

NEW ROCHELLE BAR ASSOCIATION Newsletter

March 2016

www.nrbar.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Paula Johnson Kelly

Dear Colleagues and Friends;

We made it through another unusual winter, weather wise, and now we are into spring and more unusual weather. Aside from the weather, the country is now struggling through politics and primaries for the Presidential election in November. But I shall not go there or talk candidates or issues except to say this is an important time and election. We all have a stake in and will be affected by what happens in our country in this election. So we all should be involved in the process, if in no other way but by voting in the April 19th New York primary.

There is one area that I will ask for your commitment- that is to your Bar Association and its activities for our members and our community. Your elected Officers and Board members have worked diligently to continue to provide you with interesting and diverse activities, events and benefits. This calendar year's CLEs have, so far, explored the areas of landlord-tenant, immigration, banking and ethics. Already scheduled are classes in estate planning (April), family law (May) and criminal law (June). We are even looking further and scheduling classes for the fall that, we expect, will be of interest to a broad number of our members. Of course, should you have a topic of

interest that you would like us to explore, or a speaker you would like to hear give a CLE, please let us know. We welcome your suggestions.

Aside from CLEs, the next three months will find us busy holding events. Our Ninth Annual Court of Appeals Dinner on April 21st will honor the new Chief Judge Janet DiFiore, our former Westchester County District Attorney and the first Italian American to be appointed to that illustrious position. This is a popular event and we expect a full house, with a large percentage of attendees coming from the judiciary and other bar associations. There is still time if you want to reserve your seat. Please note, all seats will be reserved and no tickets will be sold at the door. For additional information, please see our website or contact Ron Zezima, Co-chair for the event, at rvzesq@aol.com.

April also sees the start-up of this year's award winning *Lawyer in the Classroom* Program. Ron Zezima has done another excellent job, teaming up with Corey Andrews, the 5th grade teacher from Ward School who designed the curriculum used to teach civics to 5th graders in New Rochelle Public Schools. If you have the time to devote to this worthwhile program, please contact Ron at rvzesq@aol.com.

Let us not forget April also starts softball season as our own Richard Grayson has again organized and coaches the New Rochelle Bar Association Softball team, a competitive softball team in the City of New Rochelle Softball League. The Bar Association has sponsored this team since 1985. All Bar Association members -- female and male, lawyers, non-lawyers and even judges -- are encouraged to sign up for the 2016 team, our 32nd year in the League. As in the past, the team plays one game per week, at night, from late April to mid-August. Come out and play –

or lend your support by coming out to watch a game or two and cheer on your colleagues.

In June we will have our Annual Meeting and Picnic at Five Islands Park. Here, we hold our election of officers and directors for the upcoming year, as well as award scholarship checks to deserving students chosen from New Rochelle High School, Iona College, College of New Rochelle, Monroe College and Pace University Law School. We also relax and enjoy friends, food and drink.

So there is much to look forward to as a member of our Bar Association. Please join us for one or all of these events. We welcome you!

Yours,

Paula

Paula Johnson Kelly



NRBA LAWYER IN THE CLASSROOM UPDATE

By Ronald V. Zezima, Esq



Thank you, members! Twenty-four attorneys have volunteered for our award-winning Lawyer in the Classroom Initiative. On April 11th, Past President Richard Sosis, a former teacher himself, and Corey Andrews, a 5th grade teacher at Ward Elementary School who has generously given of his free time over the past three years in helping to design our curriculum, will conduct a 2 credit CLE training session for our volunteers. The volunteer lawyers will review case materials used in the course to explain basic concepts of constitutional law and will learn how to appropriately convey the subject matter to fifth graders. The classroom presentations will take place on four consecutive weeks in the month of May. Last year, our program was enthusiastically received by over 800 students, each of whom received a Certificate of Completion signed by Dr. Brian Osborne, the Superintendent of Schools, and by our President, Paula Johnson Kelly. This project is approved for *Pro Bono* credit by the Office of Court Administration, We have room for a few more volunteers, so if you can spare an afternoon once a week and are looking for an interesting *Pro Bono* project, contact Ronald Zezima at rvzesq@aol.com.

NRBA SURROGATE'S DINNER

The NRBA held its annual Surrogate's dinner at Juliano's Caterers on Main Street in New Rochelle on January 12, 2016. The event welcomed and honored Westchester Surrogate Brandon R. Sall, who was appointed by Governor Cuomo on an interim basis last May, and who subsequently was elected to the position in November 2015. Special guests included Bronx County Surrogate Nelida Malave-Gonzalez and Rockland County Surrogate Thomas Walsh. All three Surrogates addressed the attendees, which included members from the local judiciary, business community and bar associations.



Westchester Surrogate Brandon R. Sall; Ronald Zezima, Esq., NRBA Board Member; Paula Johnson Kelly, NRBA President; Nelida Malave-Gonzalez, Bronx Surrogate; Thomas Walsh, Rockland Surrogate; and Hon. Jeffrey Levin, NRBA Vice-President

NRBA UPCOMING EVENTS

Our Ninth Annual Court of Appeals dinner, honoring



Chief Judge Janet DiFiore,

is scheduled for Thursday, **April 21, 2016**, at the **Fountainhead**, located at 55 Quaker Ridge Road, New Rochelle, NY 10804.

The keynote speaker will be **Hon. Sheila Abdus-Salaam**, Associate Justice of the Court of Appeals. Other special guests from New York State's highest Court will include **Hon. Michael J. Garcia**, **Hon. Jenny Rivera**, and retired judges **Hon. Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick**, **Hon. Victoria Graffeo** and **Hon. Jonathan Lippman**. Our own **Mayor Noam Bramson** will present the key to the City to the new Chief Judge. Details for this event can be found on the NRBA's website.

The NRBA Annual Meeting, election of officers, and Picnic is scheduled for June 9, 2016 at Five Islands Park, New Rochelle. Details will be sent via email and posted on the website.



MEMBERSHIP DUES & PAYMENT METHODS REMINDER

Annual NRBA Membership dues were due on January 1, 2016. Dues must be paid before a member can attend a CLE. Membership dues and event ticket purchases may now be done on the NRBA's website (<http://www.nrbar.org>) via PayPal.



NRBA BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPCOMING OPENINGS

The Nominating Committee for the NRBA Board of Directors and Officers has been convened and is now soliciting applications through next week for openings on the Board. If you are interested in serving on our Board, or if you would like to recommend someone to be considered, please contact Laurie J. Korngold at (914) 576-1904 or lkorngold@hotmail.com.



CONSENSUAL E-FILING AT THE WESTCHESTER COUNTY SURROGATE'S COURT

Starting March 21, 2016, the Westchester County Surrogate's Court is accepting, on a voluntary basis, electronic filings with respect to probate and administration proceedings, accountings and miscellaneous proceedings. Check out:

<http://nycourts.gov/courts/9jd/e-fileSurrogate.shtml> for more information.

PUBLIC NOTICE: JUDICIAL ELECTION COMMISSION SEEKING APPLICATIONS

The IJEQC for the Second, Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh and Thirteenth Judicial Districts of the Second Judicial Department is accepting questionnaires for judicial candidates who wish to have their qualifications reviewed for public election to the Supreme Court, County Court, Surrogate's Court, Family Court, New York City Civil Court, District Courts and City Courts. Information concerning the IJEQC in the Second Judicial Department is available at <http://www.ny-ijeqc.org>

Candidates who wish to be evaluated by an IJEQC in the Second Judicial Department should submit their questionnaire by **May 25, 2016**. Candidates must submit an *original* plus *fifteen* copies of the questionnaire and attachments and/or agenda to Vivian Dearie, Director, IJEQC, 335 Adams Street, Suite 2404, Brooklyn, NY 11201. For more information contact Ms. Dearie by phone at (347) 401-9248 or via email at vdearie@nycourts.gov.



CLE UPDATE

By *Hon. Jeffrey Levin*

So far this year we have held three informative and successful CLEs to packed houses of our members. Here is a recoup, in case you missed them.

LANDLORD & TENANT LAW- JANUARY 19, 2016

The first CLE of the New Year was sponsored by Sterling National Bank and Anthony Forgione. The program, *Landlord Tenant Law 101 Current Residential and Commercial Legal Issues*, was held at Sterling National Bank's 21 Scarsdale Road, Yonkers headquarters. Member, Michele Silverman Bedell of Silversons Realty baked biscotti.

The program was presented by Carl Finger, Esq., a partner at Finger & Finger in White Plains, Nancy Marrone, Esq., of Legal Services of the Hudson Valley and New Rochelle City Court Judge Anthony Carbone.

A total of 57 attorneys attended. Principal speaker Carl Finger appreciated the opportunity to appear before the NRBA. He wrote after the CLE, "*Thanks so much for having me. I really appreciated the opportunity. I hope everyone enjoyed and took one or two nuggets away from the seminar. I made it about 1/3 of the way through the presentation so if you're interested there is room to complete it at a later CLE.*" Finger also included with the email his PowerPoint presentation in a pdf format, which was distributed to the NRBA members. Mr. Finger has been invited to continue of the program in October or November.

The extra fresh food platters left over after the CLE, three platters of sandwiches and a bag of assorted snacks, were donated to the Open Arms Shelter for Men at 86 East Post Road in White Plains (914-

948-5044). The men expressed their gratitude for the donation of the food on a frigid wintery night.

IMMIGRATION LAW CLE- FEBRUARY 23, 2016

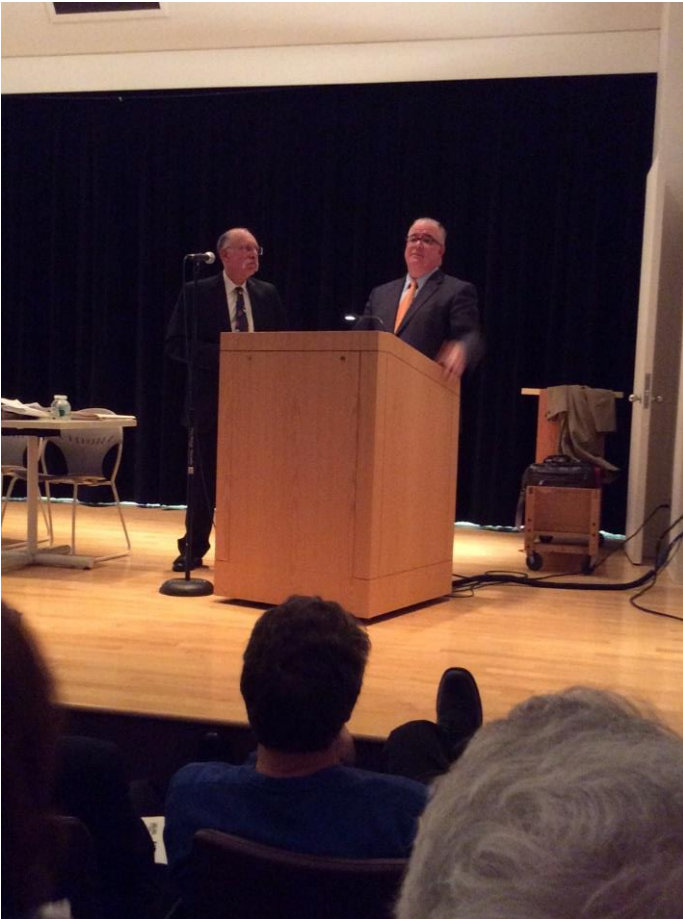
Once again our friends at Sterling National Bank and Anthony Forgione sponsored the NRBA CLE *The Border: Friend or Foe*. The program was presented by the very entertaining, Joseph A. Sena, Esq., whose White Plains immigration law practice takes him throughout the nation.

A total of 44 attorneys attended this. Mr. Sena's program was very well received by the NRBA members. His program included a far ranging discussion of the legal aspects of the restrictions on immigration that the various presidential candidates have been discussing. The legal implications and realities versus the rhetoric led to a lively question and answer dialog.

BANKING & ETHICS- MARCH 14, 2016

This CLE titled *Maintaining The Integrity of Your Escrow Account and Your Law License, Including A Discussion of the New Rules for Attorney Disciplinary Matters, Effective July 1, 2016*, was presented by Joseph Ruhl, Esq. and Richard Grayson, Esq. at the Ossie Davis Theater in the New Rochelle Public Library.

A total of 92 NRBA attorney members attended and received CLE ethic credits. Joe Ruhl and Orange Bank & Trust sponsored the cost of the venue, the CLE materials and most sufficiently catered the dinner and refreshments. Realtor and baker, Michele Silverman Bedell baked cookies and biscotti. The CLE Committee was helped by many volunteers with the food and refreshments, the sign in-out tables, distributing the CLE materials, and the distribution of the CLE attendance certificates.



Speakers Richard Grayson and Joseph Ruhl presenting the ethics CLE on March 15, 2016 at The New Rochelle Public Library.

UPCOMING CLE PROGRAMS:

April 11, 2016: For NRBA members who have volunteered for the *Lawyer in the Classroom* program, there will be a training and Education Law CLE presented by NRBA past president Richard Sosis, Esq. and Ward School 5th grade teacher, Corey Andrews. The CLE is being held at William B. Ward School on April 11, 2016. Ron Zezima, the program coordinator, would welcome any additional volunteers to participate in this NRBA program that has been recognized and acclaimed by the New York State Bar Association.

April 19, 2016: Patricia A. Bave and Rachel Ciccone, of Kommer Bave & Ollman LLP in New Rochelle, will lead a discussion titled, *Medicaid as a Creditor: Spousal Refusal or Divorce, Recoveries, Assignments, Liens and Decedent's Estates* regarding developments and practices in Elder Law and Estates and Trusts to be held at Sterling National Bank. This CLE program will be of interest and useful to any attorney representing aging and elderly clients, and all of us who may have these issues come up in our private lives.

May 17, 2016: Hon. Janet Malone, Hon. Gerald Grossman and Gerald A. DeFeo, CPA, will lead a discussion on Family Law and Court Procedures at the Hampshire Country Club in Mamaroneck. The CLE will be sponsored by Brett Forman, Senior Vice President for First Nationwide Title Agency, LLC, 220 East 42nd Street, Suite 3105, New York, New York 10017. Mr. Forman can be contacted by at 917-837-6358 and at Bforman@firstnat.com.

June 14, 2016: Civil rights and criminal justice attorney Mayo Bartlett, Esq. of White Plains will be the lead speaker at this CLE that will discuss current issues involving the penal and criminal procedure laws. The CLE will be held at the Larchmont Temple in Larchmont. It will be the first of two CLEs on aspects of criminal law. Brett Forman and First Nationwide Title Agency, LCC, will once again sponsor this CLE.

September 20, 2016: This criminal law CLE, to be held at the New Rochelle Public Library, is being presented in conjunction with My Brother's Keeper of New Rochelle. Among the topics and issues being considered is the need to raise the age of criminality in New York. Presenters are expected to be Judge Helen M. Blackwood, Councilman Jared Rice, Esq. Allison Lake of the Westchester Children's Association and Christian Philemon of the Youth Shelter Program of Westchester.

2015 CLE ACCREDITED PROVIDER YEAR-END REPORT

The New Rochelle Bar Association is required to file at the end of each year a CLE Accredited Provider Year-End Report and a 2-page Activity Table. Included in the report for the 2015 calendar year was a summary of the 10 continuing legal education programs that were presented by the NRBA and its sponsors. We were pleased to show the total attendance at our 10 programs was 449. Most of the NRBA members attended at least one CLE program.

CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION NEW YORK ACCREDITED PROVIDERS PROGRAM

From time to time the NYS Continuing Legal Education Board offers information sessions, for New York CLE Accredited Providers, during which the NYCLEB goes over the New York CLE Rules and Regulations as they relate to Accredited Providers, and answers any questions that the providers may have. As the NRBA CLE Chair, I will attend a session in White Plains on April 7, 2016 at the Judicial Institute on the campus of Pace Law School. Please feel free to email to me your comments if you have suggestions for the discussion with the NYCLEB.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

The CLE Committee welcomes and would appreciate hearing your suggestions for programs and speakers. The NRBA could not present 10 CLEs each year without the support of our sponsors. Sterling National Bank, Orange Bank and Trust Co., First Nationwide Title Agency, LLC, Silversons Realty and TitleVest made it possible for the NRBA to continue to present these programs free to our members. Please consider using the services of our sponsors.

On behalf of the NRBA CLE Committee, I would thank two of our many volunteers, Andrew M. Spatz, Esq. and Paula Johnson Kelly. Their efforts have been indispensable in the successful planning of this year's CLEs.

Yours,
Jeffrey Levin

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING CLEs:

The NRBA will be offering the following CLE programs:

1. *Lawyer in the Classroom*, April 11, 2016 by Richard Sosis, Esq. and Corey Andrews, at William B. Ward School, New Rochelle.
2. *Medicaid as a Creditor: Spousal Refusal or Divorce, Recoveries, Assignments, Liens and Decedent's Estates*, April 19, 2016 by Patricia Bave, Esq. and Rachel Ciccone, Esq. at Sterling National Bank in Yonkers.
3. *Family Law and Court Procedures*, May 17, 2016 by Honorable Janet Malone, Hon. Gerald Grossman and Gerald A. DeFeo at Hampshire Country Club in Mamaroneck.
4. *Criminal Law*, June 14, 2016 by Mayo Bartlett, Esq., at Larchmont Temple in Larchmont.

Expect to receive advance notices with particulars by e-mail for these and future CLEs. Information will also be posted at www.nrbar.org.

UPCOMING CLES:

For information on and reservations for our CLEs, or suggestions for future CLE topics, please contact

Jeffrey L. Levin, Esq. at

jeffrey.levin.law@gmail.com

MEMBER NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Parker Lucy Grayson, granddaughter of Karen and NRBA member **Richard Grayson**, was born on January 16, 2016 to Aimee and Adam Grayson. Parker is a fifth generation New York/San Francisco Giants fan despite the fact that she lives in southern California.

Congratulations to NRBA member **Gregory Varian**, who is the 2016 honoree of the New Rochelle Democratic City Committee on April 10, 2016 at the VIP Country Club, New Rochelle.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

Michele Silverman Bedell, of

Elizabeth Connolly, Esq.



OUR WEBSITE: www.nrbar.org

With our website members can obtain information concerning our Bar, its activities, and general legal and community news. We welcome feedback.

This Newsletter can be downloaded from our website. Thanks for helping keep NRBA green.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

For an up-to-date listing of scheduled events, including CLEs and dinner meetings, kindly view existing event postings on our website: www.nrbar.org.

For reservations for any of our upcoming dinners or events please contact Treasurer **Patricia Bave, Esq.**, 145 Huguenot St., Suite 402, New Rochelle, NY 10801, (914) 633-7400.

Getting Published

We welcome your submissions! All submissions should be sent to Mark Griffin, Editor, at mark.griffin@gmail.com. Please mark the subject as NRBA news. Articles between 500 to 1200 words should be sent in Word format. Photographs should be sent as jpeg attachments. Authors should include a short biographical statement with their articles, which must be spell checked, cite checked and in blue book form. Opinions expressed in any article printed in the NRBA newsletter are solely those of the author(s) and are not positions taken by the NRBA. Materials submitted allow NRBA limited copyright and full permission to reprint the article in the NRBA newsletter without additional consent.

