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The views expressed in the *Roanoke Bar Review* do not represent the policy or carry the endorsement of the Association unless specifically noted.

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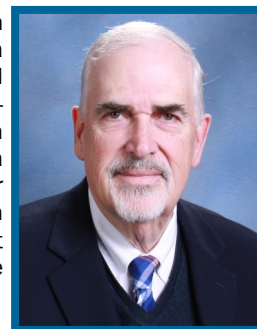
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VIEWS FROM THE BENCH: FIVE CONSIDERATIONS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MEDIATION

BY THE HONORABLE JONATHAN APGAR

I retired from the Twenty-third Circuit Court bench on March 31, 2013. I served another five years as a retired, recalled judge, and stayed just as busy as I had been in Roanoke. I fully retired in March, 2018. Starting in April, 2013, as a neutral mediator, I began providing mediation services with Southwest Virginia Mediations. Having conducted many mediations over the last twelve years, I have seen what works well in reaching an agreed conclusion, and also what makes it more difficult. I have five considerations to increase reaching the desired result, a settled case.



1. Client Preparation.

It is necessary that your client fully understands the process. Mediation is a voluntary proceeding, and all parties have to want to participate. Reluctance to be present at the meeting makes settlement more difficult. Further, some clients take the view that they will participate if they get everything they want. The client must understand that negotiation and compromise are a central part of reaching a settlement, and a willingness to move from an initial position is required.

2. Case Preparation.

There have been a number of cases, mostly in domestic relations, where the needed facts had not been fully developed. In one case, in the middle of negotiations, a party remembered the couple owned beach property. Neither side had any firm idea of its value or when it had been acquired. The mediation was halted until counsel were sure of all needed information. Mediation can be most effective when both sides have facts sufficient to go to trial if needed.

3. Opening Comments.

There are two differing views on counsel making opening comments when all parties and counsel are together. Some hold it is unnecessary. I believe, particularly in personal injury mediations, they are helpful. Counsel must remember the comments are not directed at the mediator, but at the other side. These comments can help the plaintiff in summarizing their strong points, as well as give the defendant a chance to apologize, if appropriate, or point out where the plaintiffs case has any risk. One thing counsel must not do is bully the other side. I have had more than one case where defense counsel has said, "Better take what we offer, or we will demolish you at trial." The cases did not settle.

4. Listen to the Mediator.

A neutral mediator does not give legal advice, and the parties are told to rely solely on their counsel for legal advice. However, a mediator may point out what is a potential result of any evidence or argument. The parties are paying for the mediator's thoughts based on fifty years of experience and knowledge. In one personal injury case, I was able to get the defense to come up to an offer in the high five figures. The defendant, whose special damages totaled around \$12,000, refused to change his demand in the lower six figures. I cautioned that a jury would likely award much less, but he did not consider the warning. At trial, a jury

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

BY AMY GEDDES, ESQ., PRESIDENT 2024-2025
AND JON PUVAK, ESQ., PRESIDENT 2025-2026



The 100th year of the RBA was busy! At our Law Day meeting in May we were joined by state senator David Suetterlein and state delegates Sam Rasoul and Chris Obenshain and their staff members who provided us with updates on the most recent legislative session and answered questions from our members on the status of various bills.



At our June 2025 meeting we honored our 2025 Young Lawyer of the Year winner Alisha Grubb and our 2025 Frank "Bo" Rogers Lifetime Achievement Award winner, Roy Creasy. In addition, we presented Diane Higgs with the inaugural Roanoke Star Award, created by the RBA Board of Directors to be given to a non-lawyer who significantly contributes to the mission of the Roanoke Bar Association. Diane works tirelessly and has gone above and beyond the last two years in assisting with the planning and execution

of all of the Centennial celebrations and the video history and designing the Centennial logo.

It was my pleasure to announce at the June meeting that the RBA received a 2025 Award of Merit from the Conference of Local Bars for our project entitled "RBA Centennial Community Project" which assisted with the setup of the new Legal Aid Social of the Roanoke Valley offices. In addition to covering the cost of the physical office move, the RBA funded items on a wish list that improved the security and the efficiency of the offices including new office furniture, the upgrading of the server, computers, and office technology, cameras, monitors, doorbells, and speakers were installed as well as implementation of a keyless entry system and the installation of a VOIP telephone system. It was also my pleasure to announce that the Virginia State Bar 2025 Local Bar Leader of the Year winner is our own member, Lori J. Bentley for her many years of contributions to the work and mission of the RBA, including serving in various positions on the Board of Directors as well as Secretary/Treasurer, President Elect, President of the RBA and participating in the reorganization of the Judicial Endorsement Procedure utilized by the RBA. During her presidency, Lori oversaw Operation Family Time, which raised funds to renovate and remodel the rooms used by the Roanoke City Department of Social Services for supervised visits of children.

The Centennial celebrations ended with a trivia night at Corned Beef & Company and a Family Fun Day at Camp Icimani. The Family Fun Day included activities for children and adults including an inflatable bounce house, rock climbing wall, kick ball game, and a dunk tank. Catering was provided by Montano's and live music from Buddy & The Blackjacks. The weather was beautiful and it was a wonderful way to end our centennial celebrations.

The RBA Board thanks Tom Miller for serving as the Centennial Celebration Chair and thanks to everyone who volunteered to serve as committee chairs and committee members to make all of our Centennial events a success. We hope that everyone

enjoyed all of the events this year to commemorate our 100th anniversary.

The Board was fortunate to have Amy serve as the President during the 100th year and we thank her for contributions in continuing to support the mission of the RBA to promote excellence among the members of the Bar in the Roanoke Valley and service to the community.

As we kick off the 101st year of the RBA, we may have less celebrations but we will continue to create opportunities for our members to engage. The purposes of the RBA include the "advancement of the legal profession" and "to cultivate good fellowship among the members of the Association". The low hanging fruit is our monthly lunch meetings which offer regular chances to interact with colleagues from the bar and the bench. The Board has worked hard on CLE and community service programming for the rest of the year. We will continue the annual events that our membership and community have come to expect. Please stay plugged into the email newsletters with upcoming activities and events and volunteer when your schedule allows!

Finally, the Bar Review newsletter has some new features this year and we encourage new contributors for future issues. If you have an idea for an article, please contact the editors.

We look forward to a great year!

Amy H. Geddes is the managing partner at OPN Law and Jon Puvak is a partner at Gentry Locke.



(Continued above)

UPDATES IN THE LAW:FOIA & POLICE LICENSE PLATE CAMERAS — WHAT VIRGINIA ATTORNEYS NEED TO KNOW

BY LAURA CARINI, ESQ.



A major new law—§2.2-5517 of the Code of Virginia—now governs the use of automatic license plate recognition (ALPR) systems by law enforcement agencies across the Commonwealth. The statute not only tightens oversight on how police collect and use license plate data but substantially clarifies (and restricts) the scope of public and litigant access to these records, including under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Here's what private practitioners

should know.

What Are ALPR Systems and Who's Covered?

ALPR systems are high-speed cameras paired with software that convert license plate and vehicle images into searchable data. The law applies to any Virginia law enforcement agency utilizing such technology, but *explicitly excludes* its application for agencies and entities using these systems solely for traffic enforcement, DMV operations, or non-criminal investigations.

Data Ownership, Retention, and Purging

Key requirements include:

- **Ownership:** All system data and audit trail data belong to the law enforcement agency, not the vendor.
- **Retention Limits:** System data (photos, plate numbers, etc.) must be irretrievably purged after 21 days, and audit trail data after two years—unless the data is part of a pending investigation, prosecution, or civil case.
- **Vendor Restrictions:** Vendors must certify that they will not access or share any data except under contractually defined, limited purposes (e.g., maintenance, legal compliance), and must notify the agency of any legal demand for records unless prohibited by law.

Strict Limits on Disclosure and FOIA

Section F is critical for the private bar: **System data and audit trail data are NOT subject to FOIA disclosure.** Law enforcement cannot sell, share, or disseminate such data except for specifically spelled out exceptions, which include:

- Sharing with another law enforcement agency for authorized investigations,
- Complying with discovery obligations or court orders in criminal proceedings,
- Responding to subpoenas or court orders in criminal or civil cases,
- Providing data to the system vendor for maintenance or quality assurance,

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LAW LIBRARY UPDATE

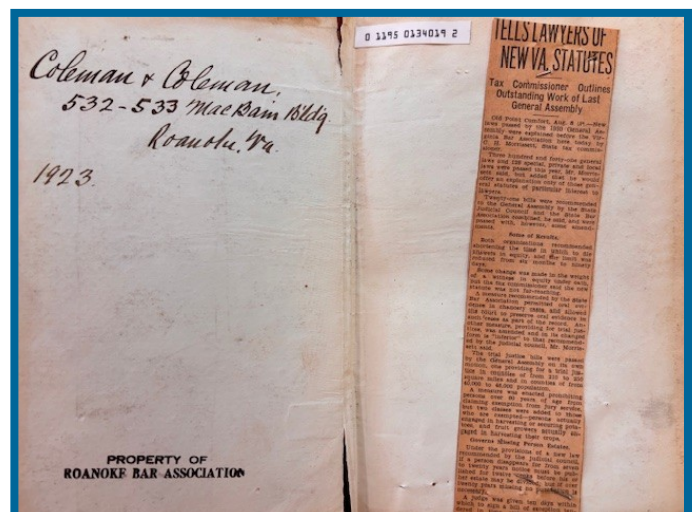
BY JOSEPH KLEIN, LAW LIBRARIAN

As a majority of local schools begin a new year, I am shocked to realize that summer is over. This year, my three school age children all began attending new schools, and so far seem to be settling in nicely. 2025 has been a roller coaster for my family. We began the year by adopting Bo, the most precious two year old that we have been fostering since birth. The celebrations were short lived because soon a family medical emergency required me to take several months off work. We haven't yet been given a 100% clean bill of health but things seem to be trending positively and we are finally starting to settle back into some semblance of normal. Even though I was out of the office for almost three months the Roanoke Law Library was still able to operate normally. My amazing coworkers did a truly amazing job keeping the Roanoke Law Library running smoothly. The other staff members do not have quite as much experience performing legal research, but they are always willing to do whatever it takes to find answers to whatever questions are thrown their way.



The many blessings and challenges I have faced this year have really given me pause and caused me to reflect on how lucky I am to be where I am. Living in this amazing community full of so many wonderful and caring people is such a blessing. As my family has been through an extremely difficult time we have had so many people step out and provide us love and support. Friends, neighbors, coworkers, our church, even members of the Roanoke legal community that I only know from working here, have offered us more love and support than I know how to express. The Roanoke valley is a beautiful place to live to be sure, but I think better even than the views are the people. We live in an amazing community, certainly not perfect but I wouldn't want to be anywhere else.

One thing that I love about working at the Roanoke Law Library is that I get to help people; I think that is really important. I get to help attorneys and legal staff answer complex legal questions, and I get to help members of the public, often in great distress, begin their journey into the legal system. The Roanoke Bar Association is a big part of all of that, this library after all was started by the Roanoke Bar Association and proba-



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ROY V. CREASY: 2025 FRANK W. "BO" ROGERS, JR. LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENT



Lori Thompson offered the following remarks when presenting this award,

I am so honored to present the Frank W. "Bo" Rogers, Jr. Lifetime Achievement Award to my friend and mentor, Roy Vogel Creasy. There are a number of words that I might choose to describe Roy – a servant, a leader, a teacher and a mentor, an intellectual with innate curiosity that has lead him to be a lifelong learner –

but perhaps what distinguishes Roy is that Roy is relentlessly dedicated to the causes in which he believes, and his dedication inspires me and I hope it will inspire you.

Roy was born on May 22, 1945. When Roy Sr. returned from World War II, he took a job as an electrical engineer with Western Electric in Chicago. While in Chicago, another son, Richard, was born.

Upon Roy Sr.'s passing in 1957, his mother moved the family back to Roanoke. Upon graduating from William Fleming High School, Roy enrolled at Virginia Tech studying aerospace engineering. While at Tech he co-oped with NASA – Marshall Spaceflight Center which developed the Saturn V Moon rocket. While at Tech, Roy was also in the Corp of Cadets and became a Company Executive Officer.

Upon graduation (and becoming a rocket scientist!) Roy decided to get an MBA and go into engineering management. He earned his MBA at the University of Tennessee where he was a member of Phi Delta Kappa, business honorary. After graduation, he went into the Army for officer training and was subsequently promoted to Captain.



Roy was hired by the Norfolk and Western Railroad to work in their Coal Sales Department. He was sent to Beckley, West Virginia to learn the coal business. The best thing to happen to Roy in Beckley was meeting his wife Barbara. It quickly became evident that coal sales was not what he wanted to do with his life, and Roy enrolled in law school at WVU.

Roy again excelled and became a member of Law Review, and it was there that Roy first began volunteering with Legal Aid.



Roy and Barbara married after his first year. They went on to have three sons who are their pride and joy. And that pride and love for their sons could only have

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ALICHA M. GRUBB: 2025 YOUNG LAWYER OF THE YEAR RECIPIENT



Monica Monday offered the following remarks when presenting this award.

It is my pleasure to present the 2025 Roanoke Bar Association Young Lawyer of the Year Award to Alichia Grubb. Alichia truly is an exceptional person and young lawyer – and I will try to use my very brief time to tell you why.

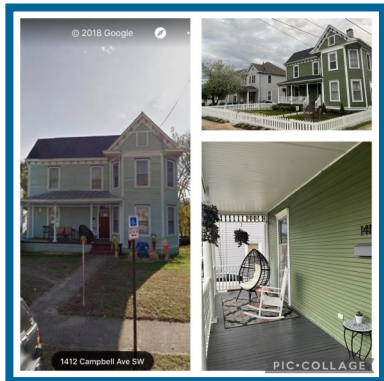
Alichia stood out immediately when she interviewed for a job at Gentry Locke. She did very well at Wake Forest Law School and was clerking for the Roanoke circuit court judges – all big pluses! But she was from Greenville, South Carolina. So one of my first questions to her was why do you want to build a career in Roanoke, Virginia? She explained that she had carefully researched this issue and had prepared an Excel spreadsheet examining the features of a host of different locations, ultimately determining that Roanoke had what she was looking for. Well I was blown away by that level of analysis and planning – not to mention that she knew how to prepare an Excel Spreadsheet. And her response to the "Why Roanoke" question was far different than the typical answer we get in interviews (like, I like the mountains or like to hike).

But I was even more blown away with what came next. After joining our firm in 2017, Alichia bought a dilapidated 1889 home in a transitional neighborhood in Roanoke. Her goal: fix it up in two years to get a tax benefit for improving this old home. And she did, doing almost all the work herself on nights and weekends. And I mean *herself*: doing drywall, installing flooring and cabinetry, wiring, plumbing, tile work, painting, and deck-building. It is an incredible accomplishment and her house looks great! She puts Tim Allen to shame!

That determination and commitment serves Alichia well in her litigation practice. She was eager to get in the courtroom when she arrived at Gentry Locke, and now, eight years later, has had tons of depositions and hearings, and 44 trials. Her last jury trial resulted in a substantial, six-figure award for her client. Given her CALI award for Trial Practice and her top performance as an appellate advocate in law school moot court, it is no surprise that Alichia is a force to be reckoned with in the courtroom. She is poised, prepared, flexible, determined, and fearless. She is a natural, with courtroom skill and instinct beyond her years. And proof of her talent came early on, when plaintiffs in three cases she was defending non-suited after facing her in the courtroom.

Beyond her skills as a litigator, Alichia is also a born leader. She is a great role model, inspires others, has effective manage-

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The McCammon Group

is pleased to announce our newest Neutral



Mark C. Nanavati, Esq.

Mediator & Arbitrator

Mark Nanavati has joined The McCammon Group to serve as a mediator and arbitrator while continuing his law practice with Sinnott, Nuckols & Logan, P.C. With three decades of experience, he has represented clients across a broad spectrum of matters, including insurance coverage disputes, large-loss tort cases, construction defect litigation, and complex commercial litigation. Mark was recognized as the 2025 “Lawyer of the Year” in Construction Law for Richmond by *Best Lawyers in America*. He is a member of the Virginia Bar Association’s Boyd-Graves Conference, the Lewis F. Powell, Jr. Inn of the American Inns of Court, and the Virginia State Bar’s Construction and Public Contracts Law Section. Mark now brings his years of experience and dedication to The McCammon Group to serve the dispute resolution needs of lawyers and litigants throughout the Commonwealth and beyond.

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MY SUPERLATIVE CASE

BY L. LEIGH RHOADS



I am the Managing Partner of Virginia Employment Law, a boutique Employment Law litigation firm based in Roanoke, Virginia, providing services to employees throughout the Commonwealth, including far southwest Virginia, Richmond, and Northern Virginia. I received my undergraduate and law degrees from my dearly beloved University of Tennessee (I like to joke that it was so fun there, they could not get rid of me!). After graduating law school, I

served as judicial law clerk to the Honorable James C. Turk in the United States District Court for the Western District of Virginia. Upon finishing that first federal trial clerkship, I completed a second clerkship as a *pro se* law clerk supervised by the Honorable Michael F. Urbanski in the United States District Court for the Western District of Virginia. Following my clerkships, I began my litigation career focused on employment defense at Gentry Locke in Roanoke, Virginia, where I was fortunate enough to be trained by some very dedicated and hard working attorneys. I will always be grateful for the time they took to help me learn the many practical aspects of a litigation practice that are lacking in much of law school training. However, as much as I enjoyed my co-workers, being the bleeding heart that I am, I transitioned to representing the rights of employees in the workplace in 2010, the same year I was awarded the Outstanding Service Award by the Virginia State Bar Young Lawyers Conference. A young lawyer no longer, I have now been living and practicing law in the Roanoke Valley for 20 years.

In between starting a business from scratch with my boy-girl twins on either hip (Vivienne & Griffith—who are now in middle school!), I have served as President of the Roanoke chapter of the Virginia Women Attorneys Association and on the statewide VWAA Board, and have served on multiple other community boards such as the Roanoke City Library Board and the North Cross School Board of Trustees. I recently completed a Certification for Negotiation and Mediation Mastery through Harvard Business School. The latter was a fascinating program as I had not been a student for many years, and while it was difficult to balance the coursework with all of the other demands on my time, I really enjoyed the experience, including connecting with some very bright individuals from all around the world. I now practice English with a former classmate from Argentina. When I am not managing 200+ litigation matters at any given time or chasing after the twins, you can generally find me on a plane heading to an exotic international locale such as Bhutan or Morocco or Tanzania where I lead incredible adventures for a women only travel company called Girls Guide to the World. My next trips are to Greece, Chile, Cuba, Uruguay, Iceland, and Holland. Look them up and come with me on a trip some time (www.girlsguidetotheworld.com)!

In addition to detailing my background and practice, I was asked to write about a “meaningful” recent case to round out this RBA member spotlight article, and I can think of no more meaningful case than the one where I first met my husband, Brian Brydges (another RBA member), last year. As most of you litigators know, a hotly contested piece of litigation can last upwards of a year or more and this one lasted close to two. So, by the time you are gearing up for a jury trial, you generally know your opposing counsel very well. In this instance, another attorney in my firm

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UPDATES IN THE LAW: FOIA & POLICE LICENSE PLATE CAMERAS — WHAT VIRGINIA ATTORNEYS NEED TO KNOW

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- Alerting the public in emergencies or cases involving missing persons.

A law enforcement agency is required to keep sufficient records to facilitate court-ordered discovery in both criminal and civil proceedings. However, outside of discovery or a court mandate, the general public—including the press—cannot FOIA this data.

Practical Advice for Private Counsel

- **Criminal Practice:** Defendants can seek system data and audit trails through discovery or court order, but not by FOIA.
- **Civil Discovery:** Civil litigants may obtain relevant data via subpoena or court order, but again are barred from general FOIA requests.

Virginia’s approach offers robust data security and privacy, while preserving key access pathways through court process and targeted discovery. Attorneys should carefully assess the revised statutory scheme when advising clients or requesting police ALPR data in any context.

Laura Carini is Deputy City Attorney.

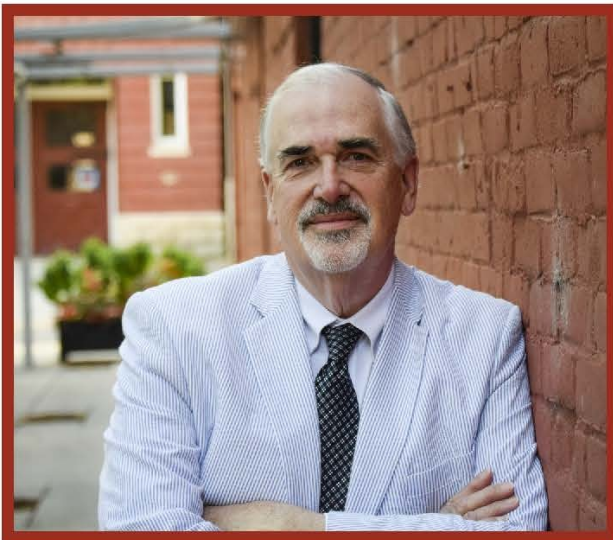
LAW LIBRARY UPDATE

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bly wouldn’t exist if your predecessors hadn’t thought it was extremely important. The Library was started 100 years ago and in 1976 the Roanoke Public Library began managing the collection, it has been a wonderful partnership.

So many things have changed, even in the 20 years that I have been here. We have moved, there are fewer books on the shelves, but our mission of providing legal information to all has never changed, and it never will. Much of the legal research that takes place around here now is done on computers, using Lexis and Westlaw. Still, when I go upstairs to research a historical Code of Virginia section it is abundantly clear where this collection originally came from. Most of the books in this collection have the Roanoke Law Library stamp, the barcode for our online catalog and a stamp that reads “Property of Roanoke Bar Association.” These volumes, some of them over 200 years old, are an amazing legacy handed down from attorney to bar association to public library.

Statistically, members of the Roanoke Bar Association use the law library far less frequently than they did even a decade ago, but I feel we still serve just as vital a role in providing free access to legal information. I am incredibly grateful to the Roanoke Bar Association for the birth of the Roanoke Law Library, and I am also grateful for your continued support. As I said, I love to help people, and I would truly love to help all of you should you ever need help with legal research.

MEDIATION**ARBITRATION****JONATHAN M. APGAR**

Having previously served twenty-one years as both a full time and a retired, recalled circuit court judge, Jonathan M. Apgar has successfully mediated scores of cases. He is also certified in civil mediation by the National Judicial College. He offers skilled mediation and arbitration at a modest cost.

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VIEWS FROM THE BENCH: FIVE CONSIDERATIONS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MEDIATION

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awarded \$ 12,500. If the mediator expresses a concern about some aspect of the case, it should be considered and weighed by the party and counsel as part of the settlement process.

5. Do Not Leave a Settled Mediation Without a Signed Agreement.

Mediations can go on into the evening or night. The parties finally reach a settlement and in the presence of the mediator, the agreement is fully acknowledged in detail. Because of fatigue and the lateness of the hour, counsel suggest that the agreement be written up and signed by the parties the next day. Don't do it. No one should leave without a signed agreement which, at a minimum, touches on all points agreed on and asserts it is an enforceable agreement. It may include language that the agreement may have more formal standard terms included later, but there must be a written and signed agreement which recites everything agreed upon and states it is enforceable and binding on the parties. See two Roanoke City cases: Snyder-Falkinham v. Stockburger, 249 Va. 376 (1995); Golding v. Floyd, 261 Va. 190 (2001).

ALICHA M. GRUBB: 2025 YOUNG LAWYER OF THE YEAR RECIPIENT

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ment skills, has a high emotional IQ, and is always challenging herself to grow – both professionally and personally. Those leadership skills have already been noticed. Alicha is the newest member of one of the firm's most important committees (the Associate & Lawyer Development Committee), and will be the Chair of the Young Lawyers Division of the Virginia Bar Association next year. Her leadership is also evident in her community involvement. She has been Chair of the Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates for four years of her six-year term, and is President of her neighborhood association. She also serves on the boards of the Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Presbyterian Community Center.



Alicha is married to the lovely and supportive Kristyn Brogan and is dog-mom to Oliver Bearington. Alicha, congratulations! This is a most fitting honor and is just the first of many honors you

will receive during what will be a meaningful and stellar legal career.

Monica Monday is Chair of Executive Board, Gentry Locke.



OUT OF OFFICE WITH MARY BETH NASH

BY LAURA M. CARINI, ESQ.

What do attorneys do when they are not practicing? Follow this column to learn some interesting information about colleagues



"I'm going to test you." Those are the words that no associate ever wants to hear from a senior partner at a law firm. And yet one chilly March morning in 1998 that was the phone call Mary Beth got from a partner. When Mary Beth arrived at the partner's car after being summoned, the partner said, "We're going to call on the client and you need to read this file on the way." Okay - every associate has faced that test. The partner went on to say that the client was in Richmond. Again not that much of a test. The third prong, it turns out, was actually the test: flying in a small single engine Cessna to Richmond to call on the client. Well Mary Beth passed the test. As it turns out she absolutely loved flying in a small plane. Perhaps the control freak in her really enjoyed being able to hear the pilots and air traffic control or perhaps it's the sheer joy of being in the air above the interstate, but that test turned into a lifelong hobby.

The flight to Richmond was uneventful. The flight back into Roanoke was slightly bumpy in the late afternoon with air flowing over the mountains. However, Mary Beth used that opportunity to get to know the pilots. (They were much nicer than the partner). Mary Beth quietly asked the pilots if she would ever be allowed to rent the plane. As it turns out, it was actually cheaper to rent the plane and pay the pilots than to drive back and forth to Alexandria and Norfolk where she frequently had hearings. Over the next several years, Mary Beth logged a number of hours in the plane. Fun fact: in general aviation, when a charter airplane comes in at least at the Newport News Airport, the ground crew literally rolls out a red carpet on the tarmac. Mary Beth had initially had dreams of becoming a pilot and flying herself to these destinations. However, life, career, elderly parents and later on, kids, got in the way. Mary Beth never gave up her love of flying and talked about "someday".

In 2018, just before her 50th birthday Mary Beth's better half handed her an envelope and said "You're 50 years old and clearly not getting any younger. If you're ever going to learn to fly, this is the time. I bought you your first flying lesson."

Mary Beth took her first lesson with Rich Donnelly at Star Flight Training. Rich is a retired Air Force officer who had flown, among other things, Blackhawk helicopters for the Air Force. He was an unflappable instructor, although there were times over the course of Mary Beth's lessons that he wondered if she could actually see the center line on the runway and might ever land on it..

Most young pilots can get their pilot's license in six to nine months if they train hard. Getting your private pilot's license requires taking a knowledge test, logging hours on solo flights, including cross country flights and night flights. Mary Beth was not a young pilot and had a job and kids; her flying time was limited to the early morning hours. Rich was accommodating and was always willing to schedule 6:30 or 7 a.m.

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PRO BONO CORNER

BY MONA A. RAZA, ESQ.



Rule 6.1 of the Virginia Rules of Professional Conduct says a lawyer should render at least two percent of their professional time to pro bono services. While this is not a mandatory requirement, it is highly encouraged. Many attorneys who want to volunteer do not know how to get started. This year, we plan to offer increased opportunities to gain pro bono hours in a structured environment.

The Pro Bono Committee is planning an expungement clinic, in coordination with the Legal Aid Society of Roanoke Valley. Hands-on training will be provided at the clinic and then attorneys will be able to assist low-income individuals file petitions to expunge criminal misdemeanor charges that have been dismissed or nolle prossed. Such charges can impede a person's ability to gain or maintain employment or housing. Details about the expungement clinic will follow in subsequent issues of the Bar Review.

The Pro Bono Committee is also looking for attorneys to serve as conflicts counsel for Blue Ridge Legal Services and Legal Aid Society of Roanoke Valley. The typical cases assigned to conflicts counsel involve domestic violence protective orders and evictions from rental housing. We plan to offer free CLE to members of the RBA who will be willing to take on such cases. Please stay tuned for CLE announcements. Please contact Mona Raza at mona@lasrv.org to sign up for the conflicts counsel list.

Mona A. Raza is General Counsel at LASRV.



Roy with Debbie Reynolds, a client of the firm.



ROY V. CREASY: 2025 FRANK W. "BO" ROGERS, JR. LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENT

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been eclipsed by their four beautiful grandchildren.



After graduating law school, Roy decided to return to Roanoke and practice with his uncle, Bill Creasy. Bill and Roy practiced together for five years, and merged with John Wilson and George Vogel, II, in a new firm, Wilson, Vogel and Creasy. Later he decided to go solo and remained so until he retired. Roy served on the Chapter 7 Bankruptcy Trustee Panel for the Western District of Virginia from 1975 – 2021. Chief Judge Paul Black commented that:

In practice, Roy truly was one of the deans of the bankruptcy bar. I would say "THE dean," – but then that wouldn't be fair to George Vogel! Roy knew the bankruptcy code inside and out, and he was creative and diligent both as a trustee and as counsel. If there was anything that had a real estate twist to it, there was no one who could handle such matters any better. Roy's manner was gracious and professional, and all young lawyers benefited from interacting with him. I include myself as a former member of that group.

Roy epitomizes the ideal of the "Citizen Lawyer," dedicating himself for 50 years to service and leadership in the bar and in his community. Since the RBA began reporting volunteer service in 2006, Roy has contributed over 6,000 volunteer hours. (That means he has averaged over 300 volunteer hours per year for the past 19 years.)

In dedicated service to our community, Roy has been an active member of the Jaycees where he coordinated the Children's Christmas Shopping Spree for many years. He has served on the Board of the Blue Ridge MS Society, in addition to serving as Chairman of the Trustees and on various committees at his church. But his favorite is the Boy Scouts (now called Scouting America). He has served on the Executive Board of the Blue Ridge Mountain Council for 30 years, received the Silver Beaver Award (highest non-professional award) and is a Vigil member of the Order of the Arrow.

His service to the bar includes serving on the Board of Directors of this Association and as its President from 2010-2011. Roy was a force behind the establishment of the Roanoke Law Foundation's Fellows program, which has been instrumental in funding the Foundation's philanthropic efforts since 2012. In addition to volunteering for the RBA's Barristers' Book Buddies Program and You and the Law, Roy (and Barbara) have volun-

(Continued on page 10)

ROY V. CREASY: 2025 FRANK W. "BO" ROGERS, JR. LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENT

(Continued from page 9)



teered for and sponsored "Santa at the Station" since its inception. For his many contributions to the RBA, Roy received the RBA "Distinguished Service Award" in 2020.

In 2015, Roy helped lead the effort to establish the Western District of Virginia Chapter of the Federal Bar Association.

At the state level, Roy has served as Virginia State Bar Council and as Chairman of the Virginia Conference of Local and Specialty Bar Associations. And

he is a fellow of the Virginia Law Foundation.

Arguably among Roy's greatest professional contributions has been his dedicated pro bono service that has extended from law school to retirement. Roy has served as a Board Member of the Legal Aid Society of the Roanoke Valley for over 30 years, and he served as President and Chairman of the Board of the LASRV for 21 consecutive years. – That's right 21 years as President and Chairman of the Board of Legal Aid. And since retiring from private practice in 2021, Roy has *increased* his pro bono service as Lawyer Emeritus, volunteering each week to represent the less fortunate. Roy's dedication to the provision of pro bono services in the Roanoke Valley is likely unparalleled among attorneys in private practice.

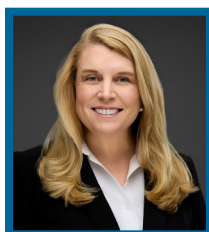
Henry Woodward who served as General Counsel of the Legal Aid Society of the Roanoke Valley until 2009 commented:

Roy was a champion for us as an institution and for me personally: always supportive, always big-hearted, always energetic, and powerfully driven by empathy for the clients we serve. His extension of his own career by serving Legal Aid as a volunteer attorney in his retirement is a priceless gift.

For his lifetime of dedicated service, Roy has received the Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award and was recently inducted into the Virginia Lawyers Weekly Hall of Fame.

If you were surprised to learn of the countless ways that Roy Creasy has dedicated his life to leadership and service to his community, I am not surprised because Roy is one of the most unassuming and humble people that you will ever meet. He is more likely to want to talk with you about planes, cars or his family than he is to talk about himself. That's why I'm so pleased that we can honor Roy today with the 2025 Frank W. "Bo" Rogers, Jr. Lifetime Achievement Award.

Lori Thompson is a partner at Spilman, Thomas & Battle, PLLC.



MY SUPERLATIVE STORY

(Continued from page 6)

had taken the lead on the matter but, in a small firm, it is "all hands on deck" when trial comes around. So, I was pulled in to participate in this trial directly prior to the start of the trial. Brian's firm, Johnson Ayers & Matthews, was on the other side of the matter, and he had a similar "last minute invitation to participate." While Roanoke seems the size of a Triscuit and our wonderful Bar even smaller, we had, inexplicably, never crossed paths through our profession. Accordingly, we found ourselves in the unlikely position of shaking hands on Day 1 of the trial, without ever having met each other previously.

I will gloss over the specifics of the four-day jury trial in the 23rd Judicial Circuit, Roanoke County Circuit Court, Courtroom #3, in front of the Honorable Charles N. Dorsey, but suffice it to say that formidable legal counsel on both sides represented their clients, while zealously, in a way that would make our Bar proud of our profession. While the matter ultimately came to a final conclusion shortly after the jury verdict, the sparks that flew on Day 1 of that trial continued. After we were very officially no longer opposing counsel, Brian suggested I join him on a hike in our surrounding beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains. This past May, we were married in a very small ceremony with family and a few close friends...in the 23rd Judicial Circuit...Roanoke County Circuit Court...Courtroom #3...by the Honorable Charles N. Dorsey. Both of our respective clients were, happily, very supportive and said the same thing in response when we advised them that we planned to marry: That they were so delighted that something wonderful resulted from that difficult trial and experience.

If anyone knows a producer at the Hallmark Channel, please feel free to give them my number.

Leigh Rhoads is a founder of Virginia Employment Law.



FOURTH ANNUAL SHINE AND DINE DINNER

BY MOLLIE ELDER, ESQ.



The Shine and Dine Dinner celebrates graduating high school students from Patrick Henry High School and William Flemming High School who achieved this milestone despite experiencing homelessness. The Roanoke Bar Association has partnered with Roanoke City Public Schools (RCPS) through the RCPS McKinney-Vento Coordinator for the past four years to provide a fun event for the students and their guests. The McKinney

-Vento Program is a federal program that assists school systems in providing support for students and families who experience housing instability. In the 2024-2025 school year, an estimated 630 Roanoke City School students were homeless. Some of those students are graduating seniors with families who cannot afford to provide a celebration.

The Shine and Dine Dinner was held at Greene Memorial United Methodist Church in downtown Roanoke. The evening before the dinner, RBA members transformed the event space into a festive room with lots of graduation decorations. Greyledge Event Planning, LLC provided a balloon arch which was a great backdrop for photographs. Mission BBQ catered the event with enough food leftover for the families to take home food boxes. The families loved the added bonus of having Mission BBQ for a later meal. Kroger catered the cupcakes and cookies. RBA members served the students and guests and cleaned up afterwards.

Dr. Ryan Sykes with POPMentality was the keynote speaker. Dr. Sykes is a nationally recognized public school educator from Chesapeake, Virginia. Dr. Sykes shared stories from his childhood that included seeing people fire guns into his house knowing his mother was inside. Fortunately, his mother was not injured, but she made Dr. Sykes and his brother move from the area due to the crime. Throughout his childhood, Dr. Sykes described instability that included changing elementary and high schools multiple times. His role model was an uncle he would visit in prison. Dr. Sykes loved his uncle but recognized very early that he did not want to end up like him. Dr. Sykes' message for the students was to look for POP - Perseverance + Opportunity + Purpose. He encouraged the students to persevere through difficult times as perseverance will lead to opportunities, and those opportunities will help them find purpose.

It was a special night. The families and the students expressed their gratitude to the RBA for providing this wonderful event.

Mollie Elder is Of Counsel at Woods Rogers Vandeventer Black.



OUT OF OFFICE: MARY BETH NASH

(Continued from page 8)

flights. Then, COVID struck and lessons stopped for a while.

By August 2020, Mary Beth had returned to the skies and was ready to take her private pilot check ride. The check ride consists of a written test, oral examination, and a practical test in the airplane with a Designated Pilot Examiner. The morning of 8 September 2020, Mary Beth took off from Roanoke and flew to Blacksburg to meet her DPE, Cecil McBride. Interestingly, one of the biggest obstacles of the check ride was parking the airplane. At KROA, Star Flight staff pull the airplanes back into the hanger and so Mary Beth had never actually parked the airplane at an airport. Cecil was kind enough to give her guidance that day. After passing the oral exam they set out on the check ride. Mary Beth had not taken a test since the 1995 bar exam. Fortunately, the outcome of her check ride was the same as the bar exam; she passed. Mary Beth has remained a licensed private pilot since September 2020. A biannual proficiency test is required and she has continued to pass these. Mary Beth is a designated VFR pilot (visual flight rules). She is sloooooowly working on instrument rating. Now that she has returned to private practice from government work, she generally only has time to fly once or twice a month. Nonetheless, every day in the airplane is a fun day. One of the more memorable flights was a flight to the Ingalls Field Airport that sits on top of a mountain above the Homestead Resort. Make no mistake, even on the calmest day in the Roanoke Valley, there's plenty of wind on top of the mountain at Ingalls Field.

Next time you see a little plane in the sky or if you are at Smith Mountain Lake and see a sea plane buzzing around (with an instructor), wave. It might be Mary Beth.

Mary Beth Nash practices at Glenn Robinson
Cathey Skaff & White, PLC.

Laura Carini is Deputy City Attorney.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEW MEMBERS	UPCOMING EVENTS	OFFICERS																																		
<p>The Roanoke Bar Association welcomes the following new members:</p> <p>Active Members</p> <p>Cristina Agee, Office of the Attorney General</p> <p>Aaron Cowart, Legal Ais Society Roanoke Valley</p> <p>Amanda Dufraine, Chaplain Dufraine, PLLC</p> <p>Jacob Bryant, Gentry Locke</p>	<p>Roanoke Bar Association Meetings 2025 - 2026</p> <p>September 9, 2025</p> <p>October 14, 2025</p> <p>November 11, 2025</p> <p>December 9, 2025</p> <p>January 13, 2026</p> <p>February 10, 2026</p> <p>March 10, 2026</p> <p>April 14, 2026</p> <p>May 1, 2026 (Law Day)</p> <p>June 9, 2026</p> <p>Go to www.roanokebar.com for more information on all upcoming events.</p>	<table><tr><td>Jonathan D. Puvak President</td><td>989-9399</td></tr><tr><td>Victor S. “Dinny” Skaff, III President-Elect</td><td>767-2217</td></tr><tr><td>Sarah C. Jessee Secretary-Treasurer</td><td>283-0134</td></tr><tr><td>Amy H. Geddes Past President</td><td>989-0000</td></tr><tr><td>Diane Higgs Executive Director</td><td>342-4905</td></tr></table> <table><tr><th colspan="2">BOARD OF DIRECTORS</th></tr><tr><td>Jennifer A. Baker</td><td>512-1806</td></tr><tr><td>David R. Berry</td><td>983-9396</td></tr><tr><td>Allegra M.C. Black</td><td>857-7111</td></tr><tr><td>Laura M. Carini</td><td>853-5332</td></tr><tr><td>Martha W. Elder</td><td>983-7535</td></tr><tr><td>Andrew S. Gerrish</td><td>725-3370</td></tr><tr><td>Devon Munro</td><td>877-652-6770</td></tr><tr><td>James J. O’Keeffe</td><td>491-0634</td></tr><tr><td>Mona A. Raza</td><td>344-2088</td></tr><tr><td>Justin E. Simmons</td><td>983-7795</td></tr><tr><td>Jaime H. Wood</td><td>983-7785</td></tr></table>	Jonathan D. Puvak President	989-9399	Victor S. “Dinny” Skaff, III President-Elect	767-2217	Sarah C. Jessee Secretary-Treasurer	283-0134	Amy H. Geddes Past President	989-0000	Diane Higgs Executive Director	342-4905	BOARD OF DIRECTORS		Jennifer A. Baker	512-1806	David R. Berry	983-9396	Allegra M.C. Black	857-7111	Laura M. Carini	853-5332	Martha W. Elder	983-7535	Andrew S. Gerrish	725-3370	Devon Munro	877-652-6770	James J. O’Keeffe	491-0634	Mona A. Raza	344-2088	Justin E. Simmons	983-7795	Jaime H. Wood	983-7785
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Complete and Forward to: Roanoke Bar Association, P.O. Box 18183, Roanoke, VA 24014

Email: rba@roanokebar.com