

LAW MATTERS

December 2020

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Sara Anne Quinn



This year, because my family is still working and doing school from home, we are also not going other places, including church. So, for the Christmas season, we have been lighting an Advent wreath at home. For those of you not familiar with Advent wreaths, many Christian denominations light the candles on these wreaths on the four Sundays leading up to Christmas. Each of the candles symbolize a different thing—hope, love, joy and peace. Whether or not you celebrate Christmas, or include Advent in your holiday traditions, I think we can all agree that the world desperately needs more hope, love, joy and peace right now.

I think many if not all of us are ready to put 2020 in the rear-view mirror. It has been a hard year for many reasons. But my hope for each of you is that here at the end of the year and during the holiday season, you can each find some hope, love, joy and peace around you. I also know without a doubt that many of you – both in your professional lives and personal lives – will be the ones to bring hope, love, joy and peace to others.

Happy Holidays to each of you, and see you in 2021!

NEW ADMITTEES' BREAKFAST

SAVE THE
DATE

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
JUDGE SHEILA CALLOWAY

January 21, 2021 8:30 am

More details coming soon!

(Please share with new attorneys you know
as they wait for the results!)

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2021 Marion Griffin Women's Symposium

Liz Sitgreaves/Kyonztè Toombs

40th Anniversary Celebration

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LAW Matters is a monthly publication of the Lawyers' Association for women—Marion Griffin Chapter, P. O. Box 210436, Nashville, Tennessee, 37221-0436. Voicemail: 615.708.1827 Fax: 888.834.7370; www.law-nashville.org.

A LOOK BACK



As LAW – Marion Griffin Chapter prepares for the celebration of its 40th anniversary in 2021, we are taking a look back at previously published newsletter articles. This month, we are reprinting an article written by a former Archivist, Judy C. Johnson and published in the January 1999 newsletter, Volume XI, No. 8.

“Looking Back”

by Judy C. Johnson, L.A.W. Archivist

When Brenda Dowdle began her presidency, she suggested that we have some articles culled from the L.A.W.* archives. As we look into a new millennium and take in new members, I thought it would be an appropriate time to look back at previous issues of L.A.W. Matters.

January, 1984, saw Connie Clark made partner at Farris, Warfield & Kanaday, becoming the first female partner at that firm. Lee Walton became a partner at Bass, Berry & Sims that same year and was the first woman partner in that firm. She and Cliff Knowles, also an attorney with the same firm were married on January 1, 1995.

Wendy Hildreth, Assistant U.S. Attorney, was married on January 5, 1985 to Chuck Goggin, U.S. Marshall for the Middle District of Tennessee.

The January, 1985, newsletter also announced that Juliet Griffin had been named Chief Clerk of the Federal District Court in Middle Tennessee and the December, 1986, issue headlined that Juliet had been elected president of the Nashville Bar Association **, the first woman elected to that office. Claudia Bonnyman, Barbara Haynes, and Muriel Robinson were nominated as board members for the NBA in 1977 and 1978. In 1979, the first woman was elected to the NBA Board. She was Kathryn B. Celauro.

Other L.A.W. members nominated in the 1980s included Rose Cantrell, Carol McCoy, Marietta Shipley, Nancy K. Corley, Sarah Elizabeth Koch (Beth Jones), Susan Emery McGannon, Mariah A. Wooten, Jimmie Lynn Ramsaur, Ruth Johnson, Marlene Moses, Martha Trammell, and Marian Harrison. Lin Howard and Margaret Behm were elected during the early 1980s. Also elected to the board were Aleta Arthur Trauger, Juliet Griffin, Jean Nelson, Christina Norris, and Ruth Kinnard. Mariah Wooten was elected in 1988 as NBA Secretary-Treasurer, becoming the first woman and the first African-American elected to that position.

In January, 1987, the newsletter headlined the appointment of Nancy-Ann Min *** as Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Human Services, an accomplishment reached before she had attained the age of 30 years.

In January, 1988, readers learned that Judge Martha Craig Daughtrey had been elected to a three year term on the NBA Board of Directors. She recalled at that time that nearly 15 years earlier she had been appointed to serve on an NBA nominating committee for the express purpose of electing a woman to the NBA Board. However, the committee concluded that the female candidate would be too busy with the auxiliary to serve on the NBA Board.

Again in January, 1988, Mary Walker's election to the NBA Board was announced along with her appointment as general counsel and Secretary of the Tennessee Board of Regents. She was to succeed Susan Short Jones who had become the new legal director of the Metro Legal Department.

Having taken this brief glimpse of our past, let us thank those pathfinders who have gone before and who continue to blaze new trails. Let us also resolve to become path makers ourselves so that the trail will always be well marked for those who will be following us.

*In later years the board voted to drop the periods in the abbreviation of the Lawyers' Association for Women (L.A.W.) the shortened form of the organization became "LAW."

**The reader will note many of the women referenced above with regard to the NBA Board in the '80's served as judges in the 90's and beyond.

***Nancy-Ann Min DeParle went on to serve as the director of Health Care Financing Administration and the Office of Management and Budget in the Clinton administration. In the Obama administration, she served as the director of the White House Office of Health Reform which included passing of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and was the Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy.

Virtual Trivia Night!

**Holiday Mixer
Pandemic Style**

Thursday, December 17th 5:00 pm

**Register by Noon 12/15 to receive
your Zoom link.**



[REGISTER HERE](#)

As the Lawyers' Association for Women—Marion Griffin Chapter celebrates its 40th anniversary this year, we are looking back on and honoring our past. As part of the celebration, we are highlighting a LAW founder and past president each month, finding out what drew them to LAW, what they remember most about their time as president, and their reflections on LAW's role in the community now and in the future.



Founder's Spotlight Suzanne Keith

What were you doing in your career at the time the Marion Griffin chapter of LAW was founded? I was just getting started since I finished law school in 1981. I had gone to night school with 3 children at home so I started the administrative route after working with 2 other male lawyers and being in house counsel for a large construction company.

How did you come to become one of the founders? I wanted to foster women in the law. My parents had been supportive of women in the work place and I wanted to continue that tradition.

What did you envision as the goal or purpose of LAW when it was founded? To encourage and support women as lawyers and judges.

What's a favorite memory from your time with LAW? Working with Justice Cissy Daughtrey.

What has your membership in LAW provided for you over the years? It has changed our judicial bench in Tennessee. There are many more women lawyers and judges now. I worked for the Administrative Office of the Courts and saw the changes being made. There were only two women in the TN Judicial Conference in 1984 when I began at the AOC and it grew greatly in 1990 with more women being elected for judgeships.

What do you think LAW has provided to the Nashville legal community since it was founded? LAW has provided a way to improve the status and programs of women in the law.

How has the practice of law changed for women since LAW was founded? Women in 1981 all wore dark suits to court and now their dress code has changed considerably. They can wear colors and alter their choice of clothing from the old dark suit mode. They used to have to dress like men to be respected and now they can dress as women. Male lawyers and judges respect them more now, too.

What do you hope LAW does in the next 40 years? I hope LAW continues its work on behalf of females and minority members in the legal community.



Past President's Spotlight Elizabeth (Libby) Miller 2001-2002

Why did you first get involved in LAW? In the late 1970's and early 80's the Nashville Bar Association social gatherings were opportunities to listen to stories told by the older well respected lawyers who were always males. Women lawyers needed to form their own organization so that women had a way to recognize and show that same kind of respect for women lawyers.

What memories do you have about the formation of LAW? I remember the first time the women's law organization made endorsements in local judicial elections. We were so concerned with the criteria and so serious about making the right choices that the meetings to discuss the candidates lasted late into the night.

What LAW committees did you serve on before or after becoming president? Marlene Moses appointed me to my first committee. I had complained about the sandwiches we were being served by the City Club for lunch. I felt we deserved better food options for what we were paying. At that time there was just a small group that would gather each month.

What has changed about LAW and/or the Nashville legal community since you first got involved in LAW? Prior to an election where retention of several justices was on the ballot, Justice Birch was to be A. A. the luncheon speaker. There was a movement in the community to influence voters to reject them. For that luncheon, there was a huge crowd that turned out that filled the room to overflowing and quite a few members of the press were in attendance. LAW monthly meetings were becoming important events in the community.

What do you hope LAW's role is in the Nashville legal community going forward? I hope that in the future LAW can help women overcome whatever obstacles keep them from achieving the highest levels of the profession. I am astonished that it seems like we have to reinvent the wheel whenever a professional woman gets pregnant!

What woman inspires you and why? I am inspired by Chancellor Anne Martin. No matter how much she has achieved for herself in the profession, she is always willing to work on behalf of other women and recommend them for opportunities that become available.



Our Legal Department is small and close-knit, so celebrating the holidays with my coworkers is like celebrating with family and very special. Last year, we went to lunch together. The year before, we had a celebration at my boss's house and exchanged "Secret Santa" gifts. Because we are such a close group, we will be unable to keep our normal traditions due to social distancing.

This year, we are planning to continue the Secret Santa tradition but with COVID-friendly adaptations. We are currently working on a limited office schedule with half of our team coming into the office every other day. Instead of exchanging gifts in person, we will each bring a wrapped and unlabeled gift to the office on one of our designated office days. Once all the presents have been brought in, each person will then select a random gift from the assortment. Then, we will open our gifts on a Zoom session. Also, I love holiday baking. I plan to bake boxes of cookies and drop them in my coworkers' mailboxes so we can enjoy them all together during the Zoom meeting. While I will certainly miss spending the holidays with my coworkers in person, I am thankful there are so many ways to adapt our traditions and can't wait for a COVID-friendly Christmas.

— Tabitha Robinson

Memories and Traditions



Every Christmas, my mom lined our stairs with nutcrackers. I would spend hours playing with them. I now have my own little collection that I hope will grow with my children.

— Jessica Lim



This is a picture from Christmas in Alaska in 1969 when I was 7. I got Baby Crawl-Along that year and was so excited!

— Bernadette Welch

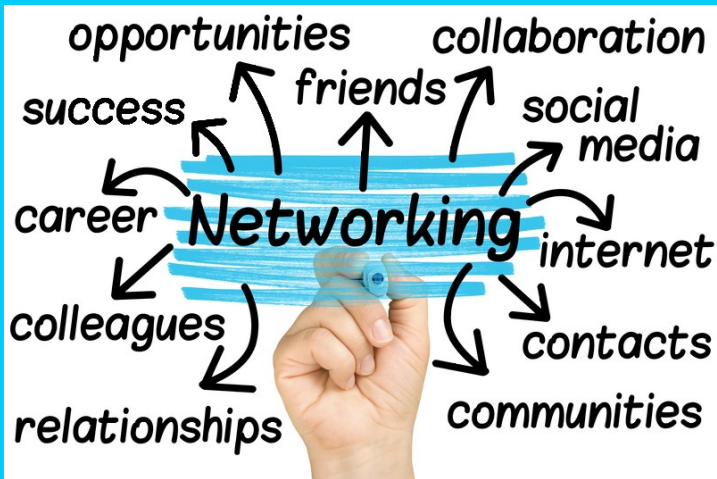
Every Christmas Eve, my family and I exchange books and spend the evening reading. We started this tradition after my brother and I graduated from college. Additionally, my brother and I each exchange one sincere gift and one "joke" gift on Christmas Day. A few years ago, my brother wrapped up my own high school yearbook and hid it under the tree for me.

— Courtney Orr



Monthly installment of recommended readings/podcasts:

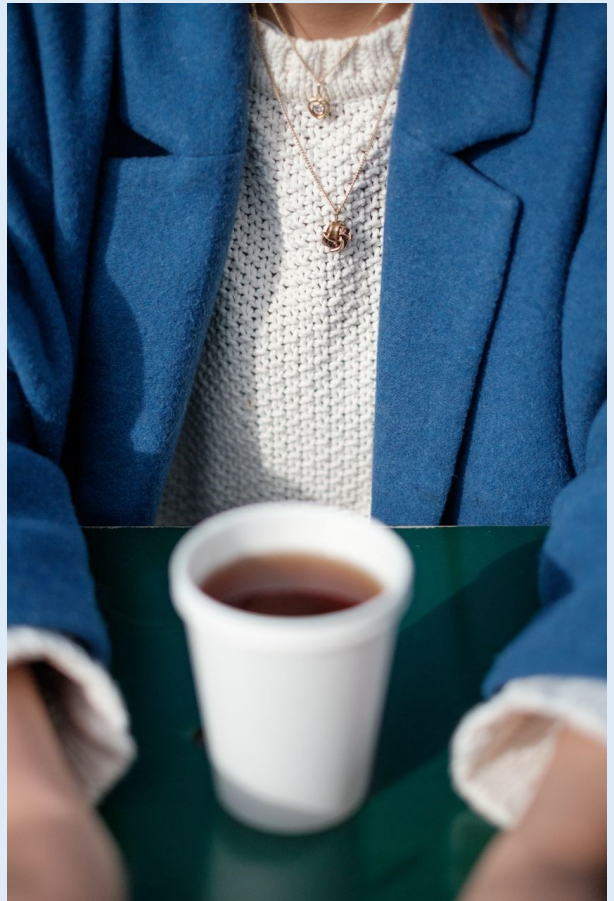
[Brené with Austin Channing Brown On I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness](#), [Unlocking Us with Brené Brown \(Podcast\)](#) (June 10, 2020)



Networking Committee

Watch for details regarding Noon events exploring networking and professional development topics!

Morning Check Ins Returning in January!



HEALTH & WELLNESS BOOK CLUB



Please take a moment to fill out a short survey to assist in planning for 2021!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/S7LM2BR>

**Thank you to our Sustaining Members who support the programs,
Mission and purposes of LAW above and beyond the Sliding Income Scale categories.**

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