

March 2025

Lunchtime Learning CLE Webcasts

Free for CCBA members on March 20, 27, and April 30

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COMMUNIQUE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE CLARK COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

The Family Law Issue

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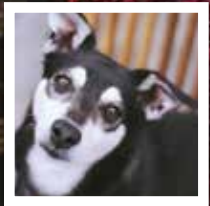
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Forever in Our Hearts

Nedda Ghandi

CCBA President ('22)

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COMMUNIQUE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE CLARK COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE CLARK COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

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For more information about our publication's editorial calendar, deadlines, editorial policy, author guidelines, ad rates, ad specifications, and deadlines, contact the publisher at Clark County Bar Association, 717 S. 8th Street, Las Vegas, Nevada 89101-7006. Phone: (702) 387-6011. Email: editor@clarkcountybar.org. 

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Communiqué Editorial Calendar

Cover Date	Topic	Closing Date
December 2024	Pro Bono	11/1/2024
January 2025	Five Things	12/1/2024
February 2025	ADR	1/2/2025
March 2025	Family Law	2/1/2025
April 2025	Civil Procedure	3/1/2025
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October 2025	Pro Bono	9/2/2025
November 2025	Mental Health	10/1/2025
December 2025	Science & Technology	11/1/2025

*The combined June/July issue will be released in June. The editorial calendars, schedules, editorial policies, and writer's guidelines for the *Communiqué* are subject to change without notice.

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Advertising opportunities

Space is available for select businesses to place an ad to showcase their accomplishments, professional services, and products in the *Communiqué*. For more information, contact StephanieAbbott@clarkcountybar.org, (702) 387-6011.

Bar Activities

Event Calendar

Please join us for these upcoming CCBA activities:

- Mar. 5 CLE Committee Meeting
- Mar. 6 New Lawyers Committee Meeting
- Mar. 7 Community Service Committee Meeting
- Mar. 13 40 Year Club Luncheon - Page 8
- Mar. 14 Publications Committee Meeting
- Mar. 20 Abe Lincoln, Esq.: Lessons from the Trial Lawyer Who Became President CLE Program - Page 8
- Mar. 21 DICE Meeting
- Mar. 27 Neurodiversity and the Juvenile Justice System CLE Program - Page 10
- Mar. 29 Walk with the Heart of a Child - Page 14
- Apr. 4 Community Service Committee Meeting
- Apr. 10 Meet Your Law Students Mixer - Pages 10, 11
- Apr. 11 Publications Committee Meeting
- Apr. 11-12 26th Annual Moot Court Competition - Page 12
- Apr. 18 DICE Meeting
- Apr. 24 Pub Crawl
- Apr. 26 Out of the Darkness Las Vegas Walk - Page 15
- Apr. 30 Cross-Court Series: Part 2 - Page 15
- May 1 Law Day Activity at U.S. Air Force Base - Page 14
- Thru May Pet Supply Drive - Page 12
- Jun. 17 Health Care Power of Attorney-a-Thon - Page 15

Learn more and RSVP at <https://clarkcountybar.org/events/> or call 702-387-6011.

Bar Services

Contact the CCBA

Reach out for information and updates about CCBA activities:

- 📞 702-387-6011
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Family Law Lawyers and Judges, We Salute You

By Joel D. Henriod

There is a type of lawyer who deals in the mess of people's lives. They handle the broken marriages, the fractured families, the contested custody battles. They do it day after day. This is the work of family law. It's rarely glamorous. It's not easy. It requires strength, patience, bravery, and a deep commitment to something larger than a paycheck or a win.

You see things others do not. You see the impact of choices that others never have to face. Divorce. Custody. Domestic violence. Adoption. These are parts of life we don't like to talk about. Your clients are almost always suffering, whether they admit it or not.

You help people pick up the pieces when their worlds fall apart, and they are scared, angry, and confused. You sit with them. You listen. You guide. You do it without fanfare. You do it because it matters.

In family law, the stakes are personal. They are about children, parents, futures. The person sitting across from you might be fighting for the right to see their child or might be fighting to protect that child. Your advice and advocacy often make the difference between stability and chaos.

Family law is not easy. It takes grit. The arguments are long. The stakes are high. The emotions are raw. And when tempers flare it can be dangerous. And yet, you press on. You work with others in the field—judges, counselors, social workers—all trying to find the best way to help people rebuild their lives.


Because the environment can be so heated, the bar honors your engagement in it. We applaud your efforts to chill that temperature, to calm the tempest with words, with facts, with reason. We count on you to represent the

best in our profession, to be force for peace. I hope those expectations don't compound your stress.

In this work, there are no quick wins. No easy victories. But there are moments of real success. A child finds a safe home. A parent regains custody. A family finds a new way to live, to grow. These moments are small, but they are real. They are the victories that matter.

Please know the bar recognizes you. We understand family law requires a special balance of intellect, empathy, resilience, and bravery. We see your challenges and sacrifices.

***Because the environment
can be so heated,
the bar honors
your engagement in it.***

And we are grateful. 

Joel Henriod is a litigator specializing in appeals at Henriod Law, PLLC, practicing in substantive areas ranging from personal-injury and product-liability to commercial and public-sector disputes involving election law, breach of contract, taxation, eminent domain, and governmental regulation, etc. He serves as CCBA president through 2025.



In Memoriam

Nedda Ghandi

By Laura Deeter and Brian Blackham

Nedda Ghandi, a beloved member of our legal community, passed away on January 8, 2025, in Las Vegas, NV, after a courageous battle with breast cancer. Born on September 5, 1979, in Iran, Nedda touched countless lives with her keen intellect and kind heart.

Nedda completed her undergraduate work at the University of San Francisco before earning her law degree from the William S. Boyd School of Law in Las Vegas, Nevada. Her legal acumen and dedication to her clients were evident from the start of her career. In 2011, Nedda founded Ghandi Law Offices. Through Nedda's leadership, this small solo practice grew to become the thriving boutique law firm of Ghandi Deeter Blackham. Nedda's legal expertise and commitment to the highest standard of ethics earned her the respect of clients, colleagues, and the judiciary.

Nedda's dedication to the legal community and access to justice extended beyond the courtroom. In 2022, she served as the President of the Clark County Bar Association, where she worked to improve legal services and support for lawyers and our community. An active member of the Nevada Justice Association, Nedda worked to empower female trial attorneys and encourage rapport in the legal community. She was a mentor to many, generously sharing her knowledge and experience with new lawyers and aspiring entrepreneurs.

As we say goodbye to Nedda Ghandi, we also celebrate her beautiful and consequential life. Nedda's journey on this earth may have come to an end, but the lives of everyone she touched are a testament to her enduring spirit.

Photo: Laura Deeter, Nedda Ghandi, and Brian Blackham

40 Year Club Luncheon

Bar Luncheon March 13

Bar members are invited to join us on Thursday, March 13, 2025, in celebration of CCBA members admitted to practice law in Nevada for 40, 45, 50, 55, and 60 years. This year we will induct members who were admitted in 1985 and honor members admitted in 1980, 1975, 1970, and 1965.

All members of Nevada's legal community are welcome to attend; however, space will be limited. RSVP with payment to the Clark County Bar Association no later than March 6, 2025. For more information, visit clarkcountybar.org or call 702-387-6011.



Special thanks to the 40 Year Club Luncheon Sponsors:



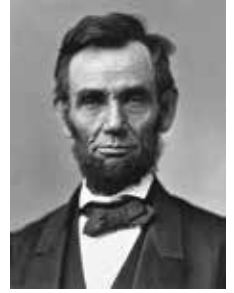
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Abe Lincoln, Esq.: Lessons from the Trial Lawyer Who Became President

Lunchtime Learning CLE March 20

- **Speaker:** Jeff Bolender, Esq. of Bolender Law Firm, PC
- **Course Description:** Abraham Lincoln is often celebrated as a transformational president, but before he led the nation, he spent 25 years as a practicing trial lawyer, handling thousands of cases and honing persuasive advocacy, strategic litigation, and professional ethics. This CLE webinar explores Lincoln's education and legal career and the practical lessons modern attorneys can apply today.
- **Participants will gain insights into:**
 - **Lincoln's self-taught legal education**—how he mastered the law through disciplined study and practice, and what this means for today's lawyers committed to lifelong learning.
 - **Strategic advocacy and persuasion**—his ability to connect with juries, cross-examine witnesses, and craft compelling arguments using logic, humor, and storytelling.
 - **Ethical obligations and professional integrity**—why Lincoln believed that honesty was a lawyer's most important asset and how his ethical compass guided his legal practice.
 - **Lincoln's major cases and litigation tactics**—analyzing five pivotal cases from his career, including criminal defense, commercial disputes, and constitutional challenges.
 - **Modern applications of Lincoln's legal philosophy**—how his principles of resilience, adaptability, and persuasive argumentation remain essential for today's litigators, trial attorneys, and general practitioners.
 - **By the end of this one-hour session, participants will:**
 - Develop a deeper understanding of Lincoln's legal strategies and their relevance to contemporary practice.
 - Learn practical techniques to enhance advocacy, from jury persuasion to written arguments.
 - Gain a renewed perspective on legal ethics, professional responsibility, and the duty of a lawyer to uphold justice.
- **Bonus:** Each attendee will also receive a companion article by Jeff Bolender, a detailed examination of Lincoln's education and legal career, providing additional insights and case studies.
- **When:** Thursday, March 20, 2025, 12 to 1:15 pm
- **Where:** Online via Zoom
- **Offers:** 1.0 general CLE credit for Nevada lawyers
- **Live webcast (via Zoom):** FREE for CCBA Members (2025) only
- **Recorded materials rental:** \$25/CCBA Member or \$50/non-member.
- **RSVP to CCBA by 3/18/2025:** clarkcountybar.org or (702) 387-6011



Photograph of Abraham Lincoln taken by Alexander Gardner, 1863.



VOLUNTEER ATTORNEYS NEEDED

We are seeking volunteer attorneys for upcoming Ask-A-Lawyer sessions to assist pre-screened pro bono clients with a variety of civil legal matters, including family law, consumer law, bankruptcy, and employment law. With just one hour of your time, you can provide access to justice to a Nevadan in need.



“Our justice system is the bedrock of our community. Access to justice is more than just lip service and being able to go to court — it is a recognition of the importance for each person to have a voice to protect and advance their rights. Legal rights are inherent to justice and are essential to every person. Please do your part to make Nevada a more just and fair place for everyone.”

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NLS
NEVADA LEGAL SERVICES

Neurodiversity and the Juvenile Justice System

Lunchtime Learning CLE March 27

- **Course description:** Learn about the unique challenges for neuro-diverse youth involved in the juvenile justice system. This program will include updated content to provide information on neurodiversity to include Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and neuro abstinence syndrome. We discuss the impact of FAS, NAS, and ASD in the dependency and delinquency system.
- **Speaker:** Hon. Soonhee “Sunny” Bailey and court coordinator Khristie Cury of the Detention Alternative for Autistic Youth (DAAY Court)—the only diversionary court in the nation for youth on the autism spectrum.
- **When:** March 27, 2025, Noon to 1:15 p.m.
- **Where:** Online via Zoom.
- **Offers:** 1.0 general CLE credit for Nevada lawyers.
- **Live webcast (via Zoom):** FREE for CCBA Members (2025) only.
- **Recorded materials rental:** \$25/CCBA Member or \$50/non-member.
- **RSVP to CCBA by 3/25/2025:** clarkcountybar.org or (702) 387-6011



This program is produced by the CCBA’s Diversity and Inclusion Committee for Equity (DICE) as part of the DICE CLE Series.

Errata

Correction to Listing for CLE Program on March 27, 2025

The printed edition of last month’s issue of *Communiqué* (Feb. 2025) included a highlight on a lunchtime learning CLE with the title of “What Every Attorney Should Know About Special Ed Law.” However, that title was incorrect. The correct title is “Neurodiversity and the Juvenile Justice System.” The error is limited to the print edition.

The CCBA staff regrets this error and apologizes for any confusion this may have caused. Special thanks to the Honorable Sunny Bailey for her patience and grace in regard to the error.

For more information about the program, see page 10 (above).

Bar Services

Sponsorship Opportunities

Opportunities are available to select businesses to sponsor bar activities, including:

- Bar luncheons
- CLE programming
- Meet Your Law Students Mixer
- Meet Your Judges Mixer
- New admittees reception

For more information, contact: Donna at the Clark County Bar Association, (702) 387-6011, donnaw@clarkcountybar.org.

4th Annual Meet Your Law Students Mixer

Special event April 10

- **About:** Special event for managing/hiring partners and judges from courts in southern Nevada to meet law students in a social indoor/outdoor setting before students start summer internships and externships.
- **When:** Thursday, April 10, 2025, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
- **Where:** Claggett & Sykes Law Firm, 4101 Meadows Ln. #100, Las Vegas.
- **Featuring:** Complimentary food and drink tickets while supplies last.
- **Price:** FREE admission to UNLV law students and CCBA members. Space will be limited to CCBA members who RSVP to the CCBA before 3/27/2025.
- **RSVP to CCBA by 3/27/2025:** clarkcountybar.org or (702) 387-6011

Special thanks to event sponsors:

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Clark County Bar Association (CCBA) presents

4th Annual

Meet Your Law Students Mixer

Thursday, April 10, 2025

5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Claggett & Sykes Law Firm

Featuring complimentary food and drink tickets while supplies last.
Free admission to UNLV Law Students and CCBA Members only.
Space will be limited. RSVP to the CCBA required by 3/27/2025

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Volunteers Needed

26th Annual Moot Court Competition

Volunteers Needed April 11 and 12

Members of the Nevada bar and bench are needed to judge the 26th Annual Moot Court Competition at the William S. Boyd School of Law on April 11 and 12, 2025. Most volunteers will be needed on Friday night.

- **When:** Friday April 11, 2025, 5:30–8:30 p.m., Saturday April 12, 2025, 9:00–10:30 a.m.
- **Where:** UNLV William S. Boyd School of Law
- **About:** The CCBA Moot Court Competition provides 1L students at Boyd their first opportunity to practice their oral argument skills through an appellate case.

This year, 1L students are currently drafting an appellate brief for their Lawyering Process II class that will serve as a foundation for their oral arguments. This is a semester-long assignment that requires dedication and great preparation.

Students have been assigned the role of Appellant or Appellee for purposes of their brief; however, for the competition, they will prepare arguments for both sides. Preliminary rounds will be on-brief, and advanced rounds could be off-brief. Students will have the opportunity to speak for 12 minutes, which will include presenting arguments and answering the questions of judges.

It is the role of judges to observe students assigned to them, question their arguments during presentation, and score them according to their performances. After both sides have presented, judges will have a few minutes to score the students and provide them with constructive feedback.

Volunteers should be Nevada attorneys, judges, or mediators. Judging the competition qualifies as pro bono service!

Sign up to judge the competition: clarkcountybar.org, (702) 387-6011.



UNLV

WILLIAM S. BOYD
SCHOOL OF LAW

For any questions regarding the competition, please contact Kayla Hall (hallk12@unlv.nevada.edu) and Maria Althea Gevero (gevero@unlv.nevada.edu).



Pet Supply Drive to Benefit Street Dogz

Drop-off Items Now through May

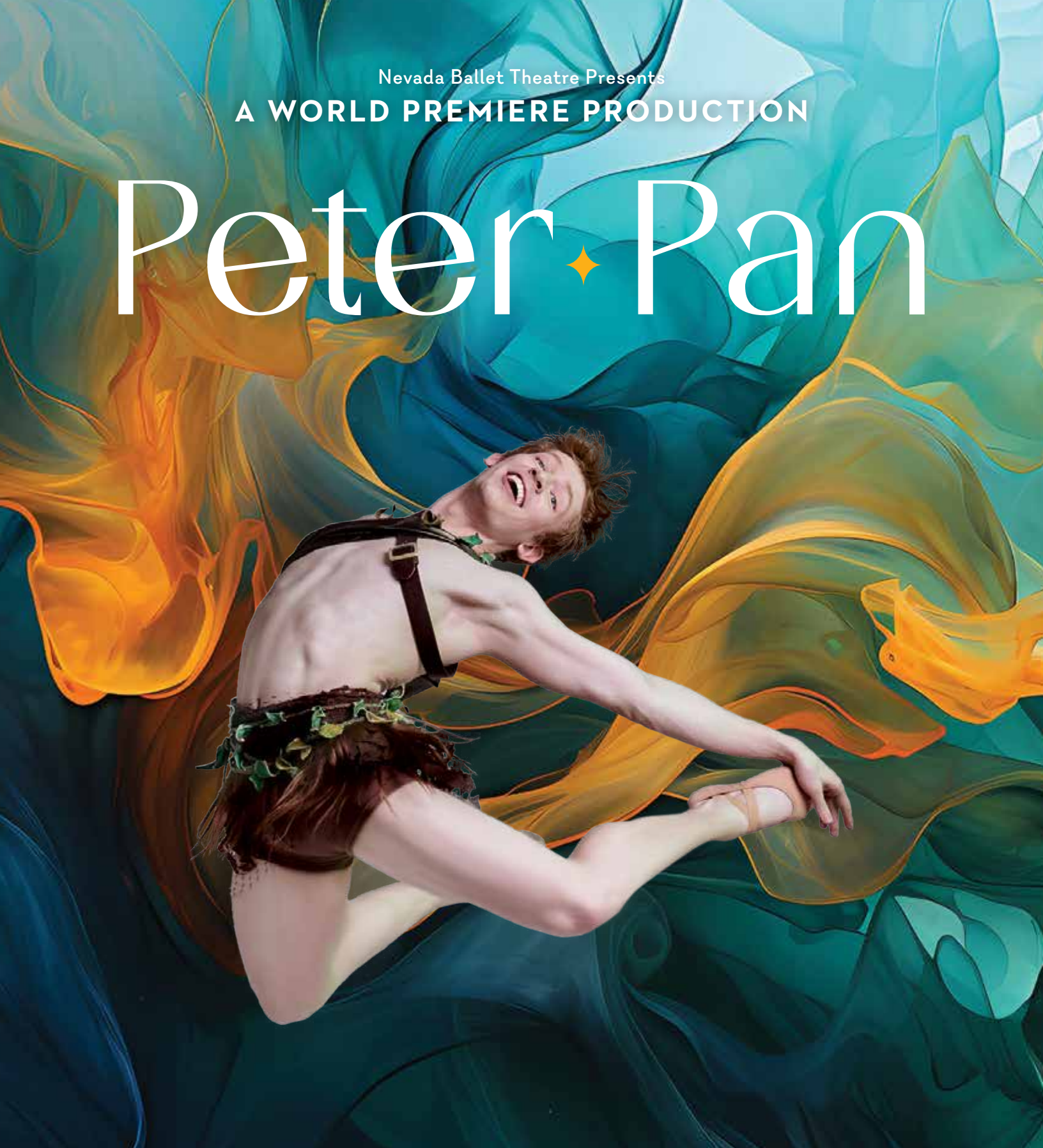
Bar members are invited to donate pet food and supplies to benefit Street Dogz—a local non-profit organization helping homeless pets and their humans with pet food and supplies, spay and neutering, medical treatment, emergency boarding/housing, etc.

- **When:** Now through May 2025
- **Where:** Drop-off locations:
 - **CCBA** - 717 S. 8th St., Las Vegas
 - **Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada** - 725 E. Charleston Blvd., Las Vegas
 - **Naylor & Braster** - 10100 W Charleston Blvd, Suite 120, Las Vegas
- **Suggested items for dogs and cats:** Dry food, wet food with flip top, dog sweaters and coats (all sizes, especially XXL), dog beds, pillows, blankets, harnesses (XL), collars, leashes, treats, bones, toys for all sizes, wagons, strollers, gallon-size baggies, dog shoes, umbrellas, spray bottles, cooling scarves, kiddie pools, litter boxes, and litter.

For a full list of items, see clarkcountybar.org or call Stephanie at the CCBA office at (702) 387-6011.

Nevada Ballet Theatre Presents
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Peter ✦ Pan



APRIL 19-27, 2025

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FEATURING NBT COMPANY ARTIST JACK GROHMANN. PHOTO BY JERRY METELLUS.

Volunteers Needed



Law Day - Image courtesy of the Creech Legal Office for editorial use by the Clark County Bar Association.

Law Day Activity at US Air Force Base Volunteers Needed May 1, 2025

Members of the CCBA and the State Bar of Nevada are needed to volunteer for the Law Day event to be hosted by the U.S. Air Force on May 1, 2025. Creech Air Force Base is home to over 4,000 Airmen, civilians, and contractors. The community event will be held in the Owl's Nest from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and is intended to support the Nellis and Creech Air Force Base communities.

Attorneys will be needed to answer general legal questions on a variety of topics including:

- Family law & divorce
- Adoption (including for same-sex couples)
- General education law, child welfare, and special education (EMFP)
- Immigration & residency
- Landlord-tenant
- Wills & estate planning
- Elder law
- Consumer protection
- Debt collection & tax
- Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)
- Servicemembers Civil Relief Act
- Veterans law & Veterans Disability (VA) Appeals

This event will not be a typical “ask-a-lawyer” event. The military has specific restrictions for civilians participating in this type of event. Also, civilian attorneys may provide information on general legal matters; however, they cannot provide legal advice to the point of creating an attorney/client relationship. To prepare for the event on May 1, all volunteers must attend the pre-event training meeting (via Teams) on Thursday, April 17, 2025 (noon to 1:00 p.m.).

Volunteers from local organizations are also invited to participate including:

- Clark County Bar Association
- Clark County Law Library
- Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada
- Nevada Legal Services
- Nevada Attorney General's Office of Military Legal Assistance
- Southern Nevada Senior Program
- State Bar of Nevada
- UNLV William S. Boyd School of Law

To volunteer, please reach out to Stephanie at the CCBA office at StephanieAbbott@clarkcountybar.org or (702) 387-6011.

Bar Activity

Walk with the Heart of a Child Community Outreach Activity March 29, 2025

Join the CCBA's team in this charity walk to benefit the Children's Heart Foundation.

- **When:** Saturday, March 29, 2025, 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.
- **Where:** Craig Ranch Regional Park, 851 Lone Mountain Road, North Las Vegas, NV 89032
- **Who:** CCBA members, friends, and family
- **Sign-up:** <https://chfn.org/>



Cross-Court Series: Part 2

Lunchtime Learning CLE
April 30, 2025

Members of the CCBA and the Washoe County Bar Association (WCBA) are invited to attend this live webcast.

- **Speakers:** Chief Judge Jones of the Second Judicial District Court and Judge Hoskins of the Eighth Judicial District Court
- **When:** April 30, 2025, noon to 1:00 p.m.
- **Where:** Online webcast hosted by the Washoe County Bar Association
- **Offers:** 1.0 general CLE credit for WCBA & CCBA members
- **RSVP:** wcbar.org or ashley@wcbar.org

Volunteers Needed

Health Care Power of Attorney-a-Thon Volunteers Needed June 17, 2025

Members of the CCBA and the State Bar of Nevada are needed to volunteer for this community outreach activity.

- **When:** Tuesday, June 17, 2025, 9 a.m. to noon
- **Where:** MLK Senior Center, 2420 N. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Building B, North Las Vegas.
- **About:** The Health Care Power of Attorney-a-Thon involves guiding a senior through the process of executing a health care power of attorney. The clients will be preregistered and scheduled for one-hour appointments with the volunteer attorneys.
- **Offers:** 1 hour CLE credit for 3 hours of pro bono service
- **CLE training before event:** A one-hour pre-recorded CLE video and PowerPoint presentation called "Health Care Power of Attorney" are available on demand for non-estate planning attorneys. An optional Zoom meeting to cover logistics and answer any questions for the volunteer attorneys will be held on June 16, 2025, at noon.
- **Registration:** Contact Cesar Hernandez, Pro Bono Coordinator at chernandez@snsstp.org by June 6, 2025. 🇨



Bar Activity

Out of the Darkness Walk Community Outreach Activity April 26

Join the CCBA's team in this charity walk to benefit the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

When: Saturday, April 26, 2025, 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Where: Sunset Regional Park

Who: CCBA members, friends, and family

Sign-up: <https://supporting.afsp.org/team/357531>

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Areas of Practice Listings Form



AREAS OF PRACTICE OFFER*: Current CCBA members—who are licensed attorneys—can get listed via area of practice in the Membership Matters issue of the COMMUNIQUÉ (June/July 2025). Listings will be limited to the member’s first name, last name, NV Bar #, and phone #, and up to three (3) areas of practice from the list below. *This service is included with the 2025 CCBA membership!*

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Areas of Practice – Select **up to three (3)** areas of practice from the list below:

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Complete this form and return to the CCBA no later than 5/1/2025.

Clark County Bar Association, 717 S. Eighth Street, Las Vegas, NV 89101, StephanieAbbott@clarkcountybar.org

***Restrictions apply.** This offer is available to current CCBA members who are licensed attorneys with paid membership types of Attorney Member, New Attorney Member, or Senior Attorney Member for the 2025 membership year. Due to space constraints in the *Communiqué*, any entries made by “Public Service Members” may be omitted from the publication. Listings are available only to current CCBA members who are licensed to practice law in Nevada or in another U.S. jurisdiction. Listings in the *Communiqué* will be limited to the member’s first name, last name, NV Bar number, and phone number (if provided), and up to three (3) areas of practice from the list above. Updates to selections submitted previously for the listing in the *Communiqué* can be made by completing the form again prior to the published deadline. Listings in the *Communiqué* are only available to members of the Clark County Bar Association who are licensed attorneys and have paid their 2025 CCBA Membership fee prior to May 1, 2025.



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Business Court Bench-Bar Meeting

- **Host:** Eighth Judicial District Court
- **When:** March 13, 2025, noon-1:00 p.m.
- **Where:** Regional Justice Center, Courtroom 16A and Zoom
- **Topic:** TBA
- **Contact:** hoskint@clarkcountycourts.us

Civil Bench-Bar Meeting

- **Host:** Eighth Judicial District Court
- **When:** March 11, 2025, noon-1:00 p.m.
- **Where:** Regional Justice Center, Courtroom 10D and Zoom
- **Topic:** TBA
- **Contact:** EJD CBenchBar@gmail.com

Las Vegas Justice Court Implements One Judge/One Defendant Criminal Case Assignment Process

On February 3, 2025, the Las Vegas Justice Court released a statement about the implementation of a new “One Judge/One Defendant” criminal case assignment process. This innovative system became effective Monday, February 3, 2025, and aims to streamline case management and improve judicial efficiency.

The new process employs a computer program designed to determine whether a defendant has a prior connection to an existing criminal case. If a prior connection is established, the new case will be assigned to the same judge overseeing the existing case. This approach ensures continuity and consistency in the handling of criminal cases involving the same defendant.

Key Rules for the One Judge/One Defendant Process:

1. **Determination of prior connection:** The computer program will assess whether the defendant has a prior connection to an existing criminal case in the Las Vegas Justice Court. A prior connection is established when:
 - An active lower-numbered criminal case, including cases where a criminal complaint has not been filed, is pending against the defendant or co-defendant.
 - The defendant has not satisfied all conditions

- of a sentence and the case has ongoing post-adjudication status checks or an active warrant.
 - The defendant is charged, and the charge arose from the same criminal transaction that was the basis of a citation or criminal complaint previously filed against the defendant (refile) or co-defendant.
2. **Case assignment:** If a prior connection exists, the new case will be assigned to the court with the prior connection. If multiple prior connections exist, the new case will be assigned to the court with the lowest case number.
 3. **Superseding cases:** Domestic violence and/or DUI case assignments will supersede prior connections.
 4. **Exclusion of traffic cases:** Traffic case types will be excluded from this process and will be randomly assigned regardless of prior connections.
 5. **Administrative reassignment:** If a case is assigned to a department in error, it will be administratively reassigned to the appropriate department in accordance with established Administrative Orders and/or these rules.

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This initiative underscores the Las Vegas Justice Court’s commitment to enhancing the judicial process and ensuring that justice is administered efficiently and fairly.

For more information, contact the Las Vegas Justice Court Administration via email at LVJCAAdministration@clarkcountynv.gov.


Lawyer Representatives for United States District Court

The United States District Court for the District of Nevada is accepting applications for lawyer representatives. Lawyer representatives provide vital input to the court on a myriad of issues affecting the operations of the federal courts, including but not limited to rule changes, development of new programs, planning of conferences, and the expenditure of funds from the non-appropriated account.

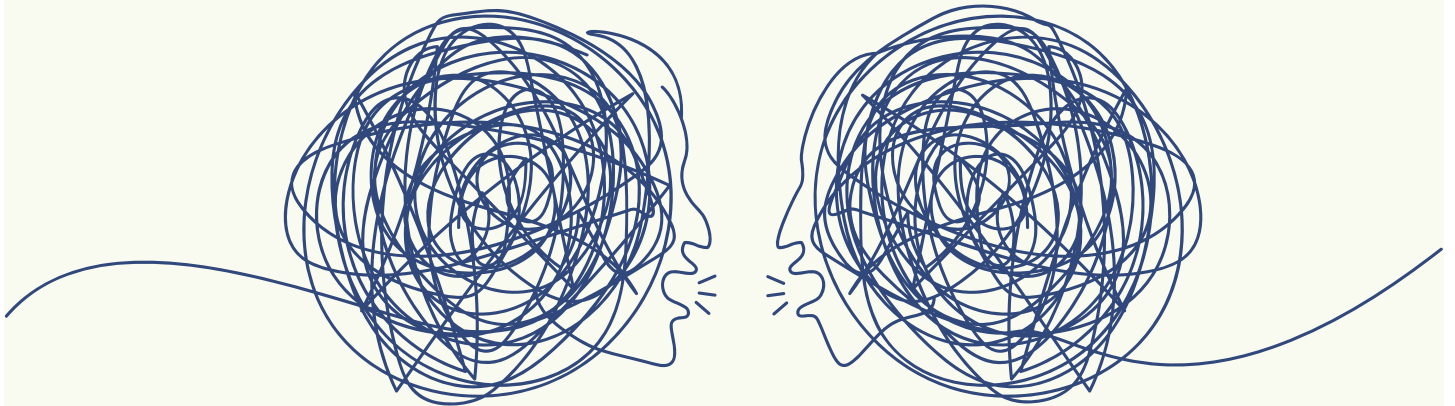
A full public notice for lawyer representatives is available on the court’s website (www.nvd.uscourts.gov). Letters of interest must be received by 4:00 p.m. on Monday, March 31, 2025. Questions can be directed to the Clerk of Court at 702-464-5456.

US District Court Conference Set for May 7, 2025

The US District Court for the District of Nevada will be hosting their conference at the Renaissance Reno Downtown Hotel and Spa on May 7, 2025. The theme for the conference is “Bridging the Divide.” This engaging event promises to challenge perspectives and foster meaningful connections across the legal community.

Explore the challenges and opportunities in bridging divides—between legal theories and practical applications, federal and state practices, and diverse perspectives within the judiciary and legal profession. Attendees will engage in discussions on collaborative solutions, inclusivity in the legal system, and innovations shaping the future of federal court practice. For more information and to register, visit <https://nevadadistrictconference.azurewebsites.net/>. 

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Innovation is Key in Family Court

By Hon. David S. Gibson, Jr.

I was recently informed that on December 11, 2024, outside normal business hours, at 7:59 a.m., I processed the one-millionth order in the Eighth Judicial District Court via Order in the Court (OIC). OIC was launched in April 2020, in response to innovative efforts by the district court to continue to effectively review and process orders despite pandemic restrictions on physical contact. The first order processed in OIC was processed by another family division judge, Hon. Charles Hoskin, also outside normal business hours. I include this information to demonstrate that our family division judges work very hard and, in many cases, around the clock, to promote diligent and efficient service to the public. One million orders in just over four years, with several of those years under pandemic restrictions, is no small feat.

Serving the public diligently and efficiently is a core value of the Eighth Judicial District Court. We are particularly mindful of it in the family division. Families in conflict and distress need timely attention and resolution to their court-involved experience. They need easy access to the courts. Other pandemic-driven innovations, like electronic document submission and service and virtual court appearances, have persisted beyond the pandemic to create a new way of conducting the business of family court. And more innovation continues.

Recent changes in delinquency leadership, with Judge Linda Marquis as the lead, have unified dependency courtroom procedures and decreased juvenile detention populations.

Recent restructuring of guardianship calendars, via split dockets, has given guardianship stakeholders access

to additional experience; through the hard work of Judges Denise Gentile, Bryce Duckworth, Stacy Rocheleau, and Dawn Throne. The reassignment of related domestic cases to juvenile dependency caseloads—under Judges Cynthia Giuliani, Robert Teuton, Ronda Forsberg, Margaret Pickard, Sunny Bailey, and myself—has furthered our goal to have as many issues involving one family being heard by one judge. These structural innovations pave the way for further expansion of split dockets, to guard against the loss of specialized institutional knowledge through retirements or other changes in the makeup of the family court bench.

Families in conflict and distress need timely attention and resolution to their court-involved experience.

Most recently, Judge Gregory Gordon spearheaded piloting informal trials in family court to better and more efficiently serve the large percentage of self-represented litigants we have in Clark County.

I have only named a few of our dedicated family division judges here, but all continue to contribute their experience and ideas to better the services we offer to the public—despite consistently having some of the largest caseloads per judge of nearly any comparable population across the country. It is our duty and honor to do so, and I am honored to preside in the Eighth Judicial District Court, Family Division. **☪**

Judge David S. Gibson, Jr. was appointed to the Eighth Judicial District Court, Family Division on Nov. 20, 2018, by former Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval. Prior to his appointment, Judge Gibson worked for six years as a juvenile dependency hearing master in the court's family division. In January 2023, Judge Gibson began to serve as presiding judge over the family division, and he currently serves on several committees.

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Committed Intimate Partner Cohabitant Cases Should be Heard in Family Court: The Necessary Legislative Fix

By Marshal S. Willick

I. INTRODUCTION

Through a process that has come to be known as “tacking,” property accrued during a period of premarital cohabitation may be divided between the cohabiting parties after they marry and later divorce. See *Carr-Bricken v. First Interstate Bank*, 105 Nev. 570, 779 P.2d 967 (1989).

Ditto for cohabiting parties when the timeline is reversed. Here, parties marry, divorce, and then live together in a meretricious relationship; the property accrued by either of them during the cohabitation period may be equally divided when the relationship ends. See *Hay v. Hay*, 100 Nev. 196, 199, 678 P.2d 672, 674 (1984).

The same applies when two parties think that they are married, but they are not by reason of a legal impediment making any attempted marriage between them void. See *Williams v. Williams*, 120 Nev. 559, 97 P.3d 1124 (2004).

And the same result occurs when there is no purported marriage at all. Nevada has adopted the California *Marvin* line of authority, holding that unmarried parties may have either an express or implied agreement to accrue property together, which becomes community property by analogy. See *Western States Constr. v. Michoff*, 108 Nev. 931, 840 P.2d 1220 (1992).

All of these “committed intimate partner cohabitant” cases (previously known as “meretricious relationship” cases) involve parties engaged in a romantic or homemaker-companion relationship that resembles the marital relationship but without a formal marriage ceremony. Such parties obtain potential rights, both to half the property accrued during such a relationship and to make a claim for support (sometimes called “palimony”), when the relationship terminates. For background, see Marshal Willick, *The Evolving Concept of Marriage and Coming Convergence of Marital and Non-Marital Property and Support Law* 19

NEV. LAW. 6, (May 2011). The number of such cases have mushroomed and may soon constitute the majority of family disputes.

These holdings and precedents can be applied in a large number of factual contexts, having a big impact on: property distributions, going to subjects as diverse as appreciation of real estate, contributions to and increases in value of retirement benefits, and *Pereira/Van Camp* analyses of a domestic partner’s interest in a separately owned business.

Justice Springer gave an excellent explanation of why all disputes between such committed intimate partners belong in family court. In *Gilman v. Gilman*, 114 Nev. 416, 956 P.2d 761 (1998), he noted that the words “cohabitation” and “cohabiting” are words of particular legal significance that carry more meaning than merely living under the same roof, and that it is a “status-creating condition.”

Landreth v. Malik, 127 Nev. 175, 251 P.3d 163 (2011), was a dispute over house ownership between childless cohabitants, filed in family court. Ultimately, the Supreme Court of Nevada found that such cases could properly be litigated there, but because such disputes are not specifically enumerated in the list of case types within the jurisdiction of family courts, in NRS 3.223, assignment of such cases was not made mandatory.

II. THE PROBLEM

Since family court was created, in 1992, the bulk of cohabitant cases have been resolved there, as they should be, since “a property-accrual agreement between cohabitants is ‘not the kind of arm’s length bargain envisioned by traditional contract principles, but an intimate arrangement of a fundamentally different kind.’” *Hewitt v. Hewitt*, 394 N.E.2d 1204 (Ill. 1979).

Some law firms, however, have noticed these lines of authority and created a cottage industry of representing potential obligors in such cases, seeking to extract a piece of the issues (typically ownership of one asset) and file that claim in the civil division, often demanding a jury trial. The tactic is to financially exhaust the weaker party and stifle, avoid, or dismiss all of the other claims properly part of an intimate partner cohabitant case, and, if possible, prevent the family court case from being heard at all.

At minimum, it creates an unnecessary “race to the courthouse” and duplicative parallel litigation, since civil division judges have been resistant to transferring the limited cases filed there to be considered as part of the overall resolution of property and support rights in family court.

While NRS 3.025(3)(a) requires reassignment to family court if the parties are or were parties to a family court case, the statute is applied inconsistently. Mandatory reassignment of these cases should not require that at all, because the issues in every intimate cohabitant case are identical regardless of whether there was such a prior family court case. And only family court judges can or should consider support claims.

Problem continued on page 24

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Problem continued from page 23

Unfortunately, the Supreme Court of Nevada declined to exercise its role as administrator of the court system by setting out case assignment directives between the family and civil divisions, leaving the question of case assignment in chaos and creating opportunities for people to divest long-term cohabitants of their rights by clever filing in the civil division. So the task falls to the Nevada legislature.

III. THE SOLUTION

A simple amendment to NRS 3.223, to add claims between intimate cohabitants to the list of case types within the family court’s explicit jurisdiction, would solve the problem and is long overdue.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

As a matter of equal protection and otherwise, case assignment between divisions should correspond with the nature of the dispute between the parties, not whether the parties were once married or never married, or did or did not have a prior case in family court.

Intimate partner cohabitant cases belong in *family court*, in part because *every Hay/Michoff* case creates the possibility of a support award, and that is the only forum with experience and training in determining the right to support—a subject within the *exclusive* jurisdiction of the family court. See NRS 3.223(1)(a).

It is no real argument to say that “contract disputes can be resolved in the civil division.” In Nevada, family court, and *only* family court, is suited to address issues more akin to a community-property-and-alimony analysis than a contract dispute between arm’s-length strangers. What is needed now is a knowledgeable legislator with the will to initiate that positive reform. **G**

Marshal S. Willick is the principal of the Willick Law Group, an A/V-rated Las Vegas family law firm, and QDROMasters, its pension order drafting division. He can be reached at 3591 East Bonanza Rd., Ste. 200, Las Vegas, NV 89110-2198. Phone: (702) 438-4100; fax: (702) 438-5311; e-mail: Marshal@WillickLawGroup.com.

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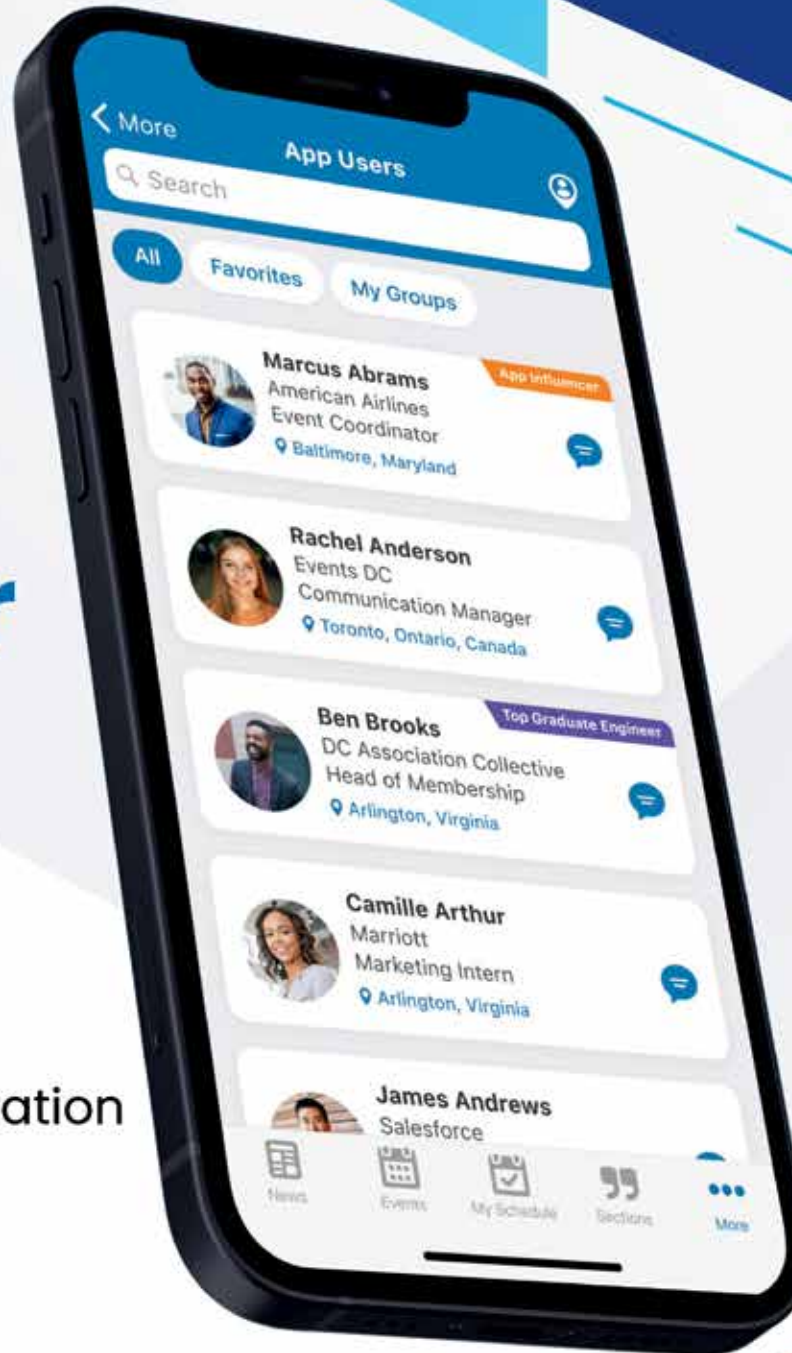


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SCAN ME



Getting Attorney Fees in Family Court

By Rock Rocheleau and Paulina Andrade

Family courts, like other courts, follow the “American rule” on attorney fees. This means (most of the time) each spouse will pay their own attorney fees. However, there are unique aspects in requesting and receiving attorney fees in family court. For instance, if Husband pays attorney fees from their joint accounts, didn’t Wife pay for them, too? How about when Husband controls the parties’ money, which can hinder Wife from hiring an attorney in the first place?

Just like in civil cases, family court rules allow for the awarding of attorney fees in family court when a motion is filed without first attempting to resolve the issue with the other side. *See* EDCR 5.501(b). An illustrative example involves a scenario where a party files a motion for custody modification without first consulting the other party to determine if there is mutual agreement. In this case, the other party may indeed agree to the proposed modification, rendering the motion unnecessary. If the court finds that the motion was filed without attempts to resolve the issue with the other party, it may award attorney fees to the responding party for the time and expense incurred in addressing the motion.

The court can also sanction a party who files an obviously unwarranted motion, fails to appear or prepare for a hearing, does not comply with a prior court order, or otherwise multiplies the proceedings. *See* EDCR 5.219. Motions to modify custody are not subject to issue preclusion rules

because the courts do not want to deter a parent from filing a motion that might have merit. However, if multiple motions without merit are filed by one parent, the court can award attorney fees to stop a parent from filing motion after motion, when their purpose is simply to harass the other parent.

A requirement unique to family court is that parties must file a Financial Disclosure Form (FDF) when requesting attorney fees.

A requirement unique to family court is that parties must file a Financial Disclosure Form (FDF) when requesting attorney fees. This requirement distinguishes family court proceedings from civil cases because the court *must* consider each party’s financial situation

before deciding on attorney fees. Additionally, the court has the authority to award attorney fees if a party fails to file an FDF, emphasizing the importance of this unique requirement.

The landmark case of *Sargeant v. Sargeant* highlights the court’s ability to award attorney fees to balance the power dynamics in a divorce, even without the court finding a party was acting unreasonable or failed to comply with other rules of procedure. This is particularly relevant when there is a significant disparity in the financial resources of the parties, a common theme in family court. The purpose of *Sargeant* fees is to allow the disadvantaged party to meet the opposing party in the court room on equal footing—without jeopardizing their financial position.

However, in situations where the parties are not married, (think custody cases!) the principles established in

Sargeant do not apply. Regardless, the court still has statutory discretion to award fees, both in custody cases or child support enforcement cases, after considering the parties' incomes. *See* NRS 125C.250 & NRS 125.180(1). These statutes are case-type specific and do not require findings of "unreasonableness."

The allocation of attorney fees can become complex, particularly when spouses accumulate fees on a joint credit card or pay them from a separate account. While community debts are typically divided equally between the parties, attorney fees are not always considered community debts. Judges have discretion in determining how these fees are allocated, and they must be vigilant to avoid a "double dip" scenario. For example, if Husband pays attorney fees from a separate bank account that is not divided, and the credit card balances (which include attorney fees) are divided equally, Wife effectively benefits by having half of her fees paid without contributing to Husband's fees. This creates an imbalance that attorneys (and judges) must carefully look for.

Judges in family court have *significant* discretion when it comes to awarding or denying attorney fees. While they are required to make findings when awarding fees, they are not obliged to explain their reasoning when denying them. *See Henry Prod. Inc. v. Tarmu*, 114 Nev. 1017, 1020, 967 P.2d 444, 446 (1998).

In our opinion, family court does not easily award attorney fees because awarding fees can "fan the flames" between the divorcing spouses. This, in turn, can intensify and prolong the divorce or custody case. Also, most issues brought in family court are not "clearly" frivolous. It can be challenging for a judge to find enough facts to support an order for attorney fees in a basic divorce or simple custody modification. Lastly, arguments surrounding attorney fees can consume valuable court time and detract from the primary issues at hand. Therefore, a good practice tip for requesting attorney fees in family court is "don't count on them," and, when asking for attorney fees, present concise and compelling arguments on why the issue was frivolous or brought with the intention to harass the other. **C**

Rock Rocheleau is the managing attorney at Right Lawyers. He received his law degree from UNLV Boyd School of Law.

Paulina Andrade is an attorney with Right Lawyers, representing clients with divorce and custody matters. She received her law degree from UNLV Boyd School of Law.

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We Can Get This Done

By Michelle Darquea

What an honor it is to be an attorney. I became an attorney after much hard work – and we all know what that entails. I started doing pro bono work immediately because I was so grateful for the life I was afforded. When I moved to Nevada in 1999 from New York, I immediately sought out pro bono opportunities because of their importance to me. Participating in pro bono cases has not only enabled me to help people in need but has honored me with a sense of well-being that I truly cherish. In 2001, Nevada Legal Services asked me to take a pro bono case. I took five cases because I had time to do so. That being said, if everyone can put in some effort, it does add up. And you may think that a small contribution is not that much, but all contributions count. You would be surprised at what a big difference it makes overall.

The Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada (LACSN)—for which I have been doing most of my pro bono efforts for years—has always given me great assistance and resources when needed. I was surprised when LACSN recently advised me that I assisted hundreds of people in only a year from participating in the Ask-A-Lawyer program, which was not terribly time-consuming.

Additionally, it is great for networking. I thank all my colleagues for all their pro bono efforts and encourage everyone to continue with pro bono contributions. I can attest that it is not overwhelming. We can get this done!

Michelle Darquea graduated from St. John's University with a B.S. in 1990; she went on to receive her Juris Doctor from Touro College, Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center in 1994. Ms. Darquea has been a member of the New York State Bar since 1994. She was admitted to the U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit in 1995 and the U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit in 2002. Ms. Darquea has been a member of the State Bar of Nevada since 2001. Ms. Darquea was also admitted to the Supreme Court of the United States in 2006.

Community Outreach Opportunity

Pro Bono Project

Take one new case

Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada is the agency of last resort for many low-income individuals and families who face critical legal problems that affect their basic needs.

The Pro Bono Project coordinates private attorneys who generously volunteer to provide free legal assistance to individuals who cannot afford an attorney.

They need YOUR help to accomplish our mission of preserving access to justice for all Southern Nevadans. Getting involved in public interest law is essentially life changing.

Please consider becoming a volunteer to help with the:

- Pro Bono Project
- Partner in Pro Bono Program
- Ask-A-Lawyer Program
- Federal Pro Bono Program
- Education Advocate Program
- Interpreter Program

For more information, contact the Pro Bono Project at (702) 386-1070.

Sign up at <https://www.lacsnpobono.org/>.



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- ✓ **ACCESS** a large and comprehensive statewide provider network
- ✓ **RETAIN** workforce talent with valuable health insurance and employee benefits
- ✓ **ENROLL** at any time!

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Health Plan Highlights

- Statewide HMO with **no specialist referrals required**
- PPO & POS health plans include access to a **national network** for those members who live, work or travel out-of-state
- **24/7 care** via telephone or video from licensed physicians, psychiatrists and counselors for a **\$0 cost share**
- With a variety of health plan options, **employees have choice** and can find the design that works best for them

Participating Areas Include:
Clark County and Nye County





2024/2025 Benefit Overview

All medical plan options were carefully designed for CCBA members. Businesses can offer up to THREE different health plans, so employees have a choice when it comes to what works best for them. Benefits listed below are in-network.

PLANS RENEW OCTOBER 1, 2025

In-Network Benefits	AHP HMO 8	AHP POS 6* HMO/PPO	AHP POS 13* HMO/PPO	AHP POS 20* HMO/PPO	AHP POS 27* HMO/PPO	AHP PPO 9*	AHP PPO HD 11* ¹
Calendar Year Deductible (CYD)							
Individual	\$2,000	\$1,250/\$2,000	\$3,000/\$3,500	\$5,000/\$5,500	\$7,500/\$7,500	\$2,500	\$3,200
Family	\$6,000	\$2,500/\$4,000	\$6,000/\$7,000	\$10,000/\$11,000	\$15,000/\$15,000	\$5,000	\$6,400
Coinsurance							
	20%	20%	30%	30%	30%	30%	10%
Out-of-Pocket Maximum							
Single	\$6,850	\$9,200/\$9,200	\$6,850/\$8,150	\$7,300/\$8,000	\$8,550/\$8,550	\$8,150	\$6,900
Family	\$13,700	\$18,400/\$18,400	\$13,700/\$16,300	\$14,600/\$16,000	\$17,100/\$17,100	\$16,300	\$13,800
Provider Office Visits							
Telemedicine - Teladoc	\$0 copay	\$0 copay	\$0 copay	\$0 copay	\$0 copay	\$0 copay	\$0 copay
Primary Care Provider (PCP)	\$25 copay	\$15/\$30 copay	\$25/\$50 copay	\$30/\$60 copay	\$30/\$60 copay	\$30 copay	CYD/10%
wellPortal Primary Care	\$0 copay	\$0 copay	\$0 copay	\$0 copay	\$0 copay	\$0 copay	CYD/\$0 copay
Specialist	\$50 copay	\$30/\$60 copay	\$50/\$80 copay	\$60/\$90 copay	\$60/\$90 copay	\$60 copay	CYD/10%
Emergency/Urgent Care							
Ambulance – Ground & Air	\$250 copay per trip	\$250 copay per trip	\$500 copay per trip	\$1,000 copay	\$1,500 copay per trip	\$500 copay per trip	CYD/10%
Emergency Room	CYD	\$500 copay	CYD/30%	\$1,000 copay	\$1,500 copay	CYD/30%	CYD/10%
Urgent Care	\$50 copay	\$50/\$100 copay	\$50/\$100 copay	\$50/\$100 copay	\$50/\$100 copay	\$50 copay	CYD/10%
Hospital/Facility/Surgical							
Outpatient Surgical	\$250 copay	\$250 copay/ CYD 20%	\$500 copay/ CYD 30%	\$1,000 copay/ CYD 30%	\$1,500 copay/ CYD 30%	\$500 copay	CYD/10%
Inpatient Hospital	CYD/\$1,000 copay	CYD \$1,000/ CYD 20%	CYD \$2,000/ CYD 30%	CYD/30%	CYD 30%/ CYD 30%	CYD/30%	CYD/10%
Pharmacy							
FDA-approved Preventive	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge
Generic/Brand/Non-Brand	\$15/\$40/\$60	\$25/\$50/\$75	\$25/\$50/\$75	\$25/\$50/\$75	\$25/\$50/\$75	\$10/\$30/\$50	CYD/10%
Specialty	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	CYD/10%
Radiology							
Routine X-Ray & Diagnostic	\$25 copay	\$15/\$30 copay	\$25/\$50 copay	\$30/ \$60 copay	\$30/\$60 copay	\$30 copay	CYD/10%
CT Scan & MRI	\$250 copay	\$250 copay/ CYD 20%	\$500 copay/ CYD 30%	\$1,000 copay/ CYD 30%	\$1,500 copay/ CYD 30%	\$500 copay	CYD/10%
Complex Diagnostic	CYD/20%	\$250 copay/ CYD 20%	CYD/30%	\$1,000 copay/ CYD 30%	\$1,500 copay/ CYD 30%	CYD/ 30%	CYD/10%
Maternity							
Prenatal Care & Delivery	\$200 copay per delivery	\$200 copay/CYD 20% per delivery	\$250 copay/CYD 30% per delivery	\$250 copay/CYD 30% per delivery	\$200 copay/CYD 30% per delivery	\$200 copay per delivery	CYD/10% per delivery
Delivery Room & Well-baby Hospital	CYD/\$1,000 copay	CYD \$1,000 copay/ CYD 20%	CYD \$2,000/ CYD 30%	CYD 30%/ CYD 30%	CYD 30%/CYD 30%	CYD/30%	CYD/10%
Mental Health/Alcohol & Drug Abuse Services							
Inpatient	CYD/\$1,000 copay	CYD \$1,000/ CYD 20%	CYD \$2,000/ CYD 30%	CYD 30%/ CYD 30%	CYD 30%/ CYD 30%	CYD/30%	CYD/10%
Outpatient	\$250 copay	\$250 copay/ CYD 20%	\$500 copay/ CYD 30%	\$1,000/ CYD 30%	\$1,500 copay/ CYD 30%	\$500 copay	CYD/10%
Office Visit	\$25 copay	\$15/\$30 copay	\$25/\$50 copay	\$30/\$60 copay	\$30/\$60 copay	\$30 copay	CYD/10%
Lab and Pathology							
	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	CYD/10%
Pediatric Dental & Vision - Diagnostic and Preventive (up to age 19)							
	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge

¹ High Deductible Health Plans are subject to deductible first and benefits will be rendered at the contractual rate based upon type of service. Refer to the Summary of Benefits document for benefit details, limitations and exclusions. This document is for plan comparison purposes only.

*Indicates plans with national network access outside Nevada



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The Marketplace

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The Marketplace

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