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A NEWSLETTER OF THE JUDICIARY OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

Chief Justice Bernette J. Johnson Joins Freedom Rider at Bar Association Conclave on Diversity in the Legal Profession

On Friday, March 6, 2015, the Louisiana State Bar Association hosted the 8th Annual Conclave on Diversity in the Legal Profession in New Orleans. *Celebrating 50 Years of Civil Rights: Moving the Pendulum Forward* was the theme of the one-day Continuing Legal Education conclave. The program highlights included: **Louisiana Supreme Court Chief Justice Bernette J. Johnson**; keynote speaker Kim M. Keenan, President and CEO of Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council; Henry "Hank" Thomas, one of the 13 original Freedom Riders; Judge Bernice B. Donald, the first African-American nominated to the United States Circuit Court for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit; and A.P. Tureaud, Jr., the first African-American to enroll as an undergraduate student at LSU.

During the conclave, speakers provoked discussion on the topics of inclusion, the financial importance of a diverse and inclusive legal profession, and practical tips to create a more inclusive legal profession. The program included a stirring two-hour interactive workshop entitled *"Inclusion 8"* facilitated by Arkansas Sixth Circuit Judge Wendell L. Griffen.

Additionally, **Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal Judge Roland L. Belsome, Jr.** moderated a Civil Rights panel discussion *"Just How Far Has the Pendulum Moved? Striving for Justice,"* and **Orleans Civil District Court Chief Judge Kern A. Reese** moderated a criminal law panel discussion *"Moving the Pendulum to Justice, Fairness and Accountability."*

Louisiana Supreme Court Chief Justice Bernette J. Johnson with Henry "Hank" Thomas, one of the 13 original Freedom Riders.

Court Column Newsletter is Back!

Court Column, the electronic newsletter featuring the good news of the Louisiana state judiciary, is back! And it is back to send the constant message that Louisiana courts and judges are working hard with a vision toward making the Louisiana judiciary the best it can be. Check your inbox for the latest edition each month and keep up with exciting things happening in the courts regarding:

- Advancements in Court Technology
- Effective Community Outreach Programs
- Court Grants and Awards At Work
- Specialty Court Success Stories

….. And More

Judges, Clerks of Court, and Court Administrators….We Need Your Help!
Send your good news stories to *Court Column* at vsw@lasc.org.
Tell us about what's happening in your court and *Court Column* will tell the world….

The Louisiana Supreme Court Welcomes Its Newest Justice Scott J. Crichton

Elected from Louisiana Supreme Court District 2, on January 1, 2015, **Justice Scott Crichton** joined the Louisiana Supreme Court as its newest member. He replaced **Justice Jeffrey P. Victory** who had held this seat on the Supreme Court bench for 19 years.

Prior to his election to the Supreme Court, Crichton served 24 years as a judge with the First Judicial District Court. Having served on both the civil and criminal divisions, he has presided over 25,000 civil and criminal cases.

Justice Crichton was elected for a ten-year term. A complete biography for Justice Crichton is available on the Supreme Court web site at: http://www.lasc.org/justices/crichton.asp.

Lafayette judge receives national service honor for work to strengthen Louisiana's DWI laws

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) presented **Lafayette City Court Judge Douglas J. Saloom** with a public service award Monday for his work to streamline and strengthen Louisiana's impaired driving statutes.

Saloom accepted the award at NHTSA's 33rd Annual Lifesavers Conference in Chicago. He was among 12 individuals honored with the agency's top public service award, which recognizes the tireless efforts and outstanding contributions people make to improve highway safety throughout the country.

In presenting Saloom's award, NHTSA cited the judge's "tireless efforts to clarify and enhance Louisiana's impaired driving statutes, thereby improving the effectiveness of the state's criminal justice process." In his work with the Louisiana Sentencing Commission, Saloom led a group tasked with rewriting Louisiana's DWI law, the results of which gained passage in the 2014 Louisiana Legislative session.

"We are fortunate to have Judge Saloom on the bench, not only for his work to curb impaired driving within his community, but also for his leadership statewide to make highways safer for all of us," said Louisiana Highway Safety Commission Executive Director John LeBlanc, who nominated Saloom for the award.

The Lifesavers conference is the nation's largest assembly of highway safety professionals, all of whom strive to improve the safety of America's roadways and communities. In addition to honoring exemplary service, the conference highlights emerging traffic safety issues and exposes participants to proven life-saving programs and best practices.

Louisiana Highway Safety Commission Executive Director John LeBlanc congratulates Judge Douglas J. Saloom (right), of Lafayette, on his national public service award at NHTSA's 33rd Annual Lifesavers Conference in Chicago. Photo courtesy of Louisiana Highway Safety Commission's Facebook page.

15th Judicial District Sobriety Court Offers Alternative to Jail for Multiple Offenders

The 15th Judicial District Court has created Sobriety Court, a program designed to wean drunk drivers off of alcohol and who have multiple operating while intoxicated (OWI) offenses. **15th JDC Judge Thomas Duplantier** works with people, convicted of third and fourth OWI offenses, who have pleaded guilty in order to participate in Sobriety Court. The four-month old program requires participants to wear alcohol detection devices, be home before 10 p.m., get drug tested twice a week, and regularly participate in Alcoholics Anonymous or some other similar support group. Additionally, the offenders must meet with a Sobriety Court judge one night every two weeks for follow up. According to Judge Duplantier, "As long as the offenders stay on the wagon, they stay out of jail. Although the Sobriety Court has only been operating for few months, the early response and results have been very favorable."

Louisiana First Circuit Court of Appeal Goes to School

The Louisiana First Circuit Court of Appeal held oral arguments this month at Southern University Law Center and Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center, respectively.

The First Circuit is one of five Louisiana intermediate appellate courts. The First Circuit's territorial jurisdiction extends over 16 parishes in the southeastern part of Louisiana. The court is domiciled in Baton Rouge. As part of its educational outreach program, the First Circuit travels on occasion to various locations within its jurisdiction—also known as "riding the circuit" –- to hold court.

First Circuit judges who sat on March 11th and March 12th panels at Southern Law Center included: **Judges John Michael Guidry, Mitchell Theriot, Michael McDonald, Guy Holdridge** and **Ernest Drake**. Similarly, **Judges John T. Pettigrew, Jewel E. "Duke" Welch** and **Wayne Ray Chutz** participated in the March 17th panel at Paul M. Hebert Law Center.

Judges of the First Circuit who sat on the five-judge panel were: (pictured from left) Judge Ernest Drake, Judge Michael McDonald, Judge John Michael Guidry, Judge Mitchell R. Theriot, and Judge Guy Holdridge.

New Rule Allows Louisiana Lawyers To Earn CLE Credit for Pro Bono Work

The Louisiana Supreme Court, in an order signed by **Chief Justice Bernette J. Johnson**, ruled that lawyers who provide *pro bono* work can receive up to three hours of Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credit each year. Every lawyer in Louisiana is required to earn 12.5 of CLE credit to maintain his or her license to practice law. Under the new rule, attorneys who provide *pro bono* representation –or legal work for free– can receive one hour of CLE credit for every five hours of *pro bono* representation, up to a maximum of three hours, of CLE credit per year.

According to **Chief Justice Johnson**, "It is our belief that the new rule will encourage Louisiana lawyers to provide legal counsel to people in need who otherwise would not have the resources to retain legal representation."

The new rule becomes effective May 1, 2015.

Law Day 2015 theme -
Magna Carta: Symbol of Freedom Under Law

Courtesy of the American Bar Association's Law Day 2015 website:

Perhaps more than any other document in human history, Magna Carta has come to embody a simple but enduring truth: No one, no matter how powerful, is above the law.

In the eight centuries that have elapsed since Magna Carta was sealed in 1215, it has taken root as an international symbol of the rule of law and as an inspiration for many basic rights Americans hold dear today, including due process, habeas corpus, trial by jury, and the right to travel.

As we mark the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta, join us on Law Day, May 1, 2015, to commemorate this "Great Charter of Liberties," and rededicate ourselves to advancing the principle of rule of law here and abroad.

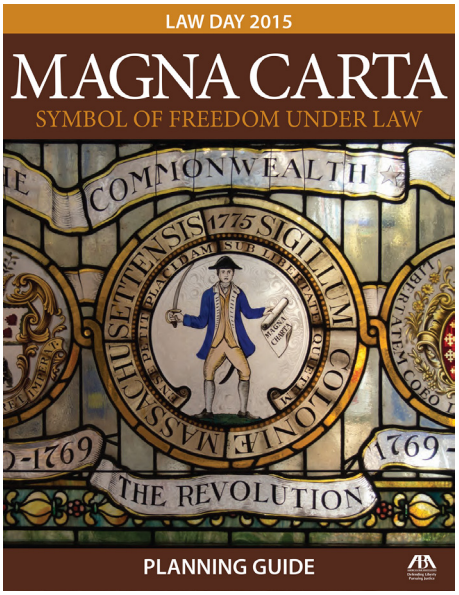
800 Magna Carta
SYMBOL OF FREEDOM UNDER LAW
LAW DAY 2015

Please take photos of all Law Day activities and send to Court Column!

TELL US ABOUT IT

We would enjoy hearing about Law Day activities and outreach programs held at your court for publication in a future issue of Court Column.

Please send any information and photographs to: vsw@lasc.org.



Law Day 2015 Resources

Law Day 2015 Resources:
http://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_education/initiatives_awards/lawday_2015.html

Law Day 2015 Planning Guide:
http://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_education/initiatives_awards/law_day_2015/law-day-planning-guide.html

ABA Magna Carta Commemoration:
http://www.americanbar.org/groups/leadership/office_of_the_president/magnacarta.html