

2024 BENCH BAR CONFERENCE AGENDA

Thursday – November 7, 2024

10:00 A.M. - 11:00 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. 9th. (Salon CDEF).

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

Welcome by

Cheryl Sobeski-Reedy, Esquire,

President, Wilkes-Barre Law & Library Association.

Presentation of the *2024 President's Award* to

Hon. Thomas F. Burke Jr. (Ret.).

See his photo & biography included on Pages 8-10 of the agenda.

Recognition of Immediate Past President

Girard J. Mecadon, Esquire

Brief Remarks by

Matthew M. Holliday

Executive Director, Pennsylvania Bar Association.

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

Jamie Anzalone, Esquire,
Chairperson, Bench Bar Committee
(Worth 1 Hour of Ethics CLE Credit).

Billy Joel and the Practice of Law – Professor Randy Lee,
Widener University Commonwealth Law School.

See his photo & biography included on Pages 11-12 of the agenda.

[Please Note: This is the Ethics hour of the conference. If you want to receive the Ethics credit you must be present for this hour.]

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:

Practice Tips Based on the Top Civil Litigation Cases of 2024 –
Daniel E. Cummins, Esquire and Paul T. Oven, Esquire.

See Dan's photo & additional information included on Page 13 of the agenda.

(II). CRIMINAL LITIGATION – (Salon CDEF – Note This [NEW LOCATION](#)).

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, with **Joseph J. Yeager, Esquire,** Chief 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:

Beyond The Basics: Supporting Your Clients with FinCEN Reporting –
Charles Wismer, CEO of FincenFetch (via Zoom) – Moderated by
David E. Schwager, Esquire.

See Charles' photo & additional information on Page 14 of the agenda.

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

Chairperson: **Ruth S. Borland, Esquire.**
Presenters and Topics Include the Following:

Kayden's Law: A View from the Bench – **Hon. Stefanie J. Salavantis**, Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County; **Andrew F. Lazar, Esquire**, Custody Master, and **Tricia Watters, Esquire**, Custody Master.

**(V). ELDER LAW, ESTATE PLANNING, SETTLEMENT,
AND ADMINISTRATION** – (Susquehanna & Hemlock Meeting Rooms).

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.

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, and Hon. Fred A. Pierantoni III**, Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County, Moderated by **Jamie Anzalone, Esquire.**

(II). CRIMINAL LITIGATION – (Salon CDEF Note This **NEW LOCATION**).

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. Alexandra Kokura-Kravitz and Hon. Ferris P. Webby Sr.**, Magisterial District Judges of Luzerne County.

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

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

Presenters and Topics Include the Following:

Featuring **Hon. Mark J. Conway**, the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania and **John J. Martin, Esquire**, Chapter 7 Trustee, speaking on: *Concurrent Jurisdiction of State Court and Bankruptcy Court with Respect to the Automatic Stay* – Moderated by **James T. Shoemaker, Esquire.**

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

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

Presenters and Topics Include the Following:

Why Understanding Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences is Essential to Enhance Justice and Well-Being for Everyone Involved in the Judicial System. - **Hon. Jennifer L. Rogers**, Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County, and **Robert K. Reed, Esquire**, Executive Deputy Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

**(V). ELDER LAW, ESTATE PLANNING, SETTLEMENT,
AND ADMINISTRATION** – (Susquehanna & Hemlock Meeting Rooms).

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 SPEAKER* – (Salon CDEF)
(Worth 1 Hour of Substantive CLE Credit).**



Joe Curcillo, Esquire

The Generalist Advantage: How Cross-Disciplinary Thinking Helps Us Lead More Effectively - Communication, Problem solving, Decision-making, Innovation and Quality of Life.

Come join us as we dive into a “magical” journey with Joe Curcillo, Author, Speaker and Recovering Practicing Lawyer. Recognized as a highly sought-after advisor to C-Suite Leaders, Entrepreneurs, and Team Leaders, Joe brings his expertise in cross-disciplinary thinking to illuminate the path forward. In his enlightening keynote, Joe invites you to reflect on the valuable lessons of the past, offering insights that go beyond mere entertainment. Discover how to elevate your life experience generates agility, resilience, and strategic foresight. Don’t miss this opportunity to redefine your approach to the ever-evolving world landscape with Joe's visionary guidance.

JOE CURCILLO

Meet Joe Curcillo, a leading authority in leadership and innovation, and the visionary author of **“THE GENERALIST’S ADVANTAGE: How to Harness the Raw Power of Multidisciplinary Thinking.”**

As the CEO of Generalist’s Advantage Strategies, Joe is renowned for his ability to integrate diverse expertise into groundbreaking strategies that break through traditional business silos.

Joe’s career is a testament to the power of cross-disciplinary thinking. With a rich background that includes roles as a trial attorney, CEO, civil engineer, strategic advisor, government operative, author, fine artist, psychic entertainer, and magician, Joe exemplifies the benefits of multidisciplinary expertise. His book, “The Generalist’s Advantage,” reveals his unique approach, enabling leaders and teams to solve complex challenges and drive innovation.

Joe Curcillo is not just a speaker; he is a practitioner with real-world experience across multiple fields. His insights prepare organizations for sustainable growth and agility, ensuring they remain competitive in a rapidly changing business environment. By booking Joe as a speaker, you will gain access to his proven strategies that foster adaptability and future-readiness in leadership and innovation.

Joe Curcillo is the quintessential generalist.

He lives near Hershey, Pennsylvania with his wife, Judge Deborah Curcillo, and an endless supply of caffeine.

And because I am an entertainer and magician...
you’ll have fun doing it!

Congratulations to



Hon. Thomas F. Burke Jr. (Ret.).

The Honorable Thomas F. Burke, Jr. served as a trial judge on the Luzerne County Court of Common Pleas, the 11th Judicial District of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, from May 22, 1998, until his retirement on December 31, 2021. Judge Burke, a West Pittston native, was appointed to the Bench in April of 1998 by Governor Tom Ridge and, after unanimous approval by the Pennsylvania Senate, took office. He was elected to a ten-year term by the voters of Luzerne County in 1999 and was retained to serve an additional term in 2009, and again in 2019.

In January of 2010, Judge Burke was unanimously elected by his colleagues to serve a five-year term as President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County. His efforts in that role were recognized before the House of Delegates of the Pennsylvania Bar Association (PBA) on November 21, 2014, with presentation of a PBA President's Award citing his "outstanding commitment and leadership in overcoming adversity...". He was honored by the Wilkes-Barre Law and Library Association "in grateful recognition of steadfast service" covering his tenure as President Judge. Also, he served as a member of the Executive Committee of the Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges and often has served as a panel member or presenter at CLE events.

Judge Burke began his career in the private practice of law in 1973 as an associate and then partner, spanning ten years, with the former Wilkes-Barre-based law firm of Flanagan, Doran, (later McFadden), Biscontini and Shaffer. Thereafter, he associated himself in practice with Attorney John E. O'Connor and his brother, Attorney Joseph D. Burke, with offices located in Forty Fort. Before his judgeship, he served as a director and President of The First Bank of Greater Pittston and as a director of several of its successor banking institutions.

A summa cum laude graduate of West Pittston High School, Judge Burke was inducted into the Wyoming Area Football "Ring of Pride" in 2005. He is an Honors graduate with a B.A. degree in Finance from Lehigh University and received his Juris Doctor degree from Villanova University School of Law. An Army veteran, he was awarded The Bronze Star Medal for Meritorious Service in the Republic of Vietnam.

Judge Burke is a former Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Marywood College (now University) and was awarded The Presidential Medal from that institution in 2004. He served on The Board of Trustees of Scranton Prep and on the President's Council of King's College. He is a past President of the Board of Directors of The Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce and served as a director and member of the Executive Committee of the Economic Development Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Throughout his professional career, Judge Burke served on the boards of numerous charitable and non-profit organizations, including United Way of Wyoming Valley and the Greater Pittston YMCA. He is a past Chair of the Board of Catholic Social Services of Wyoming Valley and served as a Vice-Chair of the Advisory Board of the Luzerne Foundation at its inception. Prior to his judgeship, he often assumed leadership roles in fund-raising efforts to benefit those and other organizations, having chaired Capital Campaigns for The Salvation Army, West Pittston, and the YMCA among other causes. His contributions to the Northeastern Pennsylvania community have been recognized at various times including his selection as "Young Person of the Year" by the Wilkes Barre Jaycees in 1981, and, as "Man of the Year" by The Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of St. Patrick in 2007. More recently, he was the recipient of a "Lifetime Achievement Award by the Greater Pittston YMCA (2022) and a Distinguished Citizen Award by the Northeastern Pennsylvania Council of the Boy Scouts of America (2024).

Judge Burke and his wife, Peggy, are members of St. John the Evangelist Parish of Pittston where they have been active in various ministries for several decades. They are the proud parents of five adult children who have pursued professional careers in the fields of law, nursing, education and engineering, and they have been blessed with ten grandchildren who are the light of their lives.

About Our Plenary Ethics Speaker:



Recognized for the third best brief in the nation.

Randy Lee teaches constitutional law, professional responsibility, torts and various writing and advocacy courses. Professor Lee has taught previously at the Villanova and University of Pittsburgh Law Schools and in the Harvard University Summer Program. The moot court teams Professor Lee has co-coached with Professor Kearney have advanced to the National Appellate Advocacy Championship three times, and their 1993 team was

Professor Lee is a frequent speaker for the Pennsylvania Bar Institute and has also done programs for the Pennsylvania Office of General Counsel, the Pennsylvania Attorney General's Office, and the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. In addition, Professor Lee has spoken at judicial conferences for the Pennsylvania Commonwealth, Common Pleas and Superior Courts. The colleges and law schools at which he has spoken include Baylor, Boston College, Carnegie Mellon, Catholic,

Duke, Fordham, Gallaudet, Maryland, Notre Dame, NYU, Oklahoma, Pepperdine, Touro, Villanova, and Penn. Professor Lee's online ethics courses have been offered on the websites of the state bar associations of eight states, and he has been quoted in the New York Times, Washington Post and Time Magazine.

Professor Lee served as the chair of the Association of American Law Schools Section on Professional Responsibility, and also served as the chair of the Law School Subcommittee of the Pennsylvania Bar Association Professionalism Committee. In addition, Professor Lee coordinates the Pennsylvania Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers annual conference for the deans of students of Pennsylvania's Law Schools. Professor Lee worked on the first case to guarantee people who are deaf the right to serve as jurors and also worked with the Pennsylvania Office of Mental Health to guarantee people who are deaf, deaf/blind, or hard of hearing equal and effective access to mental health services.

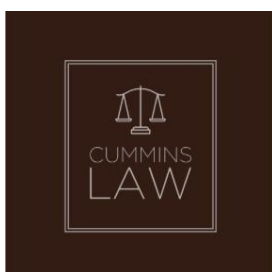


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**Cummins Law
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Clarks Summit, PA 18411**



Daniel E. Cummins, Esquire is the founder of the Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania law firm of Cummins Law, which he opened in 2019 with his nearly 25 years of experience in insurance defense litigation. His practice centers around defending against automobile accident claims and premises liability cases along with the defense of products liability and medical malpractice matters. Attorney Cummins also handles insurance coverage and insurance subrogation claims as well.

Attorney Cummins also serves as a Mediator and helps litigants bring their matters to a close through Cummins Mediation Services and as a certified Mediator for the Federal Middle District Court of Pennsylvania.

Featured Presenter in the Real Estate Workshop

WELCOME TO THE WEBINAR



Host: Charles Wismer – FincenFetch CEO

Our Corporate Transparency Act webinar will be hosted by Charles Wismer, a thought leader in the FinCEN compliance space. Charles is one of the creators and CEO of FincenFetch – a leading BOI filing solution used by hundreds of firms across the U.S., including many top 100 organizations. FincenFetch began building CTA filing solutions two years before the launch of Corporate Transparency Act filings. During this time, the FincenFetch Team gathered valuable insights from thousands of discussions with accounting and law firms. Through interviews, consultations, presentations, and industry collaborations, Charles continues to play a pivotal role in shaping standards and best practices in the field. At FincenFetch, the focus is on a personalized approach to beneficial ownership reporting, tailoring plans, features, and strategies to meet the specific needs of each firm.

A promotional graphic for a webinar. It features a dark blue background with a diagonal orange and white stripe. On the right, there is a photograph of a woman with dark hair and glasses looking at a document, and a man with grey hair and glasses looking at the same document. On the left, the FincenFetch logo is displayed. Below the logo, the title "Beyond The Basics: Supporting Your Clients With FinCEN Reporting" is written in white. At the bottom left, there is a small line of text: "Best practices and critical information collected and compiled from over 5,000 conversations with firms".

 **FincenFetch**

**Beyond The Basics: Supporting
Your Clients With FinCEN Reporting**

Best practices and critical information collected and compiled from over 5,000
conversations with firms

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.*

Saturday, November 9, 2024

Featuring at the start, a **Recognition of Veterans with a procession and Presentation of Colors**
by Members of the W-BLLA Military Affairs Committee.

Ticket Price: \$10.00
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!**

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

Remember to Buy Tickets for Both! Thank you!

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

This concludes the credit CLE program.

For lawyers staying the full day, the bench Bar Conference provides three (3)
Substantive CLE Credits and one (1) Ethics Credit.

5:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M. Cocktails & Hors D'oeuvres
(Convention Atrium Corridor).

With live music by Don Cannon

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

Thank You to
Everyone for attending.

And Thank You to this year's vendors.