

## MINUTES

### ALABAMA STATE BAR 2019 GRAND CONVOCATION AND ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The Grand Hotel  
Grand Ballroom  
Point Clear, Alabama

Saturday, July 20, 2019

#### 1. **CALL TO ORDER**

President Sam W. Irby called to order the 142nd Grand Convocation and Annual Business Meeting of the Alabama State Bar.

#### 2. **STATE OF THE JUDICIARY – CHIEF JUSTICE TOM PARKER**

President Irby introduced Chief Justice Tom Parker for remarks regarding the Alabama court system. Chief Justice Parker thanked President Irby and the leadership of the Alabama State Bar for continuing to build a strong working relationship between the bar and the judiciary in Alabama. He congratulated President-elect Crow and said that he looked forward to working with her during the coming year, and he said that he looked forward to the bar and judges being together again at the mid-winter meeting.

Chief Justice Parker said that he felt he was uniquely qualified to serve as Chief Justice and as administrative head of the court system, based on his prior administrative experience with the Administrative Office of Courts and Judicial College. He highlighted areas in which much-needed funding had been secured to provide staffing for clerk's offices, provide additional courtroom bailiffs, reduce or eliminate county commission reimbursement for state court functions, and add additional judges. Chief Justice Parker thanked bar leadership and members for their support in securing this funding.

President Irby thanked Chief Justice Parker for his remarks and pledged continued support and cooperation by the bar in improving the court system and access to justice in Alabama.

#### 3. **REMARKS BY JEFF SESSIONS**

President Irby introduced Jeff Sessions, former Alabama Attorney General, United States Senator and Attorney General of the United States. President Irby thanked Mr.

Sessions for his service to the State of Alabama and the United States of America and invited him to address the Grand Convocation.

Mr. Sessions recognized his wife, Mary, and thanked her for her support as they are about to celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. He also thanked the many Alabama lawyers with whom he has worked during his years in private practice and public service.

Mr. Sessions said that he had great appreciation for the legal system in the United States and that he counted it an honor to be a lawyer and serve the people of Alabama and the United States during his career in public service. He detailed some of the work and accomplishments during his time as United States Attorney General and said that he and his team left the Department of Justice better than they found it. He also highlighted a number of Alabamians, including many Alabama attorneys, who currently serve as high-ranking officials in the federal government.

Mr. Sessions thanked President Irby and the leadership of the bar for the opportunity to make remarks and attend the Annual Meeting. President Irby thanked Mr. Sessions for his service and his attendance at the Annual Meeting and presented him with a token of appreciation on behalf of the Alabama State Bar.

#### 4. **LAWYERS HALL OF FAME 2019 CLASS**

President Irby recognized Past President Sam Rumore, chair of the Alabama Lawyers Hall of Fame Selection Committee to make a report. Mr. Rumore announced that the inductees for 2019 class of the Alabama Lawyers Hall of Fame would include the following individuals who have been deceased less than 100 years for induction into the 2019 class: Richard T. Rives, Clifford J. Durr, Broox G. Garrett and Ellene G. Winn. The selection committee recommended the induction of Henry Hilliard who has been deceased more than 100 years.

#### 5. **FIFTY YEAR CERTIFICATES**

Vice President Taze Shepard read the names of those individuals who were in attendance to receive their 50 year certificate, which was presented along with their 50 year pin by President Irby. Those present to receive their certificate and pin were:

Orrin K. Ames, III  
 J. Knox Argo  
 David L. Barnett  
 John George Cady  
 Russell J. Drake  
 Edward Dwight Fay  
 Fournier J. Gale, III  
 James A. Harris, Jr.  
 Ralph N. Hobbs

M. Scott Johnson  
 Marshall Alston Keith, Jr.  
 Michael S. Lottman  
 Robert L. Potts  
 James R. Seale  
 William A. Short, Jr.  
 Robert H. Smith  
 John William Thompson, II  
 Roger C. Williams  
 Wayne L. Williams  
 James Jerry Wood

6. **MEMORIAL RESOLUTIONS**

President Irby recognized Past President Mark White to read a memorial resolution honoring Past President Clarence Small. The resolution honoring Mr. Small was as follows:

WHEREAS, Clarence Merilton Small, Jr. was born on July 24, 1934 and departed this life on October 31, 2018 in Durham, North Carolina at the age of 84; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of the Alabama State Bar desires to recognize and memorialize his outstanding record of service as a lawyer, patriot, and servant leader in his community and of the Alabama State Bar.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT REMEMBERED that Clarence Merilton Small, Jr. served this Bar nobly and well as its president in 1992-1993.

Clarence was born in Birmingham, Alabama, the son of Clarence Merilton and Elva Roberts Small, and grew up in Montgomery, Alabama. He attended Alabama Polytechnic Institute, now known as Auburn University, and graduated with a B.S. degree in 1956. He also attended the University of Alabama and received his LL.B. in 1961. Clarence was a member of Phi Delta Phi, Omicron Delta Kappa, Farrah Order of Jurisprudence, and the Editorial Board of the ALABAMA LAW REVIEW. He also served his country in the United States Army at Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

Clarence was admitted to the Alabama State Bar in 1961 and practiced law with the firm of Christian and Small LLP for 57 years. Clarence was honored to serve as a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers, the International Academy of Trial Lawyers, and the American Bar Foundation. In addition to his service as president of the Alabama State Bar, he also served as president of the Birmingham Bar Association. Clarence's excellence as a lawyer was recognized by his induction into the American Board of Trial Advocates and the National Academy of Distinguished Neutrals.

Clarence tried cases in every county in Alabama and each of Alabama's federal courts, as well as jurisdictions around the country. His recalled his most memorable professional event as his admission to the bar of the U.S. Supreme Court.

BE IT FURTHER REMEMBERED that Clarence Merilton Small, Jr. was a talented litigator and a man of intelligence, integrity, and loyalty. He leaves surviving him his wife, Gretchen; three children, Steve, Elizabeth, and Laura; stepchildren, Robin, Jill and Kim; and their families. He was predeceased by his first wife, Jean Russell Small.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Alabama State Bar meeting this day assembled that the life of Clarence Merilton Small, Jr. be recognized as one of deep dedication to the Bar of this state, to his country, to his community, and to his family, and that his death represents a great loss to each.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be recorded in the permanent minutes of this Association.

DONE this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of July 2019.

7. **RECOGNITION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

President Irby recognized members of the judiciary, members of the Alabama state legislature, past presidents of the Alabama State Bar, members of the Board of Bar Commissioners and executive council, and Leadership Forum alumni.

President Irby recognized his wife, Ginger, and thanked her for her constant support during his presidency, especially as he was frequently traveling and away from home.

President Irby recognized his law partner, Ken Heard, and the entire staff of Irby & Heard. He thanked them for their patience and balancing their work and providing assistance in his bar work.

8. **PRESENTATION OF PRESIDENT'S AWARD**

President Irby said that many people had been critical to his success as president of the Alabama State Bar. In particular, he recognized the following members for their assistance and presented each of them with the President's Award.

LaBella Alvis  
 Mark Boardman  
 Robert Bowers  
 John Brinkley  
 Bill Broome  
 Allan Chason  
 Michael Ermert  
 Kira Fonteneau  
 Monet Gaines

Jana Garner  
 Charles Godwin  
 Greg Hawley  
 Tom Heflin  
 Fred Helmsing  
 Stephanie A. Hunter  
 Bill Lancaster  
 Karen Laneaux  
 Madeline Lewis  
 Randy May  
 Rachel Miller  
 Levi Nichols  
 Tom Perry  
 Jeanne Rasco  
 Taze Shepard  
 Allison Skinner  
 Andrew Stanley  
 John Stamps  
 Charles Tatum  
 Manish Patel  
 Terri Tompkins

9. **PRESENTATION OF THE WILLIAM D. “BILL” SCRUGGS, JR. AWARD**

President recognized Past President Fournier Gale to present the William D. “Bill” Scruggs, Jr. Award to Past President Mark White. In receiving the award, Mr. White said that it is his highest honor to be associated with an award bearing the name of Bill Scruggs and thanked those who nominated him for the award.

10. **PRESENTATION OF THE J. ANTHONY “TONY” McLAIN PROFESSIONALISM AWARD**

President Irby presented the J. Anthony “Tony” McLain Professionalism Award to Percy Badham and Past President Douglas McElvy. Mr. Badham and Mr. McElvy gave brief remarks in accepting the award and thanked those who nominated them for an award with such significance in the Alabama State Bar.

11. **PRESENTATION OF THE COMMISSIONERS’ AWARD**

President Irby presented the Commissioners’ Award to Commissioner Jeanne Rasco. President Irby remarked that Commissioner Rasco is one of the hardest working bar members he has ever known and that she has never declined a request from him to work on bar projects. In particular, President Irby recognized Commissioner Rasco’s work in coordinating the Legal Food Frenzy collaboration between the Alabama State Bar and the Alabama Attorney General’s Office. Commissioner Rasco accepted the award and

thanked her fellow commissioners and bar members for the honor and for all of their assistance in the bar programs in which she's volunteered.

**12. PRESENTATION OF THE JEANNE MARIE LESLIE SERVICE AWARD**

President Irby recognized Robert Thornhill, Director of the Alabama Lawyer Assistance Program, to present the Jeanne Marie Leslie Service Award. Mr. Thornhill announced Mack Binion as the recipient of the award. In receiving the award Mr. Binion was appreciative to those responsible for selecting him and thanked the bar for the support of the important work of the Alabama Lawyer Assistance Program.

**13. LOCAL BAR ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS**

President Irby recognized Alabama State Bar Director of Programs Ashley Penhale to present the Local Bar Achievement Awards. The awards were presented to the Escambia County Bar Association, the Tuscaloosa County Bar Association, and the Birmingham Bar Association.

**14. PRESENTATION OF THE VOLUNTEER LAWYERS PROGRAM PRO BONO AWARDS**

President Irby recognized Allen Howell, chair of the Pro Bono Committee, to announce the recipients of the Volunteer Lawyers Program Pro Bono Awards.

Albert Vreeland Award	Tazewell T. Shepard, III
Firm/Group Award	Bradley Arant Boult Cummings, LLP
Mediation Award	Robin L. Burrell
Law Student Award	Lauren A. James (Faulkner University Jones School of Law)

**15. ANNOUNCEMENT OF AWARDS PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED**

President Irby announced recipients of awards presented at other times during the Alabama State Bar Annual Meeting.

Judicial Award of Merit	Hon. Elisabeth A. French
Maude McLure Kelly Award	Merceria L. Ludgood
Susan B. Livingston Leadership Award	Allison O. Skinner
Justice Janie L. Shores Scholarship	Jennifer Townsend

**16. PRESENTATION BY IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT**

Immediate Past President Augusta S. Dowd was recognized. Mrs. Dowd presented a certificate of appreciation to the president's assistant, Kari Roberson. She then presented President Irby with the past president's plaque and pin.

17. **PRESIDENT'S CLOSING REMARKS**

President Irby thanked those in attendance for allowing him the opportunity and privilege to serve as president of the Alabama State Bar. He said that he was especially grateful for the support and assistance provided by the entire staff of the Alabama State Bar, and he made a presentation in which he introduced each staff member and described their responsibilities at the bar. Those staff members in attendance were asked to stand and be recognized as they were introduced.

18. **RECOGNITION OF BOB METHVIN AS PRESIDENT-ELECT**

President Irby asked Bob Methvin to come to the podium. President Irby congratulated Mr. Methvin on becoming president-elect and presented him with the president-elect ribbon. Mr. Methvin made brief remarks, recognizing his family and the members of his law firm. He said that he looked forward to supporting incoming president Christy Crow in executing her initiatives for the coming year.

19. **INSTALLATION OF CHRISTY CROW AS 144<sup>TH</sup> PRESIDENT OF THE ALABAMA STATE BAR**

President Irby introduced Christy Crow of Union Springs as the 144th president of the Alabama State Bar and presented her with the presidential gavel, pin and ribbon. President Crow thanked President Irby for his leadership over the past year. President Crow also thanked Chief Justice Parker and other members of the judiciary for their support and strong relationships with the Alabama State Bar.

President Crow recognized her family and thanked them for their support of her and the time required to serve in leadership of the Alabama State Bar. She recognized the members of her law firm, Jinks Crow and Dickson.

President Crow said that she had many things planned for the upcoming year and that she would be relying on members of the bar from across the state to assist in executing her agenda as president of the Alabama State Bar.

20. **GOLF AND TENNIS TOURNAMENT WINNERS**

President Crow recognized Mr. Chip McCallum who announced the results of the golf tournament. President Crow announced the results of the tennis tournament.

21. **GRAND PRIZE DRAWING**

Ashley Penhale and representatives of Insurance Specialists (ISI) were recognized for the drawing of the grand prize. The winner was Susan Han. Ms. Penhale also announced that winners of the legal expo prizes were posted in the ballroom foyer and thanked all of the expo sponsors for their participation in this year's annual

meeting.

22. **CLOSING REMARKS AND ADJOURNMENT**

President Crow closed the meeting by reminding all in attendance that the 2020 annual meeting would be held June 24 - 27, 2020, at the Sandestin Hilton in Destin, Florida. She reminded commissioners of their brief meeting in Azalea Ballrooms C-F immediately following the annual business meeting. She then declared the 2019 Grand Convocation and Annual Business Meeting of the Alabama State Bar adjourned.

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Sam W. Irby  
President, 2018-2019

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Christy Crow  
President, 2019-2020

ATTEST:

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Phillip W. McCallum, Secretary  
Alabama State Bar