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Judicial Spotlight: John Cannon Few, Justice, Supreme Court of South Carolina

Paige Orduff and Liam Duffy

Born: April 9, 1963, Anderson, SC

Education: Duke University, B.A. 1985 (English, Economics); University of South Carolina School of Law, J.D. 1988

Career: Justice Few began his legal career as a law clerk to Hon. G. Ross Anderson Jr., U.S. District Judge. Thereafter, he practiced law in Greenville from 1989 until 2000, representing almost exclusively plaintiffs throughout the state. Beginning July 1, 2000, Justice Few then served as a trial judge on the Circuit Court of South Carolina where he continued to serve for almost 10 years. On February 3, 2010, Justice Few became the Chief Judge of the S.C. Court of Appeals. In February 2016, he was elected as a Justice to the Supreme Court of South Carolina.

Family: Justice Few has two daughters and a son. Reed, age 26, graduated from Duke University in 2012 with a B.S. in Economics. Reed lives in the West Village of New York City and works for Convatec, a global medical products and technology company, as a Manager for Market Access for North America. Anna, age 24, graduated from Clemson University in December 2016 with a B.S. in Nursing, and will be living and working in Denver. Justice Few's son Cannon, age 19, is a freshman at Boston College.

1. What the bar would be surprised to learn about you?



I keep a bookshelf in my kitchen full of children's picture books I still have from when my children were young (and some from my own distant youth). One of my favorite books on that shelf, and perhaps of all, is *Yertle the Turtle*. As is true for all Dr. Seuss books, the story is not written only for children, but there is a lot in each of them from which adults can learn. The closing lines of *Yertle* are particularly relevant to lawyers in February 2017:

"And the turtles, of course ..., all the turtles are free.
As turtles and, maybe, all creatures should be."

When my children are home they sit on

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A REPORT TO MEMBERS OF
THE SOUTH CAROLINA BAR
YOUNG LAWYERS DIVISION

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the floor of the kitchen and spread all those old books out to read while I cook.

2. Personal life away from the bench:

I spend a lot of time with my children. As they have grown into adulthood, we have started to travel together. In October, I spent 10 days in Spain with Reed, where she was living at the time. For New Years, Reed and Anna and I went to New York for five days. I have also been going to Boston to visit Cannon. In previous years, I placed a very high value on spending time outdoors—canoeing, backpacking, camping, hunting, fishing and more. In recent years, I have not done as well at keeping a proper balance with time to do those things. I still hunt a good bit, but I plan to get back to the many other outdoor activities I have always enjoyed.

I love to cook. I like to cook stews and pizza and wild game, along with many other things. Over the recent Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, I served up dove, duck and quail I shot this hunting season. I am now getting geared up for turkey season.

I also read, particularly poetry. My recent favorite poet is Rainer Marie Rilke. My old-time favorite is Robert Frost, and my favorite poem is “The Tuft of Flowers.” My daughter Anna read it at my investiture for the Court of Appeals.

3. What is the best advice you were given as a young lawyer?

Do excellent work at every task—no matter how small the task may seem—and pay attention to every detail. Our long-term success depends on a principled discipline to this work ethic. Every small success we have at this is one step toward building a reputation of trust; but one failure may destroy everything we have built.

Also, every time a lawyer writes a letter, she should write it in anticipation it will end up on a judge’s desk. Write every letter so that whoever reads it will believe you are being reasonable in taking the position you have taken.

4. What is the most rewarding aspect of being a judge, and the hardest part about being a judge?

The most rewarding aspect of being a judge is participating in the lives of so many people who come into our court system—often after moments of very real tragedy. It is particularly rewarding to believe that by correctly and impartially applying the law I am giving certainty and stability to people who could not otherwise find it. When I was a trial judge, I found it particularly reward-

ing to believe I made the right sentencing decision when I did *not* send a young person to prison, but instead gave him or her another chance to build their life and become a productive member of our society.

5. What experience best prepared you for the bench?

Representing clients and trying cases.

6. If you could choose one legal

(continued on page 7)

Letter from the President



Dear South Carolina Young Lawyers:

As always, I hope this issue of the *South Carolina Young Lawyer* finds you enjoying life. Work is very

important. Being healthy and happy is of the utmost importance.

It was a pleasure seeing many of you in Greenville at the Bar Convention. Those who attended got to experience a wide array of events. The YLD activities included a public service project during which we spoke to high school students about how to reach their professional goals, a CLE where we learned about persuasion and ethics in the millennial age, a wellness event, and a fun night at our annual oyster roast. A special thank you to Adam Landy, Lyndey Zwing, Amity Edmonds, Emily Bridges, Tommy Preston, Stephen Blevins and Lindsay Joyner for their various roles in planning and executing a wonderful convention for the YLD.

With more than half the Bar’s fiscal year behind us, I can confidently write that we have a remarkable group of young lawyers here in South Carolina and a fantastic team of YLD leaders. The things you all have done in the past 7.5 months is inspiring and brings a smile to my face. They run the gamut from amazingly selfless community outreach programs to deservedly fun social events.

The second half of the Bar year is shaping up to be a busy one. Currently, there are many of you giving your time and talents to helping the

less fortunate file their tax returns though our tax assistance committee, called VITA, and there are even more of you kindly ensuring that high schoolers across our state are going to have a memorable prom through our Cinderella Project Committee. Hopefully, several of you will also be able to enjoy one of the numerous professional development and member services events we have scheduled this spring. Keep an eye out for our e-blast that goes out every other week as well as targeted emails from your circuit representatives.

Just as in previous letters, I close by asking you again to get involved in the YLD. We are routinely recognized on a national level for the services we provide our members and our community. If you have an interest, chances are we have an award-winning committee that speaks to it, and if we do not, we can chat about putting together something for you and those who share your interest(s). Please know that I am here to serve and assist you. You can contact me at rneville@wmalawfirm.net to get involved and/or share any comments, questions or concerns. Thank you for everything you do for the YLD.

Sincerely,

Irish “Ryan” Neville
Wills Massalon & Allen LLC

Eight Things Every Young Lawyer Needs to Know About Bankruptcy Law



John Tamasitis
*Haynsworth Sinkler
Boyd, P.A.*

As a young bankruptcy attorney, I am often amazed by how a bankruptcy case,

whether corporate or consumer, that appears straightforward and simple on its face can involve so many different aspects of the law. For example, any bankruptcy case may touch on matters of contract law, complex business law, family law, securities law, real estate law, and aspects of regulatory practice or constitutional law.

It is highly likely, regardless of the area of law in which you practice, that one day you will be forced to cross paths with the arcane Bankruptcy Code and its unique statutory provisions and rules. This short article explores some of the more common issues you may encounter in a bankruptcy case and other “big picture” matters I believe every young attorney needs to know about bankruptcy law and its potential impact on clients.

1. Know the key players

South Carolina’s bankruptcy court has three federal bankruptcy judges, each appointed to 14-year terms by the Fourth Circuit. The bankruptcy court is statutorily-described as a “unit” of the U.S. District Court and, therefore, is not an independent arm of the federal judiciary. Instead, the bankruptcy court’s authority to handle matters under the Bankruptcy Code arises as a result of a standing order of reference from the district court. Any appeals from the bankruptcy court go first to the district court instead of the Fourth Circuit.

The bankruptcy trustee is an impartial third party appointed by the U.S. Trustee Program, a division of the U.S. Department of Justice, to represent the collective interests of the debtor’s creditors and administer the bankruptcy estate. The “bankruptcy estate” is the legal entity created by the filing of the case and becomes

the temporary legal owner of the debtor’s assets and property rights. A trustee is required in all Chapter 7, 12 and 13 bankruptcy cases. The trustee has significant authority to investigate the debtor’s affairs, enforce rights of the bankruptcy estate, participate in litigation involving the bankruptcy estate’s interests, and make distributions to creditors.

In certain Chapter 11 cases, the U.S. Trustee will also appoint a creditors’ committee to ensure that the collective unsecured creditors’ interests are protected. The committee is statutorily authorized to employ legal counsel, conduct investigation into the debtor’s affairs, and work with the debtor toward establishing the plan of reorganization.

2. Understand the different bankruptcy chapters

Generally, debtors in South Carolina file bankruptcy petitions under one of three chapters in the Bankruptcy Code: Chapters 7, 11 or 13. In the interest of brevity and with hope of keeping you awake, this article does not discuss Chapter 9 (municipality cases), Chapter 12 (family farmers/fishermen cases), Chapter 15 (international insolvency cases) or involuntary cases.

Chapter 7 is available to both individuals and corporate debtors and normally results in a liquidation of the debtor’s assets that are not exempt under state law or the Bankruptcy Code. The debtor’s assets are liquidated in an organized fashion by a trustee, and individual debtors (not corporate) receive a “discharge” that relieves the debtor from personal liability on the debt.

Chapter 11 cases, which are also available to both individuals and corporate debtors, involve the reorganization of the debtor’s obligations. Creditors play an active role in Chapter 11 bankruptcy cases and vote on the debtor’s proposed reorganization plan. The reorganization plan must be approved by the bankruptcy court and usually results in a discharge

similar to that in Chapter 7 cases. Additionally, Chapter 11 cases are frequently used by corporate debtors to sell off assets to prospective purchasers. Unlike other chapters, the debtor normally retains control of its property during the case and is known as a “debtor in possession.” However, the bankruptcy court can appoint a trustee in a Chapter 11 case when impartial control of the estate is necessary.

Chapter 13 cases are limited to individual debtors, and the debtor does not receive a discharge until the completion of a payment plan, which is approved by the court. Most Chapter 13 payment plans are completed 60 months after the plan is approved by the court. Generally, the trustee in a Chapter 13 case accepts payments from the debtor under the terms of the plan and disburses those payments to creditors. However, for secured debts that the debtor wants to continue paying in order to keep certain property (e.g., home mortgage payments), the debtor has the option to make those payments directly to the secured creditor.

3. Be aware of the automatic stay - 11 U.S.C. § 362

If there is only one thing you take away from this article, let it be this: Do not mess with the automatic stay.

In the most basic terms, the automatic stay is an injunction that arises by operation of law immediately when a bankruptcy case is filed. There is no need for a motion or order of the court. The act of filing a bankruptcy petition is all that is required for the automatic stay to take effect. The stay generally remains in effect until the bankruptcy case is closed or dismissed.

The scope of the automatic stay is broad. The stay is binding on all “entities” as defined by the Bankruptcy Code, which includes individuals, corporate entities and governmental units. The stay prohibits all collection activity against the debtor relating to claims that arose before the bankruptcy case, including the com-

Stars of the Quarter

Jacqueline Anthony

Jay Anthony

Emily Bridges

John Carrol

Amity Edmonds

Patrick Ford

Jeffery Gurney

Adam Landy

Jessica Means

Tommy Preston

Andrew Rhea

Thomas Rode

Alexis Wimberly

Lyndey Zwing

mencement or continuation of judicial proceedings that seek to enforce a claim (e.g., foreclosure actions and sales). The stay also prohibits activity to create, perfect or enforce a lien against property of the debtor. Exceptions to the stay are limited. The most common exceptions include criminal prosecutions and proceedings by governmental units to enforce regulatory powers. Further, the automatic stay does not bar the commencement or continuation of a proceeding to establish paternity or modify a domestic support obligation.

Here's the most important aspect of the automatic stay: Conduct in violation of the stay may carry with it liability for actual damages, punitive damages, attorneys' fees and costs. To recover damages for a stay violation, the debtor must only show that the violation was committed willfully and that an injury resulted. This standard does not require specific intent. Consequently, a creditor can be held liable for a stay violation even if the violation was an accident.

4. Be prepared to file a proof of claim

A proof of claim is a creditor's formal notice to the estate of a claim for amounts owed by the debtor. The debtor will submit a list of creditors to the court and the clerk will notify them of the bankruptcy case. The court will set a deadline for the submission

of claims (the "bar date"). A proof of claim must be submitted using the bankruptcy court's official form (which can be found online) and include the amount of the creditor's claim and any documents that prove the amounts owed. Failing to file a proof of claim by the bar date may result in disallowance of the claim.

5. Know the full impact of bankruptcy discharge

As discussed above, a bankruptcy discharge releases the debtor from personal liability for the unpaid balance of certain debts that are not excluded from discharge under the Bankruptcy Code. The discharge is a permanent statutory injunction that prohibits creditors from taking any form of collection action against the debtor on discharged debts. However, even though the debtor is not personally liable for a discharged debt, the discharge does not impact anyone other than the debtor (i.e., a guarantor), it does not impact the existence of the debt, and any valid lien that has not been avoided by the court (i.e., rendered unenforceable) remains after the bankruptcy case is closed. Thus, a secured creditor may foreclose upon a lien to recover any property secured by that lien after the bankruptcy case has been completed. It should be noted that a pre-petition waiver of the bankruptcy discharge is not enforceable; however, post-petition agreements between the creditor and debtor reaffirming the debt owed may be enforceable so long as it satisfies certain statutory requirements.

6. Watch out for preferential transfers

One of the most frustrating parts of the Bankruptcy Code for unsuspecting creditors (and the source of significant power for the bankruptcy court) exists under Sections 547 and 548 of the Bankruptcy Code. Under these sections, a bankrupt debtor may seek the return of certain voluntary payments (or transfers) made by the debtor to creditors within a statutory timeframe prior to the commencement of the bankruptcy case.

Without getting into too much detail, the purpose of these sections is to guard against the debtor "pre-

ferring" one creditor over another by making pre-petition payments to certain creditors, while other creditors remain unpaid. The goal is to allow the debtor in possession or the trustee to bring those "preferential transfers" back into the debtor's estate so that those amounts can be redistributed to all creditors on a pro-rata basis. These types of actions are known as "preference actions." The specifics of how these actions are maintained, including creditors' defenses to said actions, are beyond the scope of this article. However, understanding that a debtor in possession or trustee has this ability will assist you in better understanding the extensive powers a debtor or trustee has in bankruptcy when you get that frantic phone call from your client.

7. Understand litigation in a bankruptcy case

Bankruptcy lawyers do not "litigate" bankruptcy cases in the traditional sense of the word. However, there is plenty of litigation that occurs within the confines of a bankruptcy case, and it is not uncommon for a bankruptcy attorney to be in court several times in a given week.

First, a party may file a lawsuit within the bankruptcy case in what is known as an "adversary proceeding." An adversary proceeding is essentially a civil action that is governed largely by the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. It resembles a typical civil case in district court and can be brought by the trustee, a creditor or the debtor in possession. Certain actions can only be brought through adversary proceedings. The most common types include fraudulent transfer actions, preference actions, lien stripping actions, objections to the discharge of a debt, and the determination of the validity, priority or extent of a lien or interest in property of the estate.

In addition to adversary proceedings, there are other situations where a bankruptcy case may generate litigation that does not result in the filing of a formal complaint. These matters normally begin with the filing of a motion or application and are resolved at a hearing before the bankruptcy judge. These hearings

What's Been Happening



VITA in Greenville

On February 4, as part of the Young Lawyers Division Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Committee, IRS-certified YLD members provided income tax assistance to low-income and elderly taxpayers at Greenville United Ministries. The YLD participants helped 17 clients, saving each an average of \$250 in tax-preparation fees. This clinic was organized through the United Way of Greenville. Thank you to Victoria Voisin Gurney, Jake Rea, Katie Deuben, Jordan Roberts and Jeffrey Gurney for volunteering their time!



VITA in Charleston

On February 18, the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Committee, with help from the Charleston Trident Urban League, provided tax assistance at the Citadel Mall in Charleston. The YLD participants helped thirty clients, with a direct financial impact between \$6,000 and \$6,750. Thank

you to Taylor Seman, Ryan Neville, and especially Andrew Rhea, who took the lead on organizing the event.

Second Circuit: New Member Event

On January 24, the Second Circuit held its New Member Event at WingPlace to welcome new members to the YLD. Special thanks to Bradley McMillian for securing additional funding from the Aiken County Bar Association.



Ninth Circuit: New Member Event

On January 26, Ninth Circuit young lawyers, in conjunction with the Charleston Lawyers Club and the Charleston County Bar Association, hosted a reception at the Blind Tiger for newly admitted members. Approximately 55 young lawyers and other local practitioners attended the event to welcome those members living or working in the Lowcountry.

Lunch and Learn with Practicing Attorneys

U.S. District Judge Michelle Childs has graciously supported the YLD Professional Development lunch and learn series as it has expanded from Charleston into Columbia and Greenville. Lyndey Zwing (Adams and Reese), Anthony Quattrone (Ad-

ams and Reese) and John Tamasitis (Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd) assisted with planning the lunch series in Columbia. Fifth Circuit YLD Rep. Foster Girard (Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd) assisted with announcing the lunch series in the Fifth Circuit. Judge Childs' courtroom deputy, Miranda Brooks, assisted with scheduling, reserving space at the courthouse and coordinating the delivery of food. On January 9, S.C. Rep. Beth Bernstein spoke at the mentoring luncheon held at the federal courthouse in Columbia. On February 14, the program featured a discussion with U.S. District Court law clerks and the clerk of court regarding communications with the court, e-filing and other tips for young lawyers when interacting with the court. On March 14, Nici Cromer from South State Bank and Jim Stuckey from SCANA will discuss corporate in-house counsel.



On December 29, the 16th Judicial Circuit hosted a Lunch & Learn at the York County Complex Conference Room. Special guests Terry Miller, Cherie Barton and Bruce Poore, three experienced mediators, participated in a panel discussion with eight lawyers. The panel members answered questions and provided helpful insight into preparing for and representing clients at mediation.

can easily turn into mini-trials with examinations of expert witnesses and lengthy legal arguments. Common issues resolved in this manner include motions seeking relief from the automatic stay to foreclose on collateral, the assumption or rejection of certain contracts, and applications to retain professionals to assist in the administration of the case.

8. Know when it's time to call a bankruptcy attorney

Perhaps the most important tip I can share with you is to know when you need to reach out to a bankruptcy attorney for help. The Bankruptcy Code is incredibly complex and full of nuances that only the most seasoned bankruptcy attorney can appreciate and understand. In addition to the complexities of the Bankruptcy Code itself, each district has its own set of local rules and each judge has his or her own set of chambers guidelines that govern how bankruptcy cases are

to be administered. In South Carolina, the bankruptcy bar is a close-knit group of highly skilled practitioners, the majority of whom have extensive experience in all matters under the Bankruptcy Code. They understand the statutes and rules better than anyone and know how to navigate the bankruptcy court system. As a result, when confronted with a bankruptcy issue, the best advice to your client may be to reach out and consult a bankruptcy attorney.

Embracing Change: Why Is It So Difficult?



Rich Sheehy, JD, PhD

Imagine you're at the end of your third year as an associate at a big law firm. One night, as you're arriving home at midnight for the fourth straight night, it suddenly hits you: this is not at all what you signed up for.

Or, maybe you're a partner at a small firm you founded with a law school buddy. Five years in, and it's successful, you're making great money, and you enjoy a great reputation in the community. But suddenly, it's become boring. You don't get the same charge you got in the beginning and you find yourself thinking about making a change.

Change.

The word itself often causes anxiety and fear. When faced with change, many of us resort to an instinctual defensiveness and desire to avoid it at all costs. This resistance to change results in us being more reactive to life instead of proactive, which often means we are neglecting what we really need - or want. Why is this? Why are we so afraid of change?

I could write for days on this topic but I think I can boil it down to one fundamental issue: **change is difficult**. It requires us to move out of our comfort zones and embrace uncertainty. And uncertainty is scary! Part of the problem is that many of us see change as a one-time

event. We decide we want to change and so ... we just change! But change is not a one-time thing. There is no magic button.

Change is a process.

But it's not as bleak as it sounds. Coaches like myself can help with preparing for a change: identifying interests and values, anticipating the difficulties/obstacles, assessing the options, devising a solid plan, and supporting the person through the inevitable tough times.

In psychological circles, there is a theory that is often employed when trying to help someone change negative behavior. It's called the "trans-theoretical model of change" and was originated by Prochaska and DiClemente in 1983. Though most known for its role in a therapeutic environment, I believe its principles can be applied to any kind of change, including job/career change and personal growth.

The model itself is fairly straightforward. It proposes that there are five stages of change. I'd like to review each individually, as it would apply to an attorney thinking about a possible job/career change.

1. Precontemplation

The "ignorance is bliss" stage. The person is not currently considering any kind of career alternative and thus is not ready to make any changes. He may argue that everything is fine at his current firm and that there is no reason to make a change. He may feel like everyone else seems to be doing fine so it must be okay. He may ignore obvious signs that things are not okay because he is afraid or simply not ready to take any action in the foreseeable future. It's a question of motivation: he simply doesn't want it badly enough.

What I see most often at this stage is confirmation bias: the person will ignore all evidence that doesn't align with his current thinking and only pay attention to things that support his position. He convinces himself that everything is fine:

- "How can I complain when I'm

making so much money?"

- "Everyone's working crazy hours. It's just part of the job."
- "It wouldn't be any different at another firm."
- "Working at this firm will look great on my resume."

As a coach working with someone in this stage, I would want to validate and explore the lack of readiness, as well as the risk involved with any kind of change, and encourage him to do some self-exploration - maybe take some career or personality assessments - in anticipation of action down the road. My goal would be to get him to fully examine all of the evidence and make informed choices, rather than choices based on fear and lack of information.

2. Contemplation

The "sitting on the fence" stage. The person is ambivalent about change. Perhaps some things have happened that make her question whether this is the right firm for her. Perhaps a partner has treated her unfairly. She may be coming to the realization that practicing law might not be for her, after all. She acknowledges that a change may be necessary but she is unsure what actions to take

To submit items for future issues of the South Carolina Young Lawyer, please contact:

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For a list of the YLD Executive Council, circuit representatives and upcoming events, please visit www.sctbar.org/yld.

or how to approach the idea. This can be overwhelming and paralyzing. In this stage, the person recognizes the potential need for change but doesn't know how to make change happen; the technical piece of it.

As a coach, I would encourage her to assess the pros and cons of changing jobs/careers, and to look ahead at what her life might be like - how it might be better or worse - if she initiated a change. Again, in this stage, inadequate or incomplete information is often the driving force. The person knows, in her gut, that something is not right. But the alternatives seem impossible, unrealistic or intimidating.

3. Preparation

The "testing the waters" stage. The person has some experience with change - maybe he's been contemplating small, minor changes: reducing his hours, working with a different partner, finding a confidant to talk to about his concerns. Or the person is actively planning on implementing some changes within the next month or so. Having gone through the previous stages, the person is almost ready for action. He is at the point where he can no longer ignore the obvious: something is not right.

As a coach, I would encourage the person to take small, manageable steps. The idea is to achieve some small successes, in terms of making small changes, and to set goals that are achievable and measurable before attacking the bigger ones. So we might not immediately discuss different careers. We might start with changes, if any, he can make in his current position. I would want to help the person build his confidence so that he's prepared to take the bigger steps that might be necessary in the future.

4. Action

The person is actively in the process of making changes. She has taken affirmative steps to initiate change. She has contacted her attorney network and identified possible new jobs, legal or otherwise. She has researched companies/firms, spoken to people in her new field, maybe even sent out a few resumes or had

some interviews or contacted a headhunter. At this point, I would want to help the person review what's been working and anticipate and overcome the inevitable obstacles that she will face during the change process. I would also work with her around any feelings of loss or frustration she might be experiencing as a result of the changes she's made.

Attorneys make a huge commitment to go to law school and practice law. The idea of giving that up, regardless of whether they're happy or not, can cause intense distress for many. It's important to recognize these feelings, honor them and then move past them so that changes can be made.

5. Maintenance

In this stage, the person has initiated changes and the goal is to stay on track and continue the course. Here, the focus is on the ongoing, active work the person needs to do to maintain the changes he's made and to prevent a slip back to his old way of thinking or acting. I would try to provide support for continued change and reinforce the positive internal feelings that the person is experiencing. I would also ask about any negative feelings that may be popping up. The focus would be

on the impact of the changes on his physical and emotional health. Have things changed for the better? Is he inspired to continue with the change process? We would work on identifying next steps and avoiding obstacles and setbacks. The idea at this stage is to prevent going backwards and continue to help the person move forward in the process.

Change is hard, it's messy and it's frightening, but it can also be exhilarating, liberating and lead you to possibilities you never imagined! By approaching change, whether in a legal career or in one's personal life, as a process with distinct stages, you can manage the anxiety and overcome the inertia that holds us back from reaching your goals. I know; I've been there.

Good luck!

*Rich Sheehy, JD, PhD, is the president and owner of **First Step Coaching LLC**, a career and personal coaching service focused primarily, but not exclusively, on those working in the legal arena. Please visit his website at firststepcoaching.org for information about Rich and the services he provides, as well as useful information on a variety of topics. You can reach Rich directly at rich@firststepcoaching.org or 972-900-5109.*

Spotlight on Justice Few (continued from page 2)

scholar to have dinner with, who would it be and why?

A lawyer who just tried a case, but lost. In the reflections a lawyer has on the unsuccessful dedication of time and energy to protect the legal rights of another person, there is a clear vision of why we all became lawyers in the first place. I also would love to have been able to meet Irving Younger.

7. What do you see as the biggest challenges facing the South Carolina legal system?

Criminal justice, and meeting the basic civil justice needs of citizens who cannot pay for it.

Our criminal courts are overloaded with crime that is driven by forces we can do a much better job

addressing, primarily poverty, lack of education and addiction. The criminal justice system cannot do its best by addressing crime only after these other forces have taken effect. We have to think more broadly.

As to civil justice, a very large segment of our society cannot pay for basic legal services, like representation in family and probate courts, landlord-tenant cases, and debt collection disputes. The organized bar realizes this problem and is beginning to find ways to address it. The Bar, the Bar Foundation, S.C. Legal Services and the Supreme Court's Access to Justice Commission (which I now chair) will be asking the Young Lawyers Division to step forward and lead us to success in this critical mission. If we want the legal profession to survive, we must meet the civil justice needs of all citizens, not just those who can afford to pay a lawyer.



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Committee Feature: Community Law Week

Are you looking for an opportunity to make a difference? Have you heard of YLD's involvement in Community Law Week? Each year, during the first week of May, young lawyers across the state come together through a series of events to promote the legal community while at the same time serving the broader communities in which we live. Held in conjunction with the nationally recognized Law Day, CLW strives to select and coordinate service projects that hold meaning to both the lawyers and the individuals who participate.

This year, the CLW Committee has been hard at work to make this the best year ever! Working in conjunction with other YLD committees, we have put together an exciting roster of events and are looking forward to signing up volunteers to participate. Most of the circuits are participating in Cocky's Reading Express, which allows young lawyers to join the University of South Carolina's mascot in reading to elementary-aged children in an effort to promote childhood



literacy. Your circuit representatives will be sending out emails shortly to recruit volunteers, so be sure to check your email for more information.

Other statewide events include a book drive; Meals on Wheels event; wills clinics in Bluffton and Aiken; Ask-A-Lawyer phone banks and web chats in Columbia, Charleston and Mount Pleasant; participation in Fort Jackson's Law Day program; a Make-A-Wish event in the Upstate; and a Lawyers4Vets clinic in Columbia. More details about all of these events will be available to you in the upcoming

weeks as we are working now to finalize these fantastic opportunities for young lawyers to give back.

If you are interested in participating, please do not hesitate to email one of the co-chairs for the CLW Committee, Meggie Baker and Lyndey Zwing, or your YLD circuit representative. We are happy to get you plugged in! Even if you cannot participate, please help us by spreading the word to your colleagues about Community Law Week to make sure its impact is far and wide across South Carolina.