



Rockland County Bar Association

337 North Main Street, Suite 1; New City, NY 10956; rocklandbar.org

NEWSBRIEF

MAY 2026

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From the President

"Why do old men wake so early? Is it to have one longer day?"

Ernest Hemingway – The Old Man and the Sea

A pleasant assignment for your Bar president is writing to the Chief Administrative Judge of the New York Courts in support of the certification of Rockland's state supreme court justices who have asked to continue their service on the bench beyond mandatory retirement age, which remains the age of 70, as established by the Constitutional Convention of 1894, and reaffirmed five times at the constitutional conventions of 1915, 1921, 1938, 1961 and 1966. A ballot initiative – "Proposal 6" – which, had it passed, would have resulted in amending Article 6 of the State Constitution to increase the mandatory judicial retirement age to 76, was defeated at the polls by New York voters in 2013. Since 2023, two or three bills proposing to increase the mandatory age for judicial retirement have died in committee. As the current legislative session nears its end, a pending bill (S.7455)¹ to amend section 25 of article 6 of the constitution will most likely suffer a similar fate.²

So, for at least the foreseeable future, mandatory judicial retirement at age 70, as established 132 years ago, will probably continue until, perhaps, the next constitutional convention which would not happen until 2037³ – assuming, (and in the unlikely event), that New York's voters were to approve the convening of a convention.⁴

Section 25 of article 6 of the constitution, allows justices who have attained age 70 to be certificated provided that there's need for their services (which there is) and that the judge is mentally and physically able to perform the full duties of judicial service. Certification is for a two year term and may be extended for two additional terms of two years, under the same conditions; and a retired judge may not serve beyond the last day of the year in which he or she reaches age 76.⁵

¹ See legislation.nysenate.gov/pdf/bills/2025/S7455.

² A proposed constitutional amendment must be approved by both houses in two successive legislative sessions before the amendment is proffered to "the people's" vote.

³ Every 20 years, New Yorkers are automatically asked if they would like a constitutional convention to be held. The legislature can also call for the same question to be put on the ballot at other times.

⁴ Amending the State constitution can be initiated only through convention or through action by the state legislature (see Constitution, Article XIX). In both cases, ultimate approval lies in the hands of the voters. Voters turned down opportunities to convene a convention in 1957, 1977, 1997, and again in 2017, when 83% of New York voters said "No" to a constitutional convention.

⁵ New York State Constitution, Article VI, section 25 (b).

I think senior jurists should be coveted as a valuable resource to an overburdened court system and a welcomed, continued presence in the administration of justice. Although still requiring constitutional amendment, a different solution might lie in maintaining mandatory judicial retirement at age 70, and increasing the additional 2-year certification terms following a first 2-year certification from two to four, i.e., a total of five (instead of the current three) 2-year certification extensions, which would make sitting to age 80 a possibility for those judges capable and willing to keep working – which, understandably, not every judge wants to do. When the issue appears on the general ballot again, which I’m guessing it will – and sometime before 2037 – I hope our Association together with the New York State and other bar associations, can actively support a proposed constitutional amendment to increase or extend the maximum age of service for New York’s judiciary.

* * *

While we’re on the topic of judges, on April 21st a “sold out,” (just an expression folks; attendance – as always – was free), sheriff’s training center got to meet and welcome Rockland’s new visiting justice, Hon. John P. Collins, Jr., at the RCBA’s Spring ‘26 “Lunch-With-A-Judge” program. Judge Collins fielded myriad questions, emphasized that lawyers having matters before the court should familiarize ourselves with the Judge’s part rules and, in general, appears happy to be here for his second Rockland County assignment (“Rocky II,” in chambers). Tama Monoson, Esq., the Part’s principal court attorney and a familiar face at the Rockland County Courthouse, having served in a similar capacity for Hon. Thomas E. Walsh, II, J.S.C., (Ret.),⁶ joined Judge Collins at the program and offered her own helpful suggestions for working with their Part, which also includes Part Clerk Dana Leotta-Segarra (most recently of Judge Fried’s chambers), and the Part’s secretary, Maria Berrios, (who we also recall serving with Judge Walsh), and each of whom play an important role in rapidly reducing an inherited calendar backlog. Our special thanks go to M&T Bank, which is RCBA’s perennial and most generous patron, for sponsoring the Association’s “LWAJ” program.

FREE FOR RCBA MEMBERS!

Three Fast Hours with Professor Patrick Connors

What’s the latest language requirement for affirmations under CPLR 2106? Can notice of entry of judgment be served via NYSCEF, or is a mailing required to start the 30-day appeals clock running? Do summary judgment motions still require a separate “statement of material facts?” What are the current document word limitations, and is counsel’s failure to append a word-count statement fatal to a party’s motion?

On **Wednesday, May 13, 2026, from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**, RCBA Continuing Legal Education programs will present Professor Connors’ 3-hour 2026 CPLR Update, during which he will address these and other current rulings and revisions to New York civil practice over the

⁶ Now, District Attorney Thomas E. Walsh, II.

past year. There's always lots to cover and the program time seems to fly by; which is why I have labeled Professor Connors' CPLR Update as "the fastest 3-hours of CLE!"

Congratulations to Tom Morrissey, Rockland's Chief Clerk of the Supreme and County Courts for receiving the 2026 Hon. Joseph F. Gagliardi Award for Excellence, which is awarded annually to an non-judicial employee in the Ninth Judicial District for outstanding service to the public and dedication to the administration of justice. Well deserved!

In Memoriam

I was reminded recently of the peaceful passing of the Honorable Mary H. Smith, J.S.C., (Ret.), on December 11, 2025, in the arms of her family. Before "the Law," Mary Hauser Smith was first a young journalist writing for national publications including McCall's and Ebony magazines. Upon graduating from Hofstra's Maurice A. Deane School of Law (Class of '77), Mary became an Assistant A.G., and then was a Senior Assistant D.A. in Westchester County before becoming, in 1990, the first woman elected to serve on the Yonkers City Court. In 1994, Judge Smith was elected to the Westchester County Court and then to state Supreme Court in 2002, where she served until her (mandatory) retirement in 2021.

A memorial service remembering Judge Mary Smith's intelligence, compassion and her fiery spirit, will be held on Saturday, May 23, 2026 at 11 a.m., at the Reformed Church of Bronxville, 180 Pondfield Road, Bronxville, New York, to be followed by a light reception. May her memory be a blessing.

West Nyack, New York
May 1, 2026

Peace,

Rick

Richard A. Glickel
RCBA President, 2025-26
rglickel@glickelaw.com

Congratulations to Rockland's Tom Morrissey!

Please join us for this special occasion!



The Honorable Joseph F. Gagliardi Award for Excellence

May 7, 2026 | 3 PM

Presiding:

Hon. Anne E. Minihan, J.S.C.

*Administrative Judge of the
Ninth Judicial District*

Award Recipients:

Thomas Morrissey, Jr.

*Chief Clerk, Rockland County
Supreme and County Court*

Dorian K. Wood, Esq.

*Court Attorney Referee,
Westchester Supreme Court*

Officer Tracey Knott

*NYS Court Officer, Westchester
Family Court*

Location:

Richard J. Daronco Westchester
County Courthouse
Gagliardi Courtroom
White Plains, NY 10601

For more information, please scan the
barcode below.



All judges, non-judicial personnel, and members of the Bar are invited to attend this special presentation of the Annual Joseph F. Gagliardi Award for Excellence.

Each year outstanding non-judicial employees in the Ninth Judicial District are recognized for their service to the public and dedication to the administration of justice through the Joseph F. Gagliardi Award for Excellence.

The Award was established 32 years ago to honor the memory of Justice Joseph F. Gagliardi.

Attendance is free to all.



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THE PRACTICE PAGE

MOTIONS TO RENEW AND REARGUE

Hon. Mark C. Dillon *

Motions are frequently made to “renew and reargue” in the collective, but the two forms of motion are actually separate and distinct. They are lumped together, perhaps, because they both seek to undo a prior decision/order under the common umbrella of CPLR 2221. But that is where their cosmetic similarity ends. CPLR 2221(d)(1) for motions to reargue and 2221(e)(1) for motions to renew each expressly require that the motions “be identified specifically as such,” to separate one from the other. And the motions involve different purposes, issues, legal standards, time limits, and appealability.

If a court renders an unsatisfying decision and order, the aggrieved party may move to reargue the determination. The burden of proof on a reargument motion is upon the moving party. The party must establish that the court, in rendering the prior decision/order, misapprehended relevant facts or misapplied controlling principles of law (*AWR Group, Inc. v 240 Echo Place Housing Development Fund Corporation*, 230 AD3d 456 [2d Dep’t. 2024]). Meaning, that reargument focuses strictly upon the court’s conclusions drawn from the earlier motion papers which led to the court’s decision and order. CPLR 2221(d)(2) specifically provides that the motion to reargue “shall not include any matters of fact not offered in the prior motion.” Since new facts are prohibited, reargument motions should not be viewed as a do-over *de novo*, but rather, as a *re-visit* to the facts and law of the earlier papers.

Part of the work of judges is to move cases along. Plaintiffs wishing to recover money or equitable relief, and defendants with counterclaims, likewise have an incentive for cases to not languish. Decisions and orders rendered by courts therefore need a degree of finality for litigations to move to a new stage. CPLR 2221(d)(3) assists that effort by directing that motions to reargue trial-level orders be made within 30 days from the prior order’s service with notice of entry, otherwise they will be denied as untimely (*Williams v Annucci*, 175 AD3d 1677 [3d Dep’t. 2019]; *Selletti v Liotti*, 45 AD3d 668 [2d Dep’t. 2007]).

When a court receives a motion to reargue, it has three choices: 1) deny reargument outright without entertaining the specifics, 2) grant reargument, but upon reargument adhere to the court’s earlier determination on the merits, or 3) grant reargument, and upon reargument change its earlier determination based upon a reconsideration of misapprehended facts or the controlling principles of law. If argument is denied outright, as sometimes occurs, the denial is not appealable (*Aloi v Tobal*, 236 AD3d 618 [2d Dep’t. 2025]). The *earlier* decision/order may be appealed, but a notice of appeal must be timely filed for it and the appeal timely p

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it, that decision/order is independently appealable because merits have been re-examined (e.g. *Isaly v Garde*, 216 AD3d 594 [1st Dep't. 2023]). Courts should therefore be clear, when determining reargument motions, which of the three possible resolutions is being followed. A determination which denies reargument, but which then provides a detailed explanation of the denial, muddies the water and may unintentionally convert a non-appealable "1" into an appealable "2." When a court grants reargument and there are parallel appeals of the original order and the reargument order, the appellate divisions will dismiss the appeal of the original order as superseded by the order which granted reargument (*Id.*).

Motions to renew are a different animal. With renewal, the moving party may present new facts, but in doing so has a double burden of proof. First, according to case law, the facts must typically be "new" in that they did not exist at the time of the earlier motion, or if in existence then, could not have been discovered through the exercise of due diligence (*Holtz v Blackstone Builders Holding Co., LLC*, 235 AD3d 1207 [3d Dep't. 2025]; *Seror v Clearview Operation Co., LLC*, 235 AD3d 1023 [2d Dep't. 2025]). Indeed, CPLR 2221(e)(3) directs that the moving party reasonably justify the failure to present the new facts in the prior motion papers, which is a statutory standard which sounds a little more relaxed than that set forth in most of the case law (*In re Defendini*, 142 AD3d 500 [2d Dep't. 2016]). Renewal motions will be denied when they rely upon facts or evidence which could reasonably have been presented at the time of the earlier motion but, for whatever reason, were not earlier presented (*Millennium Development & Construction, LLC v Pick*, 235 AD3d 737 [2d Dep't. 2025]). The second burden that a moving party must meet is that the new evidence would have changed the prior determination had it been known by the court at the earlier time (*125 Court Street, LLC v Nicholson*, 214 AD3d 723 [2d Dep't. 2023]). If the new facts would make no difference to the prior decision/order, renewal will be denied (e.g. *Barnaman v Bishop Hucles Episcopal Nursing Home*, 213 AD3d 896 [2d Dep't. 2023]).

Motions to renew may also be based upon a change in the law (CPLR 2221[e][2]). The case must, of course, still be pending for this provision to apply. Cases which have gone to final judgment, with the appeal time having expired, can get no benefit from a subsequent change in the law (*Dinallo v DAL Elec.*, 60 AD3d 620 [2d Dep't. 2009]). The change in law must be such that it would have, in fact, changed the result reached in the prior motion for the renewal to be successful (*Trustco Bank v Preserve Development Group Co., LLC*, 212 AD3d 934 [3d Dep't. 2023]).

Unlike motions to reargue which are subject to a 30-day time limit, there is no time limit upon active-case motions to renew. The reason is that there is no telling when new relevant facts are discovered or when there might be a change in applicable law. The grant or denial of motions to renew are always appealable, as they represent new determinations which take into account new facts or law not before the court at the earlier time.

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What if a moving party's motion is denied because of some procedural defect with the motion papers themselves, such as the failure to present evidence in admissible form? May the problem be cured by a motion to renew with the same evidence presented in a proper form? There is a narrow line of cases in the First, Second, and Third judicial departments that if the initial moving papers suffer from some form of excusable law office failure, CPLR 2221(e)(3) is flexible enough that a motion to renew may be presented and the court may entertain it, if it chooses to, in the exercise of judicial discretion (*Tollinchi v Jamaica Hospital Medical Center*, 216 AD3d 842 [2d Dep't. 2023]; *Feuerman v Marriott International, Inc.*, 201 AD3d 566 [1st Dep't. 2023]; *Wilcox v Winter*, 282 AD2d 862 [3d Dep't. 2001]. *But see Paduano v Boland*, 277 AD2d 979 [4th Dep't. 2000]). Moreover, courts may always deny a motion and *sua sponte* grant the losing party leave to renew for any host of reasons --- and sometimes do --- rendering the later motion proper. Anecdotally, the most common example of this is when a party moves for summary judgment before the completion of discovery, and the court denies the motion as premature with leave to renew upon the parties' performance of the remaining discovery.

Happy CPLR 2221 motion-ing.

*Mark C. Dillon is a Justice of the Appellate Division, 2nd Dep't.,
is an Adjunct Professor of New York Practice at Fordham Law School,
and is a contributing author of the CPLR Practice Commentaries in McKinney's.

The Tradition Continues

FREE CPLR UPDATE 2026 CLE FOR RCBA MEMBERS!

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For over four decades, the Rockland County Bar Association has offered its Spring CPLR Update presented by Patrick M. Connors, Distinguished Professor of Ethics and New York Civil Practice at Albany Law School and author of the treatise “David D. Siegel & Patrick M. Connors, New York Practice”, which is often cited as the “Bible” for New York litigation.

Professor Connors’ live (and lively) 3-hour webinar is an indispensable fast-paced update of the most recent developments in New York civil practice and procedure that is appreciated by both experienced litigators and less seasoned practitioners.

Mark the date and register on the RCBA website for Professor Connors’ 2026 CPLR Update presented by the Rockland County Bar Association’s Committee for Continuing Legal Education.

Date: Wednesday, May 13, 2026

Time: 9:30 am – 12:30 pm

Where: Via Zoom

See you May 13!

NOMINATIONS FOR AWARDS

We have a membership composed of many outstanding attorneys. Each year we recognize those that are nominated by their peers for outstanding service to the organization, the community and the law. **If you would like to nominate someone for one or more of our awards, please fill out this form and e-mail it to veronica@rocklandbar.org.**

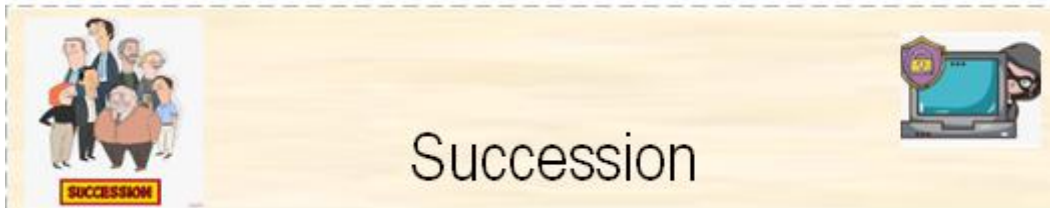
Final decisions are made by our Board of Directors at an upcoming Board Meeting. Please submit your nominations by Monday, May 11, 2026.

THE STERNS AWARD Given in the memory of Richard Sterns to a RCBA member who has made significant contributions to the Bar Association and the People of Rockland County over the year - service above self on behalf of the association. This award is presented at the Installation Dinner in June.

I wish to Nominate: _____

THE JOSEPH G. BALSAMO AWARD This award is presented at the June Installation Dinner in memory of Joseph G. Balsamo, Esq., to an RCBA member who has gained significant respect from the members of the Bar and the public for his or her personal and professional contributions to both, while maintaining the highest form of integrity and professionalism while advocating for each.

I wish to Nominate: _____



Client Transition as a Succession Strategy

By: Judith Bachman

As we continue our discussion of succession planning, one theme consistently rises to the surface. Clients, not contracts or valuations, ultimately determine whether a transition succeeds. A firm may have strong financials and a well-structured plan, but if clients do not stay, much of that value disappears.

At the outset, it is important to remember a basic ethical principle. Clients are free to choose their attorney. They cannot be compelled to remain with a firm, and their matters are not assets that can simply be sold or transferred without consent. See, *Graubard Mollen v. Moskovitz*, 86 N.Y.2d 112, 653 N.E.2d 1179, 629 N.Y.S.2d 1009 (1995).

For that reason, client transition should begin well before any formal change. Preparing clients for continuity is essential to preserving firm value.

At its core, this is about shifting the relationship from being lawyer-centric to firm-centric. In many small practices, clients view their attorney as the firm. That connection drives success, but it can also become a barrier. If clients believe their relationship exists only with one individual, they are less likely to remain when that individual steps away.

This challenge is even greater for solo practitioners. Without a built-in team, planning ahead is critical. A solo practitioner can begin by identifying a trusted colleague, co-counseling matters, or gradually introducing another attorney into client relationships. Even modest steps can help clients become comfortable with continuity beyond a single lawyer.

Another benefit of approaching client transition in this way is that it can strengthen the client relationship. When clients interact with more than one person, they often gain greater confidence in the depth and stability of the practice. At the same time, this approach can free the practitioner from being the sole point of contact on every matter. With trusted colleagues sharing responsibility, the attorney has more capacity to focus on higher-value work, business development, or other priorities, all while continuing to serve clients effectively.

Communication and timing are key. Clients do not respond well to surprises. Early, thoughtful communication builds trust and aligns with ethical obligations. Introducing others early allows familiarity to develop and responsibility to shift gradually.

Succession planning often focuses on structure and timing. Those elements matter. But in the end, it is the client who decides whether the transition holds. Firms that invest in client transition early will be the ones that carry their value forward.



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May 1, 2026

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Dear Alden,

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On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Rockland County Bar Association, I thank you, and the Law Day committee, for this year's excellent Law Day program and for your own thoughtful ceremonial remarks.

Thank you, also, for your perennial service as Chair of the Association's Law Day Program.

With best wishes for a full measure of future success as you begin the next chapter of your career in the law, I am

VERONICA JAREK-PRINZ
Executive Director

Very truly yours,

Richard A. Glickel
RCBA President, 2025-2026

rg:me

COMMERCIAL LITIGATION ISSUES OF INTEREST

Submitted by Joseph Churgin, Esq. and Susan Cooper, Esq.*



Your client is a defendant in a law suit commenced in the Supreme Court, Kings County in late May of 2025. The complaint revealed that there was diversity of citizenship between the parties but did not specify the amount of damages sought, leaving it unclear whether the action was removable to federal court. In early June, you filed an answer and served a demand for a bill of particulars, which included a demand for details of the damages sought. By mid-July, you still had not received a response to the demands, and advised plaintiff's counsel that you were waiting for a response. In early August, plaintiff's counsel advised you that the bill of particulars had been served on you by mail six weeks earlier in mid-June, and provided you with a digital copy of the bill of particulars, which demonstrated damages of \$200,000. You promptly removed the action to federal court. The plaintiff then moved to remand the case back to state court, arguing that the action was not timely removed within 30 days of service of the bill of particulars by mail. You oppose the motion, arguing that you did not receive the mailed particulars until early August, but timely removed the action less than 30 days after you received the digital copy of the bill of particulars.

Will you succeed in defeating the motion to remand the action back to state court?

The answer is *no*.

In *Stephens-Jones v. Summers* (Docket No. 25-CV-04768; N.Y.L.J. April 10, 2026; 2026 WL 905000 [E.D.N.Y., April 2, 2026]), the plaintiff, who resided in New York State, filed a complaint on May 29, 2025, seeking unspecified damages from defendants residing in other states. Counsel for two of the defendants served a demand for a bill of particulars on June 3, 2025, and filed an answer on June 6, 2025. The plaintiff's verified bill of particulars was "properly" served by mail on June 18, 2025. On July 17, 2025, not yet having received a response, counsel for the two defendants wrote to plaintiff's counsel asking for the response. On August 4, 2025, plaintiff's counsel provided defense counsel with a digital copy of the verified bill of particulars, received by defense counsel on August 5, 2025. Plaintiff's counsel also advised that the bill of particulars had been mailed to defense counsel on June 18, 2025, more than a month earlier. On August 19, 2025, two weeks after receiving the digital copy of the bill of particulars, defense counsel served a notice removing the case to federal district court.

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Plaintiff then moved to remand the case back to state court, arguing that the defendants improperly removed the case more than 30 days after *service* of the bill of particulars by mail. Defendants argued that the case was timely removed after they first *received* the digital copy of the bill of particulars and learned the facts that permitted removal.

The Court first referenced and quoted 28 U.S.C. § 1446(b)(1), which requires a notice of removal to be filed “within 30 days after receipt by the defendant, through service or otherwise, of a copy of the initial pleading setting forth the claim for relief upon which such action or proceeding is based.” The Court noted that it was undisputed that the complaint did not specify the amount of damages sought, and, therefore, did not start the running of the clock.

The Court then stated that where it is unclear from the complaint that the case is removable based on diversity, “the time for removal runs from the service of the first paper stating on its face the amount of damages sought,” quoting *Moltner v. Starbucks Coffee Co.*, 624 F.3d 34 (2d Cir. 2010). Thus, “the date of receipt is not what is relevant here, but rather the date of service. *See Moltner*. . . .” The Court further reasoned that since service under CPLR § 2103 is complete upon mailing, the removal was not timely.

The Court remanded the case back to state court.

The lesson? Don’t be at the mercy of the efficiency of the US Post Office. Be aware that your time to remove a case may depend on a mailed response to demands, which you may not timely receive. Ask and document early and frequently if and when the plaintiff will respond. If necessary, distinguish the *Moltner* case, which decided a different issue than *the Stephens-Jones* case. *Moltner* refers to and quotes *Whitaker v. American Telecasting, Inc.*, 261 F3d 196 (2d Cir. 2001), in which the Court “agreed that the 30-day period did not begin to run until the defendant received the first document from which all of the facts giving rise to removability were evident. . . .”

Editors’ note: Nothing in the decision quotes or specifically refers to 28 U.S.C. § 1446(b)(3) — relied on by the defendant — which, as stated in the *Whitaker* case, begins the removal clock from the time “the defendant received the first document from which all of the facts giving rise to removability were evident. . . .” Nor is it clear why the bill of particulars was mailed but not e-filed in a Kings County case. As of this writing, Kings County Index No. 517573/2025 does not appear in New York’s eCourt filings.

*By Joseph Churgin, Esq. and Susan Cooper, Esq. of

SAVAD CHURGIN, LLP, Attorneys at Law



6 Reasons Why You Should Get Help For Your Mental Health

By: Stan Popovich

Many people underestimate the impact that mental illness can have on an individual or family. It can be difficult to admit that you have a mental health problem in your life. Secondly, it can be just as difficult in getting the people you know to understand your situation without making any kinds of judgments.

As a result, here are six reasons why you should make your mental health an important priority in your life.

1. Your situation will improve if you get help: Your anxieties and fears can be challenging to manage and more than likely you will need some help. Just as you talk to your doctor about your regular health, you should not be hesitant in seeking help for your mental health. If left untreated, your anxieties and fears may not go away.

2. Drugs and alcohol are not the answer: Drugs and alcohol can make your problems more complicated. Many people have said that drugs and alcohol will only add more problems to your situation. Be smart and learn how to cope with your mental health issues by talking to a qualified professional. There are many health professionals in your area that can give you some ideas on where you can go for assistance.

3. You will save time and money: Eventually, you will have to confront your fears and mental health issues. Save yourself the time and heartache and confront your problems now rather than later. You will save months of struggling by getting help right away. The sooner you get assistance the faster you will start getting some relief.

4. You are not alone: Everyone deals with fear, stress, and anxiety in one's life whether your friends and others care to admit it. In addition, do not be embarrassed that you are getting help. We all learn new things from others on a daily basis and learning how to manage your anxieties is no different. In addition, your goal is to get your life back on track and not to get everyone's approval. If people start asking you questions, just say your dealing with stress. Most people can relate to dealing with stress and anxiety!

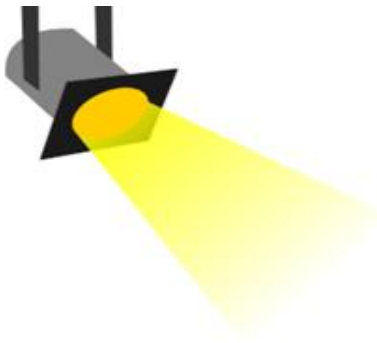
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5. Do not make the mistake of doing nothing: There are many people who struggled with anxiety and other mental health related issues, and they tried to ignore their problems. As a result, some of these people struggled on a daily basis and eventually things became more difficult. It can be scary asking for assistance, but the key is to take things one day at a time.

6. You have a variety of options: There are many mental health support groups, organizations, and counselors in your area that can help get your life back on track. Talk to your doctor to get more details on where you can go for some assistance. Help is available but you must be willing to make the choice of getting better. Remember that every problem has a solution. You just have to make the effort to find the answers.

BIOGRAPHY

Stan is the author of "A Layman's Guide to Managing Fear" which covers 200+ techniques that can drastically improve your mental health. For more information, please visit Stan's website at <http://www.managingfear.com>



Spotlight Interview
On
David Narain



In recognition of Asian Pacific Heritage Month, we had the chance to interview David Narain, Esq. Mr. Narain is a passionate criminal defense attorney and former Assistant District Attorney in Rockland County.

Where did you grow up?

I was born in Bronx County but my family moved to Rockland County when I was young. I have resided in Rockland County ever since.

Where did you go to school?

After completing high school, I attended undergraduate school at the University of Buffalo where I graduated with a B.S. Degree in psychology and legal studies. Immediately thereafter, I enrolled in law school at St. John's University.

What is your current occupation?

Currently, I am a self-employed criminal defense lawyer handling state level matters throughout the New York City and Hudson Valley regions. My cases range from minor violations to serious felonies including homicides and violent crimes.

What is your favorite thing about Rockland?

My favorite thing about practicing law in Rockland County is its ability to maintain a “small town” feel despite handling serious and complex matters. Much of my practice is in New York City where the legal community is very large, making it more difficult to develop and maintain lasting relationships with others in the legal field. Rockland County on the other hand, fosters and promotes greater relationships amongst the legal community due to its smaller size.

How did you get here?

The decision to become a lawyer was a slow process through my lifetime, starting with my family’s journey to the United States. My parents were first generation immigrants who came to the U.S. from Guyana with limited financial means and educational opportunities. However, their hard work and efforts provided me with the ability to seek higher education and a professional career. It was this new-found opportunity and desire to show gratitude for their efforts that laid the foundation for my career in the legal field.

As I completed my education, I wanted to work in a profession that helped others and advocated for those who were unable to advocate for themselves. Of all the opportunities available, the practice of law seemed to be one of the strongest professions to accomplish this. By the time I graduated college I knew that I wanted to be a lawyer and attended law school immediately thereafter.

Through most of my time at law school, I was not sure which area of law I would like to ultimately practice. The beauty of law school is that you are exposed to many different areas of law and have the ability to see what best suits your desires and aspirations. For me, it was not until my third and final year of law school that I had a clear vision of what field I wanted to pursue. In my third year, I enrolled in a mock trial program where participants were required to litigate a fictional criminal case in a real life scenario with both judges and juries. Mock trial revealed to me that trial advocacy and litigation was the best forum to be an advocate for those in need. Looking back, the mock trial program was the most influential part of my law school education.

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experience grew, I was promoted to Senior Assistant District Attorney where I was tasked with handling more complex felony matters in the Rockland County Court. As much as I love being a criminal defense attorney, my time at the Rockland County District Attorney's Office has been the most rewarding period of my career as I was able to be a "voice" for those who have been victimized by others in society. I strongly recommend that any new practicing attorney considering a career in criminal law consider a position in a prosecutorial office.

Immediately after my time at the Rockland District Attorney's Office, I opened my own private law practice with a focus on criminal defense. I have worked in this capacity for the past twenty years. While defense work provides a different perspective to criminal law, it is still fulfilling as it allows me to be a voice or advocate for those facing fear and uncertainty of being charged with criminal offenses.

Who is your inspiration/ hero?

Fortunately, I have had many people in my life who have both inspired and guided me throughout the years. However, if I had to pick one "hero" it would be my father. Originally from Guyana, a South-American country with high poverty and limited opportunities, he immigrated to the United States in the 1970's. My father demonstrated to me, that despite your shortcomings (ie. lack of education, experience, etc.) anything is possible in life if you remain focused and work hard toward your goals. He was able start a successful business, purchase a home and provide numerous opportunities for his family here in the United States. For those reasons, he will always be my greatest inspiration in life.

What good advice have you received?

The best advice I can provide to practicing attorneys is to be patient and take the time to understand their clients backgrounds and the situations they are facing. As a lawyer you are tasked with helping others in their greatest time of need, when emotions are high and uncertainty persists. Taking the time to listen to your client, answering their questions and not ignoring their concerns will demonstrate to them that you are looking out for their best interest. As a result, the attorney/client relationship will be built on a solid foundation making all future interactions productive, constructive and amicable. There have been too many occasions where I observe difficult or tumultuous relationships between attorneys and their clients, usually caused by a lack of respect and communication between them.

Favorite TV show or book?

My favorite book is *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu. Although it is old in age and based upon the 5th Century Chinese military, it has numerous life lessons that can be applied to everyday situations, both personal and professional.

What is your guilty pleasure?

One activity I enjoy is watching reality television. While most may find this genre pointless and rudimentary, I find a lot can be gained from watching these shows. Observing how others interact with one another, including the behind the scenes thought processes, can be very valuable in real life when dealing with others. There is a great deal of “truth” in reality television once you parse out the “fluff”.



Recognized each year in the month of May by Presidential proclamation, JAHM provides an opportunity for people to learn about and appreciate Jewish heritage and reflect on the specific history and experiences of the American Jewish community, serving as antidote to antisemitism.

JAHM was established in 2006 by President George W. Bush as a bipartisan effort sponsored in Congress by the late Senator Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania and Representative Debbie Wasserman Schultz of Florida.

The Library of Congress also hosts jewishheritagemonth.gov to support the federal government's commitment to paying tribute to the generations of Jewish Americans who helped form the fabric of American history, culture, and society.

Learn more about JAHM at JewishAmericanHeritage.org

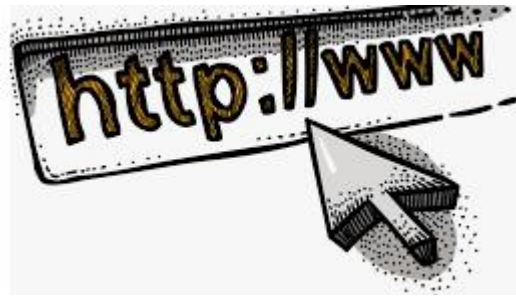


May is recognized as Haitian Heritage Month, a vibrant commemoration of resilience, culture, and enduring pride. It honors the rich history of Haiti—the first Black republic to achieve independence—and recognizes the profound contributions of Haitian people to art, music, literature, cuisine, and global culture. Throughout the month, all are encouraged to celebrate the strength of a community rooted in perseverance and unity, while uplifting the traditions, language, and spirit that

continue to inspire generations. It is a time to reflect and acknowledge Haiti's remarkable legacy to the cause of freedom and justice for all people.



In the month of May we take time to reflect and celebrate the important role that Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPIs) have played in our shared history. While Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month was officially designated by [Congress in 1992](#), the push to recognize the contributions of AAPI communities took root much earlier. In 1977, lawmakers, proposed legislation for Asian Pacific Heritage Week. A year later, President Jimmy Carter signed into law a joint resolution, prompting the first official celebration in May 1979. Over the next decade, continued efforts led President George H.W. Bush to expand the celebration in the early 1990s to a full month. May was chosen as the month to commemorate AAPI history because the first Japanese immigrants came to America on May 7, 1843. Additionally, the transcontinental railroad, which was built with significant involvement from Chinese immigrant laborers, was completed with a single golden spike on May 10, 1869.



The Hidden Cost of a Bad Website: Why Your Online Presence Is a Business Decision, Not a Design One

Most attorneys I talk to think of their website the same way they think about their business cards. It's something you need to have, you update it every few years, and beyond that, you don't think about it much.

But here's the problem with that thinking is that nobody makes a hiring decision based on your business card. People absolutely make hiring decisions based on your website.

And when your website isn't doing its job, you're not just missing out on leads from Google. You're losing people who were already referred to you.

The Referral Problem

Let's say a satisfied client recommends you to a friend. That friend goes home, Googles your name, and lands on your website. What do they find?

If your site looks outdated, loads slowly, is hard to navigate on a phone, or doesn't clearly explain what you do and who you help, there's a real chance that referral quietly moves on to someone else. They might not even be able to articulate why. It just didn't feel right.

That's the hidden cost. It's not always a cold lead you never had. Sometimes it's a warm referral you almost had, and your website turned them away before they ever called.

First Impressions Happen Fast

Research consistently shows that people form an opinion about a website within the first few seconds of landing on it. That's not enough time to read anything. It's a gut reaction based on how the site looks, how quickly it loads, and whether it feels professional and current.

Attorneys spend years building a reputation. A website that looks like it was built in 2012 can undermine that reputation instantly, before you've had a chance to say a word.

The Mobile Problem

More than half of all web traffic now comes from mobile devices. If your website isn't optimized for a phone, meaning text is hard to read, buttons are too small to tap, or the

layout breaks on a smaller screen, you're creating friction at the exact moment someone is trying to learn more about you.

People don't troubleshoot bad websites. They leave.

What a Good Website Actually Does

A well-built website doesn't need to be flashy. It needs to do a few things well. It should load quickly, look clean and professional, clearly communicate your practice areas, and make it easy for someone to take the next step, whether that's calling you, emailing you, or filling out a contact form.

It should also hold up on a phone just as well as it does on a desktop.

Beyond that, it helps to have some of the trust signals we've talked about in previous articles, including reviews, credentials, awards, and a bio that actually sounds like a human being wrote it.

So What's This Costing You?

It's impossible to put an exact number on it, because the losses are invisible. You'll never know how many referrals quietly bounced. You'll never see the potential client who found you on Google, spent fifteen seconds on your site, and called someone else.

But if your website is outdated, slow, or hard to use on a phone, it's almost certainly happening. And in a market like Rockland County, where reputation and relationships drive so much business, that's a cost worth taking seriously.

The good news is that this is one of the more fixable problems in marketing. A website overhaul isn't cheap, but it's a one-time investment that pays dividends every time someone looks you up, whether they found you on Google or heard your name from a friend.

Your website should be working for you. If it isn't, it's working against you.



Rockland County Bar Association

337 North Main Street, Suite 1; New City, NY 10956; rocklandbar.org

2026 CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Program Date	Time	Program Title	Speakers
Wednesday, May 13, 2026	Virtual 9:30 am–12:30 pm	<i>CPLR 2026</i>	Professor Connors
Thursday, May 21, 2026	Virtual 12:30 pm–1:45 pm	<i>Conveying Real Estate and the Tax Consequences</i>	Anthony Enea, Esq
Thursday, June 4, 2026	Sherrif Training Facility Lunch	<i>Personal Injury CLE</i>	George Coffinas
Thursday, June 11, 2026	Virtual 12:30 pm–1:30 pm	<i>1031 Exchanges CLE</i>	Ryan Vassar, Esq.
Tuesday, June 16, 2026	In Person 5:30 pm Tudor Room, Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University	<i>Annual Appellate View from the Bench</i>	Westchester County Bar Association Host
Thursday, June 18, 2026	Virtual 12:30 pm–1:30 pm	<i>Surviving Stress in the Legal Field while Strategizing for Success</i>	Jackie Cara, Esq. Jennifer Clayto

RCBA Cares

The following resources are provided to you courtesy of the Lawyer to Lawyer Committee.*

Lawyer Assistance Programs

New York State Bar Association: 1-800-255-0569; lap@nysba.org

New York City Bar Association: 212-302-5787; <https://nysba.org/attorney-well-being/>

Suicide Prevention

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 988

Crisis Text Line: Need help? Text START to 741-741

Chemical Dependency and Self-Help Sites

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA): 212-870-3400; www.aa.org

International Lawyers in A.A. (ILAA): www.ilaa.org

Narcotics Anonymous (NA): 818-773-9999; www.na.org

Nicotine Anonymous (NA): 1-877-TRY-NICA; nicotine-anonymous.org

Mental Health

Depressed Anonymous: depressedanon.com

National Mental Health Association (NMHA) - 1-800-273-TALK (8255) to reach a 24-hour crisis center;
Text MHA to 741741 at the Crisis Text Line

Source: Andrew Denney, Bureau Chief of NYLJ and the New York State Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers.

****For more information about the Lawyer to Lawyer Committee,***

please email: office@rocklandbar.org

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Contact Jeanmarie@rocklandbar.org

with their contact information so we can reach out to them about these opportunities.

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Constitutional and Human Rights

Corporate Law including business formation, dissolution & franchises

Education law

Elder law

Environmental Law

Insurance Law, including automobile, home, disability, long term care

Intellectual Property

Landlord Tenant Law: residential and commercial

Legal Malpractice

Zoning Law

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or contact office@rocklandbar.org

for more information and an application.

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PLEASE NOTE:

NEWSBRIEF IS NOT PUBLISHED IN JULY

CALL Jeanmarie @ 845-634-2149 or send email to Jeanmarie@Rocklandbar.org

TO ADVERTISE IN NEWSBRIEF

Advertising & articles appearing in the RCBA Newsletter does not presume endorsement of products, services & views of the Rockland County Bar

Association.

All advertisements and articles must be reviewed by the Executive Committee for content.

MEMO**TO ALL RCBA COMMITTEE CHAIRS & VICE – CHAIRS**

The Association is seeking articles from your committee for publication in the Bar's monthly Newsletter. The membership would greatly benefit from your input and would appreciate it. The article does not have to be complicated or long- a succinct piece of general interest and importance would be best.

If you are able to submit an article for the Newsletter it should be sent via email to Jeanmarie@rocklandbar.org by the 15th of the month so that the Executive Board may review it.

Thank you!



Monthly
Newsletter



OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE

Private office with/without workstation for support person. Ideal for sole practitioner. Includes use of large conference room, kitchen, WiFi, parking. Fully furnished, flexible terms. Possible professional collaborations.

Notaro, Michalos & Zaccaria P.C., 100 Dutch Hill Rd., Orangeburg. Contact Teresa Farias, (845) 359-7700

ATTORNEY

Neimark Coffinas & Lapp LLP (New City) seeking attorney with 3 to 5 years' experience in personal injury litigation. Salary commensurate with experience. Generous benefits package.

E-mail resume to: ggc@ncl.law

LOOKING TO RETIRE OR SELL YOUR PRACTICE?

If you are a solo or small firm attorney considering retirement or selling your practice, contact Judith Bachman, 845-639-3210 or judith@thebachmanlawfirm.com. As a professional courtesy and seeking colleague to colleague conversations, she will help you evaluate options and talk about practice acquisition.

Matrimonial/Family Law Attorney

Rockland County, NY law firm specializing in matrimonial and family law is seeking a full time associate. Excellent writing skills, trial experience and fluent Spanish speaking a plus. Starting salary range is \$55,000.00 to \$85,000.00+. Please call 845.639.4600 or fax resume to 845.639.4610 or E-mail: michael@demoyalaw.com

YOUR AD HERE!

Attorney Position Available

Feerick Nugent MacCartney, South Nyack, seeking NYS admitted attorney with 2 to 4 years of experience in litigation and interest in land use, zoning, and planning. Full-time, requiring some evening work for attendance at planning/zoning board meetings – Rockland/Orange Counties. We offer health, dental, vision and 401k Plan. Starting salary \$120,000 - \$140,000 depending on qualifications/ attorney registration status.

Part Time Paralegal / Legal Assistant

In person and/or virtual; Surrogate filings personal injury matters; complex personal injury matters; salary commensurate with experience.

Contact: jeff@injurylaw-nv.com

ADA Positions Available

The Ulster County District Attorney's office is seeking two (2) experienced full-time ADAs and one (1) entry level, i.e., newly admitted ADA. They are seeking ethical lawyers who have a stake in this community and possess the fortitude for criminal trials and related proceedings. Anyone hired will be paid a salary with enviable benefits and gratitude of the community.

If you are interested in pursuing this opportunity, contact Jodi Longto, Confidential stant, at jodl@co.ulster.ny.us for additional information.

IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY WANTED

Rockland County, law firm is seeking a full time associate with immigration experience. Trial experience, Spanish speaking, admitted to SDNY and willingness to assist with bankruptcy and loan modifications a plus. Starting salary range is \$55,000.00 to \$85,000.00+.

Call 845.639.4600 or fax resume to
845.639.4610 or

E-mail: michael@demoyalaw.com

Office Space Available

Beldock & Saunders, PC, located in New City, has a private office with a separate workstation, for support staff, available to sublet. Access to conference rooms, reception area, kitchen & plenty of parking. Rent terms are flexible. Contact Steve at (845) 267-4878 or email sbeldock@beldockandsaunderslaw.com .

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