



Denton County Lawyer

Volume 122, Issue 5

October 2012

www.dentonbar.com

Mentor Program Launches

By Virginia A. Moore, Attorney at Law; www.vamlawfirm.com

DCBBA kicked off its inaugural *Transitions to Practice Mentoring Group* with an orientation meeting of 28 participants at Oakmont Country Club on September 14th.

Mentors represent a wide variety of legal fields and years in practice. The mentor's introductory comments were universal in their pride in the profession and love of the law. A close second was their acknowledgement of Denton County as a collegial community of lawyers who take the time to get to know and support one another, even when representing clients on opposite sides.

Mentees competed to learn obscure facts about the mentors. Dawnelle Thomas, won Club Tickets to the UNT Mean Green Homecoming Game donated by Scott Alagood. Amanda Dickson lost the final tiebreaker and took home a Starbucks gift card as the consolation prize.

Participants came from diverse pasts, including a State Champion

Twirler (no, it wasn't Bill Wood even though he was surprisingly proficient at twirling), a cupcake aficionado, a person who slept through an earthquake, a sports blogger, a long-time fast pitch player, a former party DJ, and more than one cowboy with dude ranch experience.

Mentors

- Scott Alagood, Alagood & Cartwright
- Travis Biggs, Biggs Law Firm
- Danny Boon, The Boon Law Firm
- Lee Ann Breeding, Law Office of Lee Ann Breeding
- Ruth Brock, Law Office of Ruth Brock
- Mike Gregory, Gregory Family Law
- Virginia Hammerle, Hammerle & Finley
- Brent Hill, Hill & Hill
- Dick Kelsey, Kelsey, Kelsey & Hickey
- Gary Kollmeier, Law Office of Gary Kollmeier
- Fon Laughlin, Laughlin Law & Title
- Virginia Moore, Virginia A. Moore & Associates
- Dena Reecer, Shelton & Reecer

- Bill Wood, Wood, Thacker & Weatherly

Mentees

- Scott Bodkin, Tulane/Northwestern LLM-Tax
- Chrysandra Bowen, Texas Wesleyan School of Law
- Rick Cook, Texas Wesleyan School of Law
- Amanda Dickson, Texas Wesleyan School of Law
- Robert Hamm, University of Tulsa College of Law
- Bonny Haynes, SMU School of Law
- Josh Kowert, SMU School of Law
- Marci Martinez, Arizona State University College of Law
- Tom Stephenson, Vanderbilt Law School
- Dawnelle Thompson, Texas Wesleyan School of Law
- Robbie Torrey, Texas Wesleyan School of Law
- Adam Whitten, Texas Tech University School of Law
- Steve Wilson, St. Mary's School of Law
- Sharon Wilson, Oklahoma City University School of Law



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From the President

We've all had cases in which, after a heated Courtroom battle or even a protracted settlement conference, we catch ourselves trying to figure out who on the other side of the case is the lawyer and who is the client.

I appreciate attorneys who care about their clients and make impassioned arguments on their behalf. Imparting a certain level of conviction during those arguments, or even during negotiations with a mediator or directly with the opposing attorney, can lend credibility to the sometimes tenuous position the client is taking.

That said, I still remember my 7th grade speech teacher's advice. Helping us prepare for and argue our first debate (I think it was for or against nuclear power taking into account the recent 3 Mile Island tragedy—yes, I am actually that old), she pointed out that a good advocate can argue EITHER side of ANY position with equal conviction and passion, all while

staying detached enough to assess how that argument is going and make adjustments along the way.

Great advice that puts forth smart concepts. First, the theory that there has never been a piece of paper cut so thin that it doesn't have two sides. In other words, just about every case—every client's position, story, interest, whatever you want to call it—has two sides. A lawyer's job is to identify the client's interest or position and make a well-reasoned argument in favor of it (or, maybe better yet, talk the client off the ledge if the position is simply untenable).

Next, while some level of conviction is beneficial, a lawyer should maintain a professional detachment from the client's position or problem. We should help the client along, and eventually off of, the emotional roller coaster on which they're riding.

I practice family law, so it's usually an "emotional" roller coaster. For



Duane L. Coker, President

those of you who practice in other areas, maybe the roller coaster is financial or temporal—a waste of time and energy for your client.

Regardless, we should run the roller coaster with an ultimate goal of stopping it. We should not get in the car with our client and go for a ride.

Much of the conflict I've had with counsel in cases over the years has been because it's hard to work a case with someone who's flying by at 80 miles per hour, hands in the air, screaming at the top of their lungs! Someone who's caught up in the

President continued page 7.

DCBA Officers

President, *Duane L. Coker*
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Dena A. Reecer
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CLE Director, *Julia Kerestine*

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Leah Harbour, Brent Hill, Fon Laughlin, Andrew M. Lloyd, Virginia Moore, Jill O'Connell

DCBA Committee Chairs

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CLE Committee, *Julia Kerestine*
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Pro Bono, *Cynthia Burkett and Vicki Isaacks*

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Planning Committee,
Duane L. Coker
Local Rules, *Theodore D. Ogilvie*

DCBA Sections

- Trial Lawyer's Association
- Family Law Section
- Greater Denton County Young Lawyers Association
- Real Estate, Trust, and Probate Law Section
- Criminal Law

DCBA Membership **Your DCBA Membership includes**

- Free and discounted CLE programs
- Monthly luncheon & happy hour
- Networking opportunities
- Listing on the bar website, including photo, two practice areas, and a link to your website.

For more information see our website: www.dentonbar.com.

Community Outreach

2012 Adoption Day

Friday, Nov. 9 Denton County Court House, 2nd Floor



- We are accepting donations, sponsors, and volunteers.
- Visit www.facebook.com/DentonCountyAdoptionDay for more information.

Have you liked us yet? ➔

To show your support and change a child's life, please contact Tiffany Haertling at thaertling@mac.com or 940-391-9141.



TEXAS LAWYERS FOR TEXAS VETERANS VETERAN LEGAL CLINICS

3rd Thursday of Every Other Month
Starting September 20, 2012
9 A.M. -- 11 A.M.

Texas Workforce Commission
1300 Teasley Ln., Denton, TX 76205

This is an advice only clinic open to all honorably discharged veterans, regardless of their income status. The clinic works closely with Legal Aid of Northwest Texas, who is providing support staff to help with intake as well as malpractice coverage to the volunteers while participating at the clinic. We are always looking for volunteer attorneys to help advise clients, non-attorney volunteers to help with intake, as well as donations for coffee and light snacks for those volunteering. Legal primers will be available for attorneys to help answer general questions on areas of law they might not regularly practice in. This is a great opportunity to help give back to those who have served our country, and we hope you can volunteer and support our veterans.

DCAP Kick-Off Party Sets Stage for Continued Success

By Duane L. Coker, www.cokerlegal.com.

Continuing a long-standing, extremely successful partnership, the Denton County Bar Association and the Denton County Alternative Dispute Resolution Program held their annual DCAP Sign Up Party at Patrizio's in Highland Village on August 30th, 2012.

More than 75 lawyers and guests attended the party and DCAP successfully signed 58 lawyers to volunteer up to 4 days of their time to the mediation program during the upcoming year.

According to Angie Rhodes, the program's executive director, "The night was an incredible success! Once again the Denton legal community stepped up and we were able to fill the majority of our mediation days for the next year."

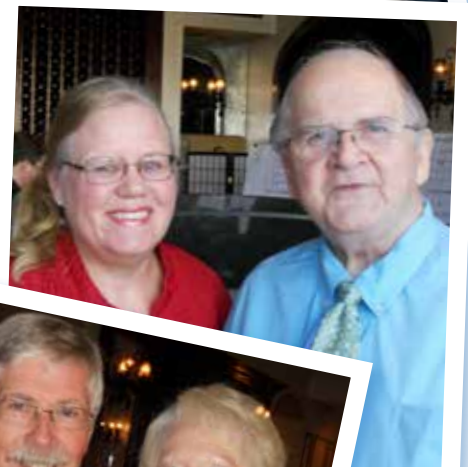
Rhodes said that there are still open slots for volunteers even though, in the weeks since the event, more attorneys have signed up to donate their time to the program.

During the dinner, volunteers, and their guests, enjoyed the fine food at Patrizio's, some great wines, and a night of socializing with peers. Door prizes were given out throughout the evening, culminating in a \$500 gift certificate for a trip on Southwest Airlines.

"One of our nicest events so far," said David Bouschor, president of DCAP. "A great turnout and good time with friends and colleagues. Glad we were able to find such a nice venue right here in Denton County."

DCAP services litigants in our county by providing, through a contract with Denton County, free and low cost mediations services. The groundbreaking program, which has received numerous statewide awards, is made possible through the generosity of the lawyers, who volunteer their time and expertise helping people reach out-of-court resolutions to their problems.





From the Social Committee

Christmas Tree Lighting

Join us for
pre-lighting
festivities at
Gerhard's
222 W. Hickory
Denton

November 30, 5:00 ~ 8:00 pm

*The Denton County Young Lawyers Association
invites all
November 2012 licensees of the Texas Bar Association
who are interested in practicing law in Denton County
to participate in a local Swearing in Ceremony.*

*The Ceremony will be presided over by
Denton County District Judge Bruce McFarling,
and a Reception with local judges and attorneys will follow.*

Friends and family members of the licensees are welcome.

*Denton County Courts Building
1450 E. McKinney Street
Denton, Texas 76209-4524
Thursday, November 8, 2012 @ 3:30
Reception Immediately Following.*

Please RSVP by November 6, 2012 to Sarah Hoffman at sarah@springer-lyle.com.



UNT Tailgate with DCBA!

Members are free. We are purchasing 40 sideline tickets and it is a first come first serve basis. We will have the tailgate starting at 2:00 p.m. Come for food, beverages and FUN! Kickoff is at 4:00 p.m. If you want to tailgate but not go to the game that is great too! Just let us know and feel free to bring a guest!



UNT Tailgate

Host: The Denton Bar Association

Phone: 940-320-1500

When: Saturday, November 3 at 4:00 PM

Where: Apogee Stadium
Denton, TX 76201

Fifth Annual Skeet & Meet Offered Fun and Festivities!

By Jill O'Connell, Attorney; www.oconnellfirm.com.

The 5th Annual Skeet & Meet was on September 15th and was graciously hosted again by Brent and Gina Hill in Pilot Point.

Everybody had a great time and lots of fun outdoor adventures! The kids looked like they had a great time swimming in the pool and sitting in the hot tub. They had a diving contest that Travis Biggs, Andrew Lloyd, and Devon DuPuy emceed and “judged” for everyone’s amusement.

The weather was perfect, and

everybody who wanted to shoot a gun or bow had the chance to do it. Brent Hill helped everybody at the shooting range take a chance at shooting either a shotgun or with one of the bows. He was even heard saying that “girls are usually better shots than boys.”

We held a raffle as well to raise money for this year’s Adoption Day, and we managed to raise nearly \$400 for this worthy cause. Duane Coker graciously donated a Charles Daly 12-gauge shotgun as the raffle prize, which Jackson Graham won.

Some of the attendees were Judge Robert Ramirez, Ted Ogilvie and family, Andrew and Inga Lloyd and kids, Travis Biggs, Angie Rhoades, Mike Upshaw, Jill Jester and her husband, Kelly Robb and husband, Elizabeth Nielsen, and Cynthia Burkett and her family.

Big thanks to the Denton County Archers who provided bows and helped throughout the entire event in the shooting range area.



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emotional ups and downs, crazy highs and lows, and mind-blowing twists and turns that their client is going through. And, much of the poor client service I’ve seen over the years has occurred with the same roller coaster-

riding attorneys who have lost the emotional detachment necessary to properly assess the situation, use good judgment, and get their clients off the ride.

Unfortunately, I’ve not always exactly

followed my 7th grade teacher’s advice. I’ve hopped on the ride, too, albeit not very often and not for very long. I find standing on the platform a much more relaxing and satisfying experience. I also find that I can see the end of the ride better from there!

From Our Sponsors

Report your PRO BONO Hours!

DCBA is known for its active volunteers in the legal community—YOU.

Tracking Pro Bono hours shows lawyers' good deeds; provides testimony for legislative sessions; and improves our reputation.

Log your hours at www.texasbar.com/mybarpage.

Let's make DCBA the best local bar in the State!

First State Bank's Trust Services
*can help provide the security
our future generations need.*

**Wills & Trusts | Guardianships
Investment Management & Custodial Services
Estate Administration | Retirement Accounts**

Carol Christian, Vice President



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TUESDAY OCTOBER 30TH

5:30 - 7:30 PM

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Announcements and Events

November Bar Luncheon

Date:

Friday, November 2

Location:

Oakmont Country Club

Program:

*Domestic Violence: Law, Policy
and Practice*

Speakers:

*Donna Bloom
Denton County Friends of the
Family, www.dcfdf.org*

December Bar Luncheon

Date:

Friday, December 7

Location:

Oakmont Country Club

Program:

To be Announced

Speakers:

To be Announced

Monthly Meetings

Collaborative Professionals

DCCP will meet at **12:00 PM** on Tuesday, **November 6**, at Oakmont Country Club, 1901 Oakmont Dr. in Corinth.

Family Law

Family Law will meet at **12:00 PM** on Thursday, **October 18**, in the Central Jury Room, 1450 E. McKinney St. in Denton.

Paralegals

DCPA will meet at **12:00 PM** on Thursday, **October 25**, at Oakmont Country Club, 1901 Oakmont Dr. in Corinth.

GDCYL

GDCYLA will gather for their monthly meetings on the first Thursday of each month. Contact Brook Stuntebeck at lbs@nakfamilylaw.com for meeting times and location.

REPTL

- Meeting from Noon to 1 pm on Wednesday, **October 24** at the Oakmont Country Club.