
60 Minutes
*Hon. Jay B. McCallum - Associate Justice Louisiana Supreme Court*

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**Important Note:**
**A link to the seminar materials will be sent to you via email prior to the seminar. Neither internet access nor electrical outlets are provided, so we ask that you either print or save the PDF materials to your laptop, and fully charge your batteries if you wish to review the materials at the seminar.**

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**dsouthern@shreveportbar.com**

# Do Good Work

*Hon. Henry A. Politz*

## Making a Difference–The Power of Pro Bono Work

In the pursuit of justice, access to legal representation should be a right, not a privilege. Yet for millions, the cost of legal services places justice out of reach. Offering free legal representation to someone in need is one of the most powerful ways attorneys can use their skills to bridge that gap and create meaningful change.

The legal system is complex, intimidating and often unforgiving. For individuals facing eviction, domestic violence, immigration hurdles or wrongful denial of benefits, the absence of legal representation can be life-altering.

According to the Legal Services Corporation, 92% of low-income Americans received inadequate or no legal help with their civil legal problems in the past year. Legal aid organizations are overwhelmed, and that's where pro bono attorneys step in.

Our pro bono attorneys handle a wide range of critical issues: securing restraining orders for survivors of domestic abuse, representation for simple uncontested divorces, advocating for veterans' benefits and helping families avoid homelessness. For the clients, the stakes couldn't be higher and a single hour of a lawyer's time can change everything.

Take, for example, the case of a pro bono client who is 42 years old, living in public housing and was wrongfully accused of having her husband, a convicted felon, living with her. Public housing rules prohibit felons from residing with tenants, and as a result of this false accusation, she was served with an eviction notice. After a trial in the matter, we were able to prove the accusations untrue and prevent the eviction.

While the clients gain access to justice, the attorneys gain something just as valuable: a renewed sense of purpose.

Valerie DeLatte, of Counsel at Pettiette, Armand, Dunkelman, Woodley & Cromwell: *"As an attorney, you get to interact with average people who look up to you and believe you are a magical problem solver, almost like a genie in a bottle. You get to make a difference with every action and every word. It's a huge privilege and opportunity, and also a huge responsibility."*

Many firms now actively encourage or require pro bono work. Some offer billable hour credit, while others partner with their local pro bono organizations to streamline case referrals. The American Bar Association recommends that lawyers provide at least 50 hours of pro bono legal services per year through the local Pro Bono organization, a goal many see not as a limit, but as a starting point. We encourage you and your law firm to partner with us in providing pro bono representation.

Pro bono work also helps young lawyers develop practical skills, courtroom advocacy, client communication and negotiation while contributing to their professional growth and confidence. In turn, it strengthens the legal community's reputation as a force for good.

Every lawyer has something to give. It's not always about big wins; sometimes it's just about showing up and making sure someone has a voice.

Pro Bono work isn't just noble, it's necessary. It upholds the promise of equal justice under law and reminds us that the legal profession holds incredible power to transform lives.

In a world where so many are silenced by circumstance, pro bono lawyers are the ones who speak up, stand beside and help carry others forward. And in doing so, they don't just change individual stories. They change the system itself.

## How Can I Get Involved?

Whether you are retired from the practice of law, a seasoned litigator or just starting your legal career, there's a place for you to be a volunteer at the Shreveport Bar Foundation Pro Bono Project. Even a few hours a month can help someone stay housed, find safety, or achieve stability.

By stepping up, you can be the difference between injustice and relief. Pro bono work is a reminder that the law doesn't exist just in books – it lives in people's stories, and you have the power to help write a better ending.

If you would like more information about volunteering or have any questions about our current open cases, please contact Lucy Espree at 318-703-8381 or at lespree@shreveportbar.com.

The SBF Pro Bono Project is able to do all that we do because of the support we receive from our grantors, Louisiana Bar Foundation, Acadiana Legal Services Corporation, The Community Foundation, Carolyn W. and Charles T. Beaird Family Foundation, First United Methodist Church, Grayson Foundation and the SBA Krewe of Justinian.

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# SBA Pickleball Tournament Results: Congratulations to the Winners!

We're thrilled to announce the successful 2nd SBA Pickleball Tournament held on Friday, April 4, 2025, at Pierremont Oaks Tennis Club. It was an exciting day full of great sportsmanship and fun!

A huge thank you to all the players, sponsors, and volunteers who made the event a success. We especially want to thank our Pickleball Committee Chairperson, Chandler Higgins, for her work in coordinating this tournament and Robert Dunkelman for running the tournament on the day of the event.



**Congratulations to our winners!**

**Ladies Doubles:**

**1st place : Virginia Calhoun/Kandi Moore**

**2nd place : Jeanne Fuller/Gaye Dean**

**3rd place : Katie Dunkelman/Rhonda Sanford**

**Mixed Doubles:**

**1st place : Claudia Munoz/Justin Smith**

**2nd place : Molly Phares/Stan Sanford**

**3rd place : Jenn Gieseke/Ken Gieseke**

We're proud of everyone who participated and brought great energy to the court. Stay tuned for our next tournament, we can't wait to see you all again. Game on!

**Thank you to our Sponsors!**

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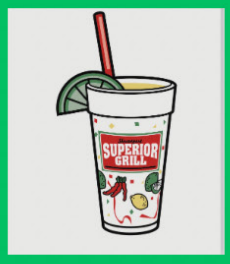


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# HIRING

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**Compensation: Competitive hourly rate or salary, based on experience and hours worked**

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- Handle all aspects of litigation including legal research, drafting pleadings, discovery, motion practice, and court appearances
- Conduct depositions and prepare clients and witnesses
- Participate in case strategy meetings
- Collaborate with a team of attorneys and legal staff
- Occasionally meet with new clients/ intake
- Notarizing and witnessing on client documents
- Drafting documents, scheduling appointments, responding to inquiries

## Qualifications:

- Trial experience a plus
- Strong legal research, writing, and communication skills
- Ability to work independently and manage multiple cases efficiently

## Benefits:

- Flexible schedule; option to work part-time or full-time
- Option to work in office or remotely
- Collaborative and supportive team environment
- Opportunities for professional development

## HOW TO APPLY:

Please submit your resume to jtodd@miramonlaw.com

Valerie DeLatte

# Pro Bono Hero Spotlight: VALERIE DELATTE

*Of Counsel at Pettiette, Armand, Dunkelman, Woodley & Cromwell*

## Why is pro bono important to you?

I have volunteered with the Shreveport Bar Foundation for a decade. When I first moved to Shreveport, in 2015, I didn't know anyone here. I didn't own a car. I didn't know anything about Shreveport. I moved into a tiny apartment on Austen Place and I walked or rode my bike to the Second Circuit every day, rain or shine, and looking around downtown, I was constantly reminded how incredibly fortunate I am and how many people right here in this local community need a helping hand.

I grew up knowing I wanted to become an attorney because I didn't know any attorneys. I had never seen an attorney before, but I always heard people saying we need one. I grew up thinking that attorneys were problem solvers, which they are, but I had this impression that an attorney could just magically solve all your problems.

Valerie DeLatte providing legal advice at the Ask A Lawyer Event

As an attorney, you get to interact with average people who look up to you and believe you are a magical problem solver, almost like a genie in a bottle. You get to make a difference with every action and every word. It's a huge privilege and opportunity, and also a huge responsibility.

Last year I had the opportunity to work pro bono with a grandmother who was attempting to acquire custody of her two autistic grandchildren. She showed me photos of the sensory room she had created and shared with me all of her research on living with children who have been diagnosed with autism. It really touched my heart how much effort she put into providing these children with a better life. I was able to share with her my knowledge of the law, explain the steps in this legal process, and even assisted her with filling out school forms that she did not understand. I learned about her and her life, and I tried to give her the encouragement and knowledge and skills to navigate some of the legal and life challenges that she may face in the future with her grandkids.

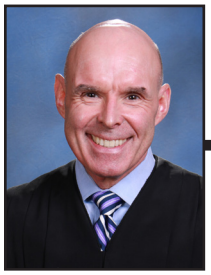
One of my favorite programs with the Shreveport Bar Foundation is Ask-A-Lawyer. Many of the people who need free legal advice just need someone to listen to them for a little while. Sometimes they do not have problems that are truly legal in nature, and sometimes it's just these simple things that we take for granted, like being able to read and understand letters from the SSA or CMS, or a lease or contract, or just knowing what your basic rights are. Even with all the technological advances and the explosion of information on the internet, there are still people who do not have access to that information, and even if they do, they do not know how to interpret or apply it.

Valerie DeLatte providing legal advice at the Ask A Lawyer


Valerie DeLatte, Linnae Magyar, Dana Southern and Lucy Espree at the Pro Bono Volunteer Appreciation Happy Hour

There exists this huge, drastic gap in access to legal knowledge, and no real solution yet how to fill it. Every day, every conversation, every interaction, you have an opportunity to educate, encourage, empower and leave your imprint on someone else's life that can be forever changed because you chose to hold out a hand and share.

*This series is aimed at bringing attention to pro bono volunteers who are committed to pro bono work. See how they made a difference through pro bono. We would love to feature you in a future Pro Bono Hero Spotlight. Email lespree@shreveportbar.com today to find out how you can volunteer!*



# Another Great Year for the Harry V. Booth and Judge Henry A. Politz American Inn of Court!

*by Judge Mike Pitman, michael.pitman@caddocourt.org*

The Harry V. Booth and Judge Henry A. Politz American Inn of Court is wrapping up another wonderful year. For those of you who are not familiar with the American Inns of Court, it is an association of lawyers and judges from all levels and backgrounds who share a passion for professionalism and excellence. We hold monthly meetings and other social functions where we build and strengthen professional relationships; discuss fundamental concerns about professionalism and pressing legal issues; share experiences and advice; provide mentoring opportunities; and advance the highest levels of integrity, ethics and civility. The vision of the American Inns of Court is a legal profession and judiciary dedicated to professionalism, ethics, civility and excellence.[1]

Members of the Inn are divided into teams consisting of members from diverse backgrounds, areas of practice and years of experience. Each team presents an educational program at Inn meetings or accomplishes a special part of the Inn's mission. Team members are encouraged to gather informally, outside of monthly meetings, to prepare their presentations and socialize with each other. This allows the less experienced attorneys to become more effective advocates and counselors by learning from the more experienced attorneys and judges. This team approach allows seasoned judges and attorneys to get to know and mentor younger lawyers.[2]

The first American Inn of Court was founded February 2, 1980. Today there are approximately 400 chartered American Inns of Court in 48 states, the District of Columbia, Guam and Tokyo. There are nearly 30,000 active members nationwide, encompassing a wide cross-section of the legal community, including federal and state judges, lawyers, law professors and law students.[3]

The local Inn of Court was formed in 1989-1990 and was named for Harry V. Booth and Judge Henry A. Politz, both of whom were well respected by the bench and bar. Thirty-five years later the Booth-Politz Inn of Court continues to promote civility, professionalism and excellence throughout the legal community. The Booth-Politz Inn is one of the premier Inns of Court, having achieved, and maintained, the prestigious "Platinum Status" for many years.

This year, the Booth-Politz Inn of Court teams presented the following programs: the history of the Inn of Court; legislative updates; ethical issues for judges and lawyers; artificial intelligence as a tool to solve crimes; wellness and mental health; laws governing sports wagering and name, image and likeness; and presidential executive orders and nationwide injunctions. Every member who attended the programs received one hour of continuing legal education credit for each program they attended. Lunch was provided after the presentations where members enjoyed visiting with one another. The CLE credits and lunches were included in the membership dues. The Booth-Politz Inn of Court will conclude the year with a mentor/mentee mixer and a dinner at the Shreveport Club.

In addition to the team presentations, the Booth-Politz Inn of Court sponsors various outreach programs. Wills for Heroes is one of our outreach programs where members volunteer their time and expertise to write wills, free of charge, for law enforcement, military and other first responders.

New member orientation for 2025-2026 will take place in August. If you are interested, or if you know of someone who may be interested in being a member of the Booth-Politz Inn of Court, please contact our Vice President, Robin McCoy, at robin.mccoy@usdoj.gov.

Judge Mike Pitman,

President, Booth-Politz Inn of Court

1. www.innsofcourt.org
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

# Save the Dates

## 2025 SBA CLE

| | |
|---|---|
| **15** AUG | **6TH NORTH LOUISIANA APPELLATE CONFERENCE** |
| **17-18** SEPT | **RECENT DEVELOPMENTS BY THE JUDICIARY SEMINAR** |
| **23-24** OCT | **SBA TRIAL ACADEMY** |
| **17-18** DEC | **DECEMBER CLE BY THE HOUR** |

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# CLASSIFIEDS

**Brief writing/legal research.**

Columbia Law School graduate; former U.S. 5th Circuit staff attorney; former U.S. District Court, Western District of Louisiana, law clerk; more than 20 years of legal experience; available for brief writing and legal research; references and résumé available on request. Appellate Practice specialist, certified by the Louisiana Board of Legal Specialization.

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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## *2025 SBA MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON

12:00 Noon at the Petroleum Club (15th Floor)

**MAY 6**
**Give *for* Good Campaign**
7:30-1:00pm @ Lowder Baking Co.
5:00-7:00pm @ Superior Grill

**AUGUST 15**
**6th North Louisiana Appellate Conference**
Second Circuit Court of Appeal
430 Fannin Street

***SEPTEMBER 24**
**SBA MEMBER LUNCHEON**
Speaker:LSBA President
Edward Walters Jr.

***OCTOBER 22**
**SBA MEMBER LUNCHEON/CLE**
Speaker: H. Alston Johnson

# AMAZON WISH LIST

The Shreveport Bar Foundation is excited to announce the launch of its Wish List program for the Pro Bono Project, Legal Representation for Victims of Domestic Violence programs, and the Shreveport Bar Center through Amazon. This new wish list program allows our supporters to purchase supplies and other items needed to run our programs. This can range from pens (for the AAL clinics) to soap and paper products (for the building)! **Check out the full list of options!**

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3EW9JTZSJNVEZ?ref_=wl_share

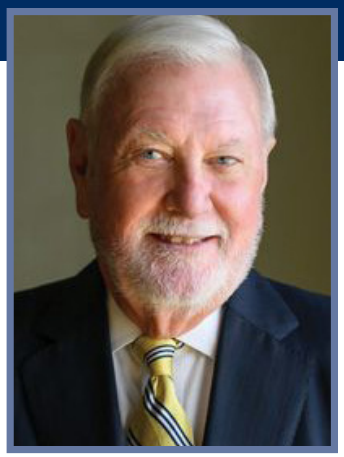
Or scan the QR code.

amazon wishlist

# SBA Luncheon Meeting – September 24

***Petroleum Club (15th Floor) Buffet opens at 11:30 a.m. Program and Speaker from 12:00 Noon to 1:00 pm.***

***$55.00 for SBA members and $65.00 for non-SBA members. Advance reservations are required by 5 p.m. Monday, September 22***



Edward Walters Jr.

**When:** **12:00 Noon on Wednesday, September 24**

**Where:** **Petroleum Club (15th floor)**

**Featuring:** **Edward Walters Jr., LSBA President-Elect**

*We will honor all past presidents of our Shreveport Bar Association and Shreveport Bar Foundation*

***This presentation is eligible for 1 hour CLE credit.***

## ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Edward J. Walters Jr. is a partner in the Baton Rouge firm of Walters, Thomas, Cullens, LLC. He received a BS degree in accounting in 1969 from Louisiana State University and his JD degree in 1975 from LSU Law Center. Walters served as the Louisiana State Bar Association's (LSBA) secretary and editor-in-chief of the *Louisiana Bar Journal* in 2012-13. He continues to serve on the *Louisiana Bar Journal* Editorial Board. He and Michael A. (Mike) Patterson have taught a course titled "Advanced Trial and Evidence" at LSU Law Center for more than 30 years, and he has been a member of the faculty of the Law Center's yearly Trial Advocacy Program since its inception 25 years ago. He was appointed by the Louisiana Supreme Court to serve as a member of the Judiciary Commission of Louisiana from 2017-21. He was the chair of the Commission for 2020. Walters received the LSU Law Center's Distinguished Alumnus Award in 2015, the LSBA's President's Award in 2011, the Louisiana Bar Foundation's Distinguished Attorney Award in 2008 and the Baton Rouge Bar Association's President's Award in 1995, 1998 and 2014. He is a member of the American College of Trial Lawyers, the International Academy of Trial Lawyers and the LSU Law Center Board of Trustees. He is board certified in Civil Trial Advocacy by the National Board of Trial Advocacy. He is the author of the book *Ipse Dixit: Ruminations on a Career at Law.* Walters and his wife, Norma, have been married for 55 years and are the parents of two children. They have four grandchildren. Please join in welcoming Ed Walters as our guest keynote speaker.

**JOIN US IN**

**HONORING ALL PAST PRESIDENTS OF THE**

**SHREVEPORT BAR ASSOCIATION AND BAR FOUNDATION**

**SEPTEMBER 24**

Confirm your reservation(s) by email at **dsouthern@shreveportbar.com** or by phone at **703-8372.**
**Please remember to call and cancel if you can't attend.**
**The SBA pays for each reservation made. No-shows will be invoiced.**