

Welcome 2017
By: Lee Ann Bennett, Clerk of Court

It's hard to believe a new year has begun. It seems like only yesterday I was writing the lead article for the January 2016 newsletter. In that article, I shared that the Court would continue its commitment to becoming One Court, One Team with the focus on uniformity. Although there were times it appeared our commitment got off track throughout the year, I found we all worked together to focus again on that goal. So many are to be thanked for helping us continue to meet our goal. First, I thank our judges who continued with their commitment of thinking district-wide and not divisionally. In 2012, they agreed to focus on "what is simple, fair, necessary, and best meets the needs of our constituencies." They continued with that focus in 2016. I also want to thank our staff and members of the bar who have continued to serve on various committees or working groups. The following deserve to be recognized:

Steering Committee Members

Elena Ketchum – Chair
Keith Appleby
Brad Hissing
Lori Vaughan
Jason Burgess
Ellsworth Summers
Michael Waskiewicz
Justin Luna
Lorne Durket
Hunter Goff
David Finemann
Luis Rivera
Brian Zinn
Denise Barnett
Jill Kelso
Doug Neway
Kelly Remick
Dawn Carapella
Robert Thomas
Mary Maddox
Raymond Waguespack
Sara Mason

Local Rules Lawyers Advisory Committee Members

(list includes current members and members who served through June)
Honorable Caryl E. Delano – Chair
Lara Fernandez
Jacob "Jay" Brown
Greg Champeau
Betsy Cox
Donald Kirk
Andrew Layden
Luis Rivera
Rick Webber
Raymond Waguespack (Clerk's office representative)
Laura Stevenson (Administrative assistance)

Chapter 13 Trustees

(provided chapter 13 process input)
Laurie Weatherford
Jon Waage
Kelly Remick
Doug Neway

The 59 staff members who serve on an internal Court Committee (Procedure, Drafting, Update, Newsletter, Website, IT, Training and Outreach).

The Lawyers who have volunteered at one of the Pro Bono Clinics.

I hope you will continue to serve and make a difference. Last year I challenged you to "reset" by thinking positively, working productively, exercising daily, eating healthy, relaxing, laughing,

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having fun, being happy, sharing love and living well. This year I challenge you to take the opportunity to make a difference. At a recent staff meeting, my Human Resource Manager shared the story of Warrick Dunn and Deshaun Watson.

For those of you who don't follow football, Warrick Dunn played for Florida State and later for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Deshaun Watson is the quarterback for the Clemson Tigers (the National College Champions). Warrick Dunn started the "Home for the Holidays" program in 1997 that provides home furnishings and down payment assistance to disadvantaged single parents. The families are selected through a partnership with Habitat for Humanity affiliates. His program furnished a Habitat for Humanity home for Deshaun Watson's family in 2006. Deshaun Watson in turn, works with Habitat for Humanity by helping build homes in the summer. I am so proud of my staff who, with the same spirit displayed by Warrick Dunn and Deshaun Watson of giving back, donated to Metropolitan Ministries (Tampa organization who help the homeless), Second Harvest Food Bank (Orlando organization), PetSmart (support for pets of the victim of the Pulse tragedy), toys to Champions for Children, CARES (a service for home recovery and the elderly), SPCA, and Camaraderie Foundation (provides healing for invisible wounds of war). Many members of the bar also displayed that same spirit of giving by donating their time and expertise to the pro bono clinics across the district. I hope in 2017, the spirit of giving continues to grow through staff endeavors and through an increase in bar members volunteering to assist at the pro bono clinics.

Happy New Year.

TRUSTEE SPOTLIGHT

Meet Aaron Cohen, Chapter 7 Trustee, Jacksonville Division

By: Miriam G. Suarez, Orlando Office of the U.S. Trustee



Aaron R. Cohen is a Chapter 7 panel trustee in the Jacksonville Division of the Middle District of Florida. He has served in that capacity since his appointment in 1997. Aaron is originally from Cleveland, Ohio and moved to Florida when he was six years old. He graduated from the University of South Florida with a B.A. in History, attended law school at “THE” University of Florida and graduated from UF in December 1985. Aaron met his wife, Lisa, while at law school; their meeting was prompted by their law school professors when they sat them alphabetically. Soon after learning that Lisa was only 20 years old and already in law school, he realized she was also way smarter than he was, so he married her. Lisa practices bankruptcy law in Gainesville and Jacksonville, Florida.

After graduating law school, Aaron was an Assistant County Attorney for Marion County, Florida. In 1987, he joined the law firm of Lansing Roy, P.A. and later became a partner in Pinkston & Cohen where he worked with the late Julian Pinkston from 1992 - 2000. In 2000, he opened his own firm, Aaron R. Cohen, P.A.

Before becoming a panel trustee, Aaron practiced under all chapters of the Bankruptcy Code, representing both debtors and creditors and an occasional creditor’s committee. He continues to maintain his private practice. In his spare time, Aaron fosters his “deep and abiding interest in all things motorcycle,” listens to electric guitar driven blues music - especially live as he tries to

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see three or four shows a year, and studies early religious texts (from about 500 B.C.E. to 400 C.E.) as an amateur historian.

AARON'S PRACTICE POINTERS FOR ATTORNEYS:

- Debtor attorneys need to spend more time with potential clients. Sometimes the best answer is not to file bankruptcy, or at least not immediately.
- Debtor attorneys need to be more actively involved in the preparation of the debtor's schedules. Sending a pre-printed packet home with the debtor to fill out should not form the basis of the schedules. Each and every question needs to be asked to a debtor by the attorney.
- Ask appropriate follow-up questions and use examples. Spending the time upfront with a client avoids most non-disclosure problems that come up later.
- Finally, use common sense. If a debtor has a \$450,000 house and brings you a list of household goods that only total \$850, there is usually something wrong. If there really is only \$850 worth of household goods, putting an explanatory note into the schedules or statement of financial affairs will at least put the trustee on notice that there may be a reasonable explanation for the low values.

PRO BONO CORNER

Bankruptcy for Beginners Seminar Yields Big Success

On October 20, 2016, the Tampa Bay Bankruptcy Bar Association, Bay Area Legal Services, Hillsborough County Bar Association, and the Bankruptcy Court hosted a free pro bono seminar, Bankruptcy for Beginners. The day-long seminar was free and attendees earned 8.5 hours of CLE credits. In consideration of attending the seminar, attendees were asked to accept one or more pro bono organization assignments. Included among the assignments were direct assignments from bankruptcy judges. The following attorneys were assigned bankruptcy cases.

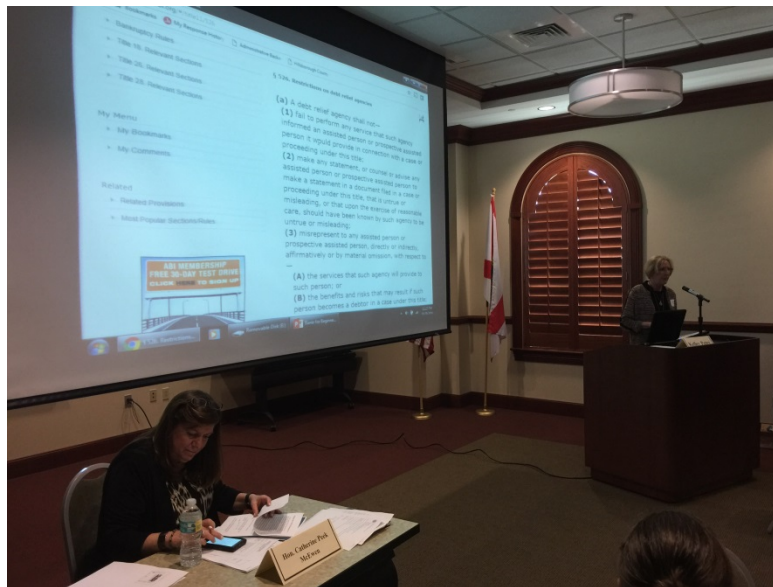
Jacksonville: Mark Loerzel

Tampa: Paul S. Maney, Petia Tenev, Sami Thalji

Orlando: Carol Hill, J. Richard Young, Joann Tolbert, Christy Collins

Additionally, the following attorneys each agreed to donate six hours to the TBBBA pro bono clinic as a result of the seminar. The volunteer hours translate into almost 1/3 of the clinic's staffing needs for the year!

Shamika T. Askew-Storay, Patricia Candamo, Shannon Clancy-Kimball, Kevin Comer, Ailen Cruz, Pamela Jo Hatley, Jennifer M. Komarek, James Kompothecras, Serena Kurtz, Anne Malley, Lauren Rehm, Daniel Rock, Russell A. Sibley, Jr., James Solomon, Petia Tenev, Iris Timm, David Wilson IV



Judge McEwen and Judge Colton were among the presenters.

PRO BONO CORNER

Justin Luna, the president of the Middle District of Florida Bankruptcy Pro Se Clinic, sent the attached thank you letter to the Clinic Volunteers.



Assisted District Court Judges
**BANKRUPTCY
PRO SE CLINIC**

Board Members:

Jeffrey S. Ainsworth
Jake C. Blanchard
Anna Haugen
Jill Ellen Kelso
Justin M. Luna
Luis E. Rivera
C. Andrew Roy

December 29, 2016

To: All Middle District of Florida Bankruptcy Professionals:

***Re: Thank You from Middle District of Florida Pro Se
Bankruptcy Legal Assistance Clinic***

Dear Valued Volunteers:

As 2016 comes to a close, it is human nature for all of us to reflect back on the year at hand. We think about our family, friends, election results as well as our own respective legal practices. From the Clinic's unique perspective, we think about the hundreds of volunteers who assisted thousands of individuals in need across Central Florida, the strides our organization has made over the last few years and the tremendous support each one of you has made to make the Clinic possible.

Since the creation of the District-wide Clinic last year, we have seen the clinics and programs in Orlando, Tampa, Jacksonville and Fort Myers become harbingers for the rest of the country. As a direct result of the countless hours that each one of you has dedicated to furthering the cause of the Clinic, new bankruptcy *pro se* clinics have blossomed across the country. The work you have provided is truly unprecedented and is an inspiration to thousands of other bankruptcy professionals from St. Louis to Montana and even California.

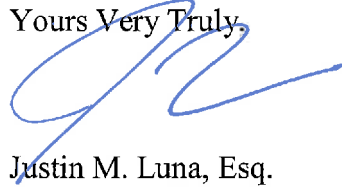
The Court has also been, and continues to be, extremely supportive of our efforts. In fact, earlier this month, the Middle District of Florida Bankruptcy Judges agreed to support the respective clinics' decisions in distributing a list of attorneys who would take cases for compensation, provided that the attorney either has taken a *pro bono* case within the last year or has volunteered each quarter at the Clinic. Consequently, another significant benefit to volunteering is born.

However, as with any successful enterprise, the challenges and work of the clinics shall never be complete. Individuals who lack resources to afford competent bankruptcy counsel will continue in the foreseeable future, despite general market conditions. It is incumbent upon each

of us to rise up to address these continued challenges on a perpetual basis. If past performance is any indication of future results, we know that the clinics' success will continue to grow.

From all of us at the Clinic, Happy New Year and thank you for your continued support.

Yours Very Truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Justin M. Luna', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Justin M. Luna, Esq.
President

cc: All Middle District of Florida Bankruptcy Judges & Associations

PRO BONO CORNER

Make-Me-Smile Moments and Shout-Outs Submitted by Judge McEwen

Thank you to:

Jonathan Semach for handling a Chapter 13 case.

Mara Shaughnessy for handling a student loan dischargeability action.

Paul Maney for accepting a Chapter 13 case assignment from a Tampa Division bankruptcy judge as a result of the Bankruptcy for Beginners seminar. The debtor had been left hanging by a disbarred attorney. Thanks also to Tim Sierra for agreeing to be Mr. Maney's mentor.

Ryan Reinert, of the Shutts firm, for giving access to the working poor by taking on a "low bono" case.

Thanks, as always, to the many courthouse clinic volunteers in our three bar-run clinics. We judges notice. You make our jobs easier and make the system run more smoothly.

Help is on the Way!

Look for the New and Improved Procedure Manual

By: Honorable Karen S. Jennemann

As we enter 2017, I look at the progress our District has made in unifying our procedures and forms. The Court is working as “One Court, One Team.” Now, we need to share these forms and procedures with you—our bankruptcy lawyers, our *pro se* filers, and everyone using the Court. Help us help you!

Last year, we made progress in getting the word out.

Our journey to help continued in March when we released a proto-type version of a **Procedure Manual** on our website. You can find it under the “Procedures” tab under Code, Orders & Rules. I expect many of you still do not know it exists!

We pressed on down the road of making our procedures accessible to everyone when in August we sent out a survey to all CM-ECF filers asking for input on how to improve the Procedure Manual. Thanks to everyone who completed the survey!

We turned our attention to our home-base in October. I met with numerous folks at the Court for their ideas on how to make the Procedure Manual easier to find and to use.

The next month was our annual Bench Bar Conference where the Procedure Manual was the topic of lively discussion. I received pages of detailed suggestions and ideas on improvements. Again, thanks to everyone who attended the Bench Bar Conference and shared their many thoughts. We reviewed all of the suggestions and realized that our bar is critical in helping improve the Procedure Manual.

Now, drum roll, I want to share improvements to the Procedure Manual you will see in the next few months:

- Putting the Procedure Manual front and center on the website to make it easier to find.
- Installing navigational tools to let you quickly answer your questions.
- Installing a “mini-survey” option to encourage feedback and to suggest new topics to add. We want to give you the forms and guidance you need to do your job!
- Substantially increasing the content of the Procedure Manual to answer the common questions we receive every day at the Court. For example, when an attorney changes law firms or addresses, what does the Court require?
- Including many more forms with motion and order templates.
- Working with our bar and our staff to publicize the Procedure Manual. I expect over the next few months when you ask a question, you will be referred to the Procedure Manual.

I am very excited we will work toward making the Court’s Procedure Manual the model for Bankruptcy Courts across the country. Give me your ideas and suggestions. Watch for substantial improvements to come in 2017. *Help us by using the Procedure Manual.*

JUDGES' CORNER



Judge Catherine Peek McEwen with former Tampa Bay Buccaneer Ryan Nece. She spoke at his Foundation's PowerPlate Luncheon about the value of volunteerism.

JUDGES' CORNER

Judge Jennemann's Chambers participated in a volunteer project that helped feed local families for Thanksgiving. They assembled 37 laundry baskets full of Thanksgiving meal ingredients, and they decorated the baskets with seasonal bows.



Pictured left to right: Law Clerk Danielle Merola, Courtroom Deputy Lexie Lewis and Law Clerk Stephanie Villalobos.



AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Laura Gallo honored as one of NCBJ’s “Blackshear Fellows”

The National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges selects a handful of minority lawyers to attend its annual Conference as "Blackshear Fellows" each year. Laura Gallo, a sole practitioner in Tampa, is one of five honorees this past year. She attended the NCBJ Conference in San Francisco in October. The fellowship benefits include attendance at special meetings and a stipend to be applied toward expenses.

The fellowship is named after Hon. Cornelius Blackshear, a retired U.S. Bankruptcy Judge for the Southern District of New York, to remind the lawyers of the illustriousness Judge Blackshear brought to the U.S. Bankruptcy Court bench as he distinguished himself by his renowned scholarship and development of bankruptcy jurisprudence. The NCBJ anticipates that the attorneys who are selected to be NCBJ Blackshear Fellows will be inspired by the example of Judge Blackshear, who dedicated himself to betterment of the legal and judicial system throughout his career.

Some interesting facts about Ms. Gallo: She has an LL.M in intellectual property, is a Big Sister in the Big Brothers and Big Sisters program, scuba dives, and knows how to dance the salsa. She came to the United States from Columbia when she was 19 and “embarked on the difficult path of learning English, attending college and later law school, while working to support myself, my parents and siblings.” Ms. Gallo also volunteers at the Tampa Bay Bankruptcy Bar Association Clinic and takes cases from Bay Area Legal Services of Spanish-speaking debtors and helps Spanish people with their forms at the BALS Family Forms Clinic En Espanol.



Pictured: NCBJ President, Judge Mary Grace Diehl and Laura Gallo during the induction ceremony.

**The Tampa Division Clerk's Office Staff Honor Judge McEwen for her
Dedication to Pro Bono Work**



During the 2016 National Pro Bono Week held October 23rd through October 26th, the Tampa Clerk's Office staff showed their appreciation to Judge McEwen for all her efforts to help pro se debtors, parties and her role in promoting the Pro Bono Clinic. Her work is appreciated by the Bar, her colleagues and also very much by the Court staff. **Thank you Judge McEwen!**

Changes are a Comin'

**By: Stephanie B. Villalobos and Danielle Merola,
Law Clerks to the Honorable Judge Karen S. Jennemann**

Just kidding—the changes have already taken place! Important amendments to the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure took effect on December 1, 2016. Below is a quick snapshot of a few of the updates.

Be sure to look at the changes to Rule 7008, General Rules of Pleading, and Rule 7012, Defenses and Objections. Prior to the amendments, a pleader must have stated if the matter was core or noncore in their pleadings. This requirement was eliminated. The pleader must now state if they consent to final orders or judgments by the bankruptcy court regardless of whether the matter is core or noncore.

Section (b), Determining Procedure, was added to Rule 7016, Pre-Trial Procedures. This amendment gives bankruptcy courts more leeway to take appropriate action that matches the particulars of each case.

Another big change took place to Rule 9006(f). Subdivision (f) was amended to remove electronic service from the modes of service that allow three days added to some deadlines. This means that some parties will have the additional three days if they were served by regular mail, but parties served by electronic service will not.

For all the Chapter 13 practitioners, be aware of the changes to subdivision (a) of Rule 3002.1. The amendment clarified the rule applies to any debtor that wishes to maintain his residence whether the debtor will pay the mortgage payment to the Trustee or directly to the creditor.

But that's not all. If you are looking for an official form and you can't find it—keep in mind a few forms were renumbered.

Each year the amendments to the rules make the bankruptcy process better. Check out the updated Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure to get the full scoop on all of the amendments.

Tampa Courthouse Obtains Handicapped Parking

You read in a prior issue about Tampa's success in obtaining a handicapped parking space near the courthouse, prompted by an inquiry of attorney Susan Sharp. City of Tampa Mayor Bob Buckhorn came through again by adding a second space in December. If you have handicapped clients, let them know that there are now two handicapped parking stalls on Florida Avenue in the 700 block.



Help Wanted!

Attorneys, do you know American Sign Language? If so, one of our referral networks has a need for assistance with cases from time to time. Please contact Lupe Mitcham at Lupe@hillsbar.com if you are willing to help with hearing impaired referrals.

IT NEWS AND SECURITY UPDATES

A Renewed Focus on Cyber Security **Submitted by Laurie Ellwood**

Although Cyber Security has always been important for the courts, our mission this year is to step up the fight to secure our systems and protect our users and data from ongoing threats. We will become more educated, informed, and aware as the threats and strategies to harm our systems and data change daily. The Judiciary has systems in place to help us provide a more secure environment for our users both internal and external and a top notch security team at the AO that monitors these systems 24/7. They also provide updated and improved systems and support to local courts to help further protect against these threats. FLMB implements and upgrades these systems and continues to update and educate our IT team and our users. Weekly reports, monthly staff reports, and quarterly scans give us an “IT Security Scorecard” that is used to assess the security status of our local court environments. We strive to keep the scorecard complete and updated and we also strive toward constant and consistent improvement.

We saw a variety of Cyber Security threats in 2016 which included ransomware, key loggers, drive by downloads, spoofed emails and social engineering. Not only were these threats internal, but some of our external users suffered as well. Fortunately our Court could block, clean, delete, or remove these threats, and avoid data loss and/or locked files. We could also notify a few of our attorneys of possible threats and infections on their own systems. We could do this because of the Judiciary’s vigilance and our educated, informed and aware local court community.

To view Biggest Data Breaches of 2016, So far - <https://www.identityforce.com/blog/2016-data-breaches>

This year will bring more threats and require even more diligence as we move through 2017. We all have a hand in protecting and securing our systems here and at home. Some familiar tips to keep you more secure include; updating software, operating systems, and browsers, installing a firewall and Anti-virus/Anti-malware programs, and using strong, updated passwords. Maybe more important than all of the above is to remain informed and aware of current trends and past mistakes, to become more prepared and aware for future threats.

DEAR POINT AND CLICK

Submitted by Sara Mason, Sarah Wiener, and Raymond Waguespack

Q. I am in need of CLE credits and would like to increase my knowledge of local practices in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Middle District of Florida. Do you offer any online informational sessions?

A. Yes. The Court offers several online Continuing Legal Education (CLE) approved programs. The courses are available for attorneys who are authorized CM/ECF users in this Court. The courses are always available through the Court's website and cover a broad range of legal topics relevant to local bankruptcy practices.

To access the programs from the Court's website, www.flmb.uscourts.gov:

- From the red menu banner located across the top of the page, hover your cursor over the [Attorney] tab.
- Select [CLE Attorney Credits] from the options.
- Enter your CM/ECF login in the text box located in the top right-hand corner of the page. Left-click [Go]. A listing of CLE materials displays. This includes: the names of the available courses, the date and location where the presentations were made and the CLE approved period, if applicable. Note: This is the login used for accessing this Court's electronic filing system. If you do not have access to file documents in this Court, you are unable to view the presentations. A PACER login will also not allow you access to these presentations.
- Select the presentation you would like to view by left-clicking the image to the left of the description.
- Once you have completed the course and have the complete CLE course number, fill out the required form to post the CLE credits with the Florida Bar.

Important Notes:

- The CLE course number may be given out in several different pieces throughout the presentation by the presenter, or the course number may be given at the end of the presentation.
- These videos are best viewed using Internet Explorer (IE) and issues may occur when using other browsers. If you have not viewed videos from our computer before, you may be prompted to run a Windows Media Player extension add-on to allow viewing. Instructions are available on the website page.

As new training videos are added to the site, an announcement is sent to anyone who has subscribed to receive this type of information. To subscribe, please proceed to the Court's website, www.flmb.uscourts.gov, and select the "Click to Subscribe" option located at the top margin of the website's homepage.

CASE LAW UPDATE

By: Bradley M. Saxton & C. Andrew Roy, Winderweede, Haines, Ward & Woodman, P.A.

Eleventh Circuit Cases

In re Monson

___ Fed. Appx. ___, 2016 WL 6833332 (11th Cir. Nov. 21, 2016).

The Eleventh Circuit held that debtor's actions in removing computer equipment, which was subject to a security interest by a creditor, and setting up a new business with the equipment after receiving notice from the creditor and demand to liquidate the collateral, was non-dischargeable under § 523(a)(6) as a "willful" and "malicious" injury.

Bankruptcy Court Cases

In re Carbide Industries, LLC

2016 WL 6803703 (Bankr. M.D. Fla. Nov. 10, 2016) (Jennemann, J.).

A post-confirmation debtor, Carbide, sued to foreclose its mechanic's lien, which was recorded prior to filing its Chapter 11 petition. The defendant moved to dismiss the claim as untimely, arguing that the two year extension under §108 does not apply to a "post-confirmation" debtor. The Court, although denying the motion on other grounds, found that since Carbide was no longer a debtor-in-possession acting for the benefit of all creditors, but was rather a reorganized debtor acting in its own interest, it could not rely on §108(a) for an extension of time to file the complaint, where the confirmed plan stated that all property reverted in the debtor and did not provide that recoveries from any adversary proceedings would fund the estate post-confirmation.

In re Macquarrie

2016 WL 6647741 (Bankr. M.D. Fla. Nov. 9, 2016) (Jennemann, J.).

In what the Court described as "sufficiently extraordinary" circumstances to warrant the granting of a motion to vacate an Order under F.R.Civ. P. 60, the Court vacated its order granting a motion to avoid a judicial lien where the lender was not given notice of the motion, had no opportunity to respond, and, because the case had been dismissed, the order had been entered in error.

In re Exume

2016 WL 7076982 (Bankr. M.D. Fla. Dec. 5, 2016) (May, J.)

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Where Debtors received \$17,000 of insurance proceeds from automobile insurance carrier after Chapter 13 petition was filed but prior to conversion to Chapter 7, Court held the insurance proceeds were subject to turnover under §542. The Court relied on the fact that the insured vehicle was property of the estate upon the filing of the Chapter 13 petition, and the insurance policy also was property of the estate. Therefore, the funds paid under the policy, in excess of the debtor's claimed exemption, became property of the Chapter 13 estate. If the insurance proceeds went into the debtor's bank account before the date of conversion, and could be traced to the purchase of a replacement vehicle, or any other assets, then the replacement vehicle, and any other assets as well as any remaining insurance proceeds would be property of the Chapter 7 estate in accordance with §348(f)(1)(A).

Fantastic Rules and Where to Find Them – *a law clerks’ field guide to the recent amendments to the Local Rules*
By: Danielle Merola & Stephanie Villalobos

The Orlando law clerks spoke at a luncheon on November 17, 2016, for the Central Florida Bankruptcy Law Association. The clerks introduced themselves to the bar and discussed the recent amendments to the Local Rules. Andy Layden of Baker Hostetler moderated a fun trivia game that questioned practitioners on some of the more technical changes to the rules. The clerks gave out the answers and elaborated on the amendments. Many thanks to Ed Comey, law clerk to Chief Judge Williamson, for crafting the questions and to Andy Layden for being Orlando’s very own Alex Trebek.

At the end of the game, the winning team answered 16 out of 20 questions correctly. Great job!



Pictured left to right: Jeanne Kraft, Timothy Fox, Nick Abbattista, Stephanie Villalobos and Danielle Merola.

Jacksonville Bankruptcy Bar Association

On December 14, 2016 the JBBA hosted its annual holiday party at the River Club, and raised \$700 to donate to BLES. Many thanks to all who attended, and to Michael Moecker & Associates for matching the donations.

On January 4, 2017 the JBBA hosted Chief Judge Williamson for his State of the District Address during lunch at noon at the River Club.

Central Florida Bankruptcy Law Association

CFBLA celebrates its 25th Anniversary this year! Thank you for the support of our members, the judiciary, and the courthouse staff over the years. It goes without saying that the CFBLA has helped create a camaraderie amongst us that has made the bankruptcy practice here in Central Florida unique and special.

CFBLA welcomes two new members to its board: Daniel Velasquez of Latham, Shuker, Eden & Beaudine, and Frank Wolff of Frank Wolff, P.A. CFBLA also congratulates Ryan Davis of Winderweedle, Haines, Ward, & Woodman and Andrew Layden of Baker Hostetler on their re-election to the board. Hopefully, their campaign promises of more bankruptcy filings in 2017 will hold true! Either way, the CFBLA will be in good hands with its board and new slate of officers:

President: Ryan Davis, of WHWW;

Vice President: Michael Nardella, of Nardella Law;

Treasurer: Esther McKean, of Akerman; and

Secretary: Nicolette Vilmos, of Broad and Cassel

CFBLA welcomes Megan Murray, of Trenam Law, as its first luncheon speaker for 2017. She is bringing her much anticipated TED talk on “surcharge” issues to our membership on January 19th. It’s not too late to sign up for what promises to be an informative program. Please contact Noreen at cfblabankruptcybar@gmail.com to reserve your seat now.

Our February luncheon, on the 16th, will feature Michele Michaelis of BDO. She is a nationally recognized speaker that will discuss some issues and trends that she is seeing in some of the larger cases in the country.

Brad Saxton and Andrew Roy of Winderweedle, Haines, Ward & Woodman will present their always highly anticipated, informative, and entertaining “case law update” at the March 16th luncheon. The FAMU book award, for excellence in the fall FAMU bankruptcy class, will also be presented at this luncheon.

CFBLA has the honor of having **Chief Judge Michael Williamson** present his **State of the District** address during the **May 5, 2017 CFBLA 2017 Annual Bankruptcy Seminar**. The 2017 seminar will be extra special because CFBLA will be celebrating its 25th Anniversary. In honor of the 25th Anniversary, the Annual Seminar will be held at the Citrus Club. So celebrate Cinco de Mayo in style, and plan to attend the 2017 Annual CFBLA Bankruptcy Seminar.

CFBLA provides its members with a number of CLE and networking opportunities that you won’t want to miss. If you have not already done so, be certain to begin or renew your membership right away. Go to www.cfbla.org and click the membership application link. If you’re new to CFBLA check out our website for some great information and how to become a member.

Tampa Bay Bankruptcy Bar Association

The TBBBA Annual Holiday Celebration took place on December 1st at Spain Restaurant. Along with celebrating the season and enjoying each other's company, the members participated in a toy drive for the Salesian Youth Center Christmas Party to great success.



“Thank you to the TBBBA for your kindness and generosity. The kids of the Salesian Youth Center had a wonderful time at their Christmas party. Please see attached photo of our six- and seven-year-old girls with their gifts. Smiles all around! You helped make it happen, and we are very grateful.” - *Kathy and Theresa, Salesian Youth Center*

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Southwest Florida Bankruptcy Professionals Association

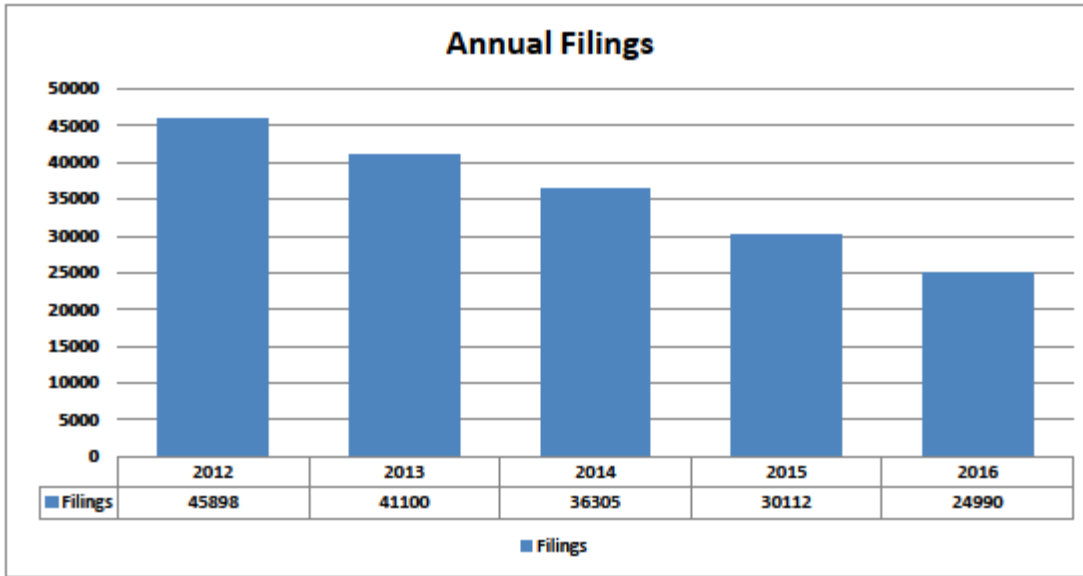
By: Adrian Lynn, President

Thank you to everyone that made it to our Christmas Happy Hour at Hotel Indigo on December 14, 2016. As I said at the event, it is you, the membership, that makes Southwest Florida a great place to practice law, and bankruptcy law particularly.

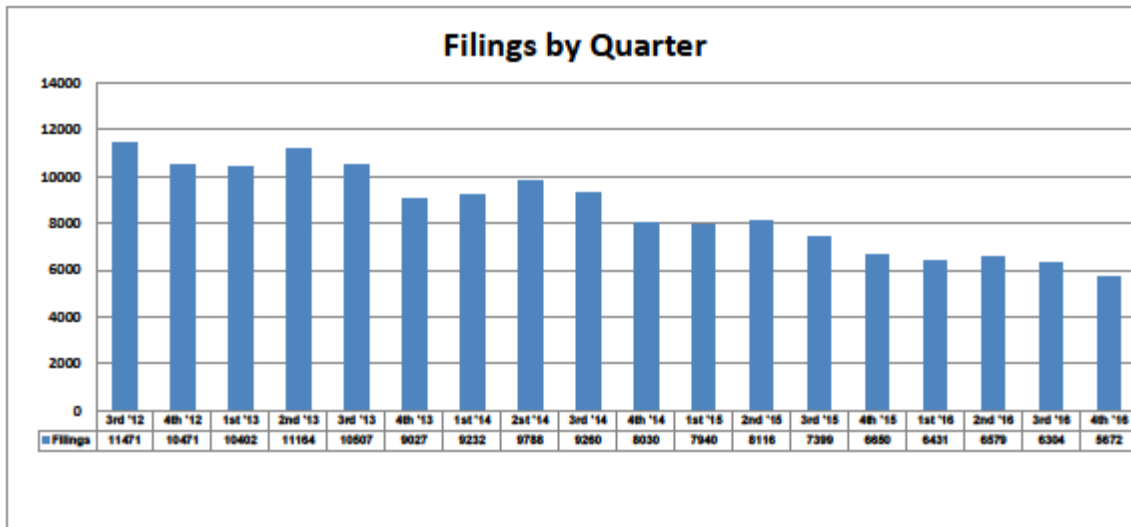
We also reflected and thanked Diane Jensen for her many years of service. Diane is one of a kind, and over the next year she will be winding down her caseload. I am not sure what we will do without her!

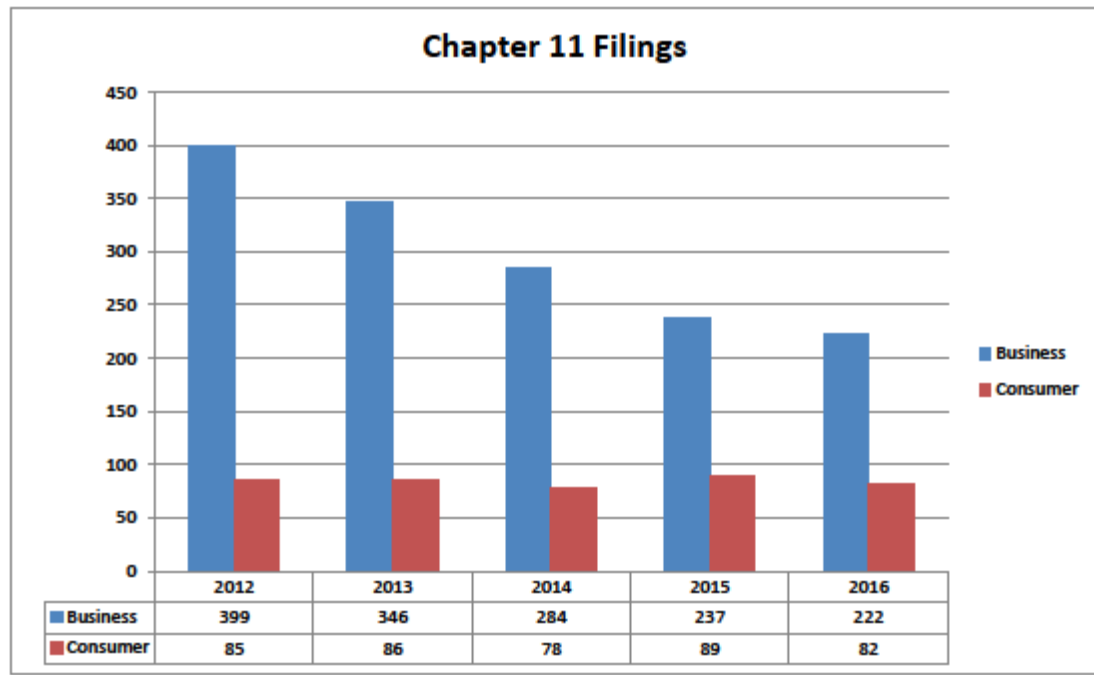
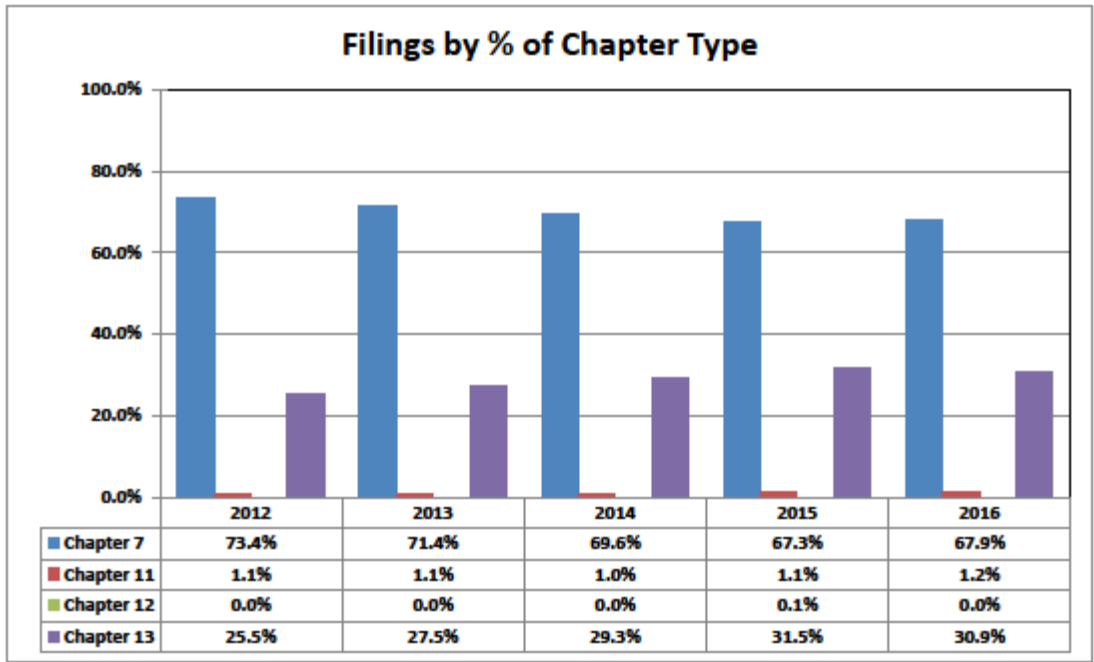
We have the **State of the District Address by Judge Williamson** to take place during our regularly scheduled monthly luncheon on **January 19th** at **12 noon**. There will be a light lunch provided.

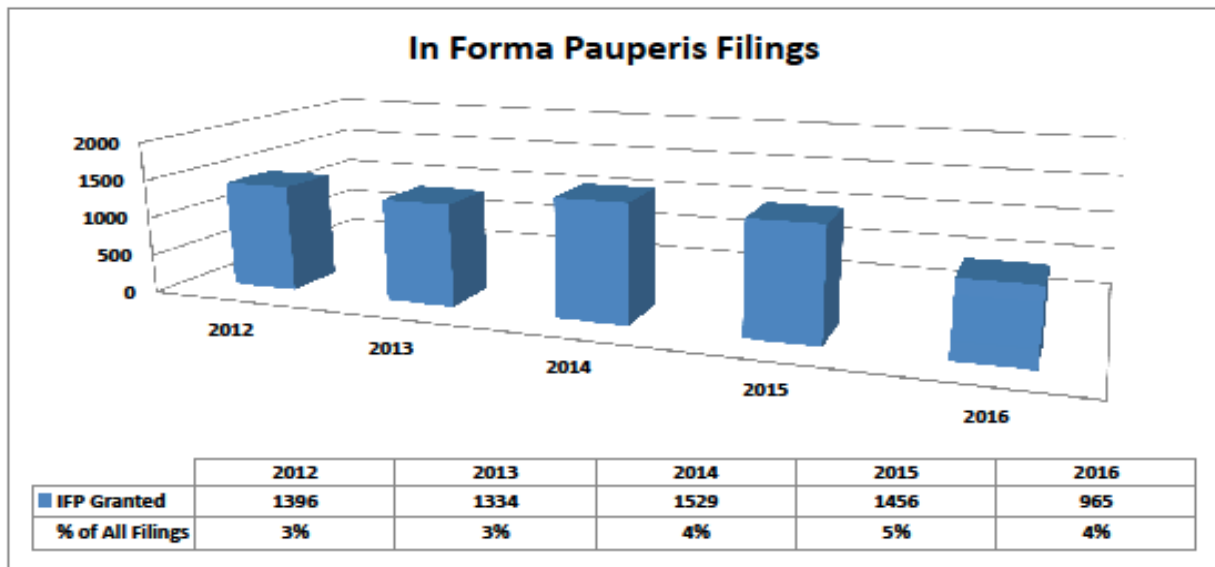
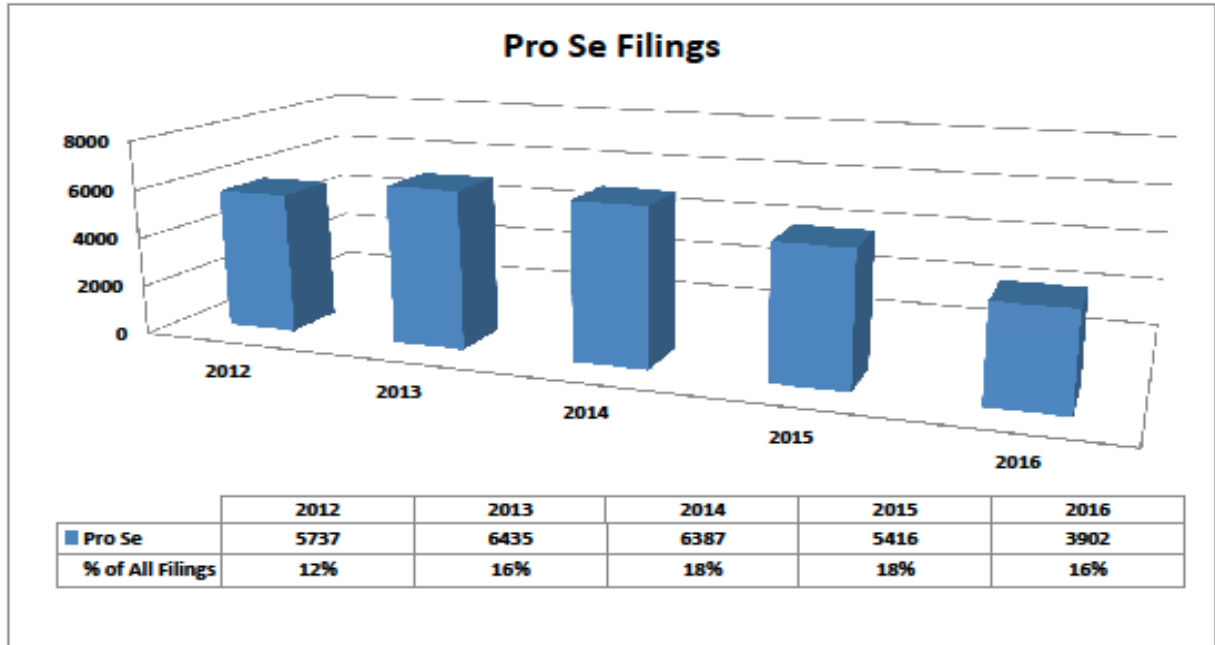
United States Bankruptcy Court - Middle District of Florida
 Statistics as of December 31, 2016

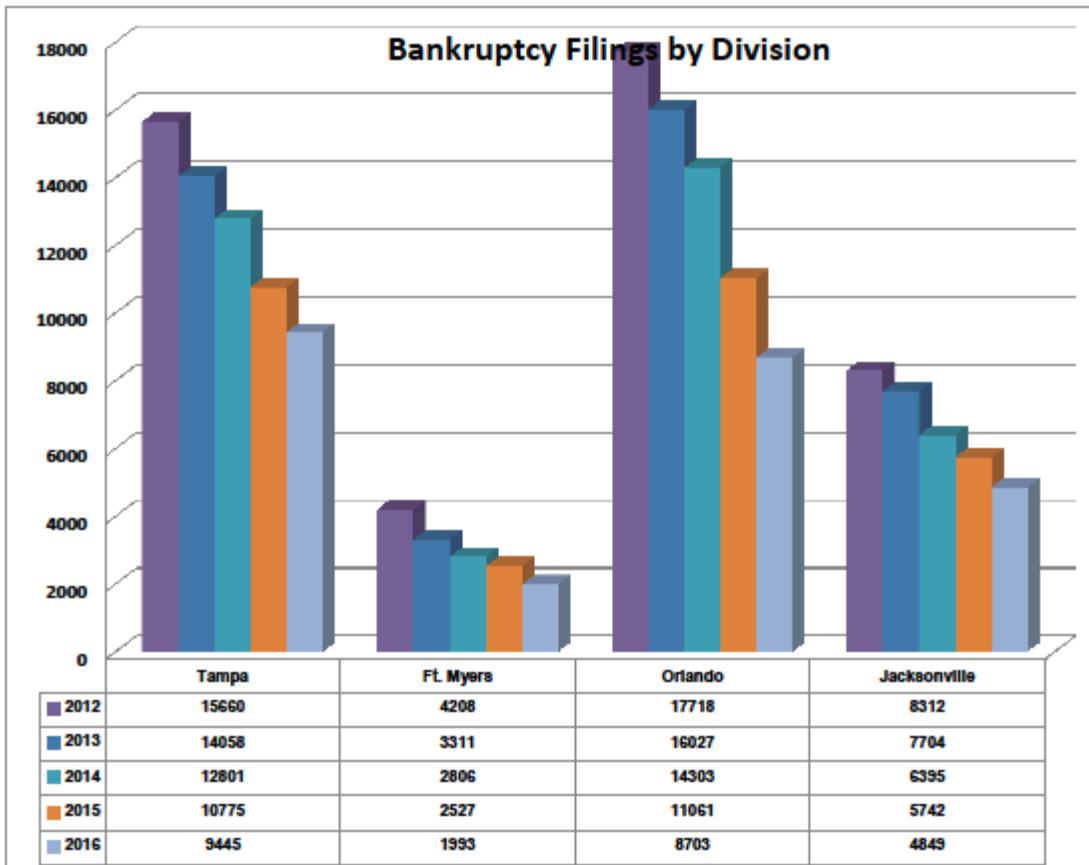


| Year | Annual Filings | vs. 2012 | vs. Prior Yr. |
|------|----------------|----------|---------------|
| 2012 | 45898 | | |
| 2013 | 41100 | -10% | -10% |
| 2014 | 36305 | -21% | -12% |
| 2015 | 30112 | -34% | -17% |
| 2016 | 24990 | -46% | -17% |









Note: 2016 Counts are projected totals.
 Order Granting IFP counts have been corrected to include approving language.

Upcoming Bar Events

Fort Myers

January 19 @ 12:00 pm “State of the District” with Judge Williamson
Location: Jury Room, 2nd Floor, United States Courthouse & Federal Building

SWFBPA Meetings: February 23, March 23, and April 20 @ 12:00
Location: Jury Room, 2nd Floor, United States Courthouse & Federal Building

Orlando

January 19 @ 12:00 pm CFBLA Membership Luncheon - Megan Murray of Trenam Law, TED Talk on “Surcharge” Issues
Location: Akerman

January 27 @ 11:30 am OCBA Bankruptcy Committee - “How to Compel Surrender of Real Property in Bankruptcy” with Jonathan Sykes of Burr & Forman
Location: OCBA, 880 North Orange Avenue

February 16 @ 12:00 pm CFBLA Membership Luncheon - Michele Michaelis of BDO, Issues and Trends in Larger Cases
Location: GrayRobinson

February 22 @ 11:30 am OCBA Bankruptcy Committee - Assistant U.S. Trustee Charles Sterbach and Bankruptcy Analyst Maureen Gimenez
Location: OCBA, 880 North Orange Avenue

March 16 @ 12:00 pm CFBLA Membership Luncheon - Brad Saxton and Andrew Roy of Winderweedle, Haines, Ward & Woodman - Case Law Update
Location: GrayRobinson

March 29 @ 11:30 am OCBA Bankruptcy Committee - Brown bag luncheon at courthouse - “Unfair Debt Collection Practices Act Claims” with Ian Leavengood of LeavenLaw

April 28 @ 11:30 am OCBA Bankruptcy Committee - featuring Judge Jennemann
Location: OCBA, 880 North Orange Avenue

May 5, 9:00 am-5:00 pm CFBLA Annual Seminar and “State of the District” with Judge Williamson
Location: Citrus Club

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Tampa

February 2-4 41st Annual Alexander L. Paskay Memorial Bankruptcy Seminar
Location: Embassy Suites Tampa-Downtown

February 14 @ 12:00 pm “State of the District” with Judge Williamson
Location: University Club

TBBBA Consumer Lunches: January 17 @ 12:00 pm - Speaker: Judge Williamson
March 7 @ 12:00 pm - Speaker: Judge May
April 4 @ 12:00 pm - Speaker: Judge Delano
May 2 @ 12:00 pm - Speaker: Judge McEwen
Location: 5th Floor Training Room, Sam M. Gibbons U.S.
Courthouse

TBBBA CLE Luncheons: February 14, March 21, April 11, and May 9 @ 12:00 pm
Location: University Club

TBBBA Happy Hours: January 26, February 23, March 23, April 27, and May 25
@ 5:30 pm

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We are always seeking suggestions, articles, photos, news, or anything you'd like to share.

Please submit all items to be considered for the April 2017 edition by March 30, 2017 to:

newsletter@fmb.uscourts.gov