



2023 BENCH BAR CONFERENCE AGENDA

Thursday – November 9, 2023

10:30 A.M. - 11:30 A.M. REGISTRATION (Convention Atrium).

Vendor Review Time and Talent Show
Raffle Baskets Review Time & Purchasing
Tickets for the Baskets Drawing to be held at
the Talent Show and Purchasing Tickets to
the Talent Show to be held on Nov. 11th. (Salon CDEF).

11:30 A.M. - 12:00 P.M. LUNCH (Salon CDEF).

LUNCH PROGRAM (Salon CDEF).

Welcome & Presentation by

Girard J. Mecadon, Esquire,

President, Wilkes-Barre Law & Library Association.

Presentation of the **2023 President's Award** to

Hon. Joseph J. Musto (Ret.).

See his Photo & full Biography included later in the Agenda.

12:00 P.M. - 1:00 P.M. PLENARY SESSION (Salon CDEF).

Jamie Anzalone, Esquire,

Chairperson, Bench Bar Committee.

America's Fascination with Serial Killers – **Hon. Correale F. Stevens**, President
Judge Emeritus of the PA Superior Court, and **Hon. Tina Polachek Gartley**,

Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County.

(Worth 1 Hour of Substantive CLE Credit).

1:00 P.M. - 1:15 P.M. BREAK.

1:15 P.M. - 2:15 P.M. CONCURRENT WORKSHOPS:
In Various Rooms as Indicated in Red.
(Workshops are worth 1 Hour of Substantive CLE Credit).

(I). CIVIL LITIGATION – (Salon A).

Chairperson: **Jamie Anzalone, Esquire.**

Presenters and Topics Include the Following:

An Update on Medical Malpractice with a Focus on the Venue –
Patrick J. Doyle Jr., Esquire. (30 mins.).

An Update on Civil Rights – **Theron J. Solomon, Esquire.** (30 mins.).

(II). CRIMINAL LITIGATION – (Hemlock Meeting Room).

Chairpersons: **Frank W. Nocito, Esquire** and **Michael I. Butera, Esquire.**

Presenters and Topics Include the Following:

Appellate Law Update, Case Law & Statutory Law - **James L. McMonagle Jr., Esquire,** Assistant District Attorney of Luzerne County, and **Albert J. Flora Jr., Esquire,** Former Public Defender of Luzerne County.

(III). REAL ESTATE – (Anthracite Meeting Room).

Chairpersons: **James T. Shoemaker, Esquire** and **David E. Schwager, Esquire.**

Presenters and Topics Include the Following:

The Homeowner's Enhanced Title Insurance Policy – Good for Your Client, Good for You – **David E. Schwager, Esquire,** Moderator;
Robert F. Musser, Vice President and Regional Counsel, The Security Title Guarantee Corporation of Baltimore, and **David Dwyer,** Pennsylvania State Manager, The Security Title Guarantee Corporation of Baltimore.

(IV). DOMESTIC RELATIONS AND CUSTODY – (Salon B).

Chairperson: **Ruth S. Borland, Esquire.**

Presenters and Topics Include the Following:

A Panel Discussion of Changes in the Law and Procedure in Luzerne County Practice in the Area of Family Law – **Hon. Jennifer L. Rogers, Hon. Tarah C. Toohil, Hon. Stefanie J. Salavantis**, Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County; **Brittany Quinn, Esquire**, Law Clerk to Judge Salavantis; **Hon. Joseph J. Musto (Ret.)**, Law Clerk to Judge Toohil; **Josianne Aboutanos, Esquire**, Law Clerk to Judge Rogers; **Susan A Maza, Esquire**, Divorce Master; **Andrew F. Lazar, Esquire**, Custody Master; **Tricia Watters, Esquire**, Custody Master; **A. Lisa Pierotti, Esquire** Director of Domestic Relations; **Laureen M. Yeager, Esquire**, Dependency Master, and **David Aikens, Esquire**, Support Master.

(V). ELDER LAW, ESTATE PLANNING, SETTLEMENT, ADMINISTRATION – (Susquehanna Meeting Room).

Chairperson: **Brenda D. Colbert, Esquire, LL.M., CELA.**

Presenters and Topics Include the Following:

Estate and Elder Law Update - **Kevin R. Grebas, Esquire, CELA**, and **Brenda D. Colbert, Esquire, LL.M., CELA.**

(VI). TRAVEL CLE COMMITTEE PRESENTATION – (Mountain Laurel Board Room).

Chairpersons: **Elaine Cook, Esquire, Lee Ann White, Esquire**, and **Paula L. Radick, Esquire.**

Presenters and Topics Include the Following:

Travel and Human Trafficking, the Background and Statistics - **Elaine Cook, Esquire**; *The Criminal Components Pertaining to Both Victim and Perpetrator* - **Paula L. Radick, Esquire** and *Legislation and Immigration Issues* - **Lee Ann White, Esquire.**

2:15 P.M. - 2:30 P.M. **BREAK (Refreshments/ Convention Corridor and Vendor time/ Salon CDEF).**

2:30P.M.-3:30P.M. **CONCURRENT WORKSHOPS CONTINUE**
In Various Rooms as Indicated in Red.
(Workshops are worth 1 Hour of Substantive CLE Credit).

(I). CIVIL LITIGATION – (Salon A).

Chairperson: **Jamie Anzalone, Esquire.**
Presenters and Topics Include the Following:

A View from the Bench – **Hon. Tina Polachek Gartley, Hon. Lesa S. Gelb, Hon. Richard M. Hughes III, and Hon. Fred A. Pierantoni III**, Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County, with **Jamie Anzalone, Esquire**, as Moderator.

(II). CRIMINAL LITIGATION – (Hemlock Meeting Room).

Chairpersons: **Frank W. Nocito, Esquire** and **Michael I. Butera, Esquire.**
Presenters and Topics Include the Following:

A Panel Discussion Regarding the Criminal Judicial System - **Hon. Michael T. Vough**, President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County; **Hon. David W. Lupas** and **Hon. Joseph F. Sklarosky Jr.**, Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County and **Hon. Joseph J. Carmody, Hon. James J. Haggerty, Hon. Alexandra Kokura-Kravitz** and **Hon. Ferris P. Webby Sr.**, Magisterial District Judges of Luzerne County.

(III). BANKRUPTCY – (Anthracite Meeting Room).

Chairperson: **James T. Shoemaker, Esquire.**
Presenters and Topics Include the Following:

Bankruptcy: An Overview – **Hon. Mark Conway**, the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania and **David J. Harris, Esquire.**

(IV). DOMESTIC RELATIONS AND CUSTODY – (Salon B).

Chairperson: **Ruth S. Borland, Esquire.**

Presenters and Topics Include the Following:

A Panel Discussion of Changes in the Law and Procedure in Luzerne County Practice in the Area of Family Law – **Hon. Jennifer L. Rogers, Hon. Tarah C. Toohil** and **Hon. Stefanie J. Salavantis**, Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County; **Brittany Quinn, Esquire**, Law Clerk to Judge Salavantis; **Hon. Joseph J. Musto (Ret.)**, Law Clerk to Judge Toohil; **Josianne Aboutantos, Esquire**, Law Clerk to Judge Rogers; **Susan A Maza, Esquire**, Divorce Master; **Andrew F. Lazar, Esquire**, Custody Master; **Tricia Watters, Esquire**, Custody Master; **A. Lisa Pierotti, Esquire** Director of Domestic Relations; **Laureen M. Yeager, Esquire**; Dependency Master, and **David Aikens, Esquire**, Support Master.

(V). ELDER LAW, ESTATE PLANNING, SETTLEMENT, AND ADMINISTRATION – (Susquehanna Meeting Room).

Chairperson: **Brenda D. Colbert, Esquire, LL.M., CELA.**

Presenter and Topics Include the Following:

Estate and Elder Law Update - **Kevin R. Grebas, Esquire, CELA**, and **Brenda D. Colbert, Esquire, LL.M., CELA.**

3:30 P.M. - 3:45 P.M. BREAK.

3:45 P.M. - 4:00 P.M. GENERAL SESSION – (Salon CDEF).

A Report on the Courts -
Hon. Michael T. Vough,
President Judge,
Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County.

4:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M. **KEYNOTE ETHICS SPEAKER** –

(Salon CDEF).

**The TikTok Jury:
How ethically to gain and keep attention
in an age of decreasing attention spans**

(Worth 1 Hour of Ethics CLE Credit).

Cliff Atkinson –

Acclaimed Writer, Popular Keynote Speaker,
And Consultant to Leading Attorneys and
Fortune 500 Companies.



Cliff Atkinson

Cliff Atkinson is an acclaimed writer, popular keynote speaker, and a consultant to leading attorneys and Fortune 500 companies.

He worked with Mark Lanier to craft the presentation that persuaded a jury to award a \$253 million verdict to the plaintiff in the nation's first Vioxx trial, which *Fortune* magazine called "frighteningly powerful."

Cliff's bestselling book *Beyond Bullet Points* (published by Microsoft Press) was named a Best Book of the Year by the editors of [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), and has been published in four editions and translated into a dozen languages including Chinese, Korean, and Russian.

The book expands on a communications approach he has taught internationally at top law firms, government agencies, business schools and corporations.

Cliff's work has been featured in The New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Wall Street Journal, and Fox News.

5:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M. Cocktails & Hors D'oeuvres

(Convention Atrium Corridor).

The reception will be located in the Atrium Corridor where everyone first checked in at the start of the day.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO TURN IN YOUR ATTORNEY CLE ATTENDANCE SHEETS to JOE, GAIL, OR KRISTIN, SO THAT YOU MAY RECEIVE CLE CREDIT.

The *Tort Talk 2023 Civil Litigation Update Booklet* created by Daniel E. Cummins, Esquire, and any other Conference Handouts can be downloaded from the Bar Association's website at

[Luzernecountbar.com](https://www.luzernecountbar.com).

Congratulations to



Hon. Joseph J. Musto (Ret.).

BIOGRAPHY JOSEPH J. MUSTO

The Honorable Joseph J. Musto is a graduate of King's College and the Dickinson School of Law. He is admitted to the Pennsylvania Supreme, Superior and Commonwealth Courts, the Third Circuit Court of Appeals, and the United States District Courts for the Middle and Eastern Districts of Pennsylvania. He has tried cases to jury verdict in both civil and criminal cases in the courts of Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Schuylkill and Wyoming Counties and the Federal District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania.

Judge Musto served as an Assistant District Attorney in Philadelphia, and also was a partner or principal in the law firms of Bedford, Waller, Griffith Darling & Mitchell, Griffith, Aponick & Musto, Rosenn Jenkins & Greenwald and Hourigan, Kluger & Quinn.

He served as a trial judge in the Luzerne County Court of Common Pleas, and as a Hearing Officer and Administrative Law Judge under the Federal and Pennsylvania Medicare and Medicaid Programs. Judge Musto has served as Solicitor to the Pittston Area School District, Duryea and Yatesville Boroughs and as an Assistant Luzerne County Solicitor. He has been a Mediator and Neutral Arbitrator for the past 25 years.

Judge Musto is a member of the Pennsylvania Bar Association and Wilkes-Barre Law and Library Association. He is a past President of the Federal Bar Association, Central Pennsylvania Chapter. He also was co-chair of the Pennsylvania Bar Association Committee which reviewed and made comment on the recently adopted Evidence Code. He was also a member of the Civil Justice Reform Act Advisory Committee of the Federal Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania. He is a past Member Advocate of the American Board of Trial Advocates.

He currently serves as law clerk to the Honorable Tarah Toohil, Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County.

Judge Musto is married to Attorney Fortunata Musto. They have two children, Laura Kapalka and Rob Musto, and three grandchildren, Olivia and Joey Musto and Richard Joseph (RJ) Kapalka.

REMEMBER TO BUY RAFFLE TICKETS AND ADMISSION TICKETS FOR:



A Law Revue

*An Evening of Talent with Harmless Error
At the Little Theatre of Wilkes-Barre.*

Date: Saturday, November 11, 2023

For Veterans' Day -

Featuring at the start, a **Recognition of Veterans and a procession and Presentation of Colors** by Members of the W-BLLA Military Affairs Committee and other Veterans who work for the County.

Ticket Admission for Veterans Is **FREE**.

6:00 P.M. – Doors Open with Cocktails.

7:00 P.M. – Curtain.

At Intermission Basket Raffle will be announced.

You do not have to be present to win!

Location:

The Little Theatre of Wilkes-Barre
537 North Main Street
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18705

PARKING FOR THE SHOW:

The Little Theatre has **three parking lots** to be used. Plus, street parking. There is parking located across the street from its front doors. There is also a smaller parking lot on the corner of West Maple Street and Franklin Street and a lot down Main Street towards East Linden Street.

A map of the parking lots in proximity to the Little Theatre (at 537 N. Main Street in Wilkes-Barre) can be found on the Little Theatre website by going to:

<https://ltwb.org/parking/>

Proceeds from the Basket Raffle and Admission Ticket Sales for the Talent Show are to benefit our
**Luzerne County Bar Association
Charitable Foundation, Inc.
And the Little Theatre.**

See Remember to Buy Tickets! Thank you!

REMINDER:

If You Signed up with DPC to get your photo taken today for the 2023 Bar Composite, the photographer is in the [Bean and Vine Café & Wine Bar](#) (which has been closed to the public).

Please head to the **Bean and Vine Café & Wine Bar** at least ten minutes before your scheduled appointment time.

The photographer will take walk-ins. So, if you forgot to sign up, you still can get photographed.

If you need directions to the Bean and Vine Café & Wine Bar, please ask Joe, Gail or Kristin.

Thank you.

And,
Thank You
for Attending this Year's Conference!