

JYL

JACKSON YOUNG LAWYERS

JYL Service Committee Supports Blues Marathon

For the fourth consecutive year, JYL volunteers greeted runners and handed out water, Gatorade, and GU Energy Gel at the Annual Mississippi Blues Marathon & Half-Marathon.



Dedicated JYL volunteers Tiffany Paige, Brooke Tarleton, Tiffany Grove, Alicia Hall, Nakimuli Davis, and Roslyn Griffin braved the cold to support the Blues Marathon runners.

Stellar weather, great runners and enthusiastic volunteers made for a wonderful event. Over 2,000 competitors from 47 states and several other countries, including the District of Columbia, Australia, England, Germany, Kenya and Ethiopia, registered to participate in the Marathon and Half-Marathon. Money raised by the event will benefit the Mississippi Blues Commission, which supports Blues initiatives throughout the state. In addition to supporting the Mississippi Blues Commission, the race's economic benefits to the Jackson area are significant. The Jackson Convention and Visitors Bureau estimates that the Blues Marathon contributed \$389,648 to the city of Jackson's economy in 2009, the most recent year for which data are

available. With many more participants this year, the race likely brought a much greater economic punch. Not only were JYL members able to help with the event, but it was a great way to celebrate the birthday of Mississippi native Elvis Presley and to celebrate the Mississippi Blues. Special thanks to JYL's team of willing and good spirited volunteers, which included Nakimuli Davis, Roslyn Griffin, Alicia Hall, Tiffany Paige, Brooke Tarleton, James Findley, and Tiffany Grove.

by Tiffany Piazza Grove

Ms. Grove is the Co-Chair of JYL's Community Service Committee and an Associate at Williford, McAllister & Jacobus, LLP.

WINTER 2011

OF NOTE

Please make plans to join us for our February social on Thursday, February 17, from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. at Nick's.

Lace up your running shoes and get ready for the Legal Beagle, scheduled for Saturday, March 12, 2011. A registration form is on the last page of this newsletter.

Our next membership meeting will be our annual CLE meeting, Friday, March 25, 2011, at noon at Hal & Mal's. Judge Kenny Griffis will discuss Legal Writing from a Judicial Perspective. 1 hour of free CLE credit will be given to all attendees.

Submissions to the newsletter or suggestions for newsletter pieces may be made to JYL Executive Director [Danielle Ireland](#). We'd love your input!

Past issues of our newsletter can be found on our [website](#).

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

JYL started the new year off with a huge turnout at our January membership meeting. Thanks to the efforts of our Speakers Chair, Mason Lowe, we welcomed Curtis Wilkie, author of the book *Fall of the House of Zeus: The Rise and Ruin of America's Most Powerful Trial Lawyer*. Mr. Wilkie discussed his popular book on the Scruggs bribery scandal, and entertained with stories of his experiences in researching and writing the book. Many thanks to all who attended and made this such a great event.



As we inch toward spring, JYL has several other exciting events coming up. The annual Legal Beagle 5K walk/run is scheduled for Saturday, March 12. Please fill out the enclosed registration form, and urge your friends and co-workers to participate as well. This is always a great opportunity to see your fellow young lawyers, enjoy the (hopefully) beautiful spring weather, and get some exercise while raising money for a good cause. JYL donates all proceeds from this event to the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project. I hope to see many of you there.

Also in March, we will have our annual CLE membership meeting. On March 25, Judge Kenny Griffis of the Mississippi Court of Appeals will give us his pointers on effective legal writing. Please make plans to join us for this meeting, to enjoy lunch with your fellow JYL members

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If you are 37 or younger, or have practiced law for fewer than three 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.

Annual membership dues are \$100 and are billed once a year for each member. (Membership dues are waived for government and public-interest employees in their first year of practice and are \$50 per year thereafter.) The dues cover JYL luncheons, newsletters, projects, and social functions during the year.

2009-2010 JYL OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS

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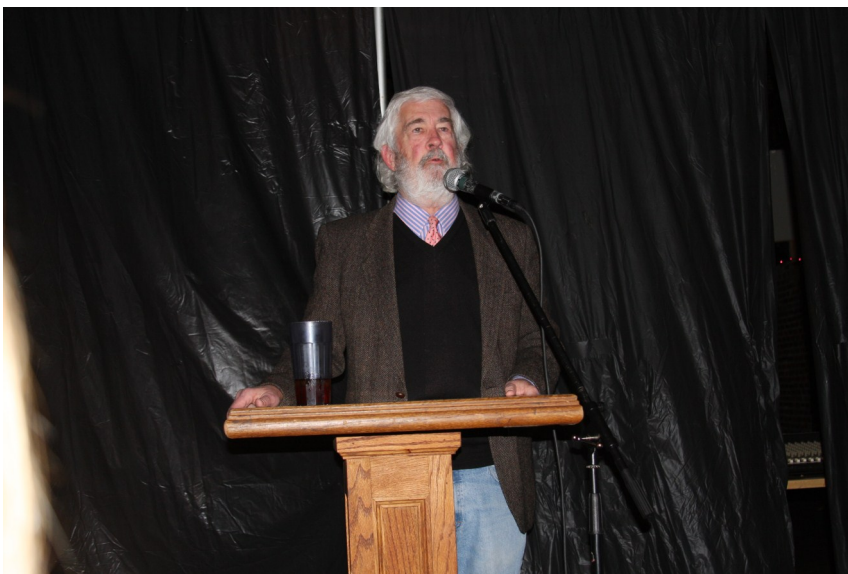
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Author Curtis Wilkie Discusses Book at JYL Luncheon

JYL was privileged to welcome Curtis Wilkie, author of *The Fall of the House of Zeus: The Rise and Ruin of America's Most Powerful Trial Lawyer*, as the guest speaker at the January 7, 2011 meeting at Hal & Mal's. Mr. Wilkie, a Mississippi native, spoke in front of a packed room, providing insight into his most recent book about the history of politics in Mississippi, culminating in the Dick Scruggs bribery scandal.



Wilkie pointed out that Zeus provides information that the average follower of the scandal was not privy to as the events unfolded in 2008 and 2009. His book is the product of hours of interviews with the characters and, as he noted, is written more from Dick Scruggs's point of view than other authors' recounts of the events.

Wilkie described Zeus as a

political story about how politicians have been scratching each others' backs and "fixing" things in this state all of his life. The Scruggs story is one that is bigger and broader than one criminal case. Many of the main characters in Wilkie's book are personal friends of his and, as he admitted, some have become former friends since the book came out.

Wilkie attributes the great success of his book to four

things: his own honesty and attempt to eliminate any bias while telling the story, cooperation by the entire Scruggs family, cooperation of the prosecutors, and that virtually every character in the book agreed to speak with him.

If you were unable to attend the January JYL meeting, you still have an opportunity to hear Wilkie speak in Jackson. Along with Alan Lange and Tom Dawson, co-authors of *Kings of Tort*, he will be speaking on Tuesday, March 15th at Millsaps College about the status of traditional media and how new media, such as blogs, affect public perception.

*by Missy Rose
Ms. Rose is the President-Elect
of JYL and an associate at
Page Kruger & Holland , P.A.*



JYL and CABA Lawyers Socialize at Annual Holiday Party



JYL Immediate Past-President Corey Hinshaw, Clifford Ammons, and John Howell



Matthew Vitart, Denita Smith, Terry Neyland, Alicia Hall, Nakimuli Davis, and Wendy Huff



JYL Executive Director Danielle Ireland, Mason Lowe, and Former JYL President Meade Mitchell



JYL Secretary Jennie Pitts, Kristen Kazery, Danielle Ireland, Tiffany Grove, Eric Patterson, and Trhesa Patterson



John Lassiter, Katrina Chisholm, JYL President Mary Clay Morgan, Clarence Webster, and Sherwood Colette



Presiding Justice James E. Graves, Jr., Beau Cole, Ashley Wicks, and Clarence Webster

Former JYL President Discusses Historic Judicial Elections

On November 12, 2010, JYL welcomed back former President Amanda Jones to share some Hal & Mal's catfish and red beans along with her unique perspective on the historic judicial elections held earlier in 2010.

Jones, a graduate of Mississippi State and Ole Miss Law, is currently Counsel to the Governor, having previously practiced law with Phelps Dunbar and Bradley Arant.

In her role as Counsel to the Governor, Jones became part of what may have been the first nonpartisan judicial write-in elections in Mississippi history, which took place in both the 13th Circuit election for Circuit Judge and the 10th Circuit election for Chancery Judge. The write-in



JYL CLE Committee Chairman Mason Lowe, Former JYL President Amanda Jones, and JYL President Mary Clay Morgan

elections arose because two sitting judges, Judge Evans and Judge Thomas, who were the only candidates to qualify to run for their seats, passed away before election day. Because of slightly different factual circumstances, the ballot in the 13th Circuit contained only a blank under the Circuit Judge category, while the ballot in the 10th

Circuit listed Judge Thomas as the sole candidate. Under Mississippi election law, Jones reported, this led to two entirely different legal results, with a runoff election between write-in candidates emerging from the 13th Circuit election and deceased Judge Thomas's reelection in the 10th Circuit expected to result in an appointment by Governor Barbour there.

Jones certainly had to navigate some muddy legal research waters in advising the governor about these unprecedented elections. JYL appreciates her willingness to share her experience with the membership.

*by Danielle Ireland
Ms. Ireland is the Executive
Director of JYL*

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and earn some free CLE at the same time. The meeting will be at noon at Hal & Mal's, and you will earn one hour of free CLE credit.

Finally, I'm very excited that JYL will be awarding its first community grant this year. Spence Young, chair of the Outreach Committee, and Tiffany Graves, the board liaison to that committee, have been working hard to draft a grant application and a protocol for awarding the grant to a

worthy local charity. The grant application will be released soon, so please watch out for it, and forward it to any local nonprofits that you are involved with. After applications are received, JYL committee members will evaluate the applications and make site visits to the top applicants before choosing the recipient. If you would like to get involved in this process, please contact Spence Young at syoung@wellsmar.com. This grant will be a lasting and visible way for JYL to share its resources

with local charities and make a difference in our community.

As always, please contact me or any other board member if you'd like to get involved in a committee, or if you have any ideas about how JYL can better serve its members. I'd love to hear your input.

*by Mary Clay W. Morgan
Mrs. Morgan is a partner at Bradley
Arant Boulton Cummings LLP and the
current President of JYL.*

JYL Members Work Up a Sweat for Habitat for Humanity

JYL's Community Service Committee met on November 13, 2010 at a Habitat house in the midst of construction at 2301 Newport Street, Jackson, MS. These brave souls wielded paint brushes, rollers, hammers, nail guns, and tape measures. They tirelessly removed debris from the worksite. Many even overcame their fear of heights upon scaffolding. JYL was not alone. The prospective family that will move into the house helped with the build, as did many volunteers from churches, schools, and other organizations. Thanks to all the volunteers, and we hope even more JYL members will help with next year's Habitat build!

by Eric Patterson

Mr. Patterson is the Co-Chair of JYL's Community Service Committee and an associate at Blair & Bondurant, P.A.



Left: JYL members Roslyn Griffin, Nakimuli Davis, and Christy Jones sort nails.

Above: Mark Hosemann and Eric Patterson test their balance.



New Third Thursday Happy Hour for Young Lawyers

Beginning next month, on March 17, Hal & Mal's is offering Third Thursdays to Young Lawyers. This happy hour event will take place each month in the Brew Pub and Patio at Hal & Mal's from 5 – 7pm and will feature appetizer and drink specials.



For March, the drink specials will be \$3 draft beer, \$4 well drinks, and \$6 martinis. This is a great opportunity for young attorneys to socialize and network. Thanks to Hal & Mal's for offering this opportunity to young lawyers!

Where Are They Now?

With Former JYL President Alex Alston

When Alex Alston gives directions to his home in Jackson's historic Belhaven, he tells his visitors to "look for the house with the really big magnolia tree out front." Big magnolia tree is right. Not only is the tree enormous, but according to Alston it serves as a tree-house for his grandkids and a launching pad for their make-believe ambushes on him. JYL recently interviewed Alston from his office at his home. Surrounded by well over a thousand books and a host of well-preserved Native American artifacts and relics, Alston is figuratively and literally at home in his exquisitely decorated office. Although retired from practicing law at a firm, Alston continues to devote his time to what he loves most – helping the less fortunate through the practice of law.

Alston, a trial lawyer and author, retired from Brunini, Grantham, Grower & Hewes having tried over 150 cases. He has argued cases before the Mississippi Supreme Court, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, and the U.S. Supreme Court. He also served as the president of the Mississippi Bar and Jackson Young Lawyers, and he won the ABA John Minor Wisdom Award, an annual honor bestowed upon lawyers who provide legal service to the poor and under represented.

When asked by JYL about his philosophy towards the practice of law, Alston emphatically acknowledged that young lawyers should "work like hell, build a good reputation, and take responsibility for matters." In terms of responsibility, Alston believes that young lawyers should "step up to the plate and show their partners that they can do the work." He opined that "lawyering is the greatest profession on earth." "You are the only ones who hold the key to the courthouse door," he says. According to Alston, "every major change in this country's history can be attributed to the efforts of lawyers."

One of the themes Alston extolled during his interview is the need for civility throughout the practice. "Civility," he says, "is the oil that lubricates that cumbersome machinery of justice." No stranger to civility himself, Alston recalled that during his JYL presidency

he lead an effort that successfully desegregated the organization.

With regard to managing stress, Alston advises that "pressure is not necessarily a bad thing." "If you're not stressed out a bit," he says, "then you're doing something wrong." He hastens young lawyers to use stress to empower themselves to move forward. Alston also paused with great deliberation to offer the following jewel of advice: "It's okay to make mistakes. It's not the end of the world. People make mistakes. When standing it front of a jury, the jurors want to see that you are human. That you are credible."

In reviewing Alston's latest literary work – "A Devil's Sanctuary," a narrative account of the cruelties exhibited by the Mississippi legal system during the Civil Right's Movement – one becomes immediately aware that he is an individual who is still very much in love with the law. He is still a student of the law and continues to track the rulings of the Mississippi Supreme Court which is evidenced by his 2008 Op-Ed in the Clarion Ledger entitled "A Plea for Appellate Justice in Mississippi." Not only a student of the law but a student of the courtroom as well, he noted that his favorite thing about practicing is being in front of the jury. According to Alston, "juries are brilliant as a whole. They know everything about the case when it's over. They know everything from what color socks the advocates wore to the most mundane and trivial comment a witness may have made from the stand."

Alston is glad to see JYL continue its tradition of trumpeting pro bono efforts within the profession. When asked what his advice to the incoming or current JYL President is, Alston said, "he or she should stress professionalism, civility, and public service." Alston said "JYL's focus should be centered on doing whatever it can to help the needy and underprivileged."

by Tray Hairston.

Mr. Hairston is an associate with Balch & Bingham, LLP and the Co-Chair of the JYL Newsletter Committee.



LEGAL BEAGLE 5K Run/Walk

USATF CERTIFIED COURSE (MS02006RH)

Sponsored by: *THE JACKSON YOUNG LAWYERS ASSOCIATION* to benefit *THE MS VOLUNTEER LAWYERS PROJECT*

Saturday, March 12, 2011

Registration: 7:00 a.m.

Run/Walk Start: 8:15 a.m.

Refreshments by Beagle Bagell! **A MS Track Club GRAND PRIX Event!** Door Prizes by Fleet Feet Sports!

****Follow us on Facebook/Legal Beagle 5K Run/Walk!**



Join Jackson Young Lawyers and other sponsors for this fun filled run/walk on the **OLD PHIDIPPIDES WATERMELON CLASSIC 5K (3.1 miles) COURSE, a flat and fast** USATF certified course through residential streets of Northeast Jackson. The run will start on Old Canton Road near the LeFleur Station Post Office and finish alongside the I-55 Kroger on Jacksonian Plaza. Run proceeds will benefit the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project of the Mississippi Bar Association, which places pro bono cases for underprivileged people with volunteer lawyers. There will be awards for M/F runners and walkers for overall, masters, grand masters, and senior masters and top three awards for the standard 5 year age groups from under 14 to over 70 (10 year age groups in the walk). There will be a trophy for the firm or business with the most overall participants. The popular long-sleeve Legal Beagle T-shirts are included in the race materials and are also available for sale without race entry. A one mile fun run will be held at 9:15 a.m. In the fun run, there will be awards for overall male and female, and top three awards in the following age groups: 5 & under, 6-7, 8-9, 10-12, & 13-15. **Race day registration will be held in the parking lot of Regions Bank alongside the I-55 Kroger (between the post office and the old Krystal). Packet pickup for pre-registered participants will be held from 3:00-6:00 p.m. at Fleet Feet Sports on Hwy. 51 in Ridgeland on Friday, March 11, 2011.**

****Team competition (5K run and walk only):** Teams may have 3 to 5 members, but only the top 3 finishers for each team will be scored. Please submit entry forms for each team member, and send all entries and fees in a single envelope. Each team must provide a team name. Team registration closes at 5:00 p.m. on March 10. Team registration fee is \$55. Awards to top 3 teams in 5K run and walk.

****New this year: Stroller division!** Awards for overall male and female (5K run only)!

For more information contact Leigh Vernon at (601) 965-1872 or at lvernon@watkinseager.com

REGISTRATION FORM

5K WALK: []

5K RUN: []

1 MILE FUN RUN: [] (children 15 and under)

Name: _____ Phone: (home) _____ (work) _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Age: (as of March 12, 2011) _____ Male: [] Female: []

T-shirt size: S [] M [] L [] XL [] XXL (\$2.00 extra) [] Name of Participant's Firm or

Business: _____

Name of Team (if applicable): _____

Cost: Pre-registered (5K run, walk, and fun run): \$20
Race Day (5K run and walk): \$25
Race Day (fun run): \$20
Team Pre-registration only (5K run and walk only): \$55
Family (5 maximum): \$55
T-shirt only: \$15

**Make checks payable to:
Jackson Young Lawyers Assoc.**

Release and Waiver

I, the undersigned, in consideration of acceptance of the entry and registration as participant in the Legal Beagle 5K, waive any and all claims which I and my heirs or assigns may now or hereafter have against Jackson Young Lawyers Association, its members, the Mississippi Track Club, Inc., Express Printing, Inc., Regions Bank, and all officials, volunteers and sponsors of the Legal Beagle 5K which may indirectly or directly result from my participation in the Legal Beagle 5K. I further warrant and represent that I am in proper physical condition to participate in the Legal Beagle 5K and am not participating in this event against physician's advice nor am I taking medications which would impair my health or ability to participate in the Legal Beagle 5K.

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian: (if participant is under 18): _____

Mail Registration Forms to: Mississippi Track Club, P.O. Box 1414, Ridgeland, MS 39157