



# NEWS

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Serving the Interests of Lawyers Dedicated to Government Service

## A Message from the President



It has been another successful year for the GBA. We had a large turnout for the Holiday Party, the Feeding Illinois Campaign was a success and we have several excellent speakers coming up this Spring. Melissa Mylinski and Kimberly Stevens from the Illinois Labor Relations Board will be speaking on March 20<sup>th</sup>, Amanda Vinicky, Statehouse Bureau

Chief will be giving us an update on the Illinois legislature on April 18<sup>th</sup> and Chief Justice Thomas Kilbride will speak on May 16th. The Chief Justice will speak about cameras in the courtroom, electronic filing and changes to Supreme Court Rules. Advance reservations are requested for Chief Justice Kilbride so we can accommodate everyone.

Our Black History Month speakers in February gave us a moving rendition of the work they do on a daily basis and its affect on the minority community in Illinois. I would encourage everyone to attend the Illinois Innocence Fundraiser on April 6th at 6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Artisans Building at the Illinois State Fairgrounds. Individual tickets are \$100.00. A flyer was sent earlier this month with the registration information. I hope to see you all there.

F. Martinez

### Upcoming Events:

#### Government Bar Association:

Apr. 18 – Luncheon: Amanda Vinicky, Statehouse Bureau Chief

May 23 – Luncheon: Chief Justice Thomas Kilbride

June TBD – Annual Wine and Cheese

June 19 – Annual Ethics Program, SIU School of Medicine 3:00 – 5:00 PM

#### Central Illinois Women’s Bar Association:

Apr. 16 – Luncheon at Maldaner’s, 11:45 – 1:00 PM

May 15 – Judicial Reception

#### Sangamon County Bar Association:

May 1 – Law Day Luncheon

#### Other: Illinois Innocence Project

Apr. 6 – Artisans Building, IL State Fairgrounds 6:00 – 9:30 PM

## The GBA Teams Up With the SCBA to Join Forces in the Lawyers Feeding Illinois Campaign



The Illinois Government Bar Association and the Sangamon County Bar Association are excited to announce their successful involvement with the Lawyers Feeding Illinois Campaign. We collected monetary and food donations from February 18<sup>th</sup> through March 1<sup>st</sup>. Our team collected over \$1291.00 in monetary donations. This is a donation of over 6,455 meals. We also collected an abundance of food which will be delivered to the Central Illinois Food Bank. Hunger is a hidden problem that affects more people than we realize. Our contributions directly support our local community. The Illinois State Bar Association Feeding Illinois Campaign raised over 1 million meals!

J. W. Hammer

## GBA Holiday Party turned into Holiday Fiesta!



Instead of a holiday party, the GBA enjoyed a Mexican fiesta at D. H. Brown’s on December 5, 2012. Attendees enjoyed libations

generously donated by the house and a wide array of savory foods and delicious homemade desserts prepared by Barbara Rowe and Fritz Goebig. A lucky few who stayed until the end enjoyed leftovers for their services in making quick work of the clean-up.



Thanks also to Midwest Litigation Services for sponsoring this free event. Their generosity allowed the GBA to provide a fun evening while benefiting the annual scholarships GBA provides to worthy law students! Additional support was derived from a silent auction capably manned by Mike Delcomyn. As always, the board appreciates everyone's generous donations to the silent auction and efforts in making this annual event a success!



MENU

- Green Chile Pulled Pork Tacos and assorted condiments
- Cowboy Cavier Salad
- Cheesy Sausage Dip / Salsa / Nacho Chips
- Gourmet Mexican Cheese and Cracker Sampler
- Fruit and Veggie Trays
- Pepitas
- Cinnamon Chips with Dulce de Leche Sauce
- Kahlua-infused Brownie Bites
- Cream Cheese Frosted Mini Pumpkin Muffins

K. Kloppe

**November Luncheon: Thomas Reuters explains new legal research trends**

On November 15, 2012 at the GBA (Government Bar Association) luncheon seminar at Maldaner's Restaurant presented speakers from the Thomas Reuters Company. The speakers were: Richard Carlson, Tim Moore (member of GBA), and Jennifer Parker-Heimlich. The Thomas Reuters Company was formerly known as West Law. The speakers explained that Westlaw has changed tremendously. Through the past years, the Thomas Reuters Company has examined the various trends in legal research and the developments of the upcoming needs of attorneys and the legal field.

The different types of legal research have evolved. Now, it is not necessary to choose a database, when one is researching a legal issue. There is a new function that serves as a filter. This function is similar to a "Secret Decoder Ring." This filter can be used to weed out the unnecessary cases. In the past, legal research was like a concordance to the Bible. The legal search would begin, based on a word, or a few words. Those words were searched and matched with cases that had that word or the other search words, within a certain number of words.



The searches would pick up words and the plural of words. This type of search would often cause a problem that could create 40% to almost 80% irrelevant "finds." In other words, these vast searches would present incorrect "finds" or cases. The researcher would spend hours going through the cases that had those particular words, but many of those cases were not relevant to the issues that were presented. The attorney, paralegal, or law student would frequently spend numerous hours on the research that could not possibly be billed to a client, because the amount of time would seem unreasonable. Searching with the new filter that Thomas Reuters has designed has helped to eliminate unnecessary research hours for the legal search.

Thomas Reuters has also designed many techniques to help with Electronically Stored Information [ESI]. Your electronic search can be stored, if you have an account with the Thomas Reuters Company. You could access and download the search and the electronic information, while you were commuting, or at home, directly with your smart phone or iPhone. Thomas Reuters looked at the trend of the increase of users of I-phones and smart phones with their customers. In 2008, 15% of people used smart phones or iPhones, while in 2012, 78% use iPhones or smart phones. Also, today more people are using iPads or other Windows-type based type Notebooks; thus, making your legal ESI data extremely accessible.

If you have a chance, take a look at the new research techniques available from Thomas Reuters.

K. Philon

## January Luncheon: Alternative Careers are reviewed to the traditional attorney role



Pinky Wassenberg, a Professor of Political Science and the Legal Studies Department at the University of Illinois-Springfield, and Kathryn Eisenhart, an Associate Professor, spoke to the membership about alternative legal careers in higher education and other fields. Ms. Wassenberg stated that legal education gives faculty members the ability to solve problems and provide a risk assessment of a situation. A legal education also provides a good background to get into university administration. Several of the faculty in the Legal Studies Department at UIS are attorneys. Ms. Eisenhart said lawyers are natural teachers and that a community college is a good place to start. She also stated that lobbyists, FBI agents, CEOs and reporters have a legal background. Both speakers provided alternative careers for members to consider.

F. Martinez

## February Luncheon: The Illinois Innocence Project in Recognition of Black History Month



John Hanlon, Legal Director of the Illinois Innocence Project at UIS and Erica Cook, Staff Attorney of the Illinois Innocence Project at UIS, spoke at the February luncheon for the GBA. In recognition of Black History Month, the pair spoke about their work with the Innocence Project and the impact on wrongfully convicted minorities. A number of fascinating statistics were provided. The United States has approximately 2.3 – 2.4 million prisoners in its prisons which

ranks #1 in the world. 30% of the US society is comprised of minorities; however, 60% of the prison population is comprised of minorities. 1 in 3 black men will be incarcerated at least once in their life and 1 in 10 black men in their 30's are incarcerated. According to the US Sentencing Commission, blacks get significantly longer prison sentences than whites. In the state of Virginia, a study performed showed that 5% of those incarcerated for rape and murder were wrongfully convicted.

There are several reasons for wrongful convictions. Mr. Hanlon stated that witness misidentification is the leading cause of wrongful convictions. Cross-race identification is a major issue because it can be difficult to identify distinguishing features of persons of a different race. False confessions are the second leading cause of wrongful convictions. This occurs frequently when there is a black defendant and a white rape victim. Another issue that Ms. Cook sites is ineffective assistance of counsel.

All of the public law schools in the state of Illinois help with the Innocence Project here and there are 55 programs around the United States and others around the world, including China. The Illinois group can claim 5 exonerees since 2001 and is currently working on 30 – 35 cases. 3 of the 5 exonerees are black. The cases include arson, shaken babies, predatory sexual assault and gang shootings. The group looks for new evidence from those incarcerated and works to get convictions overturned, not reduced sentences.

R. Patino

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