

# LAW MATTERS

June 2022

Volume XXXIV No. 1



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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Shellie Handelsman



I'm honored to serve as the 42<sup>nd</sup> President of the Lawyers' Association for Women. This organization means so much to me, and I'm grateful to have the opportunity to continue to serve our members this year.

I became involved in LAW because of Liz Sitgreaves. Liz and I met shortly after I became an attorney when we sat next to each other in General Sessions court and we quickly became friends. When Liz became President-Elect, she encouraged me to get involved on the LAW board and I've been involved ever since.

Last April, I was so inspired by the Founders at LAW's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, I decided we needed to find a way to honor and celebrate them. One way I plan to do this is through my signature LAW project announced at the Annual Meeting & Banquet. Thanks to Laura Baker's suggestion, I've formed a special committee (chaired by Laura Baker and Liz Sitgreaves) to launch an oral histories project of LAW's founders, past presidents, and other trailblazers who are and were actively involved in LAW.

The first oral history will be in honor and memory of the late Justice Cornelia Clark, who, as most of you know, was an active LAW member, a former board member, and the 2017 recipient of the Martha Craig Daughtry award. While I could go on and on about her accomplishments and how much she meant to so many of our members, her 2017 acceptance speech for the Martha Craig Daughtry award sums it up perfectly. She said:

"I remind you that, as the women rising, it is now mostly in your hands to promote respect for the rule of law, for the separation of powers, and for the achievement of true equal access to justice for all people, whatever their background or status. Continuing to overcome the challenges is the best way to honor those who have come before you and to preserve the hard won privileges of equality for those who will follow you."

Justice Clark was a trailblazer who paved the way for all of us and I can find no one more fitting with whom to begin our oral histories project. I hope these oral histories continue into the future as we honor and celebrate our members and preserve our history for our archives.

Before concluding, I also want to recognize and celebrate the last three LAW Presidents - Kimberly Faye, Sara Anne Quinn, and Christen Blackburn – who had the unimaginable task of keeping LAW going during the pandemic and finding creative ways to keep us all involved and engaged. Thank you all for your leadership!

I'm truly excited about this year. LAW belongs to all of us, and I welcome and encourage your involvement, your ideas, and your concerns.

Let's accomplish great things together,

*Shellie*



## LAW Annual Meeting and Election and Awards Banquet

LAW members greeted one another with much excitement and many hugs to celebrate the incoming board for 2022-2023, the Martha Craig Daughtrey Award recipient Barbara Moss, and the Rising Star Award recipient Christen Blackburn at The Music City Center on April 21, 2022. Below is the evening in pictures, followed by Barbara's address to the membership upon receiving her award.





## LAW Annual Meeting and Election and Awards Banquet

From Left, Donna Roberts, Judge Daughtrey and Barbara Moss.



From Left, Laura Baker, Christen Blackburn and Kimberly Faye.



From Left, Quynh-Anh Kibler, Christen Blackburn, Kimberly Faye, Barbara Moss, Kierstin Jodway and Morgan Bernard.



LAW Past Presidents

## Barbara Moss Address on Becoming the 2022 Recipient of the Martha Craig Daughtrey Award



In 1990, a book came out written by a linguist and called “You Just Don’t Understand.” The book, which described how men communicate and how women communicate, utterly changed my life.

I realized that it wasn’t that the men didn’t support me, it was that support is not their style of communication. Men compete when they communicate—one up one down. Women communicate as individuals in a network of connections. Women try to seek and give confirmation and support.

So in this special place, in this organization of women and for women, I’m going to take this opportunity, to talk to you like a woman friend, like a girlfriend.

For the lovely men in the audience, hang in there. It turns out that statistically the best friend of most women is another woman and the best friend of most men is a woman. I think you may get something out of this.

Girlfriends, I don’t want to give you advice. First of all, I couldn’t do a better job of giving advice than Laura Baker, who spoke at the last new admittee’s breakfast.

And, anyway, I don’t want to give you advice, I want to give you comfort.

You don’t have to be perfect. Quoting part of a poem by Mary Oliver:

You do not have to be good.  
You do not have to walk on your knees  
For a hundred miles through the desert, repenting.

You don’t have to win every case, you don’t have to win every negotiation, you don’t have to catch every typo.

I’m not saying I conquered perfectionism, I survived it.

You may not be the detail person, you may not be the courtroom person, you may not be the rainmaker. We all get a share of good qualities. There will be a place where your good qualities fit into the puzzle.

You don’t have to be a good fit for the billable hour. Maybe your brain works like mine, running all the time, solving problems in the shower or even in your sleep. It’s hard to quantify that in billable hours, isn’t it?

In May 1999, the Vanderbilt Law Review put out a symposium on attorney well-being and the lead article was: On Being a Happy, Healthy, and Ethical Member of an Unhappy, Unhealthy, and Unethical Profession. It was about the billable hour, of course.

You don't have to hang around the office on evenings and weekends. I don't know if this is still happening, but at several law firms where I worked (I've worked at several law firms), the guys would come in on Saturday just to be seen. They would stay late in the evening and walk around joking with each other.

You don't have to know what you're doing. For the first 5 years I thought that everyone knew what they were doing except me. And then I realized that no one really knew. Sure, you may know where to sit in the courtroom, but no one knows about this case, this story, this client.

And guess what, men don't talk about making mistakes. When I realized that many years ago, I created the "mistake okay zone" in my office.

You don't have to be confident. Here's the story of wearing hats. In 1992, I bought a hat and wore it to the office. Then I bought another one. The men started saying: "Where's your hat?" And I realized 3 things about wearing a hat: 1) everybody would talk to me, homeless people, wait staff, people in grocery stores; 2) men love women in hats (and, after all, I was a single mom for 22 years); and 3) most importantly, you look confident when you wear a hat. It wasn't about branding.

I don't know who is actually confident. (My husband says only psychopaths.) I suspect that no one is. But I will say that pretending to be confident is enough.

You don't have to make it to the top of your law firm, the executive committee, the managing partner. In fact, you don't have to stay in the same firm if it's not working out for you.

You don't have to stay in a marriage that isn't working, either. Truly, you don't have to be married at all. Being single is a whole lot better than being in a bad marriage. And if you're really lucky, you marry the man of your dreams when you're fifty-five, the one whose super power is that he never judges anyone. By the way, I told my friends at LAW that I was marrying a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst and Brenda Dowdle said: "Well that will save you a lot of money." But Tom has refrained from judging me so completely, that I am myself in every way when I'm around him, so that I know the person he loves is the real me.

You don't have to be a perfect mother. I certainly wasn't. Rachel is here as my witness (although Rebecca couldn't be here). Many of you helped me along the way, just by being there, as Rachel and Rebecca were growing up.

By the way, we don't get all the blame and we don't get all the credit for how our children turn out. Rachel and Rebecca grew up to be wonderful people, wonderful mothers, married to husbands whom I admire. I don't get the credit for that, except that I kept them alive.

And your children don't have to be perfect either.

You don't have to worry about everything. Both of my daughters are incredible athletes. When Rachel was in high school she went to sports camps every summer and I worried that she wasn't holding down summer jobs like kids did when I was growing up. When she graduated from college she went to San Francisco without a job or a place to live. Everything she needed to know about the world of work was out there waiting for her, I just needed to stay out of the way. All that worry I did was completely wasted.

You don't have to find work life balance. When I think about those three words "work life balance," a balance beam comes into my mind's eye. First you fall off on one side and then you fall off on the other.

You don't have to be pretty, like our culture says we have to be. You don't have to have pretty fingernails and toenails, although I believe in self care. The last time I was in front of the Tennessee Supreme Court, I said to my husband: I don't know how it's going to go today, but my toenails are pretty. I'm not



saying don't do it, I'm saying you don't have to.

You don't have to be thin. I once read a bumper sticker that said nothing tastes as good as thin feels. I lost 10 pounds and then woke up again to the fact that I never feel thin.

You don't have to wear high heels. I am wearing kind of wearing high heels tonight, I confess. The woman at Nordstrom's told me that sometimes you have to suffer a little bit

You don't have to stick with the same law practice that you started out with. I decided as a law student that I was going to be a trial lawyer. I loved every minute of that practice except for the losing part. At fifty-five, I married Tom, so someone had my back. When I was fifty-eight or so I picked up my head one day and said: You know, trial work is kind of stressful. At the same time, I had become best known for defending employment cases, which fell out of the big firms and into insurance defense boutiques. I looked around, I piddled around, and then at the age of sixty-three I opened a practice doing Elder Law.

A word to single moms. We are bonded. We know the same joy and the same desperation. I didn't have a Plan B. If the pandemic had happened while I was raising my kids, I might have ended up on welfare.

You don't have to win awards. This award is amazing, don't get me wrong. But an award won't fix a single thing in your life.

Quoting the next line of the Mary Oliver poem:

You only have to let the soft animal of your body love what it loves.

You love your children of course, your bonus children like Robin Campbell and Kaki Campbell who are here tonight, your grandchildren like Annie Mitchell nine years old, your friends, your colleagues, work daughters and work sons, roses, dogs. Love is the answer.

One day I was driving to work (I mentioned how my brain works, constantly and in the background), and I was thinking about my definition of a hero.

Most days, she gets out of bed and puts one foot in front of the other.

If you did that today, got out of bed and put one foot in front of the other, you are my heroes. And even if you can't do that tomorrow, you're still my hero, it's only "most days," remember. And if you can't get up even most days, there are women friends here to help you. Like many wonderful women's groups in this town, including my favorite, the Lawyers' Association for Women.



Barbara was the only woman in her firm in the 1990's.

## Recap of the May Meeting: A Conversation With Judge Martha Craig Daughtrey

By: Amanda Bradley, Of Counsel, Hartzog & Silva, PLLC

On May 17, LAW members and members of the public were treated to a conversation with Judge Martha Craig “Cissy” Daughtrey at the Downtown Public Library. Judge Daughtrey, who recently transitioned to inactive status from her longtime position as a Sixth Circuit Judge for the Court of Appeals, was there to discuss her feminist collection of books which she recently donated to the Votes for Women Room at the library. Chancellor Anne Martin moderated the program.



Judge Daughtrey explained how she accumulated her personal library of feminist books. In the early 1970s, she was teaching at Vanderbilt Law School. There were no textbooks for “women in the law” back then, so Judge Daughtrey found some paperback books on the subject. She remarked that at the time, publishers wouldn’t invest in hardback books for these subjects. Judge Daughtrey eventually accumulated quite a collection

The crown jewel of Judge Daughtrey’s donated collection is the rare *History of Woman Suffrage* volumes autographed by co-author and famous suffragist, Susan B. Anthony. They are the first books ever written about the history of women’s suffrage. Judge Daughtrey described the 6-volume set as beautiful and rare, including intricate etchings and lithographs of women. She first bought a reproduction of this set after learning of their existence and used them to teach during her days as a law school professor. Then by happenstance, she saw an ad in The New York Times from a man in New Jersey selling first edition copies of the first four volumes. Judge Daughtrey immediately called the man, sold her reproductions and used that money to buy the real things. She recalls paying a whopping \$375 for them, which was a lot of money back then. But Judge Daughtrey already realized how invaluable these volumes were. She later acquired the other two books, so the set donated to the Nashville Public Library is now complete.

But the books almost wound up staying in New York rather than in Tennessee. At one time, Judge Daughtrey was in talks with the National Susan B. Anthony Museum & House in Rochester, New York, where Anthony was from, to add the volumes to their museum, but now it seems fitting that Nashville is the final resting place for these books. After all, it was suffragists in this city who helped make Tennessee the final state needed to push the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment across the finish line.

These books are obviously special to Judge Daughtrey. She sincerely hopes the Susan B. Anthony Museum has their own set by now, but by donating them to the NPL, Judge Daughtrey takes comfort in their proximity to her knowing that she doesn’t have to part with them permanently. Judge Daughtrey joked that the only reason she donated the valuable Susan B Anthony books to the NPL was the stipu-



These books are obviously special to Judge Daughtrey. She sincerely hopes the Susan B. Anthony Museum has their own set by now, but by donating them to the NPL, Judge Daughtrey takes comfort in their proximity to her knowing that she doesn't have to part with them permanently. Judge Daughtrey joked that the only reason she donated the valuable Susan B Anthony books to the NPL was the stipulation that the library had to take the rest of her collection off her hands! In fact, she laughed and said she had three more boxes of books in her car to add to the exhibit!

Other treasured books in the collection are: A Century of Struggles. (Her favorite book in the collection); one called A Thousand Years Over a Hot Stove, which is a social history of women told through the lens of how women cooked and fed their families for centuries (She ordered a used copy of this one for herself!). There's a book by Florence Allen, the first woman to sit on the federal bench, and one written and signed by Eleanor Roosevelt. Many of the donated volumes are personally inscribed to Judge Daughtrey, signed by famous judges and Supreme Court justices that she met over the years through her connection with the women's judicial conference. Of note, it was her involvement with this same judicial conference that led to the eventual forming of LAW.

These books are not available to check out, but library patrons may take them to the reading room. Judge Daughtrey is grateful that students of all ages can access these books and glean what they can from her collection of books about women and the law, a collection she built from the ground up. Her advice for future trailblazers was a quote from Susan B Anthony, taken from a speech near the end of Anthony's life: "failure is impossible." The end of one trailblazing woman's career dovetails into the beginning of another's. We must take up the banner of our predecessors and continue the work in order to get the job done. Judge Daughtrey pointed out that one person cannot do it alone; we have to band together. Judge Cissy Daughtrey is surely one trailblazer LAW's members will honor by continuing the work that she began. Failure is impossible.



## **PLEASE** **UPDATE YOUR DATA IN YOUR LAW MEMBERSHIP ACCOUNT!!**

**LAW needs your data!** Please update your account as soon as possible with your current place of employment and practice areas (and anything else that is missing).

Please review your information TODAY! If you do not know your password, please email the LAW office at [info@law-nashville.org](mailto:info@law-nashville.org) to receive a new one.

## **LAW MENTORING AND MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

LAW's Mentoring and Membership Development Committee hosted the final Lean-In discussion for the year in-person on April 26th. During the CLE presentation, Dannelle Whiteside, VP for Legal Affairs and Organizational Strategy at Austin Peay State University, led participants through the legal landscape of freedom of speech in higher education. Then in an open discussion exploring various real world campus speech scenarios, participants reflected on the cultural, legal, and practical perspective of advising clients on why, and how, free speech should be preserved, promoted, and protected. We look forward to next year's Lean-In discussions.

## **Networking/Membership Outing**



On April 7, 2022, LAW hosted its first-ever baseball outing to welcome spring and potential new members. LAW members brought friends and colleagues to the Nashville Sounds game for an evening of baseball, beer, and burgers. Well, to be more accurate, most of us enjoyed chatting, Aperol spritzes, and tot-chos (i.e., tater tots and nachos). We were able to reserve a fun section in the right field where we could move around from high top table to high top table and meet our colleagues who are not yet LAW members.

Although many attendees may have left the game without knowing who won (I looked it up and, unfortunately, the Sounds lost to the Durham Bulls 3-6), everyone had a great time getting to know one another. We hope that this event showed our potential new members that LAW is not only a great organization for professional growth and networking but a place to make friends and form a community.

Look out for this event next year – you won't want to miss the tot-chos and to visit with one another. Hopefully, we will have warmer weather in 2023!



## March 28<sup>th</sup> Health & Wellness Committee CLE Event: Applying Mindfulness & Meditation Techniques to Improve Wellbeing in the Legal Field

“The goal of meditation isn’t to control your thoughts, it’s to stop letting them control you.”

On the evening of March 28, the Health & Wellness Committee hosted a mindfulness and meditation CLE with guest speaker Joanna McCracken. Joanna is an attorney, yoga instructor, and meditation teacher who helps educate lawyers on how to use meditation, mindfulness, and yoga techniques to overcome occupational stress and establish healthier working environments. The event took place at Mindful Nashville, a wellness center located in Germantown, that provides counseling services and group meditation. During the wellbeing presentation, Joanna explained to LAW members how stress impacts us mentally and physically, and the benefits of practicing meditation to combat the effects of stress and cultivate positive thinking patterns. Specifically, she focused on “mindfulness meditation” and the importance of being present in the moment. Joanna took into consideration that focusing during meditation can be difficult, and she explained that mind-wandering is normal and how to practice observing one’s thoughts instead of wrestling with them. With mindfulness meditation, the work is in learning to observe one’s mind and understand its tendencies, not necessarily to clear it. Joanna guided participants through several mindfulness meditation exercises and provided tools on how to establish a daily practice. The event was a great success, and the Health and Wellness Committee is looking into scheduling additional mindfulness meditation events, so be on the lookout for more in the future!



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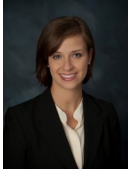
Join a Committee and get involved in LAW!  
Contact the LAW office and get connected with a co-chair today!

### New Admittees' Breakfast



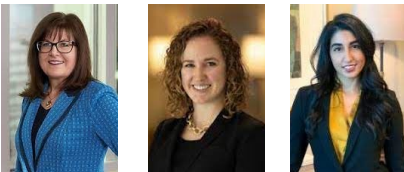
Callie Hinson/Erin Palmer Polly

### Bylaws and Long Term Planning



Sara Anne Quinn

### Community Relations



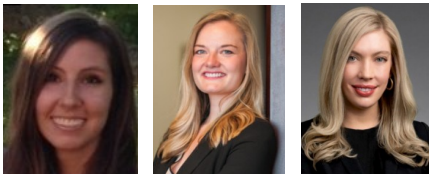
Jackie Dixon/Grace Fox/Hollie Parrish

### Diversity, Equity & Inclusion



Princess Rogers/Catherine Tabor

### Health and Wellness



Morgan Bernard/Danielle Johns/Rachel Taylor

### Judicial Appts, Elections & Awards



Judge Lynda Jones/Ellen Bowden McIntyre

### Legislation & Litigation



Annie Beckstrom/Olivia Park

### Marion Griffin Women's Symposium



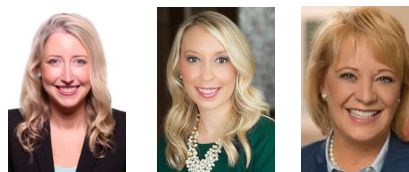
Christen Blackburn/Sherie Edwards

### Membership



Katharine Fischman, Quynh-Anh Kibler/  
Kimberly Veirs

### Mentoring/Member Development



Alaina Beach/Katie Bennett/Chancellor Anne Martin

### Networking



Blake Howell/Jorie Zajicek

### Nominating Committee



Kimberly Faye

### Oral History



Laura Baker/Liz Sitgreaves

### Practicing Parents



Mariam Stockton/Angela Williams

## 2022-2023 LAW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Bylaws and Long Term Planning  
Sara Anne Quinn

Community Relations  
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Diversity Equity and Inclusion  
Princess Rogers, Catherine Tabor

Health and Wellness  
Morgan Bernard, Danielle Johns, Rachel Taylor

Judicial Appointments, Elections and Awards  
Judge Lynda Jones, Ellen Bowden McIntyre

Legislation and Litigation  
Annie Beckstrom, Olivia Park

Marion Griffin Women's Symposium 2023  
Christen Blackburn, Sherie Edwards

Membership  
Katharine Fischman, Quynh-Anh Kibler,  
Kimberly Veirs

Mentoring/Member Development  
Alaina Beach, Katie Bennett,  
Chancellor Anne Martin

Networking  
Blake Howell, Jorie Zajicek

Nominating Committee  
Kimberly Faye

Oral History  
Laura Baker, Liz Sitgreaves

Practicing Parents  
Mariam Stockton, Angela Williams

Programs  
Jenny Charles, Brooke Coplon,  
Jan Margaret Craig, Barbara Moss

### Executive Director

Melanie Gober Grand



## Committee Co-chairs Continued

### Programs



Jenny Charles/Brooke Coplon/Jan Margaret Craig/Barbara Moss

## Members in the News!



Jackie Dixon was the recipient of the Judge Pamela L. Reeves Tennessee Professionalism Award at the recent Tennessee Bar Association Annual Convention. Jackie is a past president of LAW and the TBA.



Will Cheek, formerly with Waller Lansden Dortch & Davis LLP has joined Adams and Reese LLP, to start the firm's alcohol and hospitality team.



The City of Franklin renamed Fourth Avenue in downtown Franklin to Cornelia Clark Way to honor late the late Justice Clark.



Judge Melissa Blackburn was recently selected to Leadership Nashville's Class of 2023.

## KUDOS

To Jessica Lim, husband Jae and older siblings Kennedy and Conner on the birth of Harper Joy on May 26, 2022.

## CONDOLENCES

To Bernadette Welch on the recent passing of her father, Elliot Jerome (Jerry) Welch (Co. Ret.) in Sarasota, FL.

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

Elizabeth Alexander	Kimberly Faye	Cynthia Cutler Moon	Maria Stewart
Audrey Anderson	Mandy Floyd	Elizabeth Moreton	Mariam Stockton
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Kristy Arth	Grace Fox	Marlene Moses	Rachel Zamata Swanson
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April Berman	Callie Hinson	Kaitlin Parham	Carolyn Wenzel
Judge Cheryl Blackburn	Rachel Hogan	Rebekah Parkhurst	Memorie White
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Judge Melissa Blackburn	Kierstin Jodway	Barbara Perutelli	Susan Neal Williams
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Nancy Krider Corley	Chancellor Ellen Lyle	Lindsey Shepard	
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Chelsea Curtis	Monica Mackie	Cynthia Sherwood	
Judge Angie Dalton	Nancy MacLean	Dianna Shew	
Carrie Daughtrey	Chancellor Anne Martin	Kristen Shields	
Ashonti Davis	Henry Martin	Judge Marietta Shipley	
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LAW Matters is a bi-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](http://www.law-nashville.org).