

February 2010

From the Editor

There have been quite a few TBALL events recently including the opening retreat for the TBALL class of 2010. A heartfelt thank you is due to all the contributors to this newsletter and to the communications committee, including Anne Martin, Jason Long and Justin Martin. As president of the alumni division, Justin graciously agreed to update everyone on the district receptions held over the holidays. As always, please email me at sarah.henry@fedex.com with any comments or suggestions you have for the TBALL Times throughout the year.

Introduction to the TBALL Class of 2010

By Anne Martin

Once again, the TBALL Steering Committee, comprised of TBA staff, leadership and alums, has put together a terrific TBALL class. Here are some statistics on the 32 class members to help you to get to know them better:

Geographical Location:

15 -- Middle Tennessee
 11 -- East Tennessee
 6 -- West Tennessee

Of those, 9 are from smaller communities (not the big four cities), including Dyersburg, Tullahoma and Athens.

Practice Areas:

19 -- Private practice firm practitioners
 4 -- Solo practitioners
 4 -- Non-Profit practitioners
 3 -- In-House for-profit counsel
 2 -- Government

The solo practitioners include John Heacock, who recently returned from active duty in Iraq through his National Guard membership. John and I overlapped at VULS for one year, and I can tell you John is a really interesting guy who has done a little bit of everything in his law practice.

The non-profit practitioners include Tricia Herzfeld of the ACLU of Tennessee and Emily Ogden of Stand for Children, a grassroots organization founded to improve Tennessee's public schools. What interesting and unique perspectives they will bring to TBALL based upon their works with these organizations!

The government practitioners include Shauna Billingsley with the City of Franklin Law Department and Junaid Odubeko with the Governor's Office. Junaid is our second class member from the Governor's Office, following Steve Elkins who was in the 2005 class.

If you know any of the current TBALL class members, congratulate them on their inclusion in the class!

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Editor's Note

Let us know if you have any ideas or suggestions for The TBALL TIMES by calling or emailing Sarah Henry, Newsletter/Communications Committee chair.

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Here are the member of this year's class:

Shauna Billingsley, City of Franklin Law Department, Franklin
Bob Bowman, Kramer Rayson LLP, Knoxville
Michael Brezina, Hodges Doughty & Carson PLLC, Knoxville
Jeff Cherry, Lowery Lowery & Cherry PLLC, Lebanon
Evan Cope, Cope Hudson Scarlett Reed & McCreary, Murfreesboro
Jason Creasy, Wilkerson Gauldin Hayes & Jenkins, Dyersburg
Sherie Edwards, State Volunteer Mutual Insurance Co., Brentwood
John Elder, Paine Tarwater and Bickers LLP, Knoxville
Jason Fisher, Jenkins & Jenkins PLLC, Knoxville
John Heacock, Attorney at Law, Nashville
Tricia Herzfeld, ACLU of Tennessee, Nashville
Kim Hodges, Federal Express Corporation, Memphis
Tim Housholder, Gilreath & Association, Knoxville
Eric Hudson, Butler Snow O'Mara Stevens & Cannada PLLC, Memphis
Rhonda Kinslow, Waller Landsen Dortch & Davis, Nashville
Sean Lewis, Law Offices of Sean Lewis PLLC, Nashville
Aimee Luna, Legal Aid of East Tennessee, Tullahoma
Joe Lynch, Wimberly Lawson Seale Wright, Knoxville
Bill Maddox, William E. Maddox Jr. LLC Attorney at Law, Knoxville
Amy Martin, The Landers Firm, Memphis
Jeffrey Matukewicz, Baker Donelson Bearman Caldwell & Berkowitz PC, Chattanooga
Alonda McCutcheon, Bass Berry & Sims PLC, Nashville
Timothy Mickel, Husch Blackwell Sanders LLP, Chattanooga
Rachel Moses, Legal Aid Society, Cookeville
Junaid Odubeko, Office of the Governor, Nashville
Emily Ogden, Stand for Children, Nashville
Sharon Reavis, EMI Christian Music Group Inc., Brentwood
Sara Reynolds, Walker Tipps & Malone, Nashville
Donna Roberts, Stites & Harbison PLLC, Nashville
William Stover, Stover Law Firm, Nashville
Bridget Willhite, Carter Harrod & Willhite PLLC, Athens
Mason Wilson, Baker Donelson Bearman Caldwell & Berkowitz PC, Memphis

Calisthenics, catfish and caucus: High times at Montgomery Bell State Park

By Jason Long

The 2010 Leadership Law Class kicked off the year on January 21 with the opening retreat at Montgomery Bell State Park. Thirty-three young attorneys from across the state gathered for a spirited weekend of education, introspection, camaraderie and, of course, catfish. The weekend began with an introduction by steering committee chair Larry Wilks to the concept of the program which is now in its seventh year (Really? We've been doing this for seven years? That's amazing!). After various speakers gave introductions and overviews, the ever-entertaining class interviews occurred. Remarkably, this may be the most athletically fit group of TBALLers in the history of the program as multiple individuals are runners, marathoners, cyclists, et al. One classmate has even participated in a 50k, demonstrating that sanity is not a prerequisite to membership in the class.

The class listened to an inspiring presentation by Gregg Ramos concerning leadership in action, followed by dining, as John Tarpley puts it, at the "buffet (pronounced "boo-fay") of love." The catfish was exquisite; crispy breading with a nice, flaky texture underneath. The okra provided a nice compliment and the ever-helpful Montgomery Bell staff was on hand to cater to the diners' every need. The Sommelier made regular rounds suggesting appropriate wine pairings. Alas, there was no square dancing afterwards but the TBALLers were entertained by Ed Sweeney. I'm not going to disclose what Mr. Sweeney did for entertainment as some things that occur during retreat should stay at retreat. However, I will say that what started out looking like a disaster ended up being a really good time shared by all.

Day 2 included presenters Danni Varlan, Bruce Anderson, Lewis Donaldson, Brent Poulton and Martha Boyd in the morning. Gail Ashworth gave the President's perspective both on TBALL and the role of the TBA in the profession. Byron Trauger was excellent, as ever, followed by a panel

discussions on the costs of leadership and balanced lives, as well as Tennessee trivia. The classmates had their first caucus Friday afternoon and, per strict TBALL guidelines, Larry Wilks refused to disclose anything said during discussions.

Day 3 started with yoga to rejuvenate the body and refresh the soul. This author admits that, while I was prepared to give yoga a shot, I was somewhat thankful when I ran into Larry Wilks that morning who informed me that I didn't need to come to the yoga session if I didn't want to. I promptly made my way back into the dining hall for more eggs and sausage. Janice Brown rounded out the weekend's events with an inspiring talk on networking and motivation in the practice of law. The classmates had their final caucus and went their separate ways.

From all objective observations, we have an excellent class this year. They are engaging, intelligent and most importantly, open to this process. If you have not had the opportunity to do so, I would strongly recommend reaching out to any TBALL class members in your area and welcoming them to this unique experience. They have gotten a taste of what TBALL is all about and the year promises to be a great success. Thanks to the TBALL Steering Committee, and specifically Mary, James and Scott, for all of their hard work on the retreat.



Debriefing from the district receptions

By Justin Martin

Thanks are hereby given to the strong leadership and vision supplied by Tennessee Bar Association Leadership Law Director, Monica Mackie. She suggested and inspired TBALLA to implement the statewide alumni receptions for TBALL graduates. The alumni receptions were a great way for alums from different classes to meet and socialize according to the grand divisions in the state. They also provided a preview for the 2010 TBALL class and were a tangible impetus to the members of the TBA's Board of Governors and House of Delegates to continue (or begin) supporting TBALL. Not to mention they were just good fun!

Nashville - November 5, 2009, Wadley & Patterson, PC

A heartfelt debt of thanks is owed to the law firm of **Wadley & Patterson**, who shrugged off the "Great Recession" to fully fund and host the Middle Tennessee edition of TBALLA's 2009 Alumni Receptions. In attendance were approximately 20 TBALL graduates and 7 members of the 2010 TBALL class. W&P served a nice array of hors d'oeuvres and provided beer, wine and non-alcoholic beverages to suit any palate. After more or less demolishing the food and other available consumables, a substantial number of us adjourned to the Dan McGuinness Irish Pub. For perhaps the first time, I eschewed a Guinness at Dan McGuinness in favor of a chicken sandwich and a Coke "to go" for the ride home. This bears reference for three reasons: (1) because said sandwich was not on the menu to the great surprise and citation of **John Burns**; (2) because tax lawyers apparently have a penchant for noting where one might find good food; and (3) because, unless by the end of this

column it has been undone, I met and befriended the friendly and talented John Burns, thereby illustrating and exemplifying the reason of this entire exercise.

Memphis - November 11, 2009, chez Danny and Erina Van Horn

As generous as other spreads might have been, the home of Erina and Danny Van Horn takes top honors as the situs of the best food in both quality and quantity (in that order). At the reception for Western Tennessee, it was posited by none other than myself that Erina must have taken such extraordinary delight in having Danny home before 4 p.m. that she completely overdid it in the kitchen. Memphis TBALL Alums are advised in the future to consider the above as the Van Horns hosted a gathering of perhaps 20 Alums and 5 TBALLers from the 2010 class, who made it through the appetizers but barely sampled the entrees. It was also great fun to meet the polite Van Horn children, to tease Danny about his wedding hair (put the pictures away next year Danny) and to hear Erina tell stories about Danny from their college days! Despite the feeding frenzy, John Burns would hear nothing of ending the evening at 7 p.m. and I unbegrudgingly tagged along with John, Beverly Gates, and Angie Davis to *The Grove Grill* for a post-mortem. I must thank John for this as I had never been to the "Grove" before despite the fact that I am a graduate of a Memphis area high school.

Knoxville - November 17, 2009, Lincoln Memorial University - Duncan School of Law.

The East Tennessee reception drafted the highest number of attendees, including Neil McBride, a member of the TBA House of Delegates, who graced us with his presence, along with approximately 40-45 other current and former TBALLers. We convened at Knoxville's new law school, the Lincoln Memorial University Duncan School of Law. The campus is situated on Summitt Hill within a structure originally built to house the Tennessee School for the Deaf. The building was used as a hospital in the Civil War before it ceded to a variety of different functions, including a brief stint as Knoxville's City Hall. The event was sponsored by London & Amburn, P.C., Kizer & Black PLLC, Kramer Rayson LLP, Nick McCall and Woolf, McClane, Bright, Allen & Carpenter. A very special "thank you" goes out to Chuck Young for taking the lead in securing and amply provisioning the site for the reception. I concluded my brief but enjoyable return to the land of TBALL by joining Nick McCall, Timothy Mickel and others at the Preservation Pub for a wrap party and sadly, for the first time in two weeks, sans John Burns.

[See more photos from the receptions on TBAConnect](#)

Annual dues and the TBALL Endowment Fund

So far, TBALLA has received \$5,000 in dues for 2009-2010. For those of you who have not submitted your dues, it's not too late. Annual dues are \$50 and should be made payable to the Tennessee Legal Community Foundation. The TBALL endowment fund has received donations totaling \$490, so a gracious thank you is extended to all those who have donated to this worthy fund. And yes, donations can still be made! Please contact Beverly Gates at bgates@bakerdonelson.com or Monica Mackie at mmackie@tnbar.org with any questions.
