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President's Page

Decatur Bar Association April 2020



The Decatur Bar Association has been working hard to bring you up-to-date information from Macon County, surrounding counties, and the Illinois Supreme Court regarding court

procedures to accommodate the Governor's "Stay at Home" and social distancing orders due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you to DBA Secretary Craig Runyon for working hard to send the information out to the membership!

The April issue of the President's Page includes news and information about events that we are cancelling/rescheduling as necessary.

CLE CANCELLATIONS:

APRIL:

We had two excellent CLE Programs scheduled in April.

April 9 – Nrupa Patel of BRE Law, Topic: Juvenile Delinquency

April 16 – Hon. Thomas Little, Topic: Adoption Practice and Procedure

Thank you to the presenters for preparing to present and Jim Jankowicz for his work scheduling the programs. We plan to bring these to you in the late summer/fall assuming COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

MAY CLE DAY, May 29, 2020:

Annually, we bring you a full day of free CLE programming. The CLE and Executive Committee

worked hard to bring you a day of great programming on May 29, 2020, which planned to include:

Hon. R.C. Bollinger, Topic: Judicial Settlement Conferences

Panel of Six Macon County Judges, Topic: Trial from Judges' Perspective

ARDC Director of Diversity & Inclusion, Topic: Diversity and Inclusion in Legal Practice

Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Topic: OP Advocacy Program

Heritage Behavioral Health, Topic: Community Mental Health

Given the in-person restrictions for COVID-19 compliance and the difficult logistics of remote programming for so many different presenters, we are cancelling the May 29, 2020 CLE Day. We plan to bring you the above programs as brown bag lunches in the fall.

A big thank you to the presenters for their preparation of the programs, and to the CLE Committee, Jim Jankowicz and Caroline Bruder, for the countless hours spent booking and coordinating the program and breakfast, lunch, dinner and snack breaks.

FREE ONLINE CLE OFFERINGS:

Several CLE outlets are offering free online/remote CLE due to COVID-19. These are:

IICLE: <https://www.iicle.com/elearn>

ISBA: <https://www.isba.org/covid19/10hoursfree>

GOLF OUTING AND ANNUAL MEETING: **UPDATE**

We are cancelling the May 15, 2020 golf outing due to the uncertainty surrounding whether such an event will be feasible at that time. We considered postponing until the fall, but given the logistics of planning the event for the fall and the potential for it being cancelled, it seemed most prudent to cancel for this year and apply the funds toward a terrific golf outing next year.

That said, we WILL conduct an annual meeting in May to comply with the bylaws of the Decatur Bar Association. We will hold this meeting on May 29, 2020 (the day previously set aside for the CLE Day) at 1:00 p.m. via ZOOM call. Please SAVE THE DATE of May 29, 2020 and plan to attend the Annual Meeting if you wish to vote. The Agenda, Slate of Officers, 2020-2021 Budget, 2019 Meeting Minutes and Meeting Notice will follow via email in the next few weeks.

Please note that we will hold a vote on the proposed dues increase at the virtual Annual Meeting. In the event we do not have a quorum (35 members), we will put this and other business to an email vote. Please plan to attend the ZOOM call if you are able.

We will honor the 2020 Special Honoree, Russell D. Hoerbert Pro Bono Award Recipient, and our 50-year members at the Annual Christmas Party, which will be held at the Country Club of Decatur on December 10, 2020. Please save the date for the Christmas Party, which will feature dinner, dessert and open bar to allow us to properly honor our distinguished award winners. The awards will be announced at a later date.

Law Week 2020 Events: Schedule and Cancellations

Abe Lincoln's Hat Expansion: We were very excited to have expanded the Abe Lincoln's Hat and canine demonstrations to include Judge Bollinger, Shane Mendenhall, and Regan Lewis going into local schools (Mt. Zion and Hope Academy) for presentations. Judge Bollinger had also agreed to hold two presentations of Abe Lincoln's Hat in his courtroom during Law Week. Unfortunately, due to school and court closures, we have had to postpone these presentations until the fall.

A big THANK YOU to Judge Bollinger, Shane, Regan, and MSO for their efforts on expanding this program. It is always a popular event and will be well received when it is able to be presented.

Mock Trial: The Mock Trial was full with 6th graders from John's Hill Magnet School. We were very fortunate to again have the use of Courtroom 3A for this program. We cancelled the program and plan to reschedule to the fall.

A big THANK YOU to Judge Coryell and Judge Webber for allowing the use of the courtroom. We will look forward to calling for volunteers and presenting the Mock Trial at a later date.

Other Law Week Events: The Executive Committee planned a food drive and a Law Week Social at Dougherty's Pub and Pins for May 1, 2020. This has been cancelled; however, the Executive Committee plans to organize the food drive again to allow the DBA to contribute to the WSOY Annual Food Drive, so please be on the lookout for this opportunity.

Mentorship Program Updates

The DBA is a member of the IL Supreme Court 2 Civility Mentorship Program. Mentors and mentees are paired up and received a maximum of 15 hours of CLE training and meetings during the 1-year program.

We are very excited to have 3 mentor/mentee pairs, and are organizing a remote informational session in April.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor or mentee, please contact Lindsey Shelton at decaturbarmentor@gmail.com. A “mentee” is defined as an attorney who is in their first five years of practice in Illinois. A “mentor” is someone with more than 5 years of practice.

A big THANK YOU to Lindsey Shelton for her tireless work on instituting and coordinating this project!

Tyler Technologies Updates:

Last week, we sent an email regarding Tyler Technologies’ update of the Macon County e-filing system. This update was scheduled to start March 20, 2020. Trainers from Tyler Technologies were scheduled to remain in the courthouse sharing space in the Attorney’s Lounge until mid-April. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Tyler team was ordered to return home to Texas. They will not be in the Attorney’s Lounge, and they are helping our Circuit Clerk’s office with issues remotely. The remote upload of Macon County’s years of files is taking place overnight and on weekends. If you are having difficulty e-filing, you are encouraged to mail in your filings and the Clerk will accept them. In-person filing is also available, although mail is preferred.

Winter Social Recap:

Our new social event, the Winter Social, at Decatur Brew Works was well attended. Guests enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere and chance to catch up with each other. We will be offering this event again next year in March.

Proposed Dues Increase in 2020 – to be voted on during Virtual Annual Meeting on May 29, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.

The last time the DBA increased dues was, as far as anyone can remember, about 15 years ago. Of course, the cost of living has increased since then and so have the costs of our events and CLE programming. To continue offering our excellent programming and events, we propose a dues increase from \$100/year to \$125/year. This is an incredible value.

The benefits of your membership each year:

- 16-18 hours of FREE CLE credit at an average of \$40/hr = \$640
- Annual Local CLE Day with 7+ credits and lunch: \$350
- Brown Bag Lunch (when not sponsored by a firm): \$10/head
- Annual Meeting and Golf Outing = \$100/head
- Christmas Party = \$50/head
- Corn Roast = \$50/head
- Social events throughout the year = \$50/head each
- Total: \$1,250/year

All of the above will continue to be provided for your annual contribution of \$125.

Per Article VI, Section 1 of the Decatur Bar Association Bylaws, the Board will bring this issue to a majority vote at our annual meeting.

We appreciate your membership and the excellent participation of the bench and bar in our events each year. We look forward to continuing to provide these benefits and more!

Attorney's Lounge and Website Improvements

Per your suggestion, the tables and chairs in the Attorney's Lounge were tightened up. We have been given the opportunity to some newer furniture for the lounge, but that has been postponed due to the COVID-19 closure of the courthouse. Other physical improvements will continue when the courthouse is fully open at a later date.

The website is currently being migrated to a new server, to be managed by Millikin's Performance Consulting, and updated. The website remains operational with limited functionality at this time. We will announce when it is fully re-vamped and operational.

In Memoriam

No memorials are scheduled at this time.

The bar association schedules memorials as appropriate for our recently passed members. Memorials are a unique and long-held tradition for the Decatur Bar Association. The memorial is an opportunity to make a public record of the deeds and legacies of our deceased members. All matters pending in the courthouse are suspended during the memorial. All members are strongly encouraged to attend, as the presence of the bench and bar is greatly appreciated by the family and loved ones of the honorees.