

Briefs

■ COMEDY NIGHT ■ TRIBUTE ■ IN MEMORIAM ■ LAYOFFS ■ MERGERS ■

More “lawyer jokes” at the YLD’s Annual Comedy Night with Gerry Dee

Laugh away the night while supporting a worthy cause at the Young Lawyers Division’s Fourth Annual Comedy Night on Saturday, May 9 from 7 to 11:30 p.m. at The Franklin Institute.

Comedian Gerry Dee (below) of NBC’s “Last Comic Standing” will headline the event, which will include an open bar, hors d’oeuvres, a silent auction and a DJ. Tickets are \$65 in advance and \$80 at the door. All proceeds benefit the Philadelphia Bar Foundation,

which provides funding to approximately 30 local legal services organizations.

To purchase a ticket or receive sponsorship information, please contact Tracey McCloskey at (215) 238-6360 or tmccloskey@phila-bar.org. To donate items to the silent auction, please contact Brian Chacker (bchacker@gaychackermittin.net) or Abbie DuFrayne (adurrayne@petrellilaw.com).



A Special Tribute: William S. Stevens

On Saturday, Feb. 7, I attended an extraordinary event for a humble but extraordinary man – the too-early-to-be-the late William Stanley Stevens.

When Will died unexpectedly on Dec. 3, 2008 at the age of 60, while working in Anchorage, Alaska, it was soon decided by a group of his friends that a memorial service would be held for him in his beloved Narberth, PA. Will would have never agreed to such an affair had he still been with us, but if we had twisted his arm, he might have given in to a simple party in a linoleum covered room, provided beer was served. The room was Narberth Borough Hall, and there, beers were many. So, it turns out, were the people.

Hundreds of us came to honor one of the smartest, funniest, and fairest people we ever met. We took turns telling Will Stevens stories. And, as the three-hour ceremony rolled on, I sat there more and more amazed by the life of this simple man. Classmates from his high school in North Jersey spoke. Shipmates from his Naval years came to Narberth from all over the country. His Yale college friends arrived. And, of course, enough lawyers to start a good-sized firm. The speeches were many – but, in truth, they were all the same. From his teen-age years until his death, Will was hysterically funny, brilliant beyond words, but most of all, loved by everyone – and missed beyond imagination.

When Will's obituary (complete with photo) appeared in *The New York Times*, it did so because of a single event in his life – his writing of an anonymous law review note: "The Common Law Origins of the Infield Fly Rule," 123 U. Pa. L. Rev 1474 (1975). Consider this carefully. Assume, for the moment that there have been about 100 law reviews in print for the last 100 years, and that each one put out six issues per year, with 10 articles per issue. Do the math. More than 600,000 law review articles have been published. By far, the most cited and celebrated was the one written by Will Stevens.

After graduating from Penn Law School, Will remained in Philadelphia. For most of his career he worked at ALI-ABA, putting



together and running courses in continuing legal education. He also served as associate editor and editor of this magazine. And as one would expect, perhaps the magazine's most famous production, "The Illegal Intelligencer" published in 1979 as a gag version of our daily legal rag, was cited in *Newsweek* magazine solely because of an article written in it by Will (anonymous, of course) – an article announcing that judges bench rulings would be replaced by judicial hand signals, as shown by cartoons of football refs, covered in judicial robes.

As I write this, two months after his death, it is still hard to imagine a world without Will. His expressions ("Never run for a train in the morning and never promise anything by 5 o'clock," "That guy's the northbound end of a south bound horse," "Why do you think they call it work?") will be in my vocabulary forever. I will always see him on a Sunday afternoon, standing at my door, camera in hand, Yale hat on head, ready to share a beer and some wit. He even found humor in death. I still remember his two continuing lists of all people who left the Schnader firm, where we both practiced. One was a list of "boxed" exits, the other "unboxed" exits. He and I were on the second list. Will Stevens has moved to the first list all too soon.

Judge Jacob P. Hart is a judge for the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

IN MEMORIAM

Jeffrey Sheridan Toalton
May 14, 2008, Age 54

John Dorfman
Dec. 25, 2008

William S. Stevens
Dec. 3, 2008, Age 60

Frank Hastings Griffin III
Dec. 31, 2008, Age 62

Richard W. Hopkins
Nov. 9, 2008, Age 88

Steven R. Waxman
Feb. 2, 2009, Age 62

Allan Getson
Jan. 8, 2009, Age 71

Jerome Gerber
Feb. 5, 2009, Age 70

John Owen James Shellenberger III
Dec. 1, 2008, Age 64

Please send In Memoriam notices to
tplmag@philabar.org.

Have you considered a contribution to the Philadelphia Bar Foundation in memory of a deceased colleague?
For information, please call Gene Sirni,
Foundation Executive, at 215-238-6334.

U.S. Lawyers Expect More Layoffs

Almost one-third of U.S. lawyers expect their employers will have layoffs in 2009, according to a survey conducted by the *American Bar Association Journal*.

The survey found 31 percent of lawyers expect that, by the end of 2009, someone in their workplaces will have lost their job because of the recession. Among that 31 percent, 19 percent expect they themselves will lose their job next year.

Asked "How much will the entire legal profession be affected by the recession?," 78 percent of respondents said "everyone will be affected, at least a little." Ten percent said "big firms will suffer, but most attorneys won't." Eleven percent said "we'll all be hammered."

Asked "When will the economy improve for the legal profession?," respondents said:

- 2009: 9 percent
- 2010: 52 percent
- 2011: 22 percent
- 2012: 10 percent
- It'll never be the same: 7 percent

"American lawyers expect the recession to be deep, wide, and last for years to come," said *ABA Journal* Editor and Publisher Edward A. Adams. "It's been almost 20 years since the legal profession experienced such a significant and sustained downturn." The poll is part of a special January edition of the *Journal* devoted entirely to the recession. The whole issue is online at www.ABAJournal.com/magazine.

The *Journal's* survey of more than 14,000 lawyers was conducted online and via e-mail Nov. 11-23. Respondents self-identified as partners/of counsel (44 percent), associates (22 percent), in-house counsel (12 percent), government lawyers (9 percent), judges (1 percent), and unemployed (9 percent). Those who identified themselves as law students were excluded from the results. Not all respondents answered all questions.



70 Law Firm Mergers Announced in 2008

There were 70 new law firm mergers and acquisitions announced in the United States in 2008 according to Altman Weil MergerLine. Although the pace of deals slowed in the third and fourth quarters, the total number of mergers was up by 17 percent from the 60 deals reported in 2007.

"This may be the largest number of law firm combinations ever in a single year in the US," observed Altman Weil principal Tom Clay. "Even as the economy deteriorated, most mergers went forward as law firms pursued expansion plans. Where deals fell apart, firms may have let short-term fears overcome longer-term strategies."

Two of the biggest deals announced this year involved the acquisition of two Charlotte, N.C. firms. K&L Gates, a 1,500-lawyer firm headquartered in



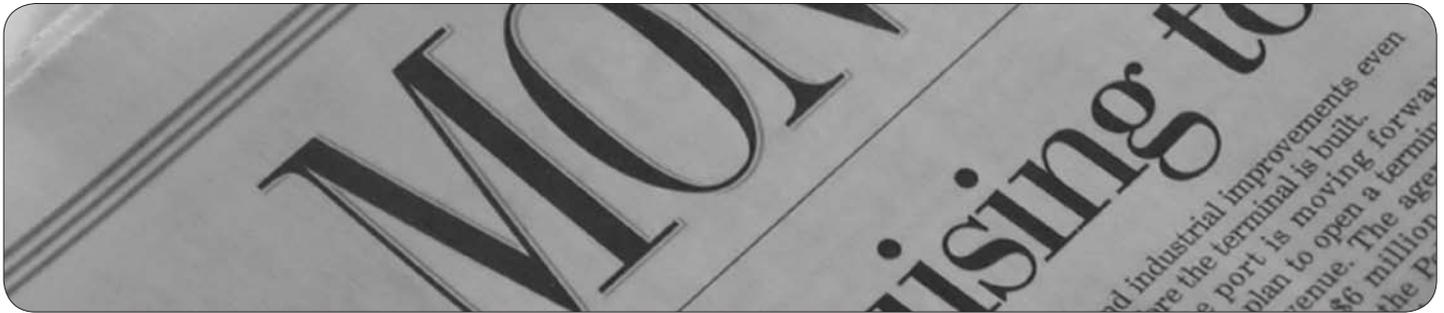
Pittsburgh, acquired 175-lawyer Kennedy Covington. Richmond-based, 750-lawyer McGuire Woods combined with 145-lawyer firm, Helms Mulls.

Two additional noteworthy combinations also targeted southern law firms. Bryan Cave, a 950-lawyer firm based in St. Louis, combined with Atlanta-based Powell Goldstein; and Bradley Arant, itself a southern firm with 250 lawyers in Birmingham AL and other cities, merged with Nashville's Boulton Cummings.

"Forty-four percent of all 2008 mergers, both large and small, involved at least one southern law firm," according to Tom Clay. "The incursion of major national firms into key secondary markets like Charlotte and Nashville may in turn be driving small and mid-sized southern firms to combine defensively in order to stay competitive."

Two midwestern mergers also stood out in 2008. Polsinelli Shalton and Shugart Thomson, both headquartered in Kansas City, announced they would combine to form a new 480-lawyer mid-western powerhouse. Cincinnati-based, 200-lawyer Taft Stettinius merged with 100-lawyer Indianapolis firm Sommer Barnard.

Combinations involving firms in the western U.S. were down significantly from 2007. The only major deal arose when Alston & Bird, an 800-lawyer



Atlanta-based firm, acquired 80-lawyer, Los Angeles firm Weston Benshoof.

"The desire to acquire West Coast firms remains high," Clay commented. "Until now, most western firms have been uninterested in merger overtures, but as the economy slows that may change."

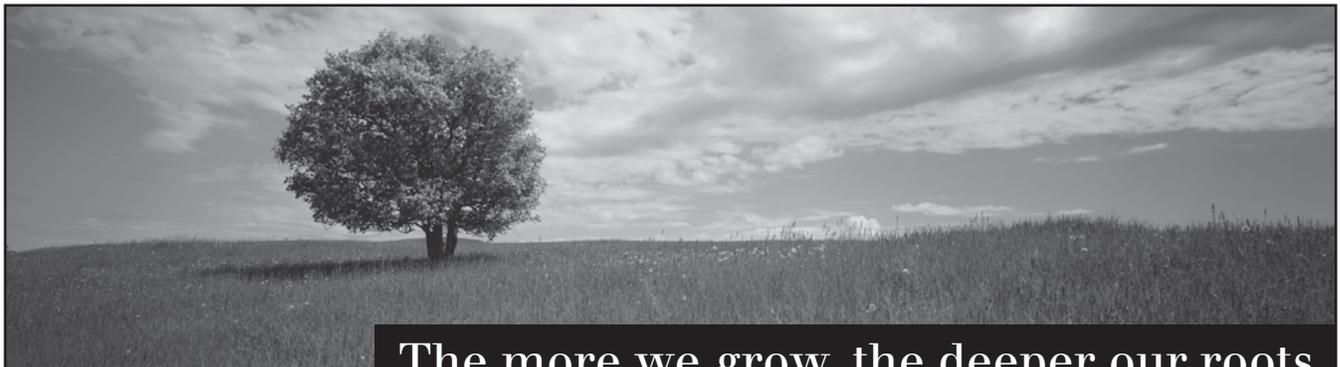
Overall, of the 70 combinations announced, the majority were regional deals, including: 31 percent in the South, 19 percent in the Middle-Atlantic region, 17 percent in the Midwest, 9 percent in the Western U.S., and 3 percent in New England. Another 19 percent were multi-regional deals – two thirds of which involved southern firms. An additional 3 percent were

cross-border combinations.

The complete list of law firm mergers and acquisitions is available online at www.altmanweil.com/MergerLine.

2009 Outlook

Nine mergers were announced in the first two weeks of January, signaling a strong, ongoing merger market for 2009. "Large law firms with clean balance sheets will continue to pursue opportunities aggressively; and smaller firms, fearful of the economic downturn, will be looking for safe havens in larger firms," predicts Clay. "There are secondary and tertiary markets out there that are still relatively untapped and should be fertile ground for acquisitive law firms."



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Our growth has given us the chance to extend our reach nationwide. But even as we grow in numbers and in resources, one thing never changes: our commitment to the communities we call home.

Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney congratulates our colleague and friend Rudy Garcia on his election as Vice Chancellor of the Philadelphia Bar Association.

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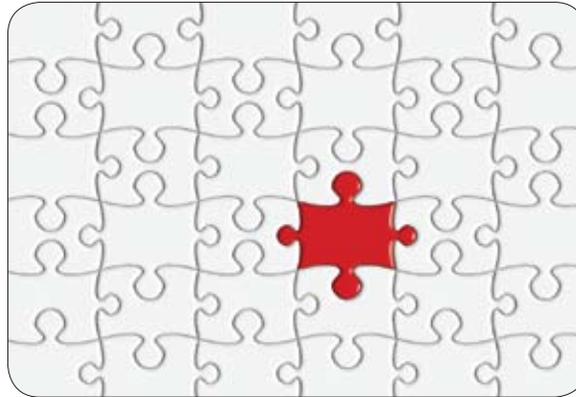
Specialties on the Rise

Certain legal specialties remain strong, even in a weak economy. An increase in bankruptcy filings and foreclosures, litigation, corporate securities and patent proceedings is generating demand for legal services in these areas. In response, law offices are recruiting professionals with relevant experience as they move swiftly to capitalize on new business opportunities.

“As competition intensifies and client budgets contract, law firms need top talent to enhance their service offerings and grow revenue,” said Charles Volkert, executive director of Robert Half Legal. “While some firms are consolidating resources to achieve these objectives, others are hiring experienced attorneys who can make immediate contributions to build-

ing niche practice groups.”

Volkert noted that legal departments are experiencing an increase in corporate governance and litigation work. “To control costs, corporate counsel are hiring outside specialists on a project basis to augment internal teams and access skills that are in short supply within their organizations.”



Following are in-demand positions for 2009, according to Robert Half Legal:

Bankruptcy/foreclosure attorneys: Lawyers with five or more years of experience handling complex bankruptcy and foreclosure matters, including restructuring and litigation, are in demand by

law firms.

Patent prosecution attorneys: An increase in patent prosecution has heightened the need for attorneys with three or more years of trademark or patent experience. An undergraduate degree in electrical engineering is desirable.

Litigation paralegals: Candidates with three to five years of litigation experience are sought by law firms and corporations to provide discovery, motion and trial preparation support.

In-house attorneys: Attorneys with at least three years of transactional law, litigation, regulatory and corporate securities experience are being recruited by corporations to help them meet ongoing legal requirements.

Foreclosure legal secretaries and legal support professionals: Legal secretaries and legal support candidates with two to five years of foreclosure and litigation practice area experience are in demand. Law firms and companies seek candidates who possess excellent computer skills and are detail-oriented.

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