

DE DIE IN DIEM

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTERN MONTANA BAR ASSOCIATION FEBRUARY 2015

President's Message by David Steele:

The Guiding Life

Some of you may know that prior to going to law school, I worked as a professional outdoor guide. My work allowed me to enjoy many different environments, from technical rock and ice climbing, mountaineering, rafting and whitewater kayaking, canyoneering and sea kayaking. I enjoyed these pursuits throughout the Western United States and Mexico. From Rocky Mountain National Park, Joshua Tree National Park, the Colorado, Green and Yampa rivers, the Gates of Lodore, to the San Rafael Swell and Cedar Mesa, Dark Canyon, Isla Danzante and Isla Carmen, Agua Verde and Timbabi-chi. I know what you're thinking, and you're right; I was actually lucky enough to live in a beer commercial for more than a decade.

But sun, sand and surf aside, that job was a lot harder than you might believe. Living outside for sometimes 300 days a year was hard. The environments I listed above are often treacherous and unforgiving. I have spent literally thousands of hours learning about the nuances of these varied environments. During those days, I recall constantly assessing my client's well-being, helping them to understand perceived risk, and pointing out the actual risks, while moving through those environments. It was often more stressful than the beer commercials would

lead one to believe. Imagine my surprise when I graduated from law school, and found myself doing essentially the same thing...

First, our jobs as lawyers are pretty cool. Maybe not quite like living in a beer commercial. Well, maybe sometimes. But like outdoor guiding, we have the fortune of meeting and working with great people. We have the fortune of learning about our client's lives, families and businesses. In my practice, I often have an opportunity to learn from my clients a little about their professions. Of course, working inside an office for 300 days a year can sometimes be hard for a former outdoor guide.

Similarly, our clients expect us to effectively



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guide them through the complex environment of law. Like you, I spend my days monitoring my client's well-being, and I seem to spend a great deal of time helping them understand perceived versus actual risk. Probably like you, I spend lots of time explaining that the risk or exposure my client thinks dangerous is probably more perceived than actual. Probably like you, I then explain about the actual risk or exposure involved, the proverbial "ice fall" perched two hundred feet up, just out of view, and which my client may never have seen coming.

The legal environment is treacherous, even for those with formal training. For our clients, the law must certainly be as unfamiliar and in-

timidating as a class IV rapid. Just like outside, failing to identify the actual risk for your client can be catastrophic. Like outdoor guiding, legal guiding is stressful and a lot harder than the beer commercials would lead one to believe. But isn't it cool that we have the honor to move people through such a difficult and foreign environment? I know our clients appreciate our role as the interpreter between the sometimes obscure legal system and the urgencies of their problems. And I am grateful that I have been able to maintain my guiding lifestyle as a lawyer. Well, for the most part anyway. Sometimes I miss the fresh air and scenery. But I can't say I miss all that sand in my sunscreen.

Join the WMBA next Thursday, February 19, 2015 for a presentation on Amendment of Parenting Plans in Montana.*

Tal M. Goldin, WMBA Immediate-Past President and family law attorney at Wells & McKittrick, PC, will present an overview of the law, procedures and practical aspects of amending court ordered parenting plans in Montana. This program will cover the key provisions of Mont. Code Ann. §§ 40-4-219 and -220 and related statutes and caselaw.

Please RSVP to westernmtbar@gmail.com

WMBA luncheons are the Third Thursday of each month at 12:00 noon in the Florence Building. \$15 for WMBA members; \$20 for non-members.

*** 0.75 CLE credits pending.**

EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Worden Thane P.C. Welcomes Chris Johnson to the Team

We are happy to announce the addition
of Chris Johnson to the law firm
of Worden Thane P.C.

We look forward to incorporating
within the firm Chris' significant experience
in the areas of real property and business law.



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CHRIS JOHNSON
REAL ESTATE,
LAND USE
& BUSINESS LAW



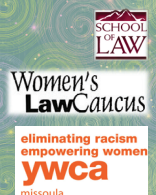
The Women's Law Caucus at the University of Montana Presents:

The 18th Annual Silent Auction to benefit YWCA Pathways Domestic Violence Shelter

Friday, March 6 ~ 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Missoula Children's Theater, 200 Adams St
(corner of Broadway & Adams)

Free Admission ☉ Live Entertainment
Free Beer & Wine ☉ Hors d'oeuvres

*Auction items include: Weekend Getaways, Handmade Items,
Homemade Goods, Artwork, Gift Certificates, Outdoor Adventures,
Gift Baskets, and much more!*



EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



YOU'RE INVITED!
**LUNCH FOR JUSTICE
CLE & FUNDRAISER**
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2015
FROM NOON TO 1:30 PM



Please join the Montana Justice Foundation to
Lunch, Learn, & Support Equal Access to Justice
at our Lunch for Justice CLE & Fundraiser



Montana Justice Foundation
111 N. Higgins; Suite 516
Missoula, Montana 59802

LUNCH FOR JUSTICE CLE & FUNDRAISER

Friday, February 20, 2015
from Noon to 1:30 PM

The Double Tree Edgewater
Missoula, Montana
1 ethics CLE credit pending
Suggested donation \$100

RSVP to the MJF at 406.523.3920 by Feb. 9

LOOKING FOR MORE CLE CREDITS?

**THE WMBA'S MARCH 19, 2015
LUNCHEON WILL INCLUDE A
PRESENTATION BY AMY SINGS
IN THE TIMBER ON LAWYER
TRUST ACCOUNTS.**

1 ETHIC CLE CREDIT PENDING.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, QUESTIONS, ADVERTISING INQUIRIES:

De Die In Diem is published monthly by the Western Montana Bar Association. It is designed and edited by WMBA secretary, Hannah Stone, in conjunction with the WMBA board. For announcements, questions and advertising inquiries contact Hannah Stone at hstone@bigskylawyers.com. The WMBA is not responsible for the content of any announcement or advertisement. The WMBA does not support or oppose any candidate for public office or public official. For advertisements and announcements please provide at least one week advanced notice. Thank you.