

MINUTES

ALABAMA STATE BAR

2009 GRANDE CONVOCATION AND ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The Grand Hotel
Point Clear, Alabama

Saturday, July 18, 2009

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Mark White called to order the 130th Grande Convocation and Annual Business Meeting of the Alabama State Bar at 9:15 a.m. He welcomed, in particular, Birmingham attorney and ABA President Tommy Wells.

2. PRESENTATION OF THE CHIEF JUSTICE'S PROFESSIONALISM AWARD

Following his call to order, President White recognized Chief Justice Sue Bell Cobb for remarks and presentation of the Chief Justice's Professionalism Award. In her introductory remarks, the Chief Justice praised President White for his year of service and recognized former chief justice Drayton Nabers and Doug McElvy as well as other members of the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism for their work this year.

The Chief Justice stated that one definition of professionalism is, "how we act and what we do to improve the profession." She then announced that Justice Gorman Houston was the recipient of the 2009 award. She described Justice Houston as the "exemplar of professionalism" and highlighted his stellar career, numerous awards as well as the courageous leadership he exhibited on the Supreme Court during a very difficult period. Chief Justice Cobb commented on the many hours of service which Justice Houston has given to the profession including to improve the statewide delivery of indigent defense services and to improve judicial selection.

Upon receiving the award Justice Houston made brief remarks and expressed his appreciation for the recognition.

3. HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2010

President White recognized former president Sam Rumore, chair of the Hall of Fame Selection Committee to announce the 2010 inductees. Mr. Rumore announced that Francis Hare, Michael Figures, Sam Pipes had been selected for installation in the class of lawyers deceased less than 100 years. He stated that James Birney and Clement Clay

had been selected for induction as lawyers deceased 100 years or more. Following the announcement of the inductees, Mr. Rumore stated that the Selection Committee encouraged and welcomed nominations for future consideration.

4. LOCAL BAR ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

President White recognized Ed Patterson for the presentation of the Local Bar Achievement Awards. Mr. Patterson presented awards to the Birmingham Bar Association (President Jack Neal), Montgomery County Bar Association (President Pat Sefton), Tuscaloosa County Bar Association (Cooper Shattuck accepting for President Terri Tompkins) and to the Calhoun/Cleburne County Bar Association, (Commissioner John Gruenewald accepting for President Robert Folsom) for outstanding projects during the previous bar year.

5. PRESENTATION OF 50 YEAR CERTIFICATES

President White presented 50 year certificates to those in attendance including Cleve Humphrey, Abe Philips, Al Ritchey, Robert Sellers Smith, Buddy Tingle and Joe Thompson.

6. PAST PRESIDENT, COMMISSIONERS, RETIRING COMMISSIONERS AND LEADERSHIP FORUM GRADUATES

President White next recognized all of the past presidents and asked that they stand as a group. He then recognized the Board of Bar Commissioners and asked that they stand as a group. President White also read the names of the retiring commissioners and presented medallions to those in attendance. Retiring commissioners included:

Michael E. Jones, 2nd Judicial Circuit
 Alyce M. Spruell – 6th Judicial Circuit, Place 2
 Anthony A. Joseph – 10th Judicial Circuit, Place 1
 Gregory H. Hawley – 10th Judicial Circuit, Place 5
 William M. Cunningham – 13th Judicial Circuit, Place 2
 James H. Anderson - 15th Judicial Circuit, Place 2
 Joseph A. Morris – 20th Judicial Circuit
 Ronald H. Strawbridge, Jr. – 24th Judicial Circuit
 John C. Gullahorn – 27th Judicial Circuit
 Gerald R. Paulk – 38th Judicial Circuit
 Pam Bucy – At-Large, Place 7

Finally, President White recognized the Leadership Forum graduates Classes I-V, as a group and asked them to stand.

7. **PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATE TO PRESIDENT'S SECRETARY**

President White called on Immediate Past President Sam Crosby who presented a certificate of appreciation to Chianne Sanchez, President Mark White's secretary.

8. **PRESENTATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S PLAQUE AND PAST PRESIDENT RIBBON**

Past President Crosby made brief remarks concerning President White's year as president and then presented Mr. White with the president's plaque and past president's ribbon. Following the presentation, Mr. White commented on his year as president. He thanked those who had helped make this year a great journey including Immediate Past President Sam Crosby, President-elect Tom Methvin, members of the Board of Bar Commissioners, Alabama State Bar staff, members of his law firm, his wife Carol Ann and the members of his extended family. Mr. White concluded by saying, "you made it fun to be a lawyer. Thank you."

9. **RECOGNITION OF PRESIDENT-ELECT ALYCE SPRUELL**

President White then congratulated Alyce Spruell. President-elect Spruell expressed her appreciation and stated that she looked forward to serving as president-elect.

10. **INSTALLATION OF ALABAMA STATE BAR PRESIDENT THOMAS J. METHVIN**

President White called President-elect Tom Methvin to the podium. He presented Mr. Methvin with the president's gavel and the president's ribbon. President Methvin thanked Mr. White. He then recognized his wife Amy, his two sons Rucker and Slade as well as his brother and his brother's family, his parents, members of his firm, and his assistant Anna Pierce.

In his remarks, President Methvin discussed the main issue that he would be focusing on this year, "Access to Justice for the Poor". President Methvin stated that although one can debate the definition of justice, the "definition of injustice cannot be debated." He discussed the work of the Access to Justice Commission and highlighted what he would like to accomplish during his year as president including approaching the legislature to increase funding for access to justice; asking Alabama lawyers to contribute more time as well as money to assisting the poor; increasing the number of lawyers participating in all volunteer lawyer programs across the state and publicizing the many good things lawyers are doing as a profession. He took a moment to give an overview of the work that is being accomplished in Mobile and the work that is ongoing in Huntsville as well as in other areas of the state. President Methvin concluded his remarks by seeking everyone's assistance to help carryout his initiative of improving access to justice for Alabama's poor.

11. 2009 GRAND PRIZE DRAWING

President Methvin called on Laura Calloway, Director of the Professional Management Assistance Program, for the grand prize drawing. Mrs. Calloway thanked everyone for visiting the expo and thanked Kristi Skipper, her assistant in particular for her help. Ms. Calloway also thanked ISI Alabama for their long support of the bar and providing the grand prize. Ms. Calloway recognized Nathan Gardner of ISI for the presentation. President Methvin made the drawing and announced that David Martin of Montgomery was the winner of the 2009 Grande Prize Napa Valley Get-Away at Silverado Resort.

12. ADJOURNMENT

President Methvin stated that the 2010 Annual Meeting would be held July 14-17 at Baytowne Wharf in Sandestin. He reminded everyone of the reception immediately following the meeting and a brief meeting of the Board of Bar Commissioners. He then declared the 130th Annual Meeting of the Alabama State Bar adjourned.

J. Mark White, President, 2008-2009
Alabama State Bar

Thomas J. Methvin, President, 2009-2010
Alabama State Bar

ATTEST:

Keith B. Norman, Secretary
Alabama State Bar