

# NEWSLETTER

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

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

<i>From the President</i>	1
<i>Oratorical Contest</i>	1
<i>Did You Know?</i>	3
<i>Volunteer Tax Help Needed</i>	4
<i>Membership</i>	4

## JFB Board of Directors

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



William A. Snoddy

H a p p y New Year! I trust you all had a joyous holiday. If you are like me you have made a resolution or two or more. I hope one of your resolutions is to become more active in our Bar Association or the community at large. Lawyers have always been at the forefront of improving the lives of people in need. Now, more than ever, there is a need for the best of us to assist the least of us.

Recently, I read where predatory lenders are taking advantage of desperate homeowners facing foreclosure. In one case, an elderly District man unwittingly sold his home, which was appraised at \$255,000,

for less than \$17,000. Worse still, he remains responsible for the mortgage he was struggling to pay and he has to fork over \$500-a-month rent to the company that bought his home. Fortunately, lawyers associated with **AARP** and the law firm of **Hogan & Hartson** are assisting the gentleman and two others who were similarly duped. Since the summer, the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation has reportedly investigated five cases of alleged rescue fraud. It issued a consumer alert in the fall.

This is but one example of an area where a lawyer's services can truly "rescue" someone in need. There are many other areas where your contributions can make a difference. During his keynote address at the Scholarship Awards Banquet, **Judge Roger L. Gregory**

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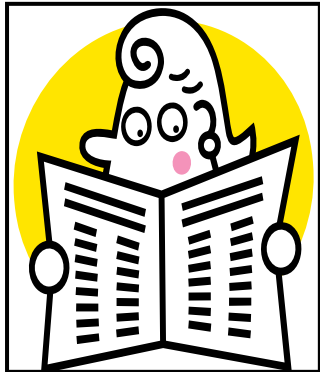
## ORATORICAL CONTEST on FEBRUARY 25th .



2004 Oratory Winners pose with , D. Michael Lyles, Debra Davis, Maurene Epps-Webb

**Judge Hassan A. El-Amin**, on behalf of the High School Oratorical Contest Committee, has announced that JFB's **Third Annual High School Oratorical Contest** will be held on *Saturday, February 26<sup>th</sup>* at 10:00 a.m. at Eleanor Roosevelt High School Auditorium, 7601 Hanover Parkway, Greenbelt, MD.

(Continued on page 2)



### JFB Newsletter Committee

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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 **Sharon V. Burrell** or **Lloyd A. Johnson**. (See above.)

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK (Cont.)

(continued from page 1)

pointed out the dichotomy between the performance of the Prince George's County Public Schools and the relative prosperity of the County's residents. Certainly, we can commit some minutes to mentoring students in the public school systems in Prince George's and Montgomery. The **Law Foundation of Prince George's County** is always looking for lawyers to take *pro bono* cases or to volunteer at its clinics.

I wish you all a happy and prosperous new year. I hope you will resolve to share the prosperity of your training and education with those who need but may not be able to afford your services. J. Franklyn Bourne will help you get started. This year, we will renew the "**Ask a Lawyer**" program where members provide brief consultations with persons needing answers to their legal

questions. The program will be again be spearheaded by **Judge Herman C. Dawson** of the Circuit Court for Prince George's County.

Last month, I asked you to let me and/or members of the Executive Board know how JFB could better serve you. We want to know what services/activities you would like Bourne to offer; what changes, if any, would make it more likely that you would attend meetings; and what suggestions you have for how Bourne can meet your needs and/or expectations. I look forward to meeting and speaking with you at the next **general membership meeting** at the Greenbelt Community Center at 6:30 p.m. on **Thursday, January 20, 2005** where we will address your and my expectations for the Bar.

William A. Snoddy, Esquire  
President, JFB Bar Assoc.

## ORATORICAL CONTEST (Continued)

(Continued from page 1)

High schools in Prince George's and Montgomery Counties are being notified of the contest and that the topic of debate will be: "*Bill Cosby's Comments on Black Parenting: On Point or Off Base?*"

The winning contestant will receive a \$1,000 college scholarship.



Organizers & judges of 2004 Oratory contest.

Last year, **Charles H. Flowers High School** of Springdale made a clean sweep of the competition, winning first, second and third places. See accompanying photo. Will Flowers H.S. repeat its winning ways this year?

The Committee invites members and others who wish to assist in this important program to its next meeting in Judge El-Amin's chambers conference room at 4:30 p.m. on **Tuesday, January 18<sup>th</sup>** in Room 250-B of the Prince George's County Courthouse in Upper Marlboro. Committee members, in addition to Judge El-Amin, include **Anu Kemet, D. Michael Lyles, Donna Shepherd and Kanika Johnson**. For further information contact Kanika Johnson at (301) 780-8182 or by e-mail at [kanika.johnson@courts.state.md.us](mailto:kanika.johnson@courts.state.md.us).

**DID YOU KNOW?.**

**SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS BANQUET**—Our **President-Elect Sharon V. Burrell**, who also serves as Chair of JFB's Banquet Committee, has already started preparing for JFB's **Annual Scholarship Awards Banquet** on *Thursday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>* at the Martin's

Crosswinds in Greenbelt, MD. The Committee will consider new ways of enhancing the Banquet and is actively inviting members and others to serve on the Committee. Since November will soon be upon us, we need to start planning now. If you are interested in some good fellowship and rewarding work with the Committee, please contact Sharon at (240) 777- 6722 or by e-mail at [Sharon.Burrell@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Sharon.Burrell@montgomerycountymd.gov).

**JOIN THE JFB LISTSERVE – NOW.** In an effort to continually improve our communication with and among JFB membership, JFB has established a Yahoo Group ListServ. To register on the JFB's Yahoo Group ListServ, navigate to [www.bournebar.org](http://www.bournebar.org) and double-click the icon on the left. The JFB ListServ is secure and will ensure that all JFB members regularly receive timely information on JFB activities.

The ListServ is restricted to paid/active JFB members only. You must identify yourself as a JFB member at the time you register – and then be confirmed as such by our Webmaster.

**MARYLAND'S PRO BONO CENTER** will sponsor the annual **Maryland Partners for Justice Conference** on *Wednesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>* and promises an extraordinary exchange of information, experiences, ideas and strategies about access to justice issues and the delivery of services to the indigent. For further information, contact Steve Blume at (410) 837-9379 or by e-mail at [sblume@probonomd.org](mailto:sblume@probonomd.org).

**BLACK ALUMNI CONFERENCE** — Georgetown University Law Center will hold its inaugural **Black Alumni Conference** at the Law Center on 600 New Jersey Avenue, Washington, DC on the weekend of *February 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>*. The Conference will feature special panel discussions, a networking reception and a formal banquet. Keynote addresses will be delivered by former New

Orleans Mayor, **Mark Morial** (Law, 1983) and former GULC Dean, **David Wilmot** (Law 1973). For more information contact [blackalumni-conf@law.georgetown.org](mailto:blackalumni-conf@law.georgetown.org)

**PRO BONO AND IOLTA FILING DEADLINE February 15<sup>th</sup>** – Apropos JFB President William Snoddy's message in this Newsletter, remember that all lawyers licensed to practice law in Maryland must fulfill two important reporting requirements each year — Pro Bono and IOLTA. To eliminate confusion, the *filing deadlines (February 15<sup>th</sup>)* and mailings for these two reporting requirements have been combined into a single mailing that has already been sent to Maryland lawyers. Although attorneys may return the forms by mail, *online filing is strongly encouraged*.

**Pro Bono Reporting Requirement** - Maryland Rule 16-903 requires Maryland attorneys to report on any *pro bono* activities they engaged in during the prior calendar year. The reports are confidential and failure to file a timely *pro bono* report can result in decertification.

Although reporting is mandatory, there is no mandatory service requirement. However, Rule 6.1 of the Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct suggests that full-time practicing attorneys provide 50 hours of service *pro bono publico* each year.

For more information about the Pro Bono Reporting Process, and other information about the Maryland Judiciary's initiatives to promote pro bono service among the Maryland Bar, visit <http://www.courts.state.md.us/probono/index.html>.

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 FAX to (301) 809-0921 or by E-mail, in MS Word format, to [lloydajohnson@comcast.net](mailto: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 Date to Remember**

**General Membership Meeting**

Thurs., January 20th, 6:30 p.m.

Greenbelt Community Center

15 Crescent Road

Greenbelt, MD 20770

**3rd Annual Oratorical Contest**

Sat., February 26th, 1000 a.m.

Eleanor Roosevelt H.S. Auditorium

7601 Hanover Pkwy

Greenbelt, MD 20770

**VOLUNTEER TAX ASSISTANCE NEEDED!**

**Look no further for online income tax training!** The IRS' **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)** is a nationwide program which provides simplified on-line training for anyone wishing to volunteer to help low-income, elderly, disabled, and limited-English individuals – as well as members of the military – prepare their income tax returns this filing season. The income tax training requirements are easier to complete than ever before and now they can be completed from the comfort of your own home or office!

VITA provides free assistance to individuals who require assistance in preparing their tax returns and cannot afford the services of a paid professional tax preparer. For the upcoming tax filing season, the VITA program will need more assistance than ever before. Please choose to volunteer.

For more information visit the website of the Pro Bono Committee of the **American Bar Association's Section on Taxation**.  
<http://www.abanet.org/tax/vita/>

**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 **Lloyd A. Johnson** at (301) 367-5115 or by e-mail at [LloydAJohnson@comcast.net](mailto:LloydAJohnson@comcast.net).