

SPOTLIGHT

Judge Orders Lawyers to Have Lunch Together



A federal district judge in Alabama recently ordered opposing lawyers to have lunch together. One attorney would not agree to extend a pleading deadline without concessions on filing a

motion to dismiss. Thanksgiving was right around the corner. The judge didn't like it.

"There is generally no good reason that an extension such as this should be opposed, let alone denied," wrote Chief U.S. District Judge R. David Proctor of the Northern District of Alabama. "The Golden Rule – do unto others as you would have them do unto you – is not just a good rule of thumb for everyday life. It is a critical component of legal professionalism. Sadly, in recent years compliance with the rule is becoming rarer and rarer in the litigation arena. It is time to reverse that trend, even if it is only in this case."

Chief Judge Proctor ordered the attorneys to go to lunch.

"Plaintiff's counsel will pay the bill; Defendants' counsel will leave the tip. The parties will discuss how they can act professionally throughout the rest of this case," he wrote.

Source: *ABA Journal* **WL**

ON THE RADAR

April 1 Election

Wisconsinites will go to the polls next month to choose a candidate for an open seat on the Wisconsin Supreme Court. Justice Ann Walsh Bradley, first elected to the state supreme court in 1995, is not seeking reelection.

Brad Schimel, a judge on the Waukesha County Circuit Court, is facing off against Susan Crawford, a judge on the Dane County Circuit Court.

Marquette University Law School is hosting a primetime debate between the two candidates on March 12.

Source: WISN **WL**



GOOD IDEA

Funding the Justice System

Gov. Tony Evers unveiled his proposed biennial state budget last month, including proposed appropriations for civil legal aid and the criminal justice system.

The criminal justice system funding will build on the bipartisan funding investments from last session's budget, including salary advancements for prosecutors and public defenders.

In a statement released last month, the State Bar of Wisconsin's elected leadership said "Wisconsin has gone far too long without properly funding civil legal aid and this proposed allocation will make a significant impact."

The State Bar urges the Wisconsin Legislature to support the civil legal aid and criminal justice funding investments included in Evers' proposed budget. **WL**

BY THE NUMBERS

161,860

– The number of counterfeit U.S. Forever stamps that U.S. Customs and Border Protections (CBP) officers intercepted in Chicago last month. The parcels were arriving from China. The value of the stamps, if not counterfeit, would be more than \$118,000. Officers seized the stamps for violating U.S. trademark laws.

"These stamps were determined to be counterfeit based on the very low invoice value, the routing, and the extraordinary efforts undertaken to conceal the stamps," according to a press release from CBP.

Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection **WL**

DID YOU KNOW?

The Golden State: Refunds for Bar Exam

The State Bar of California recently offered more than 5,000 people an \$830 refund for registration to take the California Bar Exam in February.

The State Bar of California was set to administer, through a third-party company, a new hybrid exam that could be taken remotely. The new format was expected to save the bar \$3.8 million per year in rental space.

But registrants reported scheduling and other problems, leading to concerns that the test may not be administered fairly and effectively. Registrants can still take the test, but they can also withdraw and get a refund.

The next exam is in July, and more than 7,000 people are expected to take it.

Source: Reuters **WL**