

UpFront

By Naseem Stecker and Mike Eidelbes

LAW DAY 2007



Winners of this year's Law Day essay competition sponsored by the Michigan Lawyers Auxiliary and the State Bar of Michigan were saluted at a May 1 luncheon at the Hall of Justice in Lansing. Guests of honor included the top three finishers in sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade age groups and their teachers and families. Hon. William C. Whitbeck, chief judge of the Michigan Court of Appeals, was the keynote speaker. Pictured from left to right are State Bar President Kimberly M. Cahill; eighth-grade winner Maura Levine of The Gagie School in Kalamazoo; Hon. William C. Whitbeck; Emma McClory from St. Thomas School in Ann Arbor, who finished third in her age group; and second-place finisher Nicole Stawasz of Walnut Creek Middle School in West Bloomfield.



Pictured with State Bar President Kimberly M. Cahill and Michigan Court of Appeals Chief Judge Hon. William C. Whitbeck are Nathan Shellhammer of Edwardsville Middle School in Edwardsville, winner of the Law Day essay competition in the sixth-grade age group; Ashley Sokolowski of Bangor Middle School in Bangor, who finished third; and second-place finisher Emma Kern of Tappan Middle School in Ann Arbor.



State Bar leaders hit the airwaves on May 1 to mark Law Day. Kimberly Cahill, Commissioner Charles Toy, and Law and the Media Committee Chairman Andrew Doctoroff teamed up for a special edition of "Ask the Lawyer" on the Michigan Talk Network's Big Show hosted by Michael Patrick Shiels (left). They took calls from listeners from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. The Michigan State Bar Foundation's Linda Rexer and SBM staff Dawn Evans (director of professional standards), Victoria Kremski, (deputy director of professional standards), and Candace Crowley (development and external affairs manager) also participated. Topics covered

during the four-hour long program included some history of Law Day, activities around the state to mark the day, Access to Justice, the unauthorized practice of law, and lawyers and the media.

LAW DAY 2007

Bar Associations Celebrate Law Day

Many local and specialty bar associations across Michigan sponsored events in conjunction with Law Day. The following are some examples of the kinds of events held.

Armenian Bar Association: Put on a mock courtroom demonstration at Novi Middle School.

Bay County Bar Association: Sponsored a Law Day luncheon open to the public; held an essay contest for students in middle school and high school.

Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association Bar-risters Section: Worked with students at Detroit's Denby High School to formulate arguments for and against whether the search of a student's purse is a violation of the Fourth Amendment.

Federal Bar Association, Eastern District: Held an open house at the U.S. District Courthouse in Detroit; conducted an "Ask the Lawyer" pro bono program.

Genesee County Bar Association: Sponsored a poster contest for kids in grades 1-5; held a community forum at the Flint Public Library; hosted a Law Day luncheon and high school mock trial.

Hispanic Bar Association: Provided free legal advice May 1-3 at the 36th District Court in Detroit.

Ingham County Bar Association: Honored winners of its essay contest at the 30th District Courthouse in Mason.

Macomb County Bar Association: Held a ceremony that included scholarship presentations and recognitions of the winners of its essay and poster contests.

Michigan Trial Lawyers Association/Goodwin & Scieszka, PC, Birmingham: Held its 21st annual Law Day free legal clinic; gave away 350 bike helmets to children; provided 1,000 hot dogs and other refreshments to attendees.

Midland County Bar Association: Held its annual Law Day luncheon.

Monroe County Bar Association: Sponsored a Law Day luncheon, a free legal clinic, a mock trial demonstration by Ida High School students, and an essay contest.

NALS: Visited Cornell Elementary School in Lansing.

National Lawyers Guild: Provided legal support for a May Day march in Detroit.

Oakland County Bar Association: Held a Youth Law Conference for high school seniors.

St. Clair County Bar Association: Sponsored an essay contest.

Washtenaw County Bar Association: Provided free legal advice at two locations in Ann Arbor.

35th District Court, Plymouth: Spearheaded by Hon. Ron Lowe, a sixth-grade class from a local middle school was invited to the courthouse, with different activities taking place in each courtroom.

A New Home for Michigan Legal Milestone Plaque

The State Bar of Michigan will rededicate a plaque Friday, June 15, to commemorate the convention of 1961-1962 that resulted in our state's present Constitution. The plaque was first dedicated in May 1989 at the Lansing Civic Arena at the corner of Walnut and Washtenaw streets where the Constitution was actually written. That building has since been demolished and the plaque removed for safe keeping at the State Bar. The bronze marker's new home will be Constitution Hall at 525 West Allegan Street, Lansing. Kimberly M. Cahill will serve as master of ceremonies at the rededication. The event will begin at 3 p.m. in the atrium of Constitution Hall. Light refreshments will be served. For parking information, please visit <http://www.deq.state.mi.us/documents/deq-exec-mapch.pdf>. The State Bar Public Outreach Committee undertakes plaque placement to commemorate important cases and events in Michigan's rich legal history through its Michigan Legal Milestones program.

SBM Applauds Michigan Supreme Court Apsey Decision

The State Bar of Michigan applauds the decision of the Michigan Supreme Court in *Apsey v Memorial Hospital*, released May 1.

The *Apsey* decision overturned a 2005 Michigan Court of Appeals judgment holding that signatures on out-of-state documents filed in a Michigan court must be certified by an out-of-state notary and the notarization itself must be certified by the clerk of a court within the notary's county.

State Bar President Kimberly M. Cahill welcomed the decision. "The State Bar of Michigan pursued a response to the ruling in *Apsey v Memorial Hospital* as a top public policy priority, and is very gratified that the Supreme Court has removed this senseless barrier to access to justice."

The court of appeals decision was unexpected for several reasons. It was based on an 1879 provision that had not been used for many decades and was reason-

ably believed by both plaintiff and defense lawyers to have been rendered moot by subsequent enactments of the legislature. No evidence was offered of problems with out-of-state notarizations, and the requirement of additional certification by the county clerk of the court was impossible in at least 24 states and the District of Columbia.

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Naseem Stecker, State Bar of Michigan,
306 Townsend Street, Lansing, MI 48933-2012
e-mail: nstecker@mail.michbar.org
phone: (517) 367-6428