

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



William A. Snoddy

JFB had a great February. We heard from both our own Black History figure and from some potential future Black History figures.

The month began with our annual **joint meeting with the Prince George's County Bar Association** at the U.S. District Court in Greenbelt. If you were not there, you missed JFB's founding president and **U.S. District Judge Alexander Williams, Jr.'s** informative discussion on the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA) and its present day implications. We ended the month with our fourth **Oratorical Contest**, which featured our largest and strongest field of competitors from high schools in Prince George's

and Montgomery Counties debating **Bill Cosby's** much-discussed comments on parenting skills of economically-disadvantaged African-Americans.

After recounting the history of events that led to the passage of the VRA, Judge Williams cited several contemporary issues that impact the law, particularly the disenfranchisement of convicted felons.

Judge Williams, the first elected African-American State's Attorney for Prince George's County, pointed out that African-Americans constitute about one-half of about approximately of 4 million persons who are disenfranchised as a result of having a felony conviction. Yet 13 states, *including Maryland*, ban felons from voting. He advised that we keep an eye on *Muntaqim v. Coombe*, challenging

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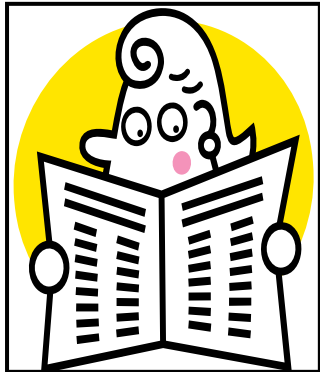
ORATORICAL CONTEST ANOTHER SUCCESS!



JFB Oratorical contest winners flanked by JFB President William A. Snoddy and Committee Chair, Judge Hassan El-Amin.

JFB's **Fourth Annual Oratorical Contest** on February 26th was again a success as 15 high school students competed for scholarship awards before a spirited audience at Eleanor Roosevelt High School, Greenbelt, MD.

Kudos to the student competitors and the Oratorical Contest Committee for a job well done.



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK (Cont.)

(continued from page 1)

New York's felon disenfranchisement statute. Although a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit affirmed the dismissal on summary judgment of an inmate's claim that the statute violated the VRA, the Court has granted a rehearing *en banc*. So stay tuned.

Many thanks, Judge Williams, for your thoughtful and informative exposition on the VRA.

Shame on you if you did not come out to our **Fourth Annual Oratorical Contest** at Eleanor Roosevelt H.S. in Greenbelt, MD, where 15 high schoolers competed for three college scholarships. They did not disappoint. The students were challenged to address the topic: "*Bill Cosby's Comments on Black Parenting: On Point or Off Base?*" Interestingly, the contestants – peers of the children about whom Cosby spoke – overwhelmingly agreed with Dr. Cosby's assessment about what ails "the lower economic people [who] are not holding up there end in this deal."

I did not envy **Judge James Salmon, Judge Michele Hotten** and attorney **Franklin M. Lee**, who had to select the winners from among a stellar crop of competitors. Committee chair, **Judge Hassan A. El-Amin** and the committee members should be commended for once again putting together a first-class event, which only gets better each year. I look forward to next year's installment.

I also look forward to seeing you at next week's **general membership meeting at the Greenbelt Community Center on March 17** and future JFB events activities. Our March meeting will feature judges from the Prince George's County Circuit and District Courts who will provide "Practical Tips for Practitioners." At our **April meeting**, we will have a joint meeting with the NAACP. In May, the JFB Scholarship Fund will co-sponsor a **golf tournament** with the Monumental Bar Foundation.

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

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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.)

UPDATE ON JFB SCHOLARSHIP BANQUET.

As was reported in the January newsletter, JFB's Banquet Committee has already started preparing for what will be Bourne's Twenty-first Annual Scholarship Awards Banquet to be held on **Thursday, November 3rd at Martin's Crosswinds** in Greenbelt, Maryland. Although we are interested in considering news ways to make our Banquet more enjoyable, some tried and true components will remain the same, such as a distinguished keynote speaker.

Already we have extended an invitation to a prominent speaker and

are eagerly awaiting what we hope will be a favorable response. We'll keep you posted. A deposit has also been given to Martin's.

Immediately following our March general membership meeting on March 17th, the committee will hold a brief meeting to discuss assignments and future meeting dates. All are invited and encouraged to attend. If you have any questions or suggestions please contact Committee chair **Sharon V. Burrell** by phone at (240) 777-6722 or by e-mail at sharon.burrell@montgomerycountymd.gov.

DID YOU KNOW?.

JFB stalwart, **Judge Hassan El-Amin**, of the District Court of Maryland for Prince George's County, recently received the Community Service Award from the Council on American-Islamic Relations.

JFB President William A. Snoddy has moved to the Montgomery County Attorney's Office where he is assigned to the Montgomery County Police Department. William may be reached via e-mail at wasnoddy@hotmail.com.

Mark your calendar for *Saturday, March 19th* for the **Annual Goldstein Criminal Law**

Seminar in the Jury Assembly Room of the Circuit Court for Prince George's County, Upper Marlboro. This is an excellent opportunity for judges, defense attorneys, and prosecutors from around the state to get together and listen to experts discuss new developments in the criminal law.

JFB membership dues invoices for the 2005 program year have been mailed to each JFB member who paid her or his dues for the 2004 program year. If you haven't received your invoice or have any questions or concerns about your membership status, contact our treasurer, **Robin Bright** by phone at (301) 952-3500 or by e-mail at rdbright@co.pg.md.us or Membership Committee Chair, **Lloyd A. Johnson** by phone at (301) 367-5115 or via e-mail at lloydajohnson@comcast.net.

THERE'S A JFB COMMITTEE WAITING FOR YOU!

The JFB Bar Association serves our African-American communities in Montgomery and Prince George's counties through a varied and active network of committees. Please review the below listed committees and consider offering your talents. If you would like more information about a specific committee's duties, projects and meetings, contact its chairperson without further delay.

Membership Committee - Lloyd A. Johnson. E-mail: LloydBowie@comcast.net or phone: (301) 367-5115.

Banquet Committee - Sharon Burrell E-mail: sharon.burrell@montgomerycountymd.gov or phone: (240) 777-6722.

Judicial Nominating Committee - Debra M. Davis E-mail: dmdlaw@erols.com or phone (301) 899-9400 and **Michael Banks** E-mail: bankslaw2001@netzero.net or phone (301) 251-9161.

Newsletter Committee - Sharon Burrell E-mail: sharon.burrell@montgomerycountymd.gov or phone (240) 777-6722.

By-laws Committee - Maurene Epps Webb E-mail: mewebb@co.pg.md.us or phone (301) 952-5181.

Oratorical Contest—Hon. Hassan El-Amin E-mail Hassan.el-amin@courts.state.md.us.

Long-range planning - D. Michael Lyles E-mail: dmlyles@co.pg.md.us or phone (301) 952-5585 and **Arthur Horne** E-mail: AHorne9291@aol.com or phone (301) 925-1800.

CLE Committee - Adrienne Morgan E-mail: almorgan@co.pg.md.us or phone (301) 952-5240.

New Admittees Committee — Joseph Wright E-mail: JLWright@co.pg.md.us or by phone (301) 952-3500.

Elections Committee - George Simms E-mail: george.simms@montgomerycountymd.gov or phone (240) 777-7383.

Fundraising Committee - Garland Stillwell - E-mail: Garland.Stillwell@shawpittman.com or phone (202) 663-8147.

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. 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., March 17th, 6:30 p.m.

Greenbelt Community Center

15 Crescent Road

Greenbelt, MD 20770

PRINCE GEORGE'S JUDICIAL VACANCY.

March 14th is the deadline for filing applications to fill the forthcoming judicial vacancy in the District Court of Maryland for Prince George's county. The vacancy results from the pending retirement of **Judge Joseph B. Brown**. Applicants must submit a Confidential Personal Data Questionnaire to the Administrative Office of the Courts. The Questionnaire and instructions are available at <http://www.courts.state.md.us/judgeselect/judgeappl.html>.

JFB's Judicial Nominations Committee will arrange to interview and recommend applicants for the position well before the **Trial Courts Nominating Commission** meets to consider applicants on May 9, 2005. If you are interested in participating in the judicial selection process, contact **Debra M. Davis** at dmdlaw@erols.com or by telephone at (301) 899-9400.

Contact **Deborah Unitus** at (410) 260-1256 or **Linda Etzold** at (410) 260-1271 with any questions or for information concerning deadlines.

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.