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PUBLISHED BY THE CAMDEN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

VOL. 71, No. 9 • MAY 2023

CRAIG D. BECKER TO BE INSTALLED AS THE 97TH CAMDEN COUNTY BAR PRESIDENT

Friends and colleagues from the Bench and Bar are invited to join us on **June 24, 2023**, from 2 p.m. - 5 p.m. to witness **Craig D. Becker** become the **97th President of the Camden County Bar Association**. Mr. Becker and the other Officers and Trustees for the Association and Foundation will receive Oaths of Office from **Hon. Eric G. Fikry**.

After graduating from the University of Florida with a BA in History, Becker attended the University of Pennsylvania Law School and graduated in 2003. During Law School, Craig Becker volunteered with Alternative Spring Break helping provide tutoring to at-risk students in Eastern Kentucky. He also interned with the Miami Public Defender's Office. Upon receiving his Juris Doctorate, Craig worked for the Chester County Public Defender's Office as an Assistant Public Defender in both the Adult and Juvenile divisions. He then transitioned to working as an Associate for law firms in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

During his tenure with one of these firms, he received his first experience with Special Education Law, representing School Districts. Mr. Becker realized that his passion rests with assisting students and families and other individuals with disabilities. In 2008 Craig opened his own law firm while simultaneously becoming Of-Counsel with the law firm of Gerstein Grayson in Mount Laurel, New Jersey. He focuses his practice on representing students and families in disputes with School Districts. Craig also represents adults and juveniles in criminal matters. As part of his criminal defense practice, Mr. Becker has a significant passion for assisting individuals with disabilities who are facing criminal charges.

Craig has been an active member of the Camden County Bar Association for the last 15 years. He has served on the Young Lawyer's Committee and has been the CLE Chair for the past 7 years. Craig lives in Cherry Hill with his wife Beth, children Eva and Aaron, and dog Clark. Most weekends you can find him canoeing or paddleboarding on the Cooper River.

SAVE THE DATE – WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7TH



Camden County Bar Foundation's Spring fundraiser **Sip, Savor & Support** will be held on **Wednesday, June 7th** at the beautiful **Merchantville County Club, Cherry Hill.** This event will offer tastings of fine wines, beers, and an assortment of bourbons. We will also enjoy delicious food, raffle prizes, and fun. **This fundraiser will help support the Children's Picnic. Sponsorship opportunities are available.**

Please contact **Kim Arroyo** for more information at 856-482-0620 ext. 113. Or **kim@camdencountybar.org**.

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Don't Delay, Renew Today!

Ensure your good standing!

Our focus remains our commitment to serving our members to the best of our ability. As a member of the Camden County Bar Association, you are now able to renew your membership for the 2023-2024 Bar year. Please renew at https://camden.intouchondemand.com/barlanding.aspx

Perhaps more so now than ever before, the CCBA is dedicated to finding solutions to your challenges, keeping you informed on the ever-changing legal landscape, connecting you with other lawyers in the County, and offering

Continued on Page 2

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535 Route 38 · Suite 328 · Cherry Hill, NJ 08002 856.665.7140 age 2 MAY 2023

THE DOCKET

MAY 2023

Thursday, May 4

CLE: Reading & Understanding Financial Statements & Tax Returns – A Primer for Attorneys

4 p.m.- 6:15 p.m. —Via- Zoom

Thursday, May 10

CLE: Tra<mark>nsition</mark> & Recent Development in Special Needs Planning 12 p.m.-2:15 p.m.—via Zoom

Wednesday, May 11

CCBA Board of Trustees Meeting 4 p.m.—Woodcrest Country Club, Cherry Hill

Wednesday, May 11

Cocktails and Conversation
5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
The Woodcrest Country Club, Cherry Hill

Monday, May 29

Memorial Day Office Closed



Ensure your good standing!

Continued from Page 1

you value for your hard-earned dollar. Below are just some of the benefits of CCBA membership:

- ✓ One free membership directory listing included with membership (\$50 value) NOTE: You must contact CCBA staff to select your free directory listing email Marian McBeth at mmb@camdencountybar.org.
- ✓ Discounts on CLE seminars **members** save 60-75% on CCBA seminars vs. many competitors and approximately 30% vs. non-members; CCBA seminars offer both NJ MCLE and PA CLE credit to help you meet your requirement.
- ✓ Unique benefits from our Partners in Progress such as advice and information for lawyers, law firm website and marketing experts, practice management software discounts, telephone and merchant services discounts, free webinars, and seminars, and more!

Plus, all the usual benefits of CCBA membership such as important updates from the courts, discounts on office supplies, exclusive opportunities to connect with members of the judiciary, our lawyer referral service to help you grow your practice, our vibrant Young Lawyers Committee, and our prestigious Senior Lawyers Committee, and more.



Tentative Agenda for May 11th Board Meeting

A tentative agenda for this month's regular Board of Trustees meeting is as follows. The meeting will be held at the Woodcrest Country Club at 4:00 p.m. All meetings are open to the membership. Anyone interested in participating should notify and confirm their attendance by calling Bar Headquarters at 856.482.0620.

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of Minutes from Meeting
- III. Treasurer's Report
- IV. President's Report
- V. Executive Director's Report
- **VI. Committee Reports**
 - a. Membership Committee
 - b. Young Lawyers Committee
 - c. Standing Committee Reports
- **VII. Foundation Update**
- VIII. NJSBA Update
- IX. Old Business (if any)
- X. New Business (if any)
- XI. Adjournment

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THE BARRISTER

Published monthly, except July and August, by the Camden County Bar Association.

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Views and opinions in editorials and articles are not to be taken as official expressions of the Association's policies unless so stated, and publication of contributed articles does not necessarily imply endorsement in any way of the views expressed.

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ATTEND MEETINGS AND FUNCTIONS!

VERDICTS IN THE COURT

March 2023 — Superior Court of New Jersey

VERDICT:

Case Type: Judge: Plaintiff's Atty:

NO CAUSE AUTO - Neg. Personal Inj Daniel A. Bernardin, J.S.C. Justin M. Bernstein, Esq. Defendant's Atty: Anthony Young, Esq. JURY

L-1630-21 VERDICT:

Case Type: Judge: Plaintiff's Atty: L- 3693-18

NO CAUSE AUTO NEG TORT Anthony M. Pugliese, J.S.C. W. Robb Graham, Esq. Defendant's Atty: Robert R. Nicodemo, III, Esq. JURY

VERDICT: LIABILITY VERDICT 40% Plaintiff - 60% Defendant

Case Type: AUTO NEG TORT Michael J. Kassel, J.S.C. Judge: Joel Garber, Esq. & Evan Garber, Esq. Plaintiff's Atty: Defendant's Atty: Steven Antinoff, Esq.

L- 4874-19 JURY VERDICT:

Case Type: Judge: Plaintiff's Atty: Defendant's Atty:

L- 4269-17

NO CAUSE MEDICAL MALPRACTICE Steven J. Polansky, P.J. Cv

Richard Heleniak, Esq. & Alaina Gregorio, Esq. Michael Ricciardulli, Esq. & Michael Heron,

JURY

VERDICT:

Case Type: Judge: Plaintiff's Atty: Defendant's Atty:

L- 4463-19

\$1,550,000.00 Daniel A. Bernardin, J.S.C.

JURY

VERDICT: Case Type:

Judge: Plaintiff's Atty: Defendant's Atty: L-191-20

LIABILITY -

AUTO NEG PERSONAL INJURY Brian S. Chacker, Esq. Roxanne Leander La Roc., Esq.

NO CAUSE UM/UIM Judith S. Charny, J.S.C. Steven DiStefano, Esq. Steven Antinoff, Esq.

JURY

NO CAUSE VERDICT: AUTO

Case Type: Judge: Donald J. Stein, J.S.C. Plaintiff's Atty: Bruce Wallace, Esq. Daniel Lewbart, Esq. Defendant's Atty: L-4145-19

JURY

VERDICT: NO CAUSE

Case Type: Judge: Plaintiff's Atty: Defendant's Atty: L- 2455-20

AUTO NEG PERSONAL INJUURY Daniel A. Bernardin, J.S.C. Jeremy Weitz., Esq. Robert Nicodemo, Esq.

CCBA & CCBF OFFICERS

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The Official CCBA Hooded Sweatshirt available now!



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MEMBERSHIP MATTERS!

Your membership in the Camden County Bar Association offers you the following exclusive benefits:





CONNECT WITH 2,000 COLLEAGUES

- + Exclusive membership directory searchable by name, practice area or firm FREE for members
- Networking opportunities at membersonly receptions and dinners, virtual speednetworking and mock interview events
- + Practice-related committees to **connect** you to other attorneys in your practice area



SAVE MONEY

- Discounts on CLE seminars CCBA members save 60-75% on CCBA seminars vs. many competitors and approximately 30% vs. non-members
- Discounts on office supplies, practice management solutions, payroll services, telephone services, clothing, publications and more



BOOST YOUR CAREER

- + Join the Lawyer Referral Service which makes some 2,000 referrals annually
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- + Monthly publication, *The Barrister*, and weekly e-newsletter keeping you in-the-know on everything from **Notices to the Bar to developments in the law**
- Member portal where you can register for events, manage your referrals, connect with colleagues, keep track of CLE and renew your membership
- + Over 30 Webinars on Demand available on our website so you can learn from the comfort of your home or office
- + Listservs for practice-related committees to help you connect with other attorneys in your field, ask questions or discuss developments in the law



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YOUR PARTNER FOR GREATER PURPOSE

- You make a difference. We make it easier.
 Connect your profession with your passion through our charitable arm the Camden County Bar Foundation with service initiatives that touch the lives of our local community
- + Leadership opportunities on the CCBA's Board of Trustees
- + Leadership and volunteer opportunities with the Camden County Bar Foundation

BY THE NUMBERS:

- 2,000 members of the South Jersey legal community
- Over a 140 years of service to the profession and community
- 40 seminars in fiscal year 2022-2023
- 1,396 cases referred to 92 participating LRS members
- Over \$31,000 contributed to the local community in donations, events and scholarships in the last year through the Camden County Bar Foundation
- "The most helpful webinar I've ever attended, thanks CCBA" Survey respondent



"I appreciate the wide range of services and charitable opportunities."

Survey respondent

QUESTIONS

or need help renewing your membership?

Contact Marain McBeth at mmb@camdencountybar.org or 856.482.0620 today!

MAY 2023 THE BARRISTER Page 5



The Camden County Bar Foundation Awards Judge Anne E. Thompson The Gerry Award

On March 29, 2023, **Hon. Anne E. Thompson** was presented with the John F. Gerry Award at the Westin, Mt. Laurel. Judge Thompson was surrounded by friends and colleagues of the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey as she was presented with this prestigious award. The Gerry Scholarship was awarded to **Jazmin King**, a second-year law student at Widner University. Thank you to all who attended this celebration.







Dennis Drasco & Scott Etish



Kelly Crawford, Tom Curtain, Judge Wolfson & Judge Hammer



Judge Rodriguez, Lisa Rodriguez & Judge Schneide



ludge Bissell & Tom Valen



Claudette Roman, Judge Thompson & Judge Wizmur



Judge Arper



zmin King & Michelle Badolate



Michelle Badolato



Judge Christine O'Hearn & Judge Orlofsky



Chief Judge Marie Bumb



dge Kugler, Theresa Kugler Leigh Ann Buziak & Judge Orlofsky



Kristine Butler, Esq., Hon. Joel Rosen, Melissa Rhodes, Esq.



Michelle Badolato, Gerry Scholarship Recipient, Jazmin King, Michael Galpern & Kimberly Arroyo

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Are your Legal Fees Deductible? Classic No Answer-Answer.... It Depends!

by Martin H. Abo, CPA/ABV/CVA/CFF

\$275,000.00 \$125,000.00 \$190,000.00 \$140,000.00 \$80,000.00

Maybe, just maybe, if the legal fees are deductible your client will feel better (and even pay you sooner). Yeh right! Well, at least take some solace in knowing that those legal fees might just be deductible.

Here's Abo and Company and Abo Cipolla Financial Forensics' punch list of items you **might** like to discuss with that client concerning the deductibility of their legal fees.

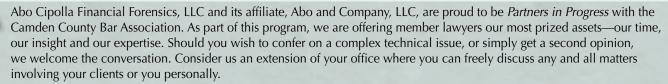
- Attorney fees may, depending on the factual circumstances and the ability of the client to meet the applicable legal requirements for deduction, will generally:
 - 1. be a deductible business expense; or
 - 2. be one of the three categories of deductible nonbusiness expenses: or
 - 3. be a personal expense which is non-deductible; or
 - 4. be a capital expenditure which is non-deductible, but which may be capitalized and subject to depreciation or amortization; or
 - 5. be a deductible loss; or
 - 6. be some combination of the foregoing.

- The Internal Revenue Code does not specifically address the deductibility of legal fees. Instead, and similar to many other types of expenses, they may be deductible as "business expenses" if they are paid or incurred in a trade or business. While a particular activity does not rise to the level of a bona fide "trade or business", if fees are paid or incurred pursuing an activity to generate a profit, the fees may be deductible.
- No deduction is permitted for legal fees incurred for a purely personal matter.
- · While the line separating a "personal legal expense" versus a "business or investment legal expense" often becomes blurred, regardless, the expense to be deductible must be "ordinary, necessary and reasonable". This "ordinary and necessary" requirement has generated substantial confusion. Generally speaking, an expense is "ordinary" if a businessperson would commonly incur it in the particular circumstances involved.
- Legal fees incurred in connection with a divorce or separation are not deductible and considered personal expenditures even if an adverse decision would be catastrophic to a client's business. It's the origin of the claim that dictates.

Continued on Page 9

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Remember! It doesn't cost you anything to call us on a matter. It may cost you dearly by not calling us on that matter. We can help, so why not give us a call!

We strive to successfully meet the needs of a very diverse client base. We have carefully focused and developed our practice to specialize in the complexities of tax planning and compliance; financial consulting; accounting and review services; estate planning and compliance. We are here to assist our judiciary and legal colleagues in any and all accounting, tax, valuation, investigative or litigation support project where our team may be of benefit. We offer consultations in many areas, including the following:

- Contract disputes
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- Business interruption claims
- Business valuations
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- Fraud investigations
- Arbitration and Mediation
- Tax related valuations
- · Lost earnings from wrongful death, termination or personal injury claims

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Counseling Session with Personal Injury Plaintiffs

by Thomas D. Begley, Jr., Esquire, CELA

In some personal injury cases the victim is receiving important means-tested Social Security Income (SSI), Medicaid, or other important means-tested public benefits. These

plaintiffs require a Self-Settled Special Needs Trust (SSSNT) in order to maintain their benefits. In other situations, the plaintiff is a minor or incapacitated adult. These individuals usually require a Settlement Protection Trust (SPT). Most personal injury victims are totally unfamiliar with trusts and are concerned that once their money is deposited into the trust, they will never see it again. Other plaintiffs have high expectations of how long money will last and have not really analyzed their future situation.

Immediate Cash Needs

A good way to address these situations is to have a counseling session. At the meetings the plaintiff and/or family will identify immediate cash needs and estimated costs. Examples of immediate cash needs might include the purchase of a new home, furniture, a vehicle, clothing and shoes, a vacation, a computer, an iPad, a cell phone, repayment of outstanding debt, and funeral arrangements if appropriate.

Monthly Budget

At the same meeting consideration should be given to development of a monthly budget. A budget usually includes shelter expenses, such as rent, real estate taxes, utilities, and insurance. Other items would include telephone bills, cable television, Internet, trash and garbage removal (if applicable), condominium or home owner association fees (if applicable), and ongoing needs for equipment. The monthly budget would also include money for auto insurance, driver's license and registration, gas, oil, maintenance, and other transportation-related expenses. The budget should also

include money for food at home, restaurants, household supplies, clothing and shoes, dry cleaning, commercial laundry, hair care, vacations, entertainment, alcohol, tobacco, newspaper, magazine, life insurance, professional expenses, prescription drugs, non-prescription drugs, cosmetics, toiletries and sundries, unreimbursed medical, unreimbursed psychiatric or psychological counseling, unreimbursed dental, and unreimbursed medical insurance.

The 4% Rule

One of the considerations that is often overlooked is how long the money will last. Studies show that the average personal injury settlement lasts from three to five years. In 1994, a financial advisor named William Bengen published a paper titled "Determine Withdrawal Rights Using Historical Data" that was published in the Journal of Financial Planning. The paper really addressed retirement savings. Essentially, Bengen examined a significant amount of data and concluded that most retirement portfolios last at least 30 years and some remained intact for 50 years or more. His conclusion was that if the retiree safely spent about 4% of the retirement savings in the first year and 4% adjusted for inflation in succeeding years, the money would last for the lifetime of the retirement account beneficiary. The same factors should apply in a personal injury settlement trust be it an SSSNT or a SPT. Therefore, during the counseling session this strategy should be explained to the plaintiff and/or family to establish realistic expectations.

By introducing the plaintiff or family to the trustee, everyone begins to have a comfort level with one another. By developing the budget and showing the clients what monies can be expended for and explaining the availability of a credit card or debit card, the client is also at ease.

Continued on Page 9

CCBF's Annual Children's Picnic



Saturday, June 3, 2023 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Challenge Grove Park, Cherry Hill



Help us show these deserving kids a great time!



Counseling Session with Personal Injury Plaintiffs

Continued from Page 8

The Players

The players at a counseling session involving a trust should include:

- ➤ The Plaintiff, if appropriate.
- ➤ The family of the Plaintiff, if appropriate.
- ➤ The Trustee.
- ➤ The Elder & Disability Law Attorney.
- ➤ The Personal Injury Attorney.
- ➤ The Structured Settlement Broker, if appropriate.

General Concepts

If a Self-Settled Special Needs Trust is involved, the plaintiff is to be made aware of the following legal concepts:

- > Sole Benefit Of. The parties must understand that the monies in the trust may be expended "for the sole benefit of" the person with disabilities.
- > Pro Rata Share. If persons other than the beneficiary benefit from trust distributions, they must pay their pro rata share. Commonly, this situation arises where the trust owns a home and the individual with disabilities lives in the home with other family members.
- > Legal Obligation of Support. Where there is a Self-Settled Special Needs Trust funds cannot be used to discharge a parent's legal obligation of support, unless the parents are too poor to discharge this obligation.
- > Distributions Caps. In New Jersey, any distribution from a Self-Settled Special Needs Trust in excess of \$5,000 requires 45 days advance notice to the State Medicaid Agency.
- > Reporting Requirements. In New Jersey the State Medicaid Agency requires an annual accounting of trust activities.

The Mechanics

A corporate trustee should always be used for trusts. Family members are well intentioned. They often work for free but very frequently they mishandle the trust administration. The corporate trustee will obtain a credit card or a debit card for the plaintiff and/or responsible family member. The expenses outlined in the budget will be charged to the credit card, and the credit card bill and receipts will be sent to the corporate trustee to be paid on a monthly basis. Alternatively, if there is a debit card rather than a credit card, the expense will be paid by the debit card and the debit card will be replenished on a monthly basis.

Distributions required outside the budget must be cleared with the corporate trustee in advance. Any distribution in excess of \$5,000 also requires 45 days prior notice to Medicaid, although this can be waived in the case of an emergency.

Begley Law Group, P.C. has served the Southern New Jersey and Philadelphia area as a life-planning firm for over 85 years. Our attorneys have expertise in the areas of Personal Injury Settlement Consulting, Special Needs Planning, Medicaid Planning, Estate Planning, Estate & Trust Administration, Guardianship, and Estate & Trust Litigation. Contact us today to begin the conversation.

Are your Legal Fees Deductible? Classic No Answer-Answer....It Depends!

Continued from Page 7

- The cost of disciplinary or licensing proceedings against your client in connection with his/her business or profession may be deductible if the conduct stems from the client's business rather than from his/her personal activities. Once again, the nature of the suit or legal proceeding against the person will control (i.e. whether it originates from professional versus personal actions). Thus, a deduction for legal fees incurred by a lawyer in defending a legal malpractice case or an ethic violation would be allowed.
- While not all inclusive, some examples of legal services we've seen provided for personal legal expenses that are **NOT** deductible include:
 - 1. child custody proceeding;
 - 2. breach of promise to marry lawsuit;
 - civil or criminal charges resulting from a personal relationship;
 - 4. personal injury damages awarded except whistleblower claims and unlawful discrimination claims;
 - 5. perfection of title to real property for personal use or any defense thereto, including preparation of title;
 - 6. preparation of a last will and testament or any codicil thereto
 - 7. property claims or property settlement in a divorce proceeding regardless of whether or not the legal proceeding relates to the loss of income-producing property;
 - 8. campaign expenses for any candidate running for office including qualification and registration fees for primary elections;
 - 9. legal fees incurred for the defense of charges arising from participation in a political campaign;
 - 10. attorney fees paid to collect social security.
- Personal legal fees had historically been deducted as a miscellaneous itemized deduction subject to a 2% of adjusted gross income threshold. These types of deductions were suspended under the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Acts for tax years beginning after December 31, 2017 through January 1, 2026. Therefore, attorney fees paid to for the above 10 examples during that time period would not be tax deductible.

Martin H. Abo, CPA/ABV/CVA/CFF is a principle of Abo and Company, LLC and its affiliate, Abo Cipolla Financial Forensics, LLC, Certified Public Accountants – Litigation and Forensic Accountants. The firm is a Partner in Progress of the Camden County Bar Association. With offices in Mount Laurel, NJ, Morrisville, PA and Franklin Lakes, NJ. Marty can be reached at marty@aboandcompany.com or by calling 856-222-4723.

LRS – Renewal: Open Enrollment Begins for the 2023-2024 Lawyer Referral Service Panel

Enrollment is now open for the Association's Lawyer Referral Service (LRS) for the 2023-2024 Bar year. Panel membership is open to any lawyer who meets the necessary qualifications. The new LRS panel will begin on June 1 and will continue through May 31, 2024. **Members serving on the current panel must re-enroll for the new LRS year.**

Each year, the LRS makes over 2,000 referrals to callers with legal problems who are able to afford a private attorney: many of them feegenerating cases. You can be part of this important program that helps expand your client base through pre-screened referrals while providing a terrific community service for individuals requiring legal services.

The annual registration fee remains only \$75 for those admitted to the New Jersey Bar for up to five years, or \$150 for those admitted for six years or more. Please note that all LRS panel members are required to remit back to the Association 10% of fees collected in excess of \$500 for all matters referred by the LRS. The fee applies to any referral received from the LRS and is payable when the participating attorney receives payment for services rendered.

A completed application, together with the appropriate enrollment fee and required original certificate of malpractice insurance coverage, must be returned to the Bar Association before referrals can be made in the new Bar year.

Applications can be downloaded from the Association's website at **www.camdencountybar.org** or by calling **Marian McBeth** at Bar Headquarters at 856.482.0620. Questions about the LRS? Contact Marian by phone or email at **mmb@camdencountybar.org**.



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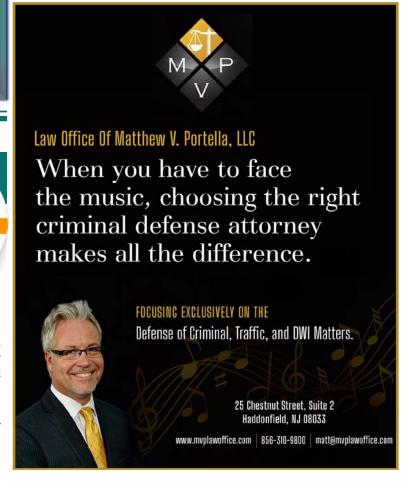
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Camden County Bar Foundation's Annual Children's Picnic

Join us for the Camden County Bar Foundation's Annual Children's Picnic scheduled for Saturday, June 3, 2023, from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Over 200 underserved inner-city kids are expected to attend and enjoy a day of fun in the sun complete with bounce houses, cotton candy, hand painting, DJ & dancing, games, hamburgers & hot dogs, and ice cream treats.

Volunteers are needed for everything from grilling to spinning cotton candy to set up. Middle and high school kids can earn community service hours by volunteering! Volunteers can now register online and will receive further instructions when available.

All interested in volunteering, please use this link https://www.camdencountybar.org/Irs-calendar to register or contact Kimberly Arroyo at kim@camdencountybar.org.





By Jim Hamilton

In last month's discussion of the wines of Sicily, space did not allow us to offer tasting impressions of wines that should be available locally. Diligent preparation for an upcoming trip to that triangular island off Italy's boot has required regularly opening its wines, particularly ones made from indigenous grapes. I also managed to taste a number of Sicilian wines that received the coveted Tre Bicchieri award from the respected Italian wine publication, *Gambero Rosso*, during its annual stop in New York City. So, let's identify some Sicilian wines that you may want to buy to take to your favorite Italian restaurant or enjoy at home.

We will focus first on white wines that may be found at retailers that have the space for bottles from a part of Italy that stores with less room or inclination may be limited in carrying. 2021 **Donnafugata Anthilia** is a wine mentioned here in the past as one that can be enjoyed as a summer sipper. Crafted mostly from a widely planted Sicilian white grape, Cattarato, it is clean and unassuming, with an easygoing air of honeysuckle escorting pear, Red Delicious apple, and almond impressions that



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are roundly delivered in an uncomplicated and unassuming fashion.

2021 Morgante Bianco di Morgante (il Bianco da Uve Nere) is a wine I have enjoyed on several occasions and keep buying for the quality it offers for such a modest price. As the parenthetical reference explains (with help from Google translate), this is a white wine made from a red grape, in this case Nero d'Avola. As you know, the pulp (or "flesh") of most grapes is clear and is wrapped in skins of different colors. In the case of a red wine, it is the nature and extent of skin contact that primarily is responsible for the color of the finished wine. Therefore, as with this wine, if the grape is pressed and the skins are quickly separated and removed to prevent the juice from coming into contact with the red grape's skin, a white wine will result. Since Nero d'Avola is a grape having good acidity, it is not surprising that this wine displays that prickly quality from the outset and carries an energy to the palate from start to finish. Even without skin influence, some of the fruit impressions are those one might taste in a red wine, such as cherry and cassis. However, the red fruit sensations are balanced by an almost tropical fruit quality more associated with a white wine. In addition, there are chalky notes helping to accent the fruit and a structure that gains grip as the wine sits in the glass and aerates.

2021 Tenuta Tascante Buonora is an Etna wine crafted using the star of that region's white grapes, Carricante. As often is the case with these wines, the initial impression is one of restrained fruit presented in a lithe and linear way. There are notes of honeydew melon and white peach with shadows of kiwi peeking out with time and air. There also emerges a subtle hint of lime and a touch of walnut that are framed by elements of slate and salinity. One key to enjoying Carricante, perhaps even more than most white wines, is not drinking it at refrigerator temperature. Rather, this is a Goldilocks sort of wine, showing best when it is not too warm, and certainly not too cold, perhaps closer to room temperature than many are comfortable serving white wines.

2020 Alta Moro Etna Bianco offers another glimpse of the nimble and penetrating disposition of the Carricante grape. It presents a bright and sunny take on the grape with its barely ripe melon fruit and some subtle herbal and citric edging, with a dusting of



talc providing a counterpoint. This is a winery owned and run by the Cusumano family, which owns vineyards in many other regions of the island that are used for wines made under the Cusumano label.

Finally, let's take a step above the value entries to highlight the 2018 Planeta **Carricante Eruzione 1614.** While it still is reasonably priced in the context of fine wine, at around \$40 it may be a bit more than many will consider spending on a Sicilian wine. This Etna Bianco (here composed of 90% Carricante and 10% Riesling) exhibits additional layers of complexity when afforded the opportunity. As with the Buonora above, it is a wine that really begins to strut its stuff as it warms up and bathes in a bit of oxygen. Like a person who wears a jacket to fend off cool outdoor temperatures but finds comfort without it indoors, this wine's fruit and texture are tight and constrained if it is too chilled. However, when allowed to unfurl its flavors, hints of lilacs on the nose are followed by fruit resembling Bartlett pears and peaches, with vanilla bean and almond cream nuances sitting above undercurrents of gentle underbrush and ash. While the reference point for pricier white wines often is oak-raised Chardonnay, the trend away from wines where oak is a prominent feature or requires time to integrate continues. This wine was made using stainless steel tanks and aged at the winery for several years (the 2018 is the current release) to enable it to shed its baby fat and evolve to show its pedigree and, perhaps, justify its price to what remains a small audience of wine buyers.

Let's now turn our attention to a few Sicilian red wines. As mentioned last month, two of the featured red grape varieties are indigenous



WIRE TOO



to Sicily, Nero d'Avola and Nerello Mascalese, and they offer two very different tasting experiences. The former usually will be bolder, highertoned, and more fruit forward, while Nerello Mascalese tends to yield wines that are paler in color and stylistically more elegant. Nero d'Avola has the footwork of a boxer while Nerello Mascalese that of a ballerina, or in a wine context, Nero d'Avola is the Syrah to Nerello's Pinot Noir. Okay, enough contrasting, let's identify some candidates.

2021 Colosi Nero d'Avola shows some of the lip-smacking brightness of the grape with supple and very ripe blackberry fruit. While there are hints of black pepper and an herbal essence, the overall impression is a fruity wine delivered in a medium body that is a nicely priced, easy drinker.

Another good value red is the **2020 Isola del Satiro Rosso**, fashioned from a blend of Nero d'Avola and Perricone, a grape that is most often used in a blend to add tannin and aromatics. This wine displays white pepper-laced blackberry and cranberry fruit that carries soft tea tones and is edged with a brambly quality that complements rather than competes with the fruit.

Perhaps a step up in stature is **2020 Feudi Montoni Nero d'Avola**. This has a briary component and more bracing acidity that helps convey dark fruit, with black cherry and elderberry at the forefront, with thyme interwoven within the fruit that is carried on a middleweight frame. The fruit expression is penetrating and tart, with dusty tannins escorting it to the finish.

Last month we mentioned that the only Sicilian DOCG is Cerasuolo di Vittoria, so let's find one that, while no longer labeled as such, is composed of the two grapes required by that classification. 2019 Azienda COS Rosso di Vittoria apparently fell short of the alcohol level required to be labeled by the DOCG designation, but it otherwise follows the same requirements of blending between 50% and 70% Nero d'Avola with the balance Frappato. These wines can represent a real middle ground between bold and dark Nero d'Avola wines, and the more ethereal and restrained wines made on Mt. Etna. The Frappato grape provides a soft side to the more muscular Nero d'Avola, and while it often yields the spotlight to its companion, it can sing a nice harmony to the melody being performed. This wine was made using roughly 60% Nero d'Avola, and it worked very well recently with the threecourse prix fixe menu at Collingswood's Zeppoli restaurant. Although appearing shyly extracted, the wine features pulpy red and black fruit, with rhubarb overlaying wild strawberries to lend a piquant touch to the otherwise lean and lively profile. Despite its relatively pale color, the wine's sinewy body is poised and balanced to enable the fruit to pair well with a variety of dishes.

Returning to Mt. Etna, **2020 Firriato Etna Rosso Le Sabbie Dell'Etna** is from a top-flight winery that makes an array of wines at a variety of price points employing both indigenous and non-indigenous grape varietals. This is a red Etna wine, so the primary grape is Nerello Mascalese (complemented by some Nerello Capuccio). The color is pale

Continued on Page 14



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garnet, and the fruit is wild and sauvage, with red berries laced with anise and subtle herbal influences. There are saline overtones and a mineral drive that adroitly helps the fruit impressions endure.

Finally, let's take a slight step up in price to the 2019 Tornatore Pietrarizzo. Pietrarizzo is a contrada (single vineyard), and this wine is made from younger vines from that specific site. It is a predictably pale red color with a subtly fruity nose yielding lots of spicy berry qualities - think raspberry and boysenberry - that are augmented by red cherries. Among these fruit impressions one may sense subtle balsam and black tea shadings which escort the flavors to a lasting finish. As with many Etna reds made from all or mostly Nerello Mascalese. one must not think the subdued, sometimes bricky red color portends an attenuated fruit experience. While these wines may not shout for attention, don't let their softspoken nature cause you to miss the depth of their expression. Ciao!











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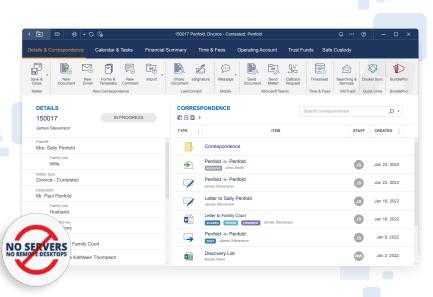
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CCBF's Annual Children's Picnic



Saturday, June 3, 2023 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Challenge Grove Park, Cherry Hill



Join us for the Camden County Bar Foundation's annual Children's Picnic! Over 200 underserved inner-city kids are expected to attend and enjoy a day of fun in the sun in the "country" complete with bounce-houses, cotton candy, hand painting, DJ & dancing, games, hamburgers & hot dogs, and ice cream treats.

Volunteers are needed for everything from grilling to spinning cotton candy to "dancing with the stars". Middle and high school kids can earn community service hours for volunteering!

Help us show these deserving kids a great time!

All interested in volunteering... use the link below to register or contact Kimberly Arroyo @ kim@camdencountybar.org or Marian McBeth at mmb@camdencountybar.org.





Presented by the CCBA's Continuing Legal Education Committee

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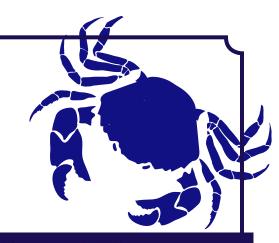
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Annual Installation of Officers

The installation of Craig D. Becker, Esq as the President of the Camden County Bar Association, Dawnn E. Briddell, Esq as the President of the Bar Foundation, and the Officers and Trustees, by The Honorable Eric G. Fikry, J.S.C.

June 24, 2023 at 2:00pm

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