

# Dougherty Bar Bulletin

*A Publication of the Dougherty Circuit Bar Association*

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## President's Message

By Gail S. Pursel

At the State Bar's Annual Meeting in June, the Dougherty Circuit Bar Association was presented with the Award of Merit in its size category. Awards of Merit are given to voluntary bar associations for their dedication to serving their communities and to improving relations among local lawyers. Thank you to the many members who worked so hard this year on behalf of our Association, including John Stephenson for his Law Day leadership, Heather Lanier for organizing our meetings, Cheryl Griffin for invaluable service on our Executive Committee, Sarah Kjellin for serving as President of our local Young Lawyers Division, and Judge Gordon Zeese for publishing our newsletter and for assisting wherever else needed. Countless others volunteered for various activities during the year, as well, and you will see their names throughout this newsletter. Congratulations to all the members of the Dougherty Circuit Bar Association

whose many efforts enabled our Bar to be recognized as one of the outstanding local bar associations in the State of Georgia.

At this same meeting, outgoing State Bar President Bryan Cavan presented Greg Fullerton with a plaque in appreciation for his 18 years of service on the Board of Governors (see photo below). Tommy Duck also received the YLD Award of Achievement for Outstanding Service to the Public. Congratulations, Greg and Tommy, for these well-deserved awards.



## Dr. Charles Bullock, June Meeting Speaker

Dr. Charles Bullock, who holds the prestigious Richard B. Russell Professor of Political Science Chair at the University of Georgia and is one of the country's most respected elections scholars, was the featured speaker at the Dougherty Circuit Bar Association's June 30th meeting at the Hilton Garden Inn. He explained the many factors and trends likely to affect the outcome of the upcoming primary and general elections both nationally and in Georgia.

Also speaking at the meeting was Norman Zoller. Mr. Zoller is the coordinating attorney for the State Bar's new military legal services program to connect veterans and service members to lawyers to handle their legal problems. He encouraged our members to help with this effort as volunteer lawyers outside the Atlanta area are in short supply. (Please see an article regarding this new program on page 2).

## Courthouse Security Notice

Please be advised that all persons who enter the main entrance of the courthouse, including attorneys, will not be allowed to bypass the metal detectors and all items brought into the courthouse will have to be scanned. County employees will only be allowed to bypass the metal detectors and scanning if their county employee identification is displayed to the Dougherty County Sheriff's Department employees at the front door. If you should have any further questions or concerns regarding this policy, please contact the Dougherty County Sheriff's Dept.

## Dougherty Bar Seeks Speakers for "Law at the Library"

During the past two Law Day celebrations, the Dougherty Circuit Bar Association, Dougherty County Public Library, and the Dougherty County Law Library have collaborated to present legal information seminars at the Central Library Branch. These seminars have been extremely popular, and Central Library has received many telephone calls requesting additional seminars.

We would like to begin offering these seminars every other month, on a Monday evening at 6:00 p.m. We are looking for attorney speakers who are willing to give a general presentation on a legal topic of interest to the community. The presentation usually lasts 30 to 45 minutes, followed by 15 to 20 minutes of questions and answers. The seminar speaker will not give legal advice, but will present helpful information on a legal topic.

In the past, our seminars have dealt with topics such as family law, estate planning, materialmen's liens, and Internet Safety & the Dangers of Sexting. According to the State Bar of Georgia's 2007-2008 Georgia Legal Needs study, the most desired legal information involved the following problems:

Consumer (e.g., abusive collection, oppressive contract terms, disputes over amount owed, and the like);

Housing (e.g., utility issues, vermin, home and housing repairs, homelessness);

Health (e.g., disputes with insurance company or provider over charges, refusal of provider to accept Medicaid, invasion of privacy, access to mental health services, denial of emergency care, and problems with nursing homes);

Employment (e.g., discrimination, unemployment benefits, wage claims);

Public Benefits (e.g., difficulty in applying, denials);

Education (e.g., school discipline, poor quality, special needs students); and

Family (e.g., child support, domestic violence, visitation, custody).

Other topics are welcome as

well.

If you would like to participate in "Law at the Library," please contact Laureen Kelly, Law Library Manager, at 431-2133 or Ashley Moore, Dougherty County Public Library Assistant Director, at 420-3230.

## In Memoriam, Judge Richard Hodge

Longtime Dougherty Bar member Richard Hodge passed away at his home on June 16. Judge Hodge is survived by his wife, Linda Stieb Hodge; his son, Matthew M. Fox; his daughter-in-law, Julie Strickland Fox; his grandchildren, Sarah Camille, Matthew, and William Hodge Fox; his sister, Sandra Hodge Farnsworth and his brother-in-law, David; his niece, Mary Beth Farnsworth Oliver; and his nephew, James Farnsworth. Judge Hodge was preceded in death by his parents, Clyde and Mary Hodge.

Judge Hodge served for over sixteen years as a U.S. Magistrate in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Georgia. He considered his colleagues in the court system to be extended family, especially his law clerks, Alicia Brown and Maria Dickerson.

Judge Hodge graduated from Albany High School, Darton College, Georgia Southwestern State University, and Mercer University School of Law. He served four years in the United States Air Force as a White House Communications Specialist. Although he was a member of many organiza-

tions, his great passions were family, friends, fishing, boating, biking, Georgia football, and car racing.

Judge Hodge was known for treating all people with dignity, and he will be greatly missed. The Dougherty Bar extends sincere sympathy to his family.

## State Bar's New Program Assists the Military

State Bar of Georgia President Bryan Cavan recently announced the appointment of Norman Zoller as the coordinating attorney for the State Bar's new military legal services program in support of veterans and service members. "At a time when our country is making increased commitments of men and women in uniform both at home and abroad, the State Bar wants to do all we can to supplement the excellent work provided by military judge advocates on active duty and in the National Guard and Reserves," Cavan said. "We think this is a place where the private Bar can help as well, and we intend to do our part by providing professional legal services on a reduced fee or on a fully pro bono basis."

Jeffrey Bramlett, immediate past President of the State Bar, who first advanced the idea of the military legal services program, said, "We are pleased that this program is underway. It will match military service members and veterans needing legal help with volunteer lawyers who are willing to provide such services. We already have nearly 700 lawyers who have said that they will help with this important program, and we are happy to have Mr. Zoller serving as the new coordinating attorney, given his extensive administrative, military, and legal background."

Mr. Zoller has devoted the majority of his 34-year legal career to public service. In 2008 he retired as Circuit Executive for the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals, where he worked for many

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**Military Services Program  
(con't.)**

years. Previously, he managed the Hamilton County, Ohio courts for nearly a decade. Mr. Zoller holds bachelor's and master's degrees in public administration from the University of Cincinnati and a law degree from Northern Kentucky State University. He is admitted to practice in Georgia and Ohio. An Army veteran, Mr. Zoller served almost seven years on active duty in the field artillery, including two tours in Vietnam, first with Special Forces and then with the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division. He also served 15 years with the National Guard and Army Reserve as a judge advocate officer.

**Ask a Lawyer Day  
A Success**

On May 20, the Dougherty Bar participated in the Ask a Lawyer Day sponsored by the State Bar's General Practice & Trial Section and the Georgia Legal Services program. This free legal clinic, which was held in 11 cities throughout Georgia, was aimed at providing help to low income families and senior citizens, primarily in the areas of consumer law, wills, and family law.

Thank you to the following local attorneys who helped to make this event a success: Glenn Booker, Jimmie Brown, Walter Burt, Al Corriere, Gail Drake, Tommy Duck, Greg Fullerton, Michael Hall, Tom Ledford, Bill Mitchell, John Moorhead, Al Newton, Rudolph Patterson, Mark Pickett, Ralph Rodgers, Bill Underwood, Trey Underwood, and Joe Vaknin. Thank you also to Cheryl Griffin and Lorilynn Daniel of Georgia Legal Services, who worked tirelessly during the day to coordinate the appointments with the lawyers.

The State Bar awarded certificates to all of the Ask a Lawyer volunteers. At right is a photograph of Dougherty Bar President Gail Pursel presenting a certificate to John Moor-

**Attorney Spotlight:  
William Davis**



William "Will" Davis recently joined the Albany office of Georgia Legal Services. Will is a bilingual lawyer who will work closely with low-income Spanish-speaking families and individuals, focusing on domestic violence, consumer issues, and employment issues. Will is here as a part of a three-year grant from the Goizueta Foundation to address legal problems of low-income Latinos.

Will was raised in Cobb County,

Georgia. He graduated from the University of Georgia in May 2006 with a Bachelor's Degree in Spanish. While at the University, Will lived and studied in Spain for five months. He then attended law school at the University of Mississippi, receiving his law degree in May 2009. During law school, Will studied abroad at Cambridge University, where he took courses in international business law and international commercial litigation. Will was also very active in the Ole Miss Moot Court Board, serving as Trial Advocacy Chair during his third year. He participated in many appellate and trial competitions throughout law school and received numerous awards related to same. Will also received a Dean's Leadership Award, chosen by his peers as one of three students who was dedicated to the law school and to his fellow classmates through his various activities and leadership roles. Welcome, Will, to Albany and to the Dougherty Circuit Bar Association!

*"Attorney Spotlight" is a new column in the Dougherty Bar Bulletin. It will feature a recently joined member of the Association. If you would like to submit a photo and information about a recently admitted member, please contact Judge Gordon Zeese at 229-430-4280.*

head during the Bar's June 30 meeting, as well as photographs of a few of the volunteers on the day of the event.



## Dougherty Bar Celebrates Law Day

The Dougherty Circuit Bar Association kicked off over a month-long series of Law Day events on April 5, 2010, when Albany Mayor Willie Adams signed a Proclamation declaring May 1, 2010 as Law Day in the City of Albany. The Proclamation called on citizens, schools, and businesses to use Law Day to dedicate themselves to preserve and strengthen the rule of law. Law Day Chairman John Stephenson and Dougherty Bar member Alfreda Sheppard attended the signing ceremony.

On April 21, the Dougherty Bar partnered with Darton College to host a Law Day forum for its students. Dougherty Juvenile Court Judge Herbie Solomon, Dougherty Chief Assistant District Attorney Chris Cohilas, and local attorney John Moorhead served as panelists. They spoke to the students regarding this year's Law Day theme, "Law in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Enduring Traditions, Emerging Challenges."

A similar forum was also held on April 21 at Albany State University. Speakers included District Attorney Greg Edwards and local attorneys Kim Westley, Andrea Ewings, and Nikki Bonner.

On April 23, Dougherty Superior Court Judge Steve Goss hosted a Law Day courthouse tour for approximately 100 students from local middle and high schools. During this half-day tour, judges from various courts (including state, probate, juvenile, and magistrate) made presentations and answered students' questions. Representatives from the Public Defender's office and the District Attorney's office also met with the students. The Dougherty Bar provided each student a Law Day bookmark from the American Bar Association.

The Dougherty Bar also sponsored an essay contest as a part of its

Law Day events, inviting all of the local middle and high schools to participate. The students were asked to write about this year's Law Day theme. Six winners (three at the middle school level and three at the high school level) were given cash prizes, medals, and pocket Constitutions.

The Dougherty Bar also took nominations for a Liberty Bell award, which recognizes a person who has promoted better understanding of the rule of law, encouraged a greater respect for the law and the courts, stimulated a sense of civic responsibility, and contributed to good government and the community. This year's winner was Cpl. Bob James of the Dougherty County Police Department, who was instrumental in the formation of a police canine unit in Albany.

The Dougherty Bar held its second annual Law Day banquet on April 28 at the Hilton Garden Inn. The Honorable Louis Sands of the U. S. District Court for the Middle District of Georgia was the keynote speaker. The Bar invited the essay contest and Liberty Bell winners to the banquet and presented them with their awards at that time. At this banquet, the Bar was also privileged to hold the induction ceremony for Albany High School's newly-formed chapter of the Georgia Law Honor Society, a program of the State Bar of Georgia. Nine students were inducted into the Society during the banquet. Judge Sands assisted with the induction, presenting the students with their certificates, and the Bar gave each student an engraved paperweight.

On May 10, the Bar partnered with the Dougherty Public Library to present a "Law at the Library" seminar, a Law Day event that the Bar began last year. District Attorney Greg Edwards presented this year's seminar, which was free and open to the public, at the library's main branch. Given this year's Law Day theme, Mr. Edwards focused on Internet safety.

In addition, during the month of May, the Dougherty Bar's Young Lawyers Division sponsored a clothing drive as a part of our Bar's Law Day celebration. The YLD collected new and gently

used professional clothing, which was given to residents of Graceway (a local substance abuse facility for women) and The Anchorage (a local substance abuse facility for men).

Thank you to the following people and organizations, without whom a successful Law Day celebration would not have been possible: Judge Herbie Solomon, Chris Cohilas, John Moorhead, Greg Edwards, Kim Westley, Andrea Ewings, Nikki Bonner, Judge Louis Sands, Judge Steve Goss, Judge John Salter, Judge Baxter Howell, Judge Nancy Stephenson, Judge Willie Weaver, Dougherty District Attorney's Office, Dougherty Public Defender's Office, 911 Call Center, John Stephenson, Cheryl Griffin, Laureen Adams, Heather Lanier, Sarah Kjellin, Judge Gordon Zeese, Alfreda Sheppard, Chris Warren, Nyota Tucker (Albany State University), Georgina Trulock (Darton College), Gloria Anderson (Dougherty Superior Court), and Ashley Moore (Dougherty Public Library).

For photographs from this year's Law Day events, please see the last two pages of this newsletter. And remember, Law Day 2011 will be here before we know it! Charles Lamb will serve as the Bar's Law Day Chairman next year, so if you are interested in assisting, please give him a call.

### Save the Date

**The next meeting of the  
Dougherty Circuit Bar  
Association will be on  
August 25 at noon.**



