

NEWSLETTER

COMMITTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF LEGAL EXCELLENCE, COMMUNITY SERVICE, AND INCREASED MINORITY PARTICIPATION IN THE PRACTICE OF LAW

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Sharon V. Burrell

Happy Spring! Although this past winter wasn't particularly harsh, Spring represents warm weather, longer daylight hours and more opportunities to get out and about. It is also a time to do Spring cleaning. If you didn't get a chance to participate in Bourne's clothing drive, where we donated clothes to the **Mt. Calvary Baptist Church's Spring and Summer Clothes Closet**, it's not too late. The event was postponed from April 1 to mid-May. So please bring your gently-worn clothing and accessories to the next general membership meeting. As for being "out and about," we began the month with our **Joint Happy Hour with the Hispanic Bar Association on April 6** at the Santa Fe Cafe in College Park. There was plenty of good food, good cheer and good opportunities to meet

and network with members of the Hispanic Bar. It was an excellent way to begin the month on the heels of the thought-provoking speech given by **Court of Appeals of Maryland Chief Judge Robert M. Bell** at the March membership meeting, which produced a record turnout.

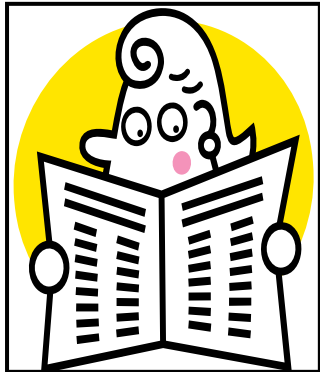
Judge Bell departed from his planned speech concerning the attorney's duty and obligation to be involved with the community once he saw that the majority of the members present were not newly admitted attorneys – but were instead "old heads." Judge Bell spoke about things that were of concern to him and that should be of concern to every attorney: the manner in which this society is moving in terms of individual liberty; the attitude towards the third branch of government; and how society is beginning to treat lawyers.

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BRIDGETTE A. GREER UPDATE

Following double-lung transplant, JFB's Past-President **Bridgette Greer** was recently discharged from the hospital and is recovering nicely at home in Durham, NC. While she still has a good way to go in her recovery, and it will take some time for her to regain her strength, Bridgette is taking it one day at a time and is learning to breathe again completely on her own.

Although she can't respond individually, Bridgette is thankful to all and has asked that we give everyone her best and thanks everyone for their prayers. She's still not allowed any flowers and can't eat yet, so please don't send any fruit baskets. Cards and notes may be sent to Bridgette at 14106 Eastman Drive, Durham, NC 27705.



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK (Cont.)

(continued from page 1)

According to Judge Bell, the judiciary is the weakest of the three branches. It has neither the power of the sword or the purse but it has the most critical role – to protect the foundation stone of the whole democracy. The judiciary must have the trust and confidence of the people or they will not have their decisions followed. Judge Bell stated that as lawyers and judges, we have to stand up and explain to those who are critical of judges what the role of the judiciary is and why it is so important to have a strong, independent judiciary. But despite the attacks on judges, it is even worse for lawyers.

Judge Bell stated that when lawyers are denigrated at every turn it undermines the authority and power and effectiveness of lawyers. Lawyers ought to be proud of being lawyers. If you get rid of lawyers, there won't be anybody to protect those whose rights have been violated. Lawyers raise questions where appropriate and ensure that there is something that seems like justice. Judge Bell urged us to remind people what lawyers can do and have done.

In response to a question from a young lawyer, Judge Bell stressed that being involved in Bourne is valuable because there is something unique about being a black lawyer.

Bourne deals with issues that are not dealt with by the majority bar. Judge Bell pointed out the importance of mentoring new attorneys, which is a timely topic considering Bourne will present a CLE on mentoring at an upcoming meeting. Mark your calendars now for the May general membership meeting to be held on **May 18, 2006**, which will feature a **Mentoring CLE**. Topics covered will include: how to be a mentor, how to find a mentor, and how to benefit from a mentor. Thanks again to Judge Bell for sharing his thoughts and experiences with us.

In addition to mentoring attorneys, there are also mentoring opportunities available for Bourne members in the community. A new mentoring program in Montgomery County, designed for children involved in the Juvenile Court system, is seeking men and women of diverse backgrounds willing to make a one-year commitment to meet regularly with young people who are in need of consistent, supportive adult figures in their lives. Please contact me for further information.

I hope to see you "out and about" this month and I especially hope to see you at the next general membership meeting on **April 20, 2006 at 6:30 p.m. at the Greenbelt Community Center**.

Sharon V. Burrell, Esquire
President, JFB Bar Association

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The **JFB Newsletter Committee** strives to insure that the *JFB Newsletter* provides a valuable resource to its members. But we need your help. The Newsletter Committee invites your participation as a Committee member or as a contributor. We welcome articles and information on topics of interest to JFB members. For further information, please contact **Joel Braithwaite**. (See above.)

TUTORS NEEDED.

Tutors are needed for at-risk youth in the Youthbuild program which provides jobs and leadership and educational skills and training for young people between the ages of 16-21 years of age who have not finished school and have been in trouble. Most of the program's participants have recently taken the GED exam but many did not pass. The weakest areas are writing and math.

If you or anyone you know has some time in the morning during the week and feel that you can or are willing to assist with tutoring, or if you know someone who might be available, please contact Judge Clarke at (301) 952-4988 or call Ms. Jacobs at (301) 793-1219. If you contact Ms. Jacobs, please be sure you tell her you are responding to Judge Clarke's call for assistance.

DID YOU KNOW ... ?

Saturday, April 22, 2006: The Prince George's County Bar Association's Criminal Law Committee will conduct the Annual **Alan J. Goldstein Memorial Criminal Law Seminar** in the Jury Lounge of the Courthouse in Upper Marlboro.

Saturday, April 29, 2006:

JFB will again co-sponsor **Christmas in April**, a non-denominational volunteer program that repairs the homes of senior citizens who are either low-income and/or physically challenged. This year's homeowner is Ms. Wade of 7005 Bishop Drive, Capitol Heights, MD 20743. Volunteers are asked to arrive between 7:30-8:00 a.m. and to bring any cleaning, yard and painting supplies you can spare. Depending on the number of volunteers we should be done before 12:00 p.m. For further information, contact **Maurene Epps-Webb** at (301) 952-3644 or by e-mail at mewebb@co.pg.md.us

Saturday, May 6, 2006: Joint Prince George's County Bar Association and J. Franklyn Bourne Bar Association 6th Annual **Family Law Seminar**. Time 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Place: the

Jury Lounge of the Courthouse in Upper Marlboro. Cost: \$30 in advance; \$40 at the door.

Position available: The law firm of **McKennon Shelton & Henn LLP** in Baltimore is seeking an associate with 1 to 3 years experience in general corporate or finance. Send resumes to joy.placek@mshllp.com.

The JFB Board of Directors has elected **Lloyd A. Johnson** an honorary member of the JFB Bar Association, in recognition of his years of sustained service to the organization. Since relocating to Savannah, GA last fall, Lloyd has continued editing the JFB Newsletter. He will turn that task over to **Joel Braithwaite** in August.

Circuit Court for Prince George's County:

The Trial Courts Nominating Commission for Prince Georges County has forwarded the names of **Andre Chapedelaine; Judge Leo Green, Jr.; Judge Albert Northrop; Erik Nyce; Judge Beverly Woodard;** and **Judge Joel Worshtit** to **Gov. Robert Ehrlich** for appointment to the Circuit Court judicial vacancy created by the retirement of **Judge James Lombardi**.

District Court for Montgomery County:

The Trial Courts Nominating Commission for Montgomery

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY INN OF COURT

The Montgomery County Inn of Court, which aims to develop the ethical and trial advocacy skills of Montgomery County litigators, and usually has more qualified applicants than available vacancies, seeks to have a membership that reflects a rich diversity in race, gender, ethnic background, and practice specialty.

The Inn meets on the second Tuesday of the month from September through May in Rockville, for a social hour and dinner, followed by an educational presentation in the Circuit Court. The Inn offers trial advocacy programs, accentuating legal excellence, civility, professionalism and ethics.

Applications are now available and may be obtained from Kathy Parker, Secretary to **Judge John W. Debelius, III**, Circuit Court for Montgomery County, 50 Maryland Avenue, Room 901, Rockville, MD 20850, telephone number: (240) 777-

9212, email: kparker@mccourt.com, or **Dorothy Fait**, Membership Chair of the Inn, One Church Street, Suite 800, Rockville, MD 20850, (301) 251-0100, email: dfait@faitandwise.com. Complete applications must be returned no later than June 1, 2006.

The *JFB Newsletter* is published monthly except July. All rights are reserved but articles may be reprinted without permission, provided proper credit is given. JFB members receive this newsletter at no cost. Statements expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the **J. Franklyn Bourne Bar Association, Inc.** or its officers.

The *JFB Newsletter* invites letters and articles. Submissions should be sent by E-mail, in MS Word format, to LloydAJohnson@comcast.net. Editor reserves the right to shorten any submissions to meet space limitations. Deadline is the 29th of each month.

J. FRANKLYN BOURNE BAR ASSOCIATION, INC.
P.O. Box 1121
Upper Marlboro, MD 20773-1121

Important Dates to Remember

General Membership Meeting

Thurs., April 20th; 6:30 p.m.
Greenbelt Community Center
15 Crescent Road
Greenbelt, MD 20770

Christmas in April

Sat., April 29th, 8:00 a.m.
7005 Bishop Drive,
Capitol Heights, MD 20743

DID YOU KNOW ... ? (Continued)



(Continued from page 3.)

County has forwarded the names of **John M. Conroy; Gary L. Crawford; Dorothy R. Fait; John Lavigne; David W. Lease; Cheryl A. McCally; James B. Sarsfield; Brian D. Shefferman; William G.**

Simmons; and **Steven VanGrack** for appointment to the four District Court vacancies created by the retirements of **Judge Cornelius Vaughey** and **Judge Louis Harrington** and the elevation of **Judge Michael Algeo** and **Judge Thomas Cra-ven** to the Circuit Court.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION



The **J. Franklyn Bourne Bar Assoc. Inc.** is committed to legal excellence, community service, and the advancement of African-American minorities in the legal profession. Our membership consists primarily of African-American attorneys who

live and/or work in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties.

Membership classes are:

Active: Licensed to practice law in Maryland. Dues: admitted to the Bar for less than 5 years — \$25; all others — \$50.

Associate: Licensed in *any other jurisdiction*, who lives in Montgomery or Prince George's County. Dues: admitted to the Bar for less than 5 years — \$25; all others — \$50.

Student: Matriculated at a Washington metropolitan area law school *or* lives in Montgomery or Prince George's County and matriculated in any law school. Dues: \$5.

New Admittees: Admitted to practice in Maryland in the last 12 months. Dues waived.

For membership applications, contact **William A. Snoddy** by e-mail at wasnoddy@hotmail.com.