

Florida Association for Women Lawyers

South Palm Beach County Chapter

Fall/Winter

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President's Message

Dear Members,

I want to thank all of you, our new and renewed members, for your continued support and participation in SPBC FAWL.

We started the year with our annual membership reception which was held at the Boca Raton Museum of Art in Mizner Park! Our group was warmly welcomed into this beautiful facility by the Executive Director, Steven Maklansky and his wife Aylin Maklansky (one of our very own members), and Special Events Manager, Kisbel De La Rosa. If their hospitality was not enough, Steven then extended an invitation for a private tour of the lower level, which he conducted himself. We thank everyone at the Boca Raton Museum of Art for opening their doors just for us, after hours and for hosting this "artful" event!

Our membership numbers continue to grow to 75+ thanks to Denise Isaacs, who continues to serve as the membership chair for her second term. Denise's consistent communications with our colleagues has encouraged repeated renewals and kept our numbers strong.

We are so fortunate to have more than double the number of sponsors this year than ever before! We have our loyal annual sponsors Sabadell United Bank and Nancy Weingard of Weingard Wealth Management of Raymond James; and new sponsors Weiner, Lynne & Thompson, P.A.; Gulfstream Business Bank' and Lesser, Lesser, Landy & Smith, PLLC. We appreciate each of their commitment and

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support to our group. We also encourage you to keep them in mind and reciprocate business referrals and relationships as the opportunity arises.

The South Palm Beach County Bar Association was kind enough to invite us to co-host a luncheon on September 19, 2012 at the Boca County Club. We were honored to have Justice Pariente as the speaker.

The fourth annual SPBC FAWL's Think Pink luncheon was held on October 11, 2012 at the Boca Grove Golf & Tennis Country Club. The speaker was Marie Morande, R.D., C.S.O., L.D. who is a Certified Specialist in Oncology Nutrition from the Lynn Cancer Institute. Thanks to the voluntary efforts of Carol Gart and Jodi Adams, it was another highly successful event. We are proud to announce that we raised One Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$1,500.00) which was donated to the Lynn Cancer Institute!

On November 8, 2012 Gary Lesser spoke on ethics and how to deal with difficult Clients at our luncheon at La Cigale's in Delray Beach. We enjoyed great food and earned a CLE!

Thanks to Ellen Lebovitch, one of our past Presidents and ex-officio members, who has again led the organization and successful execution of SPBC FAWL's participation for law week.

Members of our chapter volunteered to speak at local high schools and provide informative filled presentations on various legal topics. These presentations will continue for several weeks. We are excited to be able to give back to our local communities.

We are excited about our annual holiday party on December 4, 2012 and thank our generous hosts Gulfstream Business Bank and co-sponsors Sabadell United Bank. We welcome Gulfstream as a new sponsor and thank Sabadell for their loyal support.

Gwynne Young will be our speaker for our first luncheon of the New Year, On January

8, 2013. The South Palm Beach County Bar Association will again join us as co-hosts for this event and we appreciate and welcome their camaraderie!

Join us for our Valentine's Day luncheon, as we again welcome Guy Fronstin as the speaker. We are already planning our annual Judicial Reception which will be held on February 28, 2013. Laura Wendell is our speaker for the March 14, 2013 luncheon and Sharon Bock will speak on April 18, 2013. We'll finish out the year with Alexa Hartley who will speak at our May 9, 2013 luncheon. June ends another full year with our elections/installation luncheon as we look forward to another fun events' filled year with SPBC FAWL.

It is my privilege to be the current President of this chapter with wonderful women, whose dedication and participation furthers their commitment to each other and to SPBC FAWL. I encourage you to continue participating in our chapter and if you are new to the group we welcome your involvement on committees and at Board of Directors' meetings.

Please check our website at www.spbcfawl.org for updates, speaker topics, and details about each of our upcoming events. Feel free to contact me directly with suggestions or questions at either angelinaesquire@namialaw.com or 954-328-2772. This group changes relationships; you start as colleagues and soon find yourself amongst friends!

Very truly yours,

Angelina Namia

Angelina Namia
President, SPBC FAWL

Oath of Civility Not Just for New Lawyers

If you have been practicing law for any length of time, you are not alone in having encountered opposing counsel who are rude and unprofessional to you, the Court, and support staff. It is because of this unfortunate erosion in civility and professional courtesy that on September 12, 2011, the Florida Supreme Court amended the oath of admission to the Florida Bar to include a pledge of “fairness, integrity, and civility” to the court and opponents “in all written and oral communications” (the “Oath of Civility”). Since the addition of the Oath of Civility to the oath of admission, myriad members of the judiciary as well as various voluntary bar associations and legal organizations across South Florida have endorsed the Joint Resolution of South Florida Voluntary Bar Associations Regarding Lawyer Civility (the “Joint Resolution”). We acknowledge and thank Lisa Glass for representing SPBC FAWL in this endeavor.

SPBC FAWL is proud to be among those organizations endorsing the Joint Resolution. By endorsing the Joint Resolution, SPBC FAWL has pledged to promote the Oath of Civility by attempting to reach members and non-members alike to ensure that the message of civility is disseminated to all attorneys practicing in South Palm Beach County. Please click on the following link to visit SPBC FAWL’s website and view the Joint Resolution.

Remember SPBC FAWL Has A Website And Is On Facebook

Did you know that we have a website? Please visit <http://www.spbcfawl.org> for all things related to our chapter. Our new website is still under construction and improving all the time. Please note you may now make a reservation to attend events and pay by credit card at our website.

The rumor is true - we are on Facebook! Please check out our chapter’s Facebook page at www.facebook.com/pages/SPBC-FAWL/265414360166415

We hope all of you who have a personal or business Facebook page will “like” us on Facebook, become a fan and show your support. You can check out the Facebook page for photos, event information, and other general information. We welcome you all to leave comments, photos and connect with each other this way.

About South Palm Beach County FAWL

Formed in 2003, the objectives of FAWL’s South Palm Beach County Chapter are (1) to advance the professional status of women lawyers, (2) to promote the rights of women generally, (3) to enhance the visibility of women within the legal profession and within their communities and (4) to create and maintain supportive networks among women in the legal and other professions. Membership is available to female and male lawyers, the judiciary, and law students.

If You Aren't A Member, Please Join Us!

To join South Palm Beach County FAWL for the first time or to renew your membership, please complete the paper application (ask Denise Isaacs denise@deniseisaacsclaw.com for one) and mail it in or bring it to one of our meetings. At this point, we ask that you do not join or renew online. The application will be available at all our meetings and events.

Schedule of Events

Board Meetings take place on the first Wednesday of every month from 12 PM to 1 PM at Leorah Greenman's office, Frank Weinberg & Black, PL, 1800 Boca Center, 1800 Military Trail, Boca Raton, FL. All members are welcome to attend. Please let Leorah Greenman know if you will be attending.

Monthly luncheons are held on the second Thursday of the month. The cost is generally \$25 for members and \$30 for non-members. Please RSVP at <http://spbcfawl.org>.

Fun was had by all who attended the most recent Happy Hour on Tuesday, November 20, 2012 at 5:30 PM at Euro Fusion in Boca Raton. We enjoyed the chance to get to know members and guests a little better in a more casual setting over cocktails and appetizers. Please check our website for future Happy Hours and below for upcoming events:

December 4, 2012

Holiday Party, 5:30 PM at Gulfstream Business Bank

January 8, 2013

Joint Luncheon, 11:45 AM co-sponsored by SPBC FAWL and the South Palm Beach County Bar Association. Speaker: Florida Bar President Gwynne Young

February 14, 2013

Membership Luncheon, 11:45 AM - Guy Fronstin speaker

February 28, 2012

Annual Judicial Reception, 5:30 PM at Sunday House, Delray Beach

March 14, 2013

Membership Luncheon, 11:45 AM. Speaker: Laura Wendell, President of State FAWL

April 18, 2013

Membership Luncheon, 11:45 AM. Speaker: Palm Beach County Clerk and Controller Sharon Bock

May 9, 2013

Membership Luncheon, 11:45 AM. Speaker: Alexa Hartley, Premier Leadership Coaching

June 13, 2013

Elections/Installation of Officers, 11:45 AM

Member News of Note:

- ◆ **ANGELINA NAMIA**, Law Offices of Angelina Namia, PLLC, spoke to the South Florida Tax Symposium on Identity Theft. Ms. Namia can be reached at 954-328-2772 or Angelinaesquire@namialaw.com.
- ◆ **LESSER, LESSER, LANDY & SMITH, PLLC** put community front and center at its 85th anniversary bash in celebration of its founding by Joseph H. Lesser back to the days of Addison Mizner, Lindbergh, and Geist in the early 1920s on Narcissus Avenue in West Palm Beach. As part of the festivities, law firm partners presented a check for \$10,000 to Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County Executive Director Bob Bertisch and President Jeff Devore in sponsorship for the society's 25th Annual Pro Bono Recognition Evening & Auction, and a check for \$10,000 to Alpert Jewish Family & Children's Services Past President Howard Levy in sponsorship for the organization's 2012 "No Excuse for Abuse Luncheon." The firm's telephone number is 561-655-2028.
- ◆ **THE LAW OFFICES OF GUY FRONSTIN** is pleased to announce that Arye Corbett joined firm. Guy Fronstin and Arye Corbett have been appointed as co-chairs of the Criminal Law Committee of the South County Bar Association. If anyone would like to be on the criminal law committee, please contact Michelle Merson at 561-447-4011.
- ◆ **THE LAW OFFICES OF GUY FRONSTIN** has moved to a new location at the Lynn Financial Center. The address is 1875 NW Corporate Boulevard, Suite 290, Boca Raton, FL 33431.
- ◆ **ROBIN BRESKY** spoke to more than 150 residents of John Knox Village in Pompano regarding The Vote's in YOUR COURT merit retention education campaign in September. The goal was to ensure a fair and impartial judiciary untainted by politics. By informing Floridians about merit retention and making available information, Floridians by overwhelming majority, helped retain our Supreme Court Justices for another term. In addition, The Law Firm of Robin Bresky also held a Fundraiser for Supreme Court Justice Barbara Pariente in October. Ms. Bresky can be reached at 561-994-6273.
- ◆ **THE LAW OFFICES OF ROBIN BRESKY** is excited to announce that they are growing and expanding their firm to meet the needs of their clients. The expansion, to add a second office in West Palm Beach, solidifies their continued commitment to providing effective appeals and litigation support.
- ◆ **ROBIN BRESKY**, a board member of the National Conference of Women's Bar Association, helped coordinate their 2012 Women's Bar Leader Summit, which was

recently held in Chicago. This year's theme was Changing Perceptions for a New Reality. The firm also generously underwrote the showing of the documentary film Miss Representation at IIT Chicago-Kent College Law as part of the Summit's kickoff event.

- ◆ **MINDY STEIN** is pleased to announce that Ryan Smollar, Esquire has joined her firm, Mindy Stein, P.A., as an associate. Ryan, a recent graduate of St. Thomas University, will be concentrating in the areas of elder law, special needs law, and estate planning. Ms. Stein can be reached at 561-447-7644 or mstein@mindystein.com.
- ◆ **DENISE RAPPAPORT ISAACS** is pleased to announce that Andrea Oyola Reid has joined her firm, Denise Rappaport Isaacs, P.A.. Andrea, formerly an associate at the Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County, will be handling marital and family law cases, including complex litigation and domestic violence. Ms. Isaacs can be reached at denise@deniseisaacslaw.com.
- ◆ **MIRIAM RICHTER** is pleased to announce that her firm is growing and is moving to Wilton Manors. Ms. Richter's practice concentrates on trademark, copyright, and other intellectual property issues for businesses of all sizes with an emphasis on the proactive protection of valuable intangible assets. The new office is located at 2301 Wilton Drive, Suite 3, Wilton Manors, FL 33305 and Ms. Richter can be reached at 954-977-4711 or mrichter@richtertrademarks.com.

A Special Thank You To Our Annual Sponsors:

- ◆ Sabadell United Bank
- ◆ Nancy Weingard of Weingard Wealth Management of Raymond James
- ◆ Weiner, Lynne & Thompson, P.A.
- ◆ Gulfstream Business Bank
- ◆ Lesser, Lesser, Landy & Smith, PLLC

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Gulfstream Business Bank was formed by a group of local businessmen, entrepreneurs and bankers committed to serving the needs of customers in a manner quite unlike ordinary banks. With products and services created for the business owner, professional practices and homeowner associations in mind, our philosophy and execution of local decision-making positions us to meet these customers' unique demands.

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The Post-Election Agenda



Today's post-election political landscape looks a lot like the pre-election political landscape--President Obama will be working with a Democratically controlled Senate, and a Republican-controlled House of Representatives for a minimum of two more years. The issues haven't really changed, either. What has changed, though, is the amount of time left to deal with these issues. With little time to act, the stakes are high. Here's a quick rundown of some of the big issues that need to be addressed.

Expiring tax provisions

With the "Bush tax cuts" (extended for an additional two years by legislation passed in 2010) set to sunset at the end of 2012, federal income tax rates are scheduled to jump up in 2013. We'll go from six federal tax brackets (10%, 15%, 25%, 28%, 33%, and 35%) to five (15%, 28%, 31%, 36%, and 39.6%). The maximum rate that applies to long-term capital gains will generally increase from 15% to 20%. And while the current lower long-term capital gain tax rates now apply to qualifying dividends, starting in 2013, dividends will once again be taxed as ordinary income.

Other breaks go away in 2013 as well:

- The temporary 2% reduction in the Social Security portion of the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) payroll tax, in place for the last two years, is scheduled to expire at the end of 2012.
- Estate and gift tax provisions will change significantly (reverting to 2001 rules). For example, the amount that can generally be excluded from estate and gift tax drops from \$5.12 million in 2012 to \$1 million in 2013, and the top tax rate increases from 35% to 55%.
- Itemized deductions and dependency exemptions will once again be phased out for individuals with high adjusted gross incomes (AGIs).
- The earned income tax credit, the child tax credit, and the American Opportunity (Hope) tax credit all revert to old, lower limits and less generous rules.
- Individuals will no longer be able to deduct student loan interest after the first 60 months of repayment.

Additionally, lower alternative minimum tax (AMT) exemption amounts (the AMT-related provisions actually expired at the end of 2011) mean that there will be a dramatic increase in the number of individuals subject to AMT when they file their 2012 federal income tax returns in 2013.

There seems to be a general willingness to extend many expiring provisions. The sticking point, however, has centered on whether lower tax rates and other tax breaks get extended for all, or only for individuals earning \$200,000 or less (households earning \$250,000 or less). Recent posturing has indicated that compromise might be achieved by extending the lower tax rates for all, but increasing tax revenue by limiting the deductions available to high-income households.

Automatic spending cuts, or "sequestration"

The failure of the deficit reduction supercommittee to reach agreement back in November 2011 automatically triggered \$1.2 trillion in broad-based spending cuts over a multiyear period beginning in 2013 (the formal term for this is "automatic sequestration"). The cuts are to be split evenly between defense spending and nondefense spending, and are projected to equal about \$109 billion in 2013 (Source: Office of Management and Budget, "OMB Report Pursuant to the Sequestration Transparency Act of 2012 (P.L. 112-155)," September 14, 2012). Although Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare benefits are exempt, and cuts to Medicare provider payments

cannot be more than 2%, most discretionary programs including education, transportation, and energy programs will be subject to the automatic cuts.

As with the expiring tax breaks, new legislation is required to avoid the automatic cuts. But while it's difficult to find anyone who believes that the across-the-board cuts are a good idea, there's been no consensus on what to do. The challenge for political leaders will be to come up with a more palatable set of cost saving measures, or an alternate deficit reduction plan.

The debt ceiling

While it hasn't received the same level of attention given to the expiring tax provisions and the automatic spending cuts, there's another problem looming--the government is running out of money again. The federal government will likely hit its borrowing limit (currently set at approximately \$16.4 trillion) sometime before the end of the year, although certain "extraordinary measures" can be implemented to allow the government to meet its obligations into early 2013. (Source: U.S. Department of the Treasury, *Treasury Assistant Secretary for Financial Markets Matthew Rutherford November 2012 Quarterly Refunding Statement*, October 31, 2012.)

It was a little over a year ago that the last debt ceiling impasse led to the creation of the deficit reduction supercommittee and, ultimately, the imposition of the automatic cuts described above. It remains to be seen whether a new debt ceiling increase is included as part of a larger agreement encompassing the expiring tax provisions and impending spending cuts, or whether it is debated on its own.

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