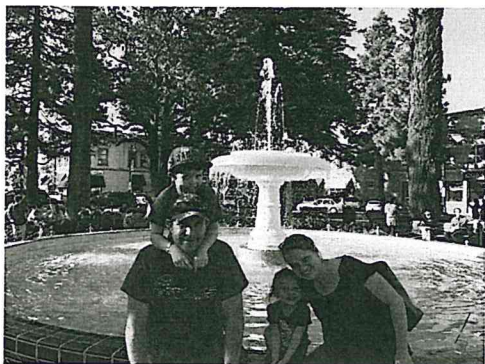


February 2017

DE DIE IN DIEM

The Newsletter of the Western Montana Bar Association



President's Message from Hannah Stone:

My dad was selected for jury duty a few weeks ago, and when I asked how it went, he responded that it was "fun!" Not exactly the word on the top of most of our lists, but for someone who has had very little interaction with the courts, it was quite an adventure. We spent 20 minutes talking about it, with him asking procedural or hypothetical questions and me drilling him on what the jury discussed in forming their decision.

Contact with the judicial system is something we as lawyers often take for granted, as our days are spent embroiled in court battles or planning ways to avoid them. The vast majority of our friends and neighbors rarely have contact with the courts, aside from a speeding ticket or simple will. Some friends may have jobs that touch the bench, but most people rarely think of the justice system aside from slowing down when followed by a police officer (or lately when trying to understand the interplay between the three branches of the US government, but that's a topic for another forum...).

In some instances, the justice system is forced upon individuals who are unequipped or unable to access the resources necessary to solve their legal problem. For me, this lack of access was one of the primary reasons I went to law school. I didn't know any lawyers growing up, and there were none in my family. While I was in college, a dear family member was diagnosed with late stage cancer, and in the emotional weeks that followed refused to leave her home. One afternoon I watched her go through the phone book calling and asking lawyers to come to the house to draft a final will, but all refused. After she passed there was the inevitable rift, which took years to resolve. All of which could have been avoided by a simple home visit by an attorney.

Of course I didn't end up with a career dedicated to drafting estates, but the injustice in that memory has stayed with me. I routinely take pro bono cases, and like those of you that do, have found that even claims that appear small in scope are large in the lives of those impacted. I recently helped a fast-food employee negotiate a simple severance after she miscarried and was terminated for taking too much leave. Given the amount at issue, it was an easy decision to take the case pro bono, and the gratitude by her and her family was the type of gift money cannot buy.

At our luncheon this month Angie Wagenhals will give a presentation on opportunities to assist in limited scope or pro bono work through Montana Legal Services Association, along with Larry Riley who is working to promote a Statewide Guardianship Program. Larry has made great strides towards linking families and caregivers with the legal resources necessary to enter guardianships for dependents nearing the age of majority, a much needed program to help these families who are already facing so many challenges. I hope to see you there.

In closing, the WMBA thanks those of you who carve out time to assist members of our community with legal needs who cannot pay, as we have the tools and training to do so. While lawyers are not the recipient of many Valentines cards, you may find that the smallest case brings about the greatest reward, or that in some cases, it may turn out to approach being "fun!"

Hannah Stone has been an attorney with the Milodragovich, Dale and Steinbrenner law firm since 2010. Her civil litigation practice includes insurance defense, workers compensation and liquor liability. She and her husband, David Flores, keep busy trying to wear out their kiddos by biking, skiing, hiking and playing.

**Don't Miss — WMBA
Monthly Luncheon—
Thursday, February 16!**

Guardianship and Pro Bono

**With Larry Riley
and
Angie Wagenhals**

WMBA Luncheons are the Third Thursday of each month at 12:00 p.m. in the Florence Building. \$15 for WMBA members, \$20 for non-members.

Please RSVP by Tuesday, 2/14 at 5:00 p.m.

Inside:

President's Message-1
Announcements/Ads-2
Membership Form-3

Announcements, questions, advertising inquiries:

De Diem In Diem is published monthly by the Western Montana Bar Association. It is designed and edited by the WMBA Secretary, in conjunction with the WMBA Board. For announcements, questions and advertising inquiries, contact Beth Hayes, at secretary@westernmtbar.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.

The WMBA congratulates Montana attorney Bob Carlson, on his recent nomination as the president-elect of the American Bar Association!

Upcoming WMBA**Family Law Pro****Bono Clinics:**

February 15, 2017

March 1, 2017

March 17, 2017

If you want to volunteer, please contact Xela Warmer at coordinator.wmba.pro.bono@gmail.com or 543-8343, ext. 200

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Western Montana Bar Association

Membership Registration

2016-2017

The WMBA is now accepting applications and payment for the 2016-2017 membership year. The cost is \$25.00 per attorney for full membership in the WMBA from September 1, 2016 to August 31, 2017. Please complete the following form and return it to:

WMBA Treasurer
P.O. Box 7451
Missoula, MT 59807-7451

(Please print or type:)

Name: _____ x \$25.00

Firm: _____

Postal Address: _____

Street Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Additional Attorneys: *(for firm use – provide name and email address)*

_____ x \$25.00

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Please make your check payable to WMBA in the amount of: TOTAL \$.00