

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 17

JYL Summer Social
Que Sera
5:30-7:30 pm

*(Please bring 2 canned food items
or a \$2 donation for Stewpot)*

August 26

Gateway Painting Blitz
Community Service Project
Gateway Rescue Mission
9:00 am - 1:00 pm

*(Family and friends are welcome,
along with those who cannot
stay for the entire project)*

September 15

Membership Luncheon Meeting
University Club
12 Noon

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JYL Golf Tourney a Huge Success!

Our 13th annual golf tournament was another success for JYL, raising over \$4,000 for the Boys and Girls Club of Jackson. The tournament was held on June 29, 2006, at Patrick Farms Golf Club in Pearl. Competing in the four-person scramble event were roughly 90 players comprising twenty-two teams of JYL members and friends.

Three teams tied for first place in the tournament. In order to decide where the three teams would finish, the golf pro at Patrick Farms used a tie-breaker to determine the rankings.

The first place team from Adams & Reese included Jarrad Garner, Jake Dickerson, Mark Power, and Jim McNamara. Each player on this team received a \$50 gift certificate as a prize.

The second place team from Scott, Sullivan, Streetman & Fox consisted of Lee Gladden, Blayne Ingram, John Gordon and Jack Nowell. Each member of this team received a \$25 gift certificate as an award.

The third place team from Baker Donelson included Robert Walker, Eric Hospodor, Marlena Pickering (a law student at MC law school), and Everett White. Each member of this team received a \$10 gift certificate for their efforts.

Tony Ellis from Merrill Lynch won the longest drive competition, for which he received a complimentary golf bag. Eric Hospodor from Baker Donelson won the closest to the pin competition, for which he was fittingly awarded a new putter.

Sponsors for the event included Adams & Reese; Bradley Arant Rose & White;



Some JYL Tournament Participants (L to R): Ryan Sadler, Derek Easley, Dave Rozier and Rick Mitchell.

Butler Snow O'Mara Stevens & Cannada; Baker Donelson Bearman Caldwell & Berkowitz; Brunini Grantham Grower & Hewes; Choice Copy; Clear Leverage; Edwards Reporting; Fowler Buick/GMC; Henjum Goucher; Legal Resources; Lexis Nexis; Nevada Bob's; North Jackson Honda; Phelps Dunbar; Reno Keller Reporting; Smith Turner & Reeves; State-Wide Reporters; Trustmark Bank; Watkins & Eager; Watkins Ludlam Winter & Stennis; and Wise Carter Child & Caraway.

The event was organized by JYL member Jim McNamara, who is Chair of JYL's Philanthropy Committee. Many thanks to Jim for overseeing such a successful and fun event! We have a handful of T-shirts remaining from the event; contact Jim at Jim.McNamara@arlaw.com if you are interested in purchasing one of for \$10.

BY REID MCKEE

Mr. McKee is an associate at Watkins & Eager

JYL Pledges to Expand Membership

Every year we try to grow our JYL membership, but this year we are also attempting to increase the different types of attorneys we count within our ranks. The Board has made a conscious decision to reach out to firms that have not traditionally been involved with JYL, and also to the large number of lawyers working in the state and federal government, such as law clerks at the Mississippi



Trey Bourn
2006-07 JYL President

Supreme Court and Court of Appeals, United States Fifth Circuit and Southern District, and Hinds, Madison, and Rankin Circuit and Chancery clerks. That's not to mention those attorneys employed by state and federal agencies like the Office of the Attorney General, the Gaming Commission, U.S. Attorney's Office, Department of Environmental Quality, and district attorneys and public defenders in the Metro Jackson area.

Bringing in attorneys in different areas of practice enriches JYL with different viewpoints and experiences. This is critical in our effort to become a premier service organization within Jackson. To further outreach, the Diversity Committee will take an active roll in seeking out these potential members. Malissa Winfield and Jay Kilpatrick have graciously agreed to chair the committee,

and both have already begun setting short and long-term goals. To succeed, we will need the help of every member of JYL. If you know any attorneys in the Metro Jackson area who is not yet a member of JYL, please contact me at trey.bourn@butlersnow.com or Executive Director Mary Largent Purvis at largentpurvis@bellsouth.net. JYL is a vital and thriving group already; it is my hope that we can make it even better.

Another goal is to increase participation in our membership meetings, which has shown the traditional lag over the summer (although the turnout for our July meeting, featuring Larry Gregory, the executive director of the Mississippi Gaming Commission, was fantastic). In order to do so, JYL's Speakers Committee is planning on bringing in several high-profile speakers. Committee Chair Meade Mitchell is one of the most connected attorneys in town, and is going to do a great

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If you are 37 or younger, or have practiced law fewer than 3 years, you are eligible for membership in JYL

MEMBERSHIP & DUES

Membership in Jackson Young Lawyers is open to any duly licensed member of the Mississippi Bar who is a resident of the greater Jackson, Mississippi metropolitan area and is either 37 years of age or younger, or has been a member of the Mississippi Bar for less than three years.

The annual membership dues for JYL are \$100 and are billed once a year to each member. (First year member-

ship dues are waived for federal, state, and local government employees.) The dues cover JYL monthly luncheons, newsletters, and various social functions during the year.

To become a member of JYL, complete the membership application, available on Page 4. Your name will be placed on the membership roster and you will receive notices informing you of upcoming JYL events.

Jackson Law Firms and the “Blog” Frontier

Hosting one's own blog, a phenomenon that began as a way to make friends and meet people on personal websites, is now becoming a tool to stake claims in a valuable piece of marketing real estate that law firms may not want to pass up.

A weblog, or “blog,” is usually kind of an online diary people regularly update with stories of their day-to-day goings-on and thoughts; however, this may not be solely the case anymore as the commercial and intellectual value of blogs is becoming more apparent.

At least one Jackson law office has recently taken the step into the world of blogs by hosting two of its own to advance the marketing direction of the firm. Jackson attorney John Rouse of McGlinchey Stafford is extremely involved in regularly updating his firm's blog on developing law surrounding the Class Action Fairness Act (“CAFA”), which was passed on February 18, 2005.

“It's a great way to become the authority on CAFA, and over the course of the past year, we posted over 100 postings and have summarized almost every, if not every case that has come down from any reportable court nationwide, district court up,” Rouse said.

Not long after the law was passed, the firm began

to host their own blogs as a marketing tool for new clients. Since that time, Rouse has helped develop the CAFA blog to a point where it is now updated with posts about every other day. The CAFA law blog can be found at www.cafalawblog.com; the firm's other blog is a Hurricane Katrina law blog, which can be found at www.hurricanelawblog.com, though either can also be accessed directly from the firm's primary webpage. The latter follows changes in litigation and legislation which resulted in the effects Hurricanes Katrina and Rita had on the Gulf Coast.

Rouse said the firm expects to pick up clients this way and to help the current clients, mainly in the consumer finance realm, to stay apprised of the law. However, this is only the tip of the iceberg, he said.

“This is a new area for law firms to reach clients and potential clients and to explore different areas of the law,” Rouse said. “I'm sure that we'll see more and more of it in the future because law firms are going to get away from the static websites that are just purely informational – that list attorneys' names and practice areas – and try to use these blogs to have more of a conversation with people on the web.”

One aim of the blog is to convey its message in a witty, entertaining style and to attract

readers specifically through the writing style and the firm has already enjoyed some national recognition as a result. Currently the firm receives many daily e-mails from in-house counsel who use the blog to keep up with CAFA law.

The idea came from the firm's head of commercial litigation, though the firm's marketing department in its New Orleans office also played an important role. One of the department heads attended a marketing seminar in California where the idea of using blogs as marketing tools was discussed. The firm quickly put their ideas into action.

Rouse said the blog's readership, though not yet raw numbers of clients, is growing continuously with about 100,000 hits per month. This works out to about 30,000 actual readers per month, Rouse said, gauging that number from RSS feeds and actual subscribers. So far, the received comments have been good and the blogs have gotten the firm some exposure to new, potential clients.

“A blog is something that is so cutting edge right now,” Rouse said. “Everyone's going to more interactive websites, which are blogs. It's not static; it changes from day to day and it's more of an information source.”

BY JOHN SCANLON

Mr. Scanlon is an associate at Baria, Hawkins & Stracener.

Back Yard Burgers and JYL Team-Up to Serve Stewpot

JYL found a new partner in providing community service with Back Yard Burgers, who graciously provided supplies for a Saturday lunch at Jackson's Stewpot Community Services. Backyard

Burgers arrived with dozens of burgers with all the fixings, complete with sides and drinks, all of which was more than enough to serve the lunchtime crowd.

A host of members took time out of their weekend to work to benefit those in need. JYL member Danny Ruhl says he enjoys working at Stewpot "because it reminds me of what I all too often forget

in the hustle and bustle of my daily law practice – that there are more important things than billable hours, and, no matter how busy I think I am, I have a responsibility to give back in direct proportion to what I have been given."

BY DAVID McCARTY

Mr. McCarty is the law clerk to the Honorable Oliver E. Diaz, Jr.



L-R: Danny Ruhl, David McCarty, Alex Purvis, Buzz Shoemaker with Back Yard Burgers, Melody McAnally, Megan Conner, Laura Langley, Lindsay Varnadoe. Not pictured: Mary Largent Purvis and Shunda Ponders.

JYL Membership Application

Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Method of Payment _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____ Email _____

Employer _____

Committees or Activities of Interest _____

Law School _____ Date of Graduation _____

Check, made payable to Jackson Young Lawyers

Please bill me for the total amount

Mail Check for \$100 to: Jackson Young Lawyers Association ■ Post Office Box 22842 ■ Jackson, MS 39225-2842

The Supreme Court recently amended Rule 6.1 of the Rules of Professional Conduct to provide that attorneys annually provide at least 20 hours of pro bono legal services, and require attorneys to report each year whether they have fulfilled their professional responsibility to provide pro bono legal services. The new rule allows attorneys who do not wish to do pro bono work to contribute \$200 to be used by legal services providers.

Mississippi Supreme Court Justice Jess Dickinson is a strong proponent of the rule and public service in general. Justice Dickinson has been on the Court since 2004, after being elected by the citizens of the southern district. He holds a Bachelor of Science from Mississippi State University and was graduated cum laude from the University of Mississippi School of Law, where he served on the editorial board of the Mississippi Law Journal. He recently took time to discuss the impact of the changes in Rule 6.1 on young lawyers and the community.

What do you hope the new rule will accomplish?

The primary goal is to increase access to justice by those living at or below the poverty level. I believe the new rule will accomplish that aim. Also, I believe most lawyers who take a case from the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project are hooked for life, so it is also my hope that the new rule will bring many lawyers into the MVLP who have never before participated.

Why do you feel this rule is important?

As lawyers, we have a duty to strive to move our profession closer to a principle in which we all say we believe; a principle to which we place our hands over our hearts and pledge our allegiance; the principle that says we are “one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.” No self-respecting lawyer would deny that everyone—rich and poor—is entitled to equal justice under the law, and that the prevailing party in legal disputes should never be determined by the size of the pocketbook. And yet, we all know it happens.

When I made the decision in 1977 to attend law school, I was

very idealistic. I wanted to be Perry Mason, Atticus Finch, and Thurgood Marshall—all rolled into one. I believed in justice and the need to protect the rights of people guaranteed by our Constitution.

I graduated from law school and began the practice of law. My main focus soon became billable hours and climbing the ladder. I had children, a mortgage, pressures of the job, and I kind of put Thurgood Marshall and Atticus Finch on hold . . . and twenty years quickly passed.

One day, as I reflected on my life and career, I became convicted that I had committed the sin of apathy; of doing nothing in the midst of injustice; and not just any injustice, but one which I believe, as a lawyer, I had a special ability and obligation to do something about. That injustice was, and is, the inequality (and in many cases exclusion) of the poor from the justice system.

As a practicing lawyer, I profited greatly from the legal profession and the legal system. Nevertheless, I stood by and did very little about the thousands of fellow human beings, many of them children, who were grossly and shamefully ignored to a great extent by that same legal system, simply because they were poor.

It is my very strong belief that every lawyer licensed to practice law in Mississippi has a professional and moral obligation to contribute to the provision of legal service to the poor.

Perhaps more than ever before, young lawyers have extreme demands placed on their time. How will Rule 6.1 work in the busy world of the young associate?

It's all a matter of priorities. Pro bono legal work should be as much of a part of a lawyer's schedule as CLE. A lawyer who works five days a week, fifty weeks a year, and takes a two-week vacation, will work approximately 2,000 hours a year. Twenty hours of pro bono work each year should not greatly compromise any lawyer's schedule or ability to carry on a law practice. Young lawyers should also remember that they are being watched and evaluated not only for billable hours and dedication to the firm, but also for their integrity and sense of responsibility to the community and the profession.

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QUESTIONS *for* Justice Jess Dickinson

JYL Plans to Expand, Diversify Membership - Continued from Page 2

job in bringing in some great speakers. Suggestions are always welcome, though, and if you have ideas for a great speaker please drop me a line or write Meade at meade.mitchell@butlersnow.com.

Our Membership Committee, headed by co-chairs Megan Conner and Brandon Jolly, is starting a process to evaluate how else to increase JYL's membership. Although membership is at an all-time high, we can always do better. In addition to the membership meetings and the great socials, JYL members will have the opportunity

once again to participate in the various community service projects in which JYL participates each year. The previous chair of the Service Committee, Seth Hunter, left a large void when he moved to Hattiesburg, but I have hopes that new chairperson David McCarty can handle the job. If you have suggestions for a service project, please e-mail David at davidmccarty@gmail.com.

I always have several people who ask me how they can get involved with JYL and how they can get nominated for JYL's

elected positions. The answer is simple: Sign up for one of our many committees and get out there and work. Whenever our nominating committee sits down to look at candidates, the number one criterion is "how involved is this member." Believe me: Your hard work will be noticed and rewarded.

I look forward to working with you to make this year an outstanding success for JYL.

Mr. Bourn is an associate at Butler Snow O'Mara Stevens & Cannada.

5 Questions for Justice Jess Dickinson - Continued from Page 5

What are the benefits the rule provides to the young lawyer?

The most important benefit to the lawyer, I think, is that it keeps us focused on our professional responsibility. Remember the old saw, "out of sight, out of mind." Prior to this rule change, most lawyers in Mississippi couldn't even tell you what the rules provided with respect to pro bono work. Now, every lawyer will have to think about it once a year.

The rule is aspirational; only the reporting of time is actually required. Would the rule work better if pro bono service were required?

Many experts believe that lawyers are more likely to provide more and better quality pro bono representation when their decision is based on a sense of professional responsibility, rather than the fulfillment of a requirement. I am opposed to forcing lawyers to

provide pro bono legal services; but I am not opposed to requiring lawyers to report whether they have, or have not, fulfilled their professional responsibility. A lawyer who chooses to do no pro bono work will have to report it and live with it.

BY DAVID McCARTY

Mr. McCarty is the law clerk to the Honorable Oliver E. Diaz, Jr.

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