



STARK COUNTY BAR JOURNAL

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JANUARY 2024



Ralph F. Dublikar



David Herbert



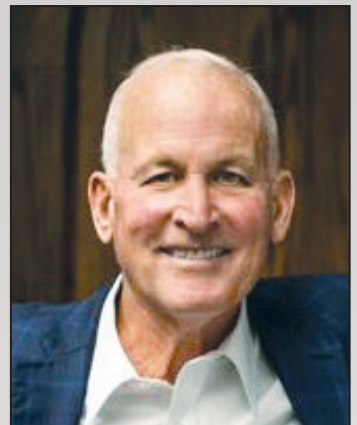
James P. Kamerer



Ronald G. Macala



Randy McFarren



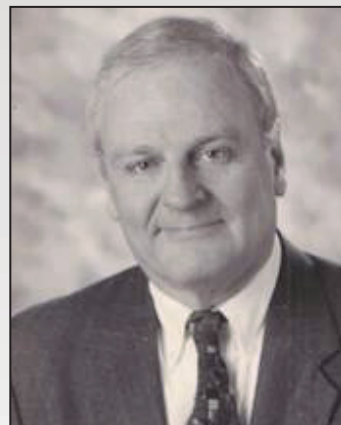
**Honorable
Richard D. Reinbold, Jr.**



Rosemary G. Rubin



Mark J. Skakun



Michael A. Thompson



John A. Tscholl

Congratulations to our 50-Year Honorees in 2024!

SCBA January 2024 Office Schedule

Jan. 1 st		Office closed in observance of New Year's Day
Jan. 4 th	9:00 AM	Bar Applicant Interviews
Jan. 4 th	12:00 NOON	Community Involvement Committee Meeting
Jan. 5 th	1:30 PM	Bankruptcy Committee Meeting
Jan. 9 th	12:00 NOON	Elder Law Committee Meeting
Jan. 11 th	12:00 NOON	Legal Aid/Pro Bono Committee Meeting
Jan. 12 th	8:30 AM	Professional Continuity Committee Meeting
Jan. 15 th		Office closed in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Jan. 25 th	12:00 NOON	Military & Veterans Affairs Committee Meeting
Jan. 29 th	12:00 NOON	Stark County Bar Association's 125th Planning Meeting

Elder Law Committee Meeting

Tuesday, January 9, 2024 – 12:00 NOON

Live Interactive Webinar

Mr. Robert Fenn, Social Security Administration, will give a presentation on "Social Security Benefits".

NOTARY EDUCATION CLASS & TESTING

Classes and Testing offered every 2nd & 4th Tuesday
Stark County Bar Association Office
By Appointment Only

1 Hour Renewal Education Class • 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

3 Hour New Notary Public Education Class
12:00 Noon – 3:00 PM

TESTING 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Online classes and testing
available at our website: www.StarkCtyBar.com

2024 CLE Seminars

January 26, 2024 2024 Criminal Law Seminar
SCBA Conference Room
See Pg. 4

MARK YOUR CALENDARS DETAILS TO COME

March 20, 2024	2024 Municipal Court Seminar SCBA Conference Room
April 3, 2024	2024 Family Law Seminar SCBA Conference Room
April 12, 2024	28th Annual White-Williams Bankruptcy Institute Hartville Kitchen
May 1, 2024	2024 Law Day Seminar Kent State Professional Conference Center
May 16, 2024	2024 Probate Practice & Elder Law Symposium Kent State Professional Conference Center



Reminder: M - Z!
Complete your CLE by Dec. 31, 2024

THE STARK COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION



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THE BAR JOURNAL

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Opinions and positions expressed in the signed material are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the Stark County Bar Association, its officers, staff or board of editors.

From Our President

Try Something New This Year!

"You'll never be bored when you try something new. There's really no limit what we can do!"

Dr. Seuss

Every year millions of Americans make New Year's resolutions that they are somehow convinced will change their lives. (I always claim I'm going to cut down on my intake of pizza, but it only lasts a few weeks.) It's our chance to start over – a fresh beginning. An opportunity to get our priorities right – a blank slate. It seems like the appropriate time to change old habits and try new things. When work is wearing you out, boredom creeps in or you're overwhelmed by the everyday grind, perhaps it's best to change your game plan. Maybe you want to do more with your life? A better question is, when was the last time you took a chance? If it's been quite a while, what is stopping you? Why deny yourself this incredible experience? Is it the fear of the unknown or exiting your comfort zone?

What 2024 brings rests entirely on you. Let's face it, we're all creatures of habit. We tend to get set in our ways and are hesitant to modify our daily routines. But let's stop and think about it – isn't it up to us to create ideas to bring more excitement into our lives. I found this out several years ago when my two nephews graduated from college and talked me into a spur-of-the-moment skydiving escapade. (Unfortunately their moms were a bit dismayed and I've not received a Christmas present from them since.) This summer I went to my wife's hometown of San Angelo, Texas and found myself reluctantly climbing a mountain at Big Bend Park, which cautioned us to "be careful of bears and mountain lions". These activities were breathtaking as I could feel my adrenaline pumping, senses coming alive and creating "lasting memories." These types of ventures can be thrilling and make your life more fulfilling. Why do everything the same each day?

You don't have to climb Mount Everest or quit



Honorable Frank Forchione
*President, Stark County Bar
Association*

your job. It can be as simple as calling an old friend, picking a new restaurant to dine, listening to various genres of music, taking dance lessons, getting a massage or paying more attention to your fitness. Haven't we all imagined that amazing adventure we would like to embark on; Hawaii, Europe, Aruba, or maybe just a relaxing beach trip. Let's go! One of the hallmarks of many successful people is that they are always stretching themselves to learn cutting-edge activities. You can only grow if you're willing to feel awkward and uncomfortable and take a leap of faith.

Volunteering for a non-profit can be exhilarating. I've been on the board of Wishes Can Happen for over 25 years, where we raise funds and grant wishes to children with life-threatening illnesses. When those stricken children send us pictures from their Disney trips with smiles beaming, sitting with Cinderella and Mickey Mouse, it's heartwarming. It gives our board members a sense of pride and accomplishment knowing we put a smile on a child's face. Maybe a shift in the area in which you practice could be a breath of fresh air, forcing you to learn unfamiliar legal concepts and forming intriguing relationships which could spur your personal growth. You

(continued next page)

From Our President *(continued from previous page)*

may even realize you enjoy this type of practice. How about taking a class on a subject unrelated to your career? It never hurts to expand your menu of tasty Italian dishes. Perhaps learn to play a musical instrument, attempt photography or look up your family tree to discover the truth of your ancestors. Your options are unlimited.

One benefit to dabbling in stimulating hobbies is you'll make valued friends and increase your social network. It can promote self esteem and empowerment. Learning to adapt to change allows you to better adjust to knotty situations that occur on your job. Traveling uncharted waters creates a bit of a pleasure which can energize you. Sometimes it causes us to reflect and acknowledge there are other fun ways to spend our days that we haven't even considered. Let's face it, anything is more productive than wasting minutes on social media, Netflix or video games. So let's regroup and promise ourselves to shake things up a bit in the upcoming twelve months.

In the end, life is an experience. Humans are born to be curious so there's nothing wrong with traveling an unfamiliar path in your life. So come up with a New Year's resolution that will capture your imagination, hopes and dreams. Develop a dedicated plan to achieve them. If you want to be someone who others find interesting, then you've got to be willing to reach for the stars. Your possibilities are endless and you'll reap the benefits.

*"Trying new things should be really fun.
The good times you'll have will be second to none.
Imagine the tales that now may be spun.
The doldrums you suffer could now be undone."*

Frank Forchione

- The Christmas Holiday Party was a great success due to the hard work and planning of Judges Kristin Farmer and Natalie Haupt. We were fortunate to have the talented MLB trio featuring Attorney Michael John and Judicial Assistant Melanie John, who entertained us while creating the holiday spirit. It was great to see so many who attended. Looking forward to next year's event.

- Thank you Magistrates Andrea Scassa and Christy Pierson and their Community Involvement Committee for their successful Adopt-A-Family program. Also to Santa's favorite elf, Maria Klutinoty Edwards of Plakas, Mannos for her last-minute heroics. Our Bar Association put smiles on the faces of two families of four people Christmas morning!
- Kudos to Attorney Joe Martuccio and Professor Dean Carro for working with the NAACP in arranging a 4th Amendment Educational Outreach Program to educate our youth on how to handle themselves during a traffic stop. City Prosecutor Katie Erchick and Assistant Public Defendant Tony Kaplanis joined me as cast members in a simulated traffic stop to help the participants understand how to communicate with police officers and the consequences of their actions.
- It is bittersweet to see the retirement of The Honorable John A. Poulos. He has been a staple of the Canton Municipal Court since 1994. Judge Poulos displayed compassion and wisdom as he tried to steer so many who appeared in front of him in the right direction. I had the honor of working for Judge Poulos as the Chief Assistant Prosecutor when he served as the Canton City Prosecutor where he taught me many valuable lessons that I try to follow today. Thank You Judge Poulos for mentoring so many young lawyers and we all wish you the best!
- We want to congratulate our 2024 Honorary Members. These distinguished members have proudly served our community for 50 years. Thank you!

Ralph F. Dublikar	Rosemary G. Rubin
David Herbert	Mark J. Skakun
James P. Kameron	Michael A. Thompson
Ronald G. Macala	John A. Tscholl
Randy McFarren	
Honorable Richard D. Reinbold, Jr.	

Thank you to our Membership!



A Community Christmas

ADOPT-A-FAMILY

The Community Involvement Committee adopted 2 families of 4 people this Christmas and the membership's response was overwhelming. We were thrilled with everyone's participation, knowing two families had presents this Christmas! Thank you for your continued support.

2024 Dues Bills Have Been Mailed ...

What Is The Value of SCBA Membership?

CLE Seminars\$360 Annual Savings

- Reduced Rates for Members! (12 hrs/yr.)
- Annual Savings can Exceed Dues

Stark County Bar Journal \$20.00 Value

- FREE to Members
- FREE Business Card Size Ad for Three Months (business related)

Mailing Labels \$60.00 Value

- Member and Non-member labels in alphabetical or zip code order.

Conference Room Up to a \$60.00 Value

- Members may use a conference room once a month at no charge.

Total Savings \$500.00!!

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- Client Referrals

Public Speaking OpportunitiesGreat Value

Member CommitteesSubstantive & Service Oriented

Networking & Congeniality Professional & Social Events

Professional Growth.....PRICELESS!



Stark County Bar Association

2024 CRIMINAL LAW SEMINAR

Friday, January 26, 2024
SCBA Conference Room

- 8:45 A.M. REGISTRATION Water, coffee and donuts provided.
- 9:00 A.M. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE
The Honorable Kristin Farmer
Stark County Court of Common Pleas
- 9:30 A.M. U.S. AND OHIO SUPREME COURT CASE LAW UPDATE
Russ Bensing, Esq.
Cuyahoga County Criminal Defense Lawyers Association
- 10:45 A.M. BREAK
- 11:00 A.M. FROM RECEPTION TO REENTRY
Roxanne Coey
Assistant Deputy Director
Office of Reentry, Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction

The Honorable Chryssa Hartnett
Presiding Judge, Reentry Court
Stark County Court of Common Pleas
- 12:00 NOON OHIO DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH SERVICES: MORE THAN A LOCK-UP
Jordan Argus, Ph.D.
Deputy Director, Best Practices Institute
Ohio Department of Youth Services
- 12:30 P.M. ADJOURN



2024 Criminal Law Seminar

*Members: \$97.50 Associate Members: \$81.25 Non-Members: \$178.75

Name _____ Atty. Reg. No. _____

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***PLEASE NOTE:** If you are currently a member of any local bar association, you may attend at our member's price.

Do you prefer to receive the seminar materials via E-mail or Hard Copy on the day of the seminar? Circle One.

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NO REFUNDS UNLESS RESERVATION CANCELLATION IS RECEIVED 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF SEMINAR.
Application has been submitted for 3.25 General CLE Credit Hours.

Changes of Address

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In 2023 we took the opportunity to recognize local practitioners who were celebrating 50 years in the practice of law. Our last attorney for 2023 to be recognized for a largely commendable 50 years of practice is John B. Wirtz, Esq.

50TH Year Spotlight

John B. Wirtz, Esq.



Pop Quiz: How many members of the Stark County Bar Association are also airplane pilots? While I do not know the answer to this question, I do know the answer is greater than or equal to one.

Attorney John B. Wirtz first obtained his pilot's license at the age of 17 while he was working for Teledyne-

Monarch, which was located off Route 43 just north of Hartville. Thereafter, he went to work at Southwest Bank in St. Louis, Missouri while he attended St. Louis University in pursuit of his bachelor's degree.

During his undergraduate education, all of John's roommates were planning to attend postgraduate and professional studies, and one of them informed Attorney Wirtz of his desire to attend law school. This prompted Attorney Wirtz to conclude: "If he's going to be a lawyer, I am too!" He then set about applying to law schools.

Although he was accepted to each of the law schools that he applied to, as a Stark County native and graduate of Central Catholic High School, Attorney Wirtz decided to attend Case Western Reserve University to be closer to his hometown.

With no job prospects on his horizon, Attorney Wirtz heard that the Stark County Prosecutor's Office was hiring and he contacted Stark County Prosecutor David Dowd to inquire. To his surprise, he was not required to abide by any formalities in applying for a position as an Assistant Prosecutor, such as submitting a job application, and instead was told he would start the following week.

While working at the Stark County Prosecutor's Office, Attorney Wirtz found a niche for himself in the Civil Division handling Board of Tax Appeals and Board of Revision matters. Through his work at the Prosecutor's Office, Attorney Wirtz represented county offices and agencies in many high-profile cases, including property disputes related to the burgeoning Belden Village Mall. Given the fact that many such cases (Board of Tax Appeals) are directly appealable to the Ohio Supreme Court, Attorney Wirtz frequently found himself litigating before the State's highest court.

Recalling one of his most prominent cases while working at the Prosecutor's Office, Attorney Wirtz described the Penn Central bankruptcy, which was, at the time, one of the largest corporate bankruptcies in the history of the United States. When Penn Central filed for bankruptcy protection, they owed many thousands of dollars in taxes to Stark County. By partnering with an attorney from Philadelphia, Attorney Wirtz remained steadfast in his position that Stark County was entitled to be repaid 100% of what it was owed. Eventually, his drive and determination paid off, as the County's claim gradually moved from the bottom of the creditor priority list to the top, where the County's debt was eventually repaid in full.

Attorney Wirtz's work at the Prosecutor's Office also allowed him to develop client relationships with entities that would later become private clients when he chose to leave the Prosecutor's Office. Among these were many clients that Attorney Wirtz would continue to represent throughout his career, including Stark Metropolitan Housing Authority and the Stark County Education Service Center, where he formed a close bond with well-known former superintendent Larry Morgan. Through this work, Attorney Wirtz assisted in handling very contentious labor disputes and is credited with prevailing in a claim against Cleveland Clinic in excess of \$1 million dollars that was owed to Stark County schools. Although his representation was of great importance and significance, Attorney Wirtz often preferred to maintain a low profile. "Never get into an argument with someone who buys ink by the barrel," Attorney Wirtz noted.

Given his interest in aviation, Attorney Wirtz once approached then-County Commissioner Dr. Peter Ferguson about becoming involved with the Akron-Canton Airport. Many people are unaware that the Akron-Canton Airport is the only commercial airfield in the State of Ohio governed by an airport authority, which is a political subdivision of the State. This led to Attorney Wirtz being appointed to the Akron-Canton Airport Board of Trustees, a position that he has repeatedly been reappointed to and where he remains to this day. Attorney Wirtz is also an avid kayaker and can often be found paddling around Meyers Lake, where he resides and serves on the Meyers Lake Preserve Committee, which oversees ownership/stewardship of the body of water known as Meyers Lake. Additionally, Attorney

(continued next page)

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-Tim Moore

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50 Year Spotlight Continued

Wirtz has been a board member of our local Salvation Army for over 50 years, he serves on the board of the YMCA endowment committee, and is involved in many other charitable and community associations.

Outside of his professional and benevolent endeavors, John has a great family life with his wife Colleen, their 3 children, and 4 grandchildren, and one of his daughters followed in his footsteps and became an attorney who practices in Seattle, Washington. Attorney Wirtz, remarking on the collegiality and professionalism of the Stark County Bar Association, notes: “I wouldn’t trade this Bar Association for anything.” When asked about changes he has witnessed with regard to the legal profession, Attorney Wirtz spoke of technological advancements with legal research and writing, and also lamented the fact that attorneys are often so busy with their caseload that they do not find time to develop meaningful relationships with colleagues.

Of the legal profession in a general sense, Attorney Wirtz said, “This is a great profession if you do it right.

Don’t cut corners, take time to take care of your clients and they will take care of you.” Wonderful advice, indeed! Congratulations Attorney John Wirtz on 50 years of doing it right, not cutting corners, and taking care of clients!



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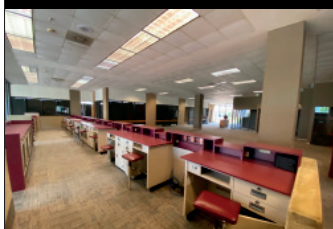
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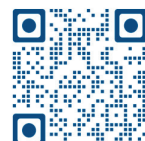
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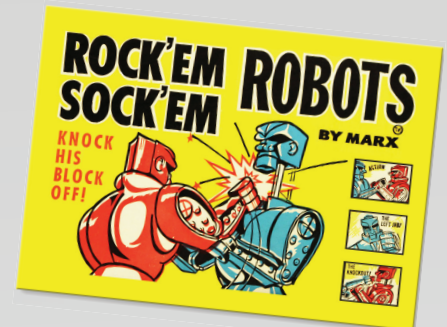
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50 YEARS **LOOKING BACK ... 1974**

TRIVIA, FUN FACTS, & HISTORY

1974 Bar Exam	1,336 Passed
US President.	Richard M. Nixon
Top Song	The Way We Were (Barbara Streisand)
Top Movie	Blazing Saddles
Top TV Shows	All in the Family, Sanford & Son
Most Popular Toys	Rock 'Em Sock 'Em Robots, Dungeons & Dragons
Average Income per year	\$11,100
Average Cost of New Mercury Capri	\$3,395
Gallon of Gas53 cents
Cost of First-Class Stamp10 cents
World Series Champions	Oakland Athletics
NBA Champions	Boston Celtics
Superbowl VIII Champions	Miami Dolphins
Average cost of an ad during Superbowl . . .	\$103,000
NCAA Football Champions	Notre Dame
1974 Quote.	"My Father taught me many things ... keep your friends close, but your enemies closer."



Major Events of 1974:

Richard Nixon resigned as President because of Watergate so Vice President Gerald Ford became President on August 9, 1974; the Equal Credit Opportunity Act was enacted; People Magazine began publishing; the World Trade Center opened for business; the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program began operations.