



**AMERICAN BOARD OF TRIAL ADVOCATES®**

To Promote The Art Of Advocacy  
And The Efficient Administration Of Justice

**MICHIGAN CHAPTER**

32nd Annual

Annual Meeting  
&  
Holiday Gathering

**Virtual Event**

Friday, December 4th, 2020

5:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.

## **A Prayer to Saint Thomas More for Lawyers**

Thomas More, counselor of law and statesman of integrity,

merry martyr and most human of saints:

Pray that, for the Glory of God and in the pursuit of His justice,

I may be trustworthy with confidences, keen in study, accurate in analysis,

correct in conclusion, able in argument, loyal to clients, honest with all,

courteous to adversaries, ever attentive to conscience.

Sit with me at my desk and listen with me to my clients' tales.

Read with me in my library and stand always beside me

so that today I shall not, to win a point, lose my soul.

Pray that my family may find in me what yours found in you:

friendship and courage, cheerfulness and charity, diligence in duties,

counsel in adversity, patient in pain --- their good servant, and God's first.

Amen.



## AMERICAN BOARD OF TRIAL ADVOCATES®

To Promote The Art Of Advocacy  
And The Efficient Administration Of Justice

### MICHIGAN CHAPTER

#### Officers

##### President

Robert F. Riley  
Riley & Hurley PC  
19853 Outer Drive Ste 100  
Dearborn, MI 48124  
(313) 565-1330  
Fax (313) 565-1318  
riley@rileyhurley.com

##### President-Elect

Thomas R. Behm  
Gruel Mills Nims & Pylman PLLC  
99 Monroe Ave NW Suite 800  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 235-5500  
Fax (616) 235-5550  
trbehm@gmnp.com

##### Treasurer

Daniel J. Scully, Jr.  
Clark Hill PLC  
500 Woodward Ave Ste 3500  
Detroit, MI 48226  
(313) 965-8468  
Fax (313) 965-8252  
scully@clarkhill.com

##### Membership Chairperson

Judith A. Susskind  
Sommers Schwartz PC  
1 Towne Square Fl 17  
Southfield, MI 48076  
(248) 746-4043  
Fax (248) 936-2162  
jsusskind@sommerspc.com

##### Secretary

Michael R. Janes  
Janes Van Camp Moffatt & Selzer PC  
44 First Street  
Mount Clemens, MI 48043  
(586) 979-6500  
Fax (586) 468-7016  
mjanes@janescampmoff.com

##### Immediate Past President

Thomas W. Waun

##### National Board Representatives

Robert H. Darling  
Daniel J. Scully, Jr.  
James E. Tamm

##### Chapter Headquarters

Madelyne C. Lawry  
Executive Director  
PO Box 66  
Grand Ledge, MI 48837  
(517) 627-8700  
Fax (517) 627-3950  
mlawry@abotami.org

Welcome to our first virtual Annual Meeting and Holiday Gathering!

It seems unlikely that 2020 will soon be forgotten. Coronavirus, COVID and Pandemic will long be words etched in our memories. All of us have faced challenges and uncertainty. To be sure, a return to “normal” cannot come soon enough.

There is, however, much to celebrate as we gather together. This group of outstanding lawyers has much to celebrate. Indeed, reflection will reveal the liberating power of gratitude.

At the outset, this Chapter’s ambitious goals and objectives for 2020 were impressive. A uniquely talented group of board members assembled to plot a course consistent with our mission: developing young trial lawyers, educating law students on the path to civility, integrity and professionalism, advocating positions central to the preservation of our civil jury trials and finally to set positive examples within both our profession and the communities we live in.

A foundation has been built for 2021 and this Chapter, under the leadership of Tom Behm, Dan Scully, Judy Susskind, Mike Janes and Debra Freid is in great hands. Their work ethic is unparalleled and their commitment to this Chapter is unmatched. The stage is set for great things in the years ahead and I look forward to witnessing all that will be accomplished and achieved by these fine attorneys.

They, of course, are a reflection of our membership. We all have been blessed to be recognized for our skills and abilities. Membership is something to be proud of and I congratulate all of you for being an integral part of this Chapter.

Please accept my thanks and appreciation for entrusting me with the opportunity to serve ABOTA. You have my very best wishes as 2020 comes to a close. I trust all of you will enjoy health and happiness in the year ahead and that you will all continue to be shining and distinguished examples of what our profession has to offer.

Best regards,

Bob

#### Past Presidents

Richard B. Baxter\*  
John P. O’Leary  
J. Michael Fordney  
David W. Christensen  
David R. Getto  
Carol A. McNeilage  
James R. Kohl  
Bruce C. Conybears  
Daniel J. Scully, Jr.  
James N. Martin  
Gary J. McInerney  
Thomas F. Myers  
Robert F. Garvey  
C. Kenneth Perry, Jr.  
Paul A. Rosen\*  
Loretta M. Ames\*  
William F. Mills  
Cynthia E. Merry  
Joseph C. Smith  
Thomas W. Cranmer  
Kathleen L. Bogas  
James E. Tamm  
Robert H. Darling  
Wilson A. Copeland, II  
Thomas W. Waun  
\* deceased

# **Program**

**Presiding  
Chapter President  
Robert F. Riley, Riley & Hurley PC**

**A Prayer to Saint Thomas More for Lawyers - Robert F. Riley**

**Annual Meeting & Opening Remarks - Robert F. Riley**

**Master of Award Ceremonies – Charlie Langton, FOX 2 Detroit**

## **New Members**

**Judith A. Susskind**

J. Kelly Carley, McKeen & Associates PC  
Ronald G. DeWaard, Varnum LLP  
Audrey J. Forbush, Plunket Cooney  
Edward G. Lennon, Lennon Law PLLC  
Marcy R. Matson, Hall Matson PLC  
Thomas G. McHugh, Thomas G. McHugh PC  
Jeffrey T. Meyers, Meyers Law PLC  
Peter A. Smit, Varnum LLP  
Todd J. Stearn, Law Offices of Todd J. Stearn PLC  
Ronald K. Weiner, Lipton Law

## **Award Presentations**

### **Lifetime Judicial Achievement Award**

**Robert F. Riley**

Hon. Robert J. Colombo, Jr., Retired, 3<sup>rd</sup> Circuit Court

### **Civility Award**

**Wilson A. Copeland**

William C. Hurley, Riley & Hurley PC

### **Richard B. Baxter Exemplary Advocate Award**

**Thomas R. Behm**

E. Thomas McCarthy, Jr., Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge PC

### **Scully Outstanding Service Award**

**Daniel J. Scully Jr.**

J.P. O'Leary, John Patrick O'Leary PC

### **Presidential Recognition Award**

**Robert F. Riley**

Cheryl L. Chandler, Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge PC

## **Passing of Gavel**

President - Robert F. Riley, Riley & Hurley PC

President – Elect - Thomas R. Behm, Gruel Mills Attorneys & Counselors

## **2021 Executive Officers**

**President** - Thomas R. Behm, Gruel Mills Attorneys & Counselors

**President-Elect** - Daniel J. Scully, Jr., Clark Hill PLC

**Treasurer** - Judith A. Susskind, Sommers Schwartz PC

**Membership Chair** - Michael R. Janes, Janes Van Camp Moffatt & Selzer PC

**Secretary** - Debra Freid, Freid Gallagher Taylor & Associates PC

**Recognition of Sponsors**

**Thomas R. Behm**

**Closing Remarks**

**Thomas R. Behm**

## **Save the Dates: Annual Meeting and Holiday Gathering**

Friday, December 3, 2021 – Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, Grand Rapids

Friday, December 2, 2022 – Country Club of Detroit, Grosse Pointe Farms

**Special Thank You to our Sponsors!**

**USLEGAL  
SUPPORT**

**The Power of Commitment™**



MEYERS LAW, PLLC

Riley & Hurley, P.C.

LAW OFFICES OF  
TODD J. STEARN, P.C.

 SMITH HAUGHEY  
RICE & ROEGGE  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

# **Lifetime Judicial Achievement Award**

## **2020 Recipient**

### **Honorable Robert J. Colombo, Jr., Retired Wayne County Circuit Court**

Robert J. Colombo, Jr. was elected to the Wayne County Circuit Court serving from 1983 through 2018, the last 5 years as Chief Judge.

He graduated from the University of Miami cum laude with a BBA in accounting and from Detroit College of Law cum laude with a J.D.

Judge Colombo clerked for Michigan Court of Appeals Judge George Bashara, Jr. He practiced civil, criminal and domestic relations in the trial and appellate courts at Riley and Roumell.

For 25 years he was the asbestos judge in Wayne County. The Michigan Supreme Court appointed him the state's breast implant judge. He tried Dow Corning's breast implant coverage case. The Court of Appeals noted " the remarkable skill and patience exhibited by Judge Colombo in the face of some of the most complex and expansive litigation in the history of the state."

Judge Colombo is married to Workers' Compensation Magistrate Jane Sullivan Colombo and they have 2 sons.

### **Prior Recipients**

**2001** Honorable James L. Ryan

**2004** Honorable John Feikens

**2007** Justice Marilyn J. Kelly

**2008** Honorable Dennis C. Kolenda

**2011** Honorable Robert Holmes Bell

**2012** Honorable Julian Abele Cook, Jr.

**2013** \*Honorable Damon J. Keith

**2014** Honorable Pamela R. Harwood

**2015** Honorable Gerald E. Rosen

**2016** Honorable Gershwin A. Drain

**2017** Honorable Nancy Edmunds

**2018** Honorable Jane M. Beckering

**2019** Chief Justice Bridget M. McCormack

\* **Deceased**



# **Civility Award**

## **2020 Recipient**

### **William C. Hurley Riley & Hurley PC**

For having demonstrated the highest degree of professionalism and civility with high integrity and ethical standards

Bill was educated at Wayne State University, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree (with distinction) in 1977 and a Juris Doctor Degree in 1979. He has been a shareholder at Riley & Hurley, P.C. in Dearborn since 1999; previously, he was a shareholder at Feikens, Stevens, Kennedy, Hurley & Galbraith, P.C. in Detroit. His practice focuses on the defense of physicians and hospitals in medical malpractice litigation, representation of professionals in licensing matters and, most recently, serving a mediator.

He was admitted to practice in 1980 and has litigated cases in Michigan circuit courts and the Court of Appeals; the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan; and the United States Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit. He served as Chairman of the State Bar of Michigan's Committee on the Unauthorized Practice of Law. Bill also has served as a member of the Detroit Bar Association's Judicial Candidate Evaluation Committee for several election cycles. He has an AV rating with Martindale-Hubbell.

Bill is a member of the Detroit Bar Association and the Oakland County Bar Association and has served as a Case Evaluator. He is a member of the Michigan Defense Trial Counsel (MDTC) and the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA). In 2006 he was given the Respected Advocate Award by the Michigan Trial Lawyers Association. In 2015 he was given the Distinguished Alumni Award by the Department of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts at Wayne State University.

He also co-owns Hearthside Golden Retrievers in Camden, Michigan and is proud of the many AKC champions and a grand champion that the kennel has produced.

### **Prior Recipients**

**2016** William F. Mills

**2017** Thomas W. Cranmer

**2018** David W. Christensen

**2019** Linda M. Galbraith and Steven B. Galbraith

# **Richard B. Baxter Exemplary Advocate Award**

## **2020 Recipient**

**E. Thomas McCarthy, Jr.  
Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge PC**

Tom McCarthy graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Michigan with a Bachelor of Arts degree and then received his Juris Doctor degree from the University of Tennessee College of Law in 1977. He has been a trial lawyer for over forty years, engaged primarily in civil litigation in state and federal courts. Tom is a shareholder at Smith, Haughey, Rice & Roegge in Grand Rapids where he serves on the Board of Directors and as Co-Chair of the Personal Litigation Practice Group. He focuses his litigation practice on the representation of seriously injured people and businesses who have been harmed by the wrongful conduct of others, and the representation of lawyers, law firms, doctors and hospitals in a wide range of circumstances.

Tom is a Fellow of the International Academy of Trial Lawyers, a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers, a member (Advocate Rank) of the American Board of Trial Advocates and a member of The National Trial Lawyers. He is listed by Best Lawyers and Leading Lawyers for Personal Injury Litigation, Commercial Litigation, and Legal Malpractice Litigation, and was named by Best Lawyers as “Lawyer of the Year” in Grand Rapids for Personal Injury Law in 2009 and 2013, for Legal Malpractice Law for 2016 and 2018, for Mediation in 2019, and Bet-the Company Litigation in 2020. In 2018, Tom was selected as a Leader in the Law by Michigan Lawyers Weekly.

Tom is an elected member of the Board of Commissioners for the State Bar of Michigan for District C. He served as Michigan State Chair for the American College of Trial Lawyers in 2016- 2018. Tom is a member of the Steering Committee of the Hillman Trial Advocacy Program and has served on the teaching faculty of that program for many years. He has also served as a high school mock trial coach for over 20 years. Tom is a certified facilitative mediator and has mediated hundreds of state and federal cases and is a member of the ADR Committee of the Kent County Circuit Court.

### **Prior Recipients**

**2002** J. P. O’Leary

**2003** David W. Christen

**2004** James Feeney

**2005** No Award Given

**2006** \*John E. S. Scott

**2007** Honorable Dennis Archer

**2008** No Award Given

**2009** No Award Given

**2010** \*Paul A. Rosen

**\* Deceased**

**2011** Robert F. Garvey

**2012** Daniel J. Scully Jr.

**2013** \*George J. Bedrosian

**2014** \*Robert S. Krause

**2015** Paul Manion

**2016** George A. Googasian

**2017** Kathleen L. Bogas

**2018** Richard M. O’Connor

**2019** No Award Given

# **Scully Outstanding Service Award**

## **2020 Recipient**

**J. P. O'Leary**  
**John Patrick O'Leary PC**

Wife Jan, 3 sons, 4 grandchildren  
We have resided in Grand Beach for over 10 years  
Benedictine College Ab  
University of Detroit Law School, J.D.  
University of Chicago, Graham School 2009-2012  
Detroit Bar Association President 1986  
ABA House of Delegates  
ABOTA founding member, president 1989-1900  
American College of Trial Lawyers  
International Academy of Trial Lawyers  
ABOTA Trial Lawyer of the Year, 1st recipient 2002  
State Bar of Michigan Most respected Advocate, 1st recipient 1997 Best Lawyers, Super Lawyers

## **Prior Recipients**

**2015** C. Kenneth Perry, Jr.

**2016** James R. Kohl

**2017** Daniel J. Scully

**2018** No Award Given

**2019** Madelyne C. Lawry

# **Presidential Recognition Award**

## **2020 Recipient**

**Cheryl L. Chandler**

**Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge PC**

Cheri is a seasoned and highly regarded Michigan trial lawyer. In her 35 year career as a successful litigator, she has handled hundreds of cases - from claim filing to pretrial settlements to jury verdict and/or appeals as needed. She holds a coveted AV peer rating by Martindale-Hubbell, Inc., the highest rating offered by this prestigious organization.

Cheri has tried cases and appeals before judges and juries in all county Circuit Courts in the Detroit tri-county area, Washtenaw County, Traverse City, Monroe, Adrian, as well as in Federal Court, the American Arbitration Association and the Michigan Supreme Court. As appropriate for each situation and case, she conducts detailed case assessments to determine whether settlement or trial will most likely attain the most favorable outcome for the client.

Cheri defends physicians and health care entities in medical malpractice cases involving all areas of medicine - from family practice, radiology technologists, nurses - to the more technical areas of obstetrics and gynecology, neurosurgery, orthopedics, urology, cardiology, gastroenterology, plastic surgery, radiology and cardiovascular surgery. She represents numerous health care facilities of all types who operate in Wayne, Washtenaw, St. Clair and Macomb counties, many of whom face claims throughout Michigan. In addition, Cheri will assist and advise on other commercial cases and claims.

## **Founding Members**

**Chartered on October 22, 1988**

Richard B. Baxter\*

J. Michael Fordney

George J. Bedrosian\*

Robert N. Foster

Joel M. Boyden\*

David R. Getto

Edmund M. Brady, Jr.\*

James R. Kohl

John F. Chambers

John LaParl\*

John L. Collins\*

John P. O'Leary

David W. Christenson

Harry M. Philo\*

Calvin R. Danhof

Robert C. Russell\*

Jon P. Desenberg

Donald E. Shely

Jon Feikens

William J. Waddell

James P. Feeney

\*Deceased



*Congratulations*  
**Audrey J. Forbush**

American Board of Trial Attorneys  
Class of 2020

111 East Court Street, Suite 1B, Flint, MI 48502  
T: (810) 342-7014 | [afortbush@plunkettcooney.com](mailto:afortbush@plunkettcooney.com)  
[www.plunkettcooney.com](http://www.plunkettcooney.com)

**PLUNKETT**  **COONEY**  
ATTORNEYS & COUNSELORS AT LAW

***CONGRATULATIONS!***  
**Ron DeWaard & Peter Smit**  
on your election to the  
**AMERICAN BOARD OF TRIAL  
ADVOCATES**

**VARNUM**  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

[www.varnumlaw.com](http://www.varnumlaw.com)

Ann Arbor | Birmingham | Detroit | Grand Haven | Grand Rapids | Kalamazoo | Lansing | Naples, FL | Novi



**Ronald G. DeWaard**  
616/336-6480 | [rgdewaard@varnumlaw.com](mailto:rgdewaard@varnumlaw.com)



**Peter A. Smit**  
616/336-6508 | [pasmit@varnumlaw.com](mailto:pasmit@varnumlaw.com)



Thomas W. Stockett, CSSC  
Settlement Specialist

Direct: (800) 453-5414 | Mobile: (248) 766-2408

Email: [tstockett@cwsettlements.com](mailto:tstockett@cwsettlements.com) Website: [cwsettlements.com](http://cwsettlements.com)

### Congratulations 2020 New Members

J. Kelly Carley, McKeen & Associates PC

Audrey J. Forbush, Plunket Cooney

Marcy R. Matson, Hall Matson PLC

Jeffrey T. Meyers, Meyers Law PLC

Todd J. Stearn, Law Offices of Todd J. Stearn PLC

Ronald G. DeWaard, Varnum LLP

Edward G. Lennon, Lennon Law PLLC

Thomas G. McHugh, Thomas G. McHugh PC

Peter A. Smit, Varnum LLP

Ronald K. Weiner, Lipton Law

## Congratulations to **Cheri Chandler** and **Tom McCarthy!** 2020 American Board of Trial Advocates' Award Recipients



Presidential Recognition Award



Richard B. Baxter Exemplary Advocate Award



[www.shrr.com](http://www.shrr.com)

LAW OFFICES OF  
**TODD J. STEARN, P.C.**

We continue to successfully handle premises cases.  
**248-744-5000 / [tjlawfirm.com](http://tjlawfirm.com)**

***Congratulations 2020 New Members***

J. Kelly Carley, McKeen & Associates PC

Audrey J. Forbush, Plunket Cooney

Marcy R. Matson, Hall Matson PLC

Jeffrey T. Meyers, Meyers Law PLC

Todd J. Stearn, Law Offices of Todd J. Stearn PLC

Ronald G. DeWaard, Varnum LLP

Edward G. Lennon, Lennon Law PLLC

Thomas G. McHugh, Thomas G. McHugh PC

Peter A. Smit, Varnum LLP

Ronald K. Weiner, Lipton Law