

# The Mentor

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN'S  
MASTER LAWYERS SECTION



*"The voice of trust through experience."*

Spring 2015

## From the Chair: Waking the Giant

### Size of the Master Lawyers Section

Formed in 2010, the Master Lawyers Section is the largest section of the State Bar of Michigan, at approximately 17,200 members. The State Bar provides \$13,000 per year for the section's operation. Currently, we have about \$29,000 in the bank. We have some resources.

The State Bar provides professional staff to assist us, and currently, Kari Thrush and Amy Castner are the primary people who support the section. Other professionals at the State Bar assist us with surveys, technology, preparation of brochures, and other services.

The section is a giant. It is beginning to stir. If you are interested in doing something, interested in the section creating something, or have an idea, please send it by e-mail to [estate-plan@lawyer.com](mailto:estate-plan@lawyer.com), or post your idea as a new topic on SBM Connect.



J. David Kerr, Chair

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### SBM Connect

Do you have trouble seeing the print on the SBM Connect website? Hold down your control key and press the key with the plus sign (+) and the print will get bigger. To make the print on the website smaller, hold down the control key and press the minus sign (-). The print will get smaller.

SBM Connect is our major communication tool. It allows our members to communicate with one another. The Master Lawyers SBM Connect is by far the most active site of all of the SBM Connect sites.

Members are learning that the members of the Master Lawyers Section provide a terrific resource for one another. The stored expertise and wisdom of our members is incredible—not just on the law, but on every aspect of life and on every endeavor.

If you haven't started using SBM Connect, consider starting now. Click here: <http://connect.sbm.org>. That will take you to the page with instructions for registering. On the left side of the page, look under GETTING STARTED. If you have any trouble, contact Amy Castner, who will assist you. Click here for Amy: [acastner@mail.michbar.org](mailto:acastner@mail.michbar.org). Once you are signed up, you go to <http://connect.sbm.org>. Click on

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**2014-2015****MASTER LAWYERS SECTION  
SECTION COUNCIL****CHAIR**

J. David Kerr  
Kerr Law Firm PLLC  
205 S Main St  
Mount Pleasant, MI 48858  
P: (989) 773-7071  
F: (989) 772-0232  
E: [estate-plan@lawyer.com](mailto:estate-plan@lawyer.com)

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**NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

Roberta M. Gubbins, Mason  
(734) 255-9119

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Send correspondence and  
material for publication to:

Roberta M. Gubbins  
[rmgubbins@yahoo.com](mailto:rmgubbins@yahoo.com)

the blue stripe on the top, left side of the page. Then click on SECTION WEBSITES, which appears inside the green stripe, and then choose MASTER LAWYERS SECTION. Start reading and writing.

**New Service Allows Potential Clients to Find You  
with Little Hassle on Your Part**

Your member profile can now be searched for by Google, Bing, and other on-line search engines. The new search service instituted by the State Bar is called "ZeekBeek." The key is that ZeekBeek® automatically determines the location of the person doing the search, and then searches State Bar of Michigan profiles by location and identifies those lawyers, by location, who provide the services for which a search is made.

Your State Bar of Michigan Profile will now hold much more information. Update your profile, if you are practicing and want to be found. You need to have your log-in information up-to-date and that isn't the same process as signing up for SBM Connect. (See above, under "SBM Connect," on how to do that.)

**Summer Conference**

The Master Lawyers Summer Conference will be held at Boyne Highlands on August 21 and 22. Plan on attending. An educational program will be provided. There will be free time to enjoy the resort facilities.

**Survey**

Recently, the Master Lawyers Council provided a survey to members, allowing them to weigh in on the direction of the section. Many members not only checked boxes showing preferences, but also filled out text boxes, supplying ideas and making suggestions. The council has started its analysis of the survey results and will review the survey in depth at its meeting on March 26. Thank you to all who participated.

**Train Tour Travel**

The council is considering an arrangement with a travel company to provide train tour packages to our members. The survey demonstrated interest in two tours: *American the Beautiful* and a *Canadian Rockies Tour*. In March, we will decide if we will move forward with a trial tour. We will begin small, with a limited offering trial—20 people. If the trial is successful, we may try to fill a whole train. We do not expect a discount for these tours. The advantage is that tours will be selected based on member interest and the people on the trip will be other master lawyers.

**Planning Ahead**

The State Bar furnishes a brochure and forms for solo lawyers and small firms for service to clients, if one becomes disabled or dies. Almost all master lawyers have observed the impact on clients and the attorney's family when one becomes disabled or dies.

**Continued on the next page**

The Master Lawyers Council is studying the brochure, to make it more user friendly.

The brochure is available and it contains forms in Chapter Four. You can easily access the brochure by going to the State Bar website: <http://www.michbar.org>. In the search box at the top of the page, just left of the center of the page, type in "Planning Ahead" and then click the green GO button on the right. Just click on the line which says PLANNING AHEAD when it comes up and you will be taken right to the brochure, or click here: <http://www.michbar.org/pmr/articles/planningahead.pdf>

### Your Ideas and Contributions

Do you have an idea for the section? Do you have an interest in exploring something yourself? Please let us know, either on SBM Connect, or by sending me an e-mail at [estate-plan@lawyer.com](mailto:estate-plan@lawyer.com).

## Letter from the Editor

Our issue this month is about transition. It is March in Michigan and we hope that the demands of winter are gone. Spring is a time of transition from the hazards and stresses of winter to the more enjoyable hassles of birds returning, spring flowers emerging, seed catalogs piling up in your mailbox and planning for an easier time.

Many lawyers in our group are transitioning or have transitioned to a new phase of life. We have an interview with Justice Michael Cavanagh who said of his move to Alane & Chartier, PC in Lansing where he will be in private practice, "I am fortunate to have good health and a pretty good energy level and I can't imagine dropping out of sight and doing nothing. I enjoyed private practice very much prior to assuming the bench and am looking forward to returning to it at a rather leisurely pace."

Bill Schooley has moved from criminal defense for the public defender to coaching target shooters. As he said, "I didn't want to retire from something, I wanted to retire to something. I found out that I wanted to retire to coaching." As time moved on another transition took place. He launched a new law firm, "Lawyers on Target, which is a consulting law practice focusing on all aspects of firearms law and on providing CPL training exclusively to other lawyers."

As with all changes in life, each can create its own challenges. Tish Vincent, director of the Judges and Lawyers Assistance Program, tells us in her article: "To cope most effectively with a transition we need to turn to the ABC's of stress management for attorneys: Awareness, Balance & Connection." She goes on to give readers tools to become aware and cope with the complications that can occur.



Roberta M. Gubbins, Editor

Rob Mathis comments on the Cummiskey Award nominations. Many of our members are involved with pro bono programs. Consider nominating a candidate for this opportunity to gain recognition for his efforts.

Finally, we have some fun items. Ruthmarie Shea shares her poem and Judge William Cole offers an interesting anecdote and a recipe for you to try. We hope you enjoy *The Mentor* and we look forward to hearing from you.

# Justice Michael F. Cavanagh Moves on to Private Practice

By Frederick Baker, Jr.

*Shortly after Justice Michael F. Cavanagh retired from the Michigan Supreme Court, after 32 years of service on the high court, and formally joined the firm of Alane & Chartier, PLC, he was kind enough to grant an interview with Briefs, the e-newsletter of the Ingham County Bar Association. Following are his comments on what the future holds for him now that he has returned to private practice after a nearly a half-century of public service.*

Justice Cavanagh, you are the longest serving appellate court judge in Michigan history, and, I believe, by a matter of just a few months, the second-longest serving justice of the Michigan Supreme Court. You have done it all, from clerking at the (then) brand new Michigan Court of Appeals, to serving in the Lansing City Attorney's Office, to private practice with the Farhat firm, and service at the district, Court of Appeals and Supreme Court levels of the Michigan judiciary. Yet here you are, embarking on yet another career. What keeps you so active and engaged in the profession at a stage in life when many would be happy to say, for the last time, "my pen is down"?

**Answer: I am fortunate to have good health and a pretty good energy level and I can't imagine dropping out of sight and doing nothing. I enjoyed private practice very much prior to assuming the bench and am looking forward to returning to it at a rather leisurely pace.**

I noticed when I was working on background for this interview that the clerks who were with you at the end of your term, Elizabeth Ribby-Shiels, Julie Agueros, Kirk Lapham, and Joel Knaack, have all gone on to some form of public service. Do you think your example played any part in their post-clerkship career choices? And, pardon the compound question, but have many of your clerks gone on to careers in public service? Have you stayed in touch with the dozens of attorneys who have served in your chambers over the years?

**Answer: A good number of my former clerks have continued in public service with the Attorney General's Office, as assistant U.S. attorneys, in prosecutors' offices, and in judgeships. I stay in touch with many of them. I have been fortunate to have had**

**the service of some 52 outstanding and talented men and women, and was flattered when over 30 of them, from around the country, returned for the Court's retirement reception for me.**

Not many jurists with a history of accomplishments as impressive as yours have gone into practice with two of their former clerks after leaving the bench, as you have chosen to do. What is it about Mary Chartier and Natalie Alane and the practice they have built that persuaded you to take this unusual step?

**Answer: Mary and Natalie are two very talented and dynamic individuals possessed of boundless energy. Having worked with them at the Court, I became well aware of their talent and engaging personalities and felt very comfortable reuniting with them. After my many years on the bench, our association has provided me with a low-pressure "soft landing."**

What goals have you set for yourself in this new private practice phase of your career? What kinds of work do you see yourself doing?

**Answer: I anticipate that my role will be diverse: mentoring the young lawyers in the firm, aiding Mary and Natalie in their appellate matters, consultation with other lawyers on appellate matters, moot courting (with other retired appellate judges) other**



Justice Michael F. Cavanagh

Courtesy Photo: Justice Michael F. Cavanagh

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**firms' appellate arguments, and, of course, continuing my involvement with our state's tribal courts.**

Former Chief Justice Thomas Brennan appeared before the Court, both on briefs and as an oral advocate, a number of times after serving on the Court. Do you think that someday you might appear as an advocate before your former colleagues?

**Answer: I have no such plans at present, but would not rule out that possibility.**

You, perhaps more than any other single person, are responsible for the collegial relationship of mutual respect that exists between the Michigan judiciary and the tribal courts of Michigan's federally recognized tribes. What prompted you, especially when you were chief justice, and consistently since then while serving as an associate justice, to devote so much time and effort to establishing and nurturing the warm relationship between these separate-sovereign judicial systems?

**Answer: When I served as chief justice, I became aware of my own ignorance about our state's tribal courts and felt it important to educate our state court judges and the Bar about the constitutions and court rules of these sovereigns within our state. These tribal court systems are much less adversarial than our system where we have to have a winner and a loser. Their goals are more focused on a restorative sort of justice. I firmly believe that our state can benefit greatly from greater informed and cooperative interaction with our tribal communities.**

Traditional Indian culture places a greater value on the wisdom that comes with age and experience than is perhaps reflected in Michigan's constitutional bar against being reelected to the bench after the age of 70. Michigan tribal courts also include an appellate level. Have you ever thought about what your reaction might be if a Michigan tribe asked you to serve on its appellate court?

**Answer: Yes, I have thought about that possibility and think I would enjoy such an opportunity.**

When I was a commissioner at the Court, I once researched how often the United States Supreme Court had reversed the Michigan Supreme Court in cases in which you had dissented. Though I cannot recall the

exact percentage, I remember being astonished at how often SCOTUS had agreed with you when you dissented. Can you recall any cases in which you were particularly gratified to be vindicated by the high court?

**Answer: I have never kept track of my batting average but have always felt a well written dissent serves a very useful purpose by airing a rational opposing view and pointing out the flaws in the majority's reasoning. One matter where the reasoning of my dissent was adopted by SCOTUS was very gratifying. In the case of *People v. Bulger* [462 Mich 495 (2000), overruled in *Halbert v Michigan*, 545 US 605, 622 (2005) (citing dissent in *Bulger* of Cavanagh, J.)] the legislature had determined that a guilty-pleading defendant forfeited an appeal of right and could only appeal by application. Our Court ruled [in *Bulger*] that there was no right to counsel on that application. I dissented and would have held that as the only first tier of appeal that a defendant had, there was a right to counsel. SCOTUS, by I believe a 7-2 vote, ultimately agreed with my dissent.**

Having had some opportunity to reflect on your many years of service on the Michigan bench, do you have any thoughts to share with our readers?

**Answer: I have said many times that I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to serve on a trial court, our intermediate appellate court and, of course, our Supreme Court. Each level presented different challenges and each produced a unique sense of satisfaction. I am very grateful.**

Article courtesy of the Ingham County Bar Association *Briefs*.

#### **About the Author**

Frederick M. Baker Jr. ([fbaker@willinghamcote.com](mailto:fbaker@willinghamcote.com)) was a Michigan Supreme Court commissioner from 2005 to 2013, after 19 years in the Honigman firm's Lansing office. Baker taught full-time at Wayne Law School and Cooley Law School, and in an adjunct capacity at Cooley and MSU Law School. He is now of counsel to Willingham & Cote, P.C., where he began private practice after serving as a law clerk to the chief judge of the Court of Appeals, the late Robert J. Danhof.

# On Transitioning Out & Back

By Bill Schooley

In 2010, when I retired from full-time, 40 hours per week, get up and go to work every day, the furthest thing from my mind was just sitting at home, vegetating and drawing Social Security. I didn't want to retire from something, I wanted to retire to something. I found out that I wanted to retire to coaching. And coaching what, you may ask.

Since 2000, I've been deeply involved in the Boy Scouts of America program called Venturing. It's a co-ed program for youth between the ages of 14 and 21. I knew from experience that many of the young men and women I worked with were never going to qualify for an athletic football or basketball or track scholarship. But I also knew from experience that without some type of scholarship support, many of the youngsters wouldn't be able to afford college.

When one of my Venture crewmembers was asked to bring her rifle to college and received a housing stipend to shoot on her college rifle team, I had an epiphany moment. There's an old saying that God made all people, but Colonel Colt made all people equal. It was then I realized that if a five-foot, 100-pound young woman could consistently put 60 shots into the black, there would be an NCAA school somewhere knocking on her door offering her a college shooting sports scholarship. I retired to rifle and pistol coaching.

Nearly 300 colleges and universities in the U.S. offer shooting programs. Exposure to the shooting sports fosters a respect for firearms and a high regard for safety. Shooting sports programs are considerably less expensive than other athletic programs and are an exceptionally safe sport. The shooting sports help develop sportsmanship, leadership, responsibility, and concentration. Participation in competitive shooting develops self-discipline and teamwork.

Many colleges and universities offer NCAA shooting sports scholarships as does the NRA, the Civilian Marksmanship Program and the American Legion.

For many years before I retired, I'd been an NRA certified range safety officer and rifle and pistol instructor. While I was still working full time, I took weekend coaching classes and added an NRA rifle and pistol coaching certificate (Level 1) to my resume.

The NRA Level 1 coach is the club or grassroots entry level. It's coaching for beginning and intermediate shooter athletes. The emphasis is on range safety, safe gun handling and the development of marksmanship skills. The calibers used are low power .117 air rifle and .22 long rifle. These are NCAA and Olympic rifle calibers.

Since retirement, among the many things I've been privileged to do include being the advisor and rifle/pistol coach to Chelsea Venture Crew 357, a rifle instructor/coach at the 2013 BSA National Jamboree and a rifle coach at the 2014 NRA convention air rifle range. I've also accompanied my junior shooters to Camp Perry Ohio to shoot in national matches. It's a great personal thrill when one of my juniors earns a shooting medal or is awarded a college scholarship. As I've said repeatedly to my junior shooters, "You work at getting the good grades, and I'll work with you to get the marksmanship." And it's paid off for several Crew 357 crewmembers.

Retirement has now given me time to develop as an individual competitive shooter. I've competed at Camp Perry in the Excellence in Competition (EIC) matches in high-power rifle (AR15) and pistol (M9). In 2014, I was a Camp Perry competitor in the rim-fire sporter class.



Bill Schooley

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And now, in what can only properly be called “semi-retired,” I’ve transitioned yet again. This time I’m into a niche area of law, which combines my law passion with my firearms passion.

In 2014, I formed a one-person law firm: Lawyers on Target PLLC. Lawyers on Target is a consulting law practice focusing on all aspects of firearms law and on providing CPL training exclusively to other lawyers. I’m now training both juniors and adults in developing their own marksmanship skills.

As a niche law practice, Lawyers On Target has worked out very well for me. I still coach. I still compete. I still train others in the use of firearms. But now I

participate in firearms-related legal seminars and consult on firearms-related legal issues to other lawyers.

While I’ve transitioned from one type of law practice to another, even if it’s a less lucrative practice, it’s sure a lot more fun.

William Schooley  
Lawyers on Target, PLLC  
P.O. Box 962  
Brighton, MI  
248-496-3472  
wm.schooley@gmail.com

## Transitions

*By Tish Vincent, LJAP Program Administrator, SBM*

The lecture hall was configured as an auditorium. Semicircular surfaces formed the desks. One hundred and 10 first-year law students filled the room. Sitting near the front of the lecture hall was one 52-year-old woman, me. As I gazed around the room I realized that I was the oldest person in the room by several decades. One hundred and six of my section mates were in their 20s or early 30s. Three others were in their 40s.



Law school was a transition for me. As a 1-L, I was a non-traditional student interacting with a large group of fellow students the age of my youngest child. In my first career I had practiced for 17 years and was considered an expert in a number of areas. I remember feeling like my entire professional identity was gone. Our Civil

Procedure professor required us to form small groups to study together. He called them “law firms.” My classmates eyed me suspiciously. Who wants to have this older woman in his/her study group? I wound up in a group with a number of young women who were kind enough to include me. My interactions with them helped me enormously in my life transition. Now they are my friends on Facebook and colleagues around the country.



Tish Vincent

**What to expect in transitions.** All transitions have certain realities in common. Human beings are constantly experiencing transitions yet some demand more attention and understanding than others. We will examine what to expect in any transition and leave the reader to apply it to his particular circumstances.

We can expect to experience these forces:

- A period of psychological and emotional adjustment
- A demand to let go of the way things used to be

**Continued on the next page**

- A pressure to establish a new homeostasis and emotional equilibrium
- Anticipation of feelings of loss, discomfort, and some disorientation

During any period of transition we can expect to experience some strong positive emotions about the change and some intense negative emotions about the change. When I started law school I was very excited about earning a JD, earning a license and exploring new horizons. I was also afraid I was making a foolish mistake returning to school at my age, losing the recognition I had earned in my first career, and worried that I could not muster the energy necessary to succeed.

**Dealing with the challenges of transition.** To cope most effectively with a transition we need to turn to the ABC's of stress management for attorneys: Awareness, Balance & Connection. Human beings are most resilient when they are aware of their emotions, their needs, their strengths and their challenges. Busy people can sometimes neglect cultivating an awareness of these realities, yet all successful transitions are rooted in such awareness.

**Awareness.** Using my transition from the full-time practice of therapy to being a first-year law student to illustrate: I was angry and frustrated with the health insurance industry's practices of withholding payments for services rendered to healthcare providers. I had a need for more education for professional development and because of my natural restlessness and enjoyment of problem solving, I possessed the drive, the interest, the intellect, the LSAT scores and GPA to get admitted. However, as the transition began, the challenges of studying and competing with fellow students 30 years younger than I proved more challenging than I anticipated.

**Balance.** We are healthiest when we strike a balance of work, play, and rest. Our lives need to be filled with some combination of these experiences. At times of transition our lives can become unbalanced if we invest too much time in any one facet of our lives. Perhaps we work two jobs while we transition from one to the other. Perhaps we are called back to do contract work

for our old employer just as we are trying to establish a more leisurely lifestyle or a different career.

How can we maintain balance in our lives as we transition? This takes some planning and conscious effort to chart out a time plan that includes and protects relaxation and play along with the work of the transition. A person can look to something he finds intrinsically rewarding for the positive experiences that will offer him the rest and relaxation to stay balanced at times of transition. I love to read, so during times of transition I commit to at least 30 minutes a day when I relax and read only what I choose to read: a novel, a non-fiction work that interests me, a sewing magazine, or whatever I choose that day.

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*To go with the drift of things, to yield with a grace to reason, to bow and accept the end of a love or a season.* —ROBERT FROST

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**Connection.** Social interactions are vital for people at all times and particularly so in transitions. As we transition into a new circumstance we need the social connections but do not yet know the others in the new environment well enough to feel connected. Establishing and maintaining new connections is critical for a smooth transition. Lawyers can rely on the networking skills they have cultivated in their legal careers to connect with others in other forms of social organizations.

My "law firm" from Civil Procedure transitioned to a study group in Constitutional Law, the Friday afternoon movie group as 3-Ls, and now a social group that persists. We have held baby showers, grandbaby showers, attended weddings, funerals, and live blogged elections and unfolding newsworthy events together. This group of individuals connected with one another to deal with the transition from other paths to becoming lawyers together. Every transition brings anticipation and loss. Understanding the elements of transition and developing our own ABC plan for dealing with the challenges and satisfactions make the transition go more smoothly.



## Cummiskey Award Nominations for Pro Bono Contributions Due

By Robert Mathis

The State Bar of Michigan is now accepting nominations for major awards, including the John W. Cummiskey Award. The purpose of the Cummiskey Award is to foster awareness of the need for involvement of the private bar in delivering legal services to the poor, by giving public recognition each year to a Michigan lawyer who has made a significant *pro bono* contribution to this effort. The award is established in the name of John W. Cummiskey of Grand Rapids, a leading advocate and activist in the cause of making legal services available to all, without regard to economic status.



Robert Mathis

*Nominate* an outstanding pro bono attorney today! Applications must be received no later than Friday, April 17, 2015. This award carries with it a cash stipend of \$3,000 to be donated to the *Access to Justice Fund partner program* of the recipient's choice.

Recent Cummiskey Award recipients include Susan Kornfield of Bodman PLC (2014), Robert Mossel of Ford Motor Credit Company (2013), Sister Ann Ozog (2012), Joy Fossel of Varnum LLP (2012), and Erick Frankie of the Law Office of Eric I. Frankie PLC (2010).

For more information on the John W. Cummiskey Award, as well as other State Bar of Michigan awards, please check out the *2015 Awards Nomination Book*. For more information you may also contact Robert Mathis, SBM pro bono service counsel, at [rmathis@mail.michbar.org](mailto:rmathis@mail.michbar.org) or (517) 346-6412.



### THE OLD OAK

The old oak stands silently  
ankle deep in snow  
wearing her withered leaves  
like a torn brown coat.

—Ruthmarie Shea—

# From the Memoirs of Prof. Jonathan Balderdash

By Hon. William Cole, Retired

**AUTHOR'S COMMENT:** "The stories are fiction of my own creation. The recipes are created for the specific story and based upon years of cooking, baking and reading then adapting the recipes of others."

## Pyongyang, North Korea

I met her on the train. It had been a long and arduous journey from Vladivostok. She was a special envoy for North Korea, and a renown expert in agronomics. Her travels had taken her through much of Russia and now she was heading back to her small flat in the teeming capital of that suffering country she called home. I don't know why she spoke to me, but it was a relationship instantly forged. We settled into adjoining seats and began our conversation as new friends often do. Language was not a problem. We were each masters in the language of the other's native land. Often we found ourselves shifting from Korean to English in mid-sentence. Being the consummate professionals that we were, the discussion changed. She told of her search for a more prolific wheat seed to help feed the hungry population. I revealed to her the purpose of my quest.

We talked for hours sharing valuable insights and crucial information. She was grateful when I provided her the means by which she could obtain the seed she desperately wanted. I received the better of the bargain. She reached into the heavy valise and removed the item. She handed me the tracing of a 2000 year old Han Dynasty stone upon which was inscribed a Korean emperor's recipe. No one had yet deciphered the encrypted puzzle within its words. That would be my task.

Months later I returned to my apartment in Manhattan and set to work. Within the week the puzzle vanished. I had succeeded where so many had failed. Great caution must still be exercised as many North Korean leaders would go to great extremes to prevent a Westerner from possessing this knowledge.

I can not risk harm to you by revealing the "solution," but you may safely share its results.

## NORTH KOREAN CREAMED SHRIMP

8 oz cooked salad shrimp  
 8 oz cooked shrimp, medium size  
 2 tbsp flour  
 1 cup light cream  
 1 cup crushed tomatoes, drained  
 ½ cup grated or shredded Parmesan cheese  
 2 tsp basil  
 1 tbsp butter  
 1 tbsp olive oil  
 ½ tsp cayenne pepper  
 1 lb wide egg noodles cooked and drained, cover and reserve

### Preparation

Heat fry pan to hot, add 1 tbsp olive oil and cayenne pepper

Add medium sized shrimp and stir for 1 minute, remove from heat

In medium sauce pan heat butter to slow simmer, medium low heat

Add flour and stir until mixed and reduce heat to low

Add cream and stir until thickened, add basil

Add cheese and stir

Add tomatoes

Add salad shrimp

Season with salt and pepper to taste

Place serving of noodles on plates

Spoon creamed shrimp sauce over noodles, top with sautéed shrimp



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# New State Bar Member Directory—A Benefit for Attorneys and Consumers

*By J. David Kerr*

The State Bar of Michigan has launched a new online member directory that offers free expanded profile listings for its membership. Through a partnership with ZeekBeek®, an online legal marketplace, this new member benefit will make it easy for attorneys to share information and market their practice. The expanded directory will help cultivate relationships between attorneys and the public. Because much of the legal profession has yet to fully embrace online technology, the new member directory portal has built-in tools that will help SBM members build connections with other lawyers and potential clients. Members can opt in to a number of free features, including reviews, endorsements, mapping office location; showing social media connections, and whether or not they are currently accepting clients.

ZeekBeek® is owned and operated by CloudLaw, Inc. CloudLaw was founded in 2012 by a group of lawyers and web developers with over 150 years of cumulative legal and technical experience. ZeekBeek® is building a comprehensive national online legal marketplace where consumers can find lawyers, and lawyers, legal professionals, and law students can connect with each other. ZeekBeek® focuses on credibility, transparency, ethical compliance, and improving access to legal services, as well as building connections between members of the legal profession.

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**The expanded member directory gives complete control to each lawyer about how much information they want to share about themselves online.**

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The State Bar partnered with ZeekBeek® to help its members take back control of their online profiles. In recent years, many online marketplaces have developed

where lawyer data is publicly available through online profiles that claim to describe a lawyer's practice. These sites offer the public the opportunity to post reviews of lawyers without the lawyer's consent. In some cases, the online "profiles" contain false or misleading information, and messages were sent to attorneys encouraging them to visit the site and "claim" their profile to correct any inaccuracies—which raises their rating and may lock them into a monthly fee. These sites were being constructed with little regard for legal ethics, encouraging consumers to enter information about their problem and claiming they would find the right attorney for them. This raises serious ethical concerns on many fronts. The new member directory format allows SBM members to manage your own Internet presence at a pace that each attorney feels comfortable with. The expanded member directory gives complete control to each lawyer about how much information they want to share about themselves online.

Members can update and expand their member information through the SBM Member Area web portal, and/or directly through the ZeekBeek® website. The database is configured to send and receive information through a web services secured connection that updates information in both databases within seconds. Members who would like to import their LinkedIn profiles can do so automatically on the ZeekBeek® portal. Members can host a gallery of photos on ZeekBeek®, as well as add extensive professional information about themselves, including practice areas, languages spoken, employment history, education, awards and certifications, bar association memberships, courts practiced, and other notable experiences. Other new features members can take advantage of include the ability to: Create customized and detailed profiles; post publications, blogs, and videos; join and create groups; build connections with other lawyers; map their geolocation; and monitor all site activities from personal dashboards.

All you need to get started is your SBM user name and password. From the new [member directory](#) select the “Update Member Profile” link at the top of the page. From there all the ZeekBeek® site features can be accessed. If you prefer to build your profile through the State Bar of Michigan website tools, sign into the [Member Area](#), select “My Profile,” “Communication Preferences,” “Expanded Profile”. Because the content on the site is considered advertising, it is the attorney’s responsibility to meet the requirements of Michigan disciplinary rules and ethics. Among these requirements is that the information that is provided by the attorney be truthful.

Why might a member want to take advantage of the new expanded profile features? Online advertising is expensive; lawyers must be ethically compliant when advertising online; lawyers have little time or expertise to integrate social media as an advertisement tool; without the Internet, geography limits the reach of attorneys; and maintaining control of your online presence and reputation is important. Members can control their own profile and online presence through a bar association sponsored directory listing and those members without a website can immediately obtain a credible online presence. Members have access to fully vetted and easy-to-use online tools without having to invest a lot of time or money to secure and maintain them on their own. The information provided to the Master Lawyers Section is that 76% of people who hired a lawyer used the

Internet at some point in the process. The State Bar of Michigan member directory advances the relationship between its members and the public by providing full and meaningful information that allows potential clients to make more informed choices.

People who can sign up with ZeekBeek® are consumers, lawyers, paralegals, and law students. There is a user agreement that provides that the lawyer who posts content on ZeekBeek® will continue to own it. However, the posting lawyer gives CloudLaw, Inc. rights to use and distribute their content.

Remember that you don’t have to do anything to make your profile appear in the new online directory. All basic information is displayed on the site, including name, firm, location, and section memberships. Add additional information about yourself, including a photo, at your own pace. If you’d like assistance building your online profile, ZeekBeek® offers two packages to assist you: A one-time profile review and walk through that helps build your profile for \$50, and a deluxe service where they will build your profile for you for \$200. You can sign up for these services here: <http://www.ZeekBeek.com/Resources/For-Lawyers/Custom-Services>

ZeekBeek® also offers several free webinars that can help you build your profile. Visit this link for more information: <http://www.ZeekBeek.com/Resources/For-Lawyers/Webinars>

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## Nominations Open for Major State Bar Awards

Nominations are now open for major State Bar of Michigan awards that will be presented at the October 2015 Annual Meeting in Novi.

All SBM award nominations are due by 5 p.m. Friday, April 17, 2015.

An awards committee, co-chaired by former SBM President Julie Fershtman and SBM President-Elect Lori Buiteweg, reviews nominations for the Roberts P. Hudson, John W. Reed, Champion of Justice, Frank J. Kelley, Kimberly M. Cahill, and Liberty Bell awards. The SBM Pro Bono Initiative Committee reviews nominations for the Cummiskey Pro Bono award. These recommendations

are then voted on by the full Board of Commissioners at its June meeting.

Last year's non-winning nominations will automatically carry over for consideration this year. Nominations should include sufficient details about the accomplishments of the nominee to allow the committees to make a judgment.

Any SBM member can nominate candidates for awards. Apply online or download application forms. Cummiskey Award nominations can be directed to Robert Mathis at [rmathis@mail.michbar.org](mailto:rmathis@mail.michbar.org); all other nominations can be submitted to Joyce Nordeen at [jnordeen@mail.michbar.org](mailto:jnordeen@mail.michbar.org).