



OCTOBER 2020



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"As our community changes all around us, it is inevitable that the WCBA has to change, too." That was written by our previous President, and now United

States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit Judge, Danielle J. Hunsaker in the September 2017 newsletter. While the circumstances relating to the statement were vastly different than those we face today, we are again at a crossroad of how to make sure we are serving members through technology.

During the last few months, the WCBA has continued to meet with the goal of better facilitating our member's needs during the ongoing pandemic. In the coming months, the Board will be holding several discussions focused on the new work-life balance and how, as lawyers, we can continue serving our client's needs using technology. We are also revisiting the newsletter format and method of dissemination to make sure members are receiving the best and most timely information.

Announcements from the court will continue. We strive to send these announcements to members via email and Facebook updates as soon as we receive them. We are cognizant that many rely on our announcements and will continue to make these a priority. Please "like" us on Facebook because we are posting information regarding the court and other news of interest to Washington County attorneys on a regular basis. If you have something you would like to post, please mail it to [admin@wcbabar.org](mailto:admin@wcbabar.org).

During a time of hardship, voluntary community service is in high need. There have been several announcements relating to serving our community and members faced with hardship brought by the pandemic and fires. If you have any questions about how you can help, please let us know.

Moving forward, we are encouraging individuals to register and renew their WCBA membership electronically.

## COMING EVENTS

- No in-person events currently scheduled.

## WCBA CONTACTS

<b>President:</b>	Ralph Gzik
<b>President-elect:</b>	Tyler Beach
<b>Secretary:</b>	Mindy Stannard
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Ben Evans
<b>Directors:</b>	Gabe Biello Laura Burgee Kate Glasson Rachael Gray James Jensen Bryce Kaufman Matthew McKean Miranda Summer Adam Thayne
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.wcbabar.org">www.wcbabar.org</a>
<b>Emails:</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@wcbabar.org">admin@wcbabar.org</a> <a href="mailto:newsletter@wcbabar.org">newsletter@wcbabar.org</a>

In the past, a number of members renewed in person at the CLE's, events, or other meetings. We will be restarting events as soon as it is safe to do so and will let all members know when that decision is made. In the meantime, we are striving to use technology to serve our members and appreciate the on-going support of our members .

Ralph E. Gzik  
WCBA President



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Washington County Bar

# BECKY MEHRINGER'S RETIREMENT DENIED BY CIRCUIT COURT... WE WISH

Kate Glasson

This December, Deputy District Attorney Becky Mehringer plans to retire from her career in the law. When I told other members of the WCBA board that she was retiring their responses were on two themes: 1) Becky is wonderful, we are really going to miss her; and, 2) we want her job. A longtime leader with the WCBA, Becky has been an asset to the Washington County legal community. On the eve of her retirement, she was willing to share with us some of the pivotal moments and anecdotes of her life and career.

Becky grew up knowing she wanted to be a lawyer. Her father, who was the District Attorney of Washington County in the mid-60s before being appointed to District then Circuit Court, would tell courtroom stories around the dinner table. While not always appropriate for young ears, those stories instilled in her the desire to practice law. Becky took the first step in that direction at the University of Oregon where she graduated with a degree in political science. There, she met Tom Mehringer, a Navy Pilot, married him, and moved to California. While in California, she attended night law school at Santa Clara University while working full-time.

She worked for Dewey E. Turner, Esq., an older attorney in Palo Alto, California. At his practice, Becky worked her way from secretary, to paralegal, and finally to attorney. During her six years with Mr. Turner, she learned about probate, bankruptcy, family law, adoption, and domestic violence. Becky remembers typing wills by hand and listening to dictation on a tiny cassette and convincing Mr. Turner to use a word processor for payroll by the time she left him. Becky will also never forget the thrill of typing her mock trial brief on a computer. Previously, using a typewriter, the process was grueling and included a lot of typing, cutting, pasting, taping, and retyping to arrive at a final product.

When Becky passed the California Bar in 1988, she promptly moved to Maine following her husband's Navy career. In Maine, she worked with a Chapter 13 Bankruptcy Trustee until her first son was born. She took, and passed, the Maine Bar when her son was eight months old and then worked for a small firm in Brunswick, Maine, where she practiced bankruptcy and civil litigation. Her first big win was a case against Snap On Tools, but, like, most of us, she remembers more about her biggest loss. Becky had filed a lawsuit against a company that built a rural road in Maine and her biggest problem, as it turned out, was that her client was from New Hampshire. After a trial where she lined up bags of dirt on the judge's

bench to demonstrate how wood debris, rather than dirt, was used in the construction of the road the judge found for the opposing side. The judge, over a beer after trial, told her that there was nothing wrong with her case – just her client – and he was never going to find for an out-of-state landowner.



The arrival of her second son forced Becky to leave her job in Brunswick. She reminds us all that there was no maternity leave and she worked for 15 years as a stay at home mom while her family moved from California to Florida, to Maine, to Texas, to Virginia, back to Texas, and to Maryland for their last tour.

That period is marked with memories of "wives clubs" meetings, substitute teaching, and participation in foster care. When Tom retired as a Captain, and the Commander of a Test Squadron at Patuxent River, Maryland, the Mehringers moved back to Oregon.

While making plans to move back to Oregon, Becky's dad told her about some openings in the DA's Office. While home on a visit, Becky remembers putting on her best "jumper" and walking into the DA's Office to ask if someone was willing to meet with her about the open positions. She left her youngest in the waiting room with his Gameboy and made him promise not to move. Jeff Lesowski met with Becky and she isn't sure if it was her jumper or her dad being a sitting Washington County judge but he gave her a chance and the next step was a phone call from Diane McBratney about a position with the Child Support Division.

While she was back in Maryland, she had her first ever phone interview with Ms. McBratney. The interview focused on the following three questions: 1) are you willing to answer your own phones?; 2) do you mind getting yelled at?; and 3) will you promise to stay at least two years? Her answers must have been yes, no, and yes because she later received a call from Bob Hermann offering her the job.

Becky flew back to take the Oregon Bar and then her family drove cross-county arriving August 3, 2005. Two days later, she started with Child Support and she has no regrets about her work there. The office currently handles about 5500 cases and is one of the top collectors in the state. She is proud of her office's reputation for customer service including helping the non-customers like the private bar and court system. Becky will miss the daily calls or visits from court staff, the Family Law Assistance Center, and the private bar the most. Her philosophy is that the office would not be as successful as they are if they didn't work together as a team.

For ten years, Becky served with the WCBA. She was



encouraged by Sue Lain (Hobach) and started in 2010 as secretary. She also served as president, taking over for Keith Rogers when he was appointed to the bench, and then served her own term. Becky values the community and maintaining contact with private practitioners. During her career she also served on the House of Delegates for the Oregon State Bar.

Becky plans to kick off her retirement by traveling. Her military moves did not allow for the leisurely and scenic travel she would have preferred. When she is ready to settle down from her travels she plans to connect with and volunteer for the Family Law Assistance Center and the Boy Scouts, the latter of which she has served for the last 17 years. Becky loves giving courthouse tours and teaching scouts about citizenship. She loves the opportunity to instill in the scouts a sense of civic responsibility and understanding of why the laws are there and believes it helps them become better adults. Which brings her full circle to where her career started, with stories around the dinner table. Although she will probably save the inappropriate stories for her family.

Please join me in thanking Becky for her years of service to the bar and wishing her the best during her retirement.



## JUST GETTING STARTED PRACTICING IN OREGON (OR NEED A REFRESHER)?

Save the date for "Learning the Ropes," the annual PLF program for new admittees to the Oregon State Bar and lawyers entering private practice in Oregon. We are excited to be able to offer this program to attorneys statewide via Zoom this year. The program will be held October 27-30, 2020.

The entire seminar has been approved for 15.25 MCLE credits: 9.25 Practical Skills Credits (Oregon Practice and Procedure); 2 Oregon Ethics Credits; 3 Introductory Access to Justice Credits; and 1 Mental Health/Substance Use Credit. Attendance at the full program will satisfy MCLE requirements for new admittees' first reporting period.

The webinar will be free of charge. In addition to the educational content, the program will include breakout meetings to interact with judges, attorneys from different practice areas, bar leaders, and representatives from the Professional Liability Fund, the Oregon Attorney Assistance Program, and the Oregon State Bar.

Registration opened in early September. Check the PLF website, [www.osbplf.org](http://www.osbplf.org), for updates in the fall.

If you have any questions, please email DeAnna Shields at the Professional Liability Fund, at [deannas@osbplf.org](mailto:deannas@osbplf.org).

## WCBA DONATES FACIAL COVERINGS TO PROMOTE THE "MASK UP" EFFORT TO WASHINGTON COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT

James Jensen

In response to the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and in an effort to stop the spread of the virus at the Washington County Courthouse, the Washington County Bar Association recently donated facial coverings to the court. Accepting the facial coverings on behalf of the Washington County Circuit Court was Judge Oscar Garcia. With the current mandates requiring court participants to wear facial coverings, the Washington County Bar Association believes that this donation of facial coverings can help court participants comply with the mask requirements. Even more importantly, the main goal is to provide court participants with masks and keep everyone who goes to court healthy and safe.

COVID-19 has posed an unforeseen challenge for everyone who works in the courts in any capacity. It is encouraging to see those who come to the Washington County Courthouse do their part and comply with the mask requirements. Hearings, trials, and other court proceedings are often adversarial in nature. That said, everyone in the Washington County legal community can agree that we have a common goal in preventing the spread of COVID-19. The Washington County Bar Association encourages all those attending court proceedings to continue to "mask up" to prevent the spread of COVID-19.



# CLACKAMAS LAW LIBRARY HELPS WITH PROPERTY DOCUMENTS

## Washington County Law Library

Our neighbors in Clackamas County made the news recently after helping a resident address racist language in their property documents. Pamplin Media's *Lake Oswego Review* reported on the experience of a local high school teacher who started the process of removing racist language from his covenants, conditions and restrictions (CC&Rs). According to the article "[How easy is it to remove racist language from property documents?](#)" (August 15, 2020), the law library helped him find information on civil process and statutes, and examples of documents. The Washington County Law Library recently fielded the same question and managed to borrow from our colleagues' work.

### New CLEs and Titles

In Washington County we don't have anything that exciting to report. However, we have some new CLE titles just in time for the end of the reporting year:

- 2019 Bridging the Disability Gap - Making Your Practice and Workplace More Accessible, Improving Your Communication with Clients and Colleagues
- 2019 Data Security/Data Breach: What Every Lawyer Needs to Know to Protect Client Information
- 2019 Learning The Ropes
- 27th Annual Litigation Institute and Retreat
- Advanced Advising and Advocacy for Nonprofit Entities
- Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementia: The Pandemic Affecting Your Practice—2019 Update
- At the Crossroads of Ethics and Practice Management
- Basic Estate Planning for Oregon Taxable Estates
- Broadbrush Taxation: Tax Law for Non-Tax Lawyers
- Business Law 2019: Refreshing the Old and Learning

### Classified Advertising Rates

50 or fewer words	\$20	51-100 words	\$40
101-150 words	\$60	151-200 words	\$80

Over 200 words, a quote will be provided upon request.

Classified ads must be prepaid.

### Display Advertising Rates

Business card size (3.5" w x 2" h)	\$30
1/4 page (3.6" w x 4.75" h)	\$60
1/2 page (7.5" w x 4.75" h)	\$90

Purchaser is responsible for providing a properly sized image at the desired resolution.

Please submit your classified text or display ad in JPEG format to: [newsletter@wcbabar.org](mailto:newsletter@wcbabar.org).

Pay for your ad at: [mkt.com/wcba](http://mkt.com/wcba)

### What's New—Practical Updates for Business Lawyers

- Controversial Issues in Mediation
- Employment Law and Conscientious Communication
- Ethical Misadventures in the Practice of Law
- Ethics - The Sweet and Sour of Solo and Small
- Fundamentals of Oregon Civil Trial Procedure
- Increasing Access to Justice Through Trauma Informed Lawyering
- Intellectual Property Review—Updates and Changes from 2019
- Law Firm Branding It's Not Your Logo It's Your Life
- Meeting Crisis in Your Practice
- More Than Just a Click: Automating the Client Intake Process
- Nuts-and-Bolts Issues for Smoothly Closing Your Law Practice
- Solo and Small Firm Conference 2019: Success Beyond Tech
- Stay Ahead of the Curve: Tips for Maintaining an Organized Office
- Using Your Resilient Lawyer Brain to Overcome Life's Challenges

Other new titles include:

- Black's Law Dictionary, 11th ed.
- The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America
- The Limits of Presidential Power: A Citizen's Guide to the Law

The [Washington County Law Library](#) is a free legal research resource for all. Contact: (503) 846-8880, or [lawlibrary@co.washington.or.us](mailto:lawlibrary@co.washington.or.us).

## GETTING TO KNOW THE BAR – SORAN LAW

Soran Law is a solo-practice firm located in downtown Hillsboro that began in July of 2020. Cameron Soran specializes in five areas: startup formation, business transactions, real estate, civil litigation, and estate planning. Cameron sees his role as attorney in these practice areas as "facilitating the engines behind 10,000 years of human development." Engines that in his opinion play a pivotal role in Washington County, ranging from computer hardware development to growing clover, but all stem from allowing people to create, manage, and resolve disputes related to businesses. Cameron operates his practice almost entirely through cloud-based applications, and is a well-respected author in the world of college football Xs & Os (see e.g., his book *The Pass Coverage Glossary*).

# PANDEMIC PROCEDURE: SUCCESSFULLY APPEARING IN COURT BY REMOTE MEANS

Adam R. Thayne

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has brought many changes to Oregon court procedures. Those changes have affected how attorneys and litigants prepare for court, how hearings are held, and even where we sit in a courtroom. While many hearings are still held in person, the Oregon Supreme Court (and other local courts) has approved the use of technology for virtual court appearances in certain types of hearings. Chief Justice Order No. 20-028, for example, provides that "A Presiding Judge may direct or permit any arraignment or category of arraignment to be conducted by remote means." As a result, many courts are allowing criminal arraignments to occur remotely. Certain family law hearings are similarly taking place via remote means, amongst other types of hearings. This change in how we appear at hearings has led attorneys to prepare differently for virtual hearings than for in-person hearings. The following are tips designed to help attorneys and their clients successfully navigate appearing in court through virtual means:

1. Test your internet connection and setup with a test meeting before your scheduled hearing.
2. If appearing through a mobile device, make sure your phone or tablet is charged.
3. Use a headset or headphones with a built-in microphone if you have one that works with your device.
4. Make sure you have all paperwork you might need to look at during the hearing easily accessible.
5. Before joining your hearing, set yourself up in the most private, quiet place you have so you can hear and be heard during the court proceeding.
6. Dress in a soft, solid color and sit in front of a solid neutral background, if possible. Be sure to avoid a distracting background.
7. Check your lighting – avoid very bright or very dark rooms, or a bright light behind you.
8. If using a phone or tablet, try to securely prop up your phone so you can look directly at it without holding it by hand.
9. Pause before speaking just in case there is an audio/video lag.
10. Mute yourself when you are not speaking in order to avoid background noise.
11. When speaking, look directly at the webcam (not at the screen).
12. Make sure to identify yourself prior to speaking if open-

ended discussion is occurring.

13. If there are technology issues, have a backup plan. Get a direct-line phone number to court staff in advance of the hearing and have that accessible in case the technology goes awry.
14. Send any necessary paperwork (exhibits, petitions, etc.) to the court at least 48 hours prior to the hearing.
15. Remember that no matter where you are physically, you are "in" a courtroom. The court will expect appropriate attire from all parties appearing virtually.

In addition to knowing these tips, attorneys should be prepared to help their clients understand them as well. According to Rule 1.1 of the Oregon Rules of Professional Conduct, attorneys are to provide competent representation to their clients, and "[c]ompetent representation requires the legal knowledge, skill, thoroughness, and preparation reasonably necessary for the representation." Part of the "thoroughness" and "preparation" involves not just presenting legal arguments but knowing the hearing logistics. Just as clients look to their attorneys for guidance on appearing in court in person, clients will also look to their attorneys for help on how to appear in court remotely. A discussion with the client about these tips and the "ebb and flow" of court hearings can be very helpful. For example, if a client is to appear in court for a phone hearing, the client should be instructed on how to call in to the court (or how to receive the court's call) and when to speak. Attorneys can assist in the smooth operation of court hearings by preparing their clients ahead of the hearing.

Given the uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, remote hearings will likely be here to stay for at least the foreseeable future. While hearings involving technology can be daunting, some preparation can go a long way in assuring that remote hearings take place as seamlessly as possible.

[The writer wishes to acknowledge and thank Michigan Legal Help for many of the tips presented.]

## CLASSIFIEDS

Beaverton attorney office building for over 40 years on S.W. 2nd and Tucker has a 2nd floor office available with shared building reception area, library, conference room and parking. \$450 monthly or longer lease an option. Nine sole practitioners in building with some overflow/referral. Call Sheila at (503) 641-7888 or email [sheilawagnon@lawyer.com](mailto:sheilawagnon@lawyer.com).

## YOUR JOB HERE

The WCBA offers basic job listings at no charge!

Please send your plain text job information to [newsletter@wcbabar.org](mailto:newsletter@wcbabar.org). Free postings must be 50 words or less and may be edited for length.

**WASHINGTON COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION****2020-2021 DUES**

The WCBA is a local association of lawyers serving Washington County practitioners. It provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and for local bar members to voice their views on matters of importance to their everyday practice. Consider the benefits of low-cost membership. You will receive the WCBA Newsletter which keeps you informed (and sometimes entertained) on updated information from Washington County Judges, various bar committees, monthly CLE Programs, social dinners & activities, the law library, etc. The Newsletter is also an excellent and inexpensive place for advertising and classifieds.

- Discount on monthly CLE programs and materials.
- Discount on monthly dinner meetings with speakers or opportunities to express your views and become informed directly from practitioners.
- Events and Committees for relaxation, networking and socializing with your colleagues.
  - Leadership opportunities and community service.

Membership Dues: **\$100 per year** (September 2020-August 2021)

(Note: new members have this fee waived for the first year!)

Payable to: **Washington County Bar Association (WCBA)**

PO Box 912

Hillsboro, OR 97123

- You can pay by credit card online by visiting: <https://mkt.com/wcba>
- If mailing your payment, please complete and return this form with your payment to the above address.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ OSB # \_\_\_\_\_

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**One Application per attorney**

\_\_\_\_\_ New Member      Referred by: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Renewing Member