



# FBA newsletter

Summer 2007

Federal Bar Association - Eastern District of Michigan Chapter - 49 years of service to our Federal Bench and Bar

## Jim Thomas Receives Gilman Award

On April 26, 2007, the Chapter hosted its 23rd Annual Leonard R. Gilman Award Luncheon at the Gem Theatre. The Gilman Award is given annually to an outstanding practitioner of criminal law who exemplifies the excellence, professionalism, and commitment to public service of Len Gilman, who was U.S. Attorney at the time of his death in 1985. The selection is made by prior recipients of the award, many of whom served with and knew Len.

The lunch opened with a welcome from Chapter President Grant P. Gilezan. Then, Judge Gerald E. Rosen delivered remarks honoring James (Jim) C. Thomas, the recipient of the 2007 Gilman Award. Thomas graduated from Wayne State University in 1969 and from Detroit College of Law in 1974. He has been practicing law for more than thirty years and is on the board of directors for the Criminal Defense Attorneys of Michigan.

*(continued on page 3)*

## Supreme Court Adds Teeth to Rule 8 . . . or Maybe Not

By Bryan Schneider\*

A divided case . . . Debate raging . . . A marked departure from past decisions . . . Partial-birth abortion? Affirmative action? The death penalty? No, it's civil procedure time in the Supreme Court.

On May 21, the Court decided *Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly*, an antitrust case with potentially vast implications for federal practitioners. In *Twombly*, the plaintiff alleged an antitrust conspiracy based on allegations of parallel

conduct between the defendants. The complaint merely alleged a conspiracy based on parallel behavior, with no specific allegations relating to the existence of an agreement among the defendants. The Court upheld the district court's dismissal of the action under

*(continued on page 2)*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Annual Dinner Review pg.4

Recent Targets on the IP Radar Screen pg.6

Chapter Headings and Footnotes By Brian Figot pg.8

From Dave Weaver pg.9

Past Presidents pg.9

Leadership Directory pg.9

Calendar of Events pg.11



## President's Column

Grant P. Gilezan

In concluding my year as Chapter President, there is one reflection about my experience that not only stands apart from the others, but it defines, in my mind, our Chapter's

longstanding recipe for success. And that is we remain a Chapter abundant with leaders who, despite our dramatic growth in size over the past half century, maintain a close-knit brand of stewardship and friendship. It has been a privilege and inspiring to lead an organization of such capable and impressive leaders. To serve as President of our Chapter is not like running a marathon; rather, even in these challenging economic times for Michigan, I liken it more to the pleasure of getting behind the wheel of one of the finest automobiles and enjoying a drive fueled by an active spirit of mission and camaraderie.

I am proud and grateful to have had a chance to serve as your President, and I want to take this occasion to recognize and thank the many volunteer leaders in our Chapter listed below, who generously gave their time and talents to our Chapter's 600 members over the past year in organizing twenty-five Chapter events, operating twenty-two committees, actively participating in the National FBA and running a \$100,000 organization.

- Chief Judge Friedman, for leading all the support and participation extended by the Eastern District of Michigan to our Chapter that is so important to the mission and success of our Chapter.

- My fellow Chapter Officers – Hon. Mark Goldsmith, Barbara McQuade, Elisa Angeli, Barbara Rom, Laurie Michelson and Julie Pidgeon – for their energy, enthusiasm, dedication and friendship.

- Chapter Executive Board Members Hon. Robert Cleland, Hon. George Steeh, Hon. Mona Majzoub, Cameron Evans, Claretta Evans, Dan LaCombe, David Lerner, Dan Manville,

*(continued on page 2)*

WINNER  
4 YEARS  
National FBA  
Outstanding  
Newsletter  
Award

## President's Column (continued)

Tom McNeill, Kathie Nesi, Mike Riordan, Jeff Sadowski, Theresa Serra, Miriam Siefer, Adam Strauss, Dona Tracey, Bob Vercruysse, and Kelly Walters, for their guidance, vision and committee leadership.

- Committee Co-Chairs Bill Abbatt, Brian Akkashian, Kim Altman, Christine Dowhan-Bailey, Leslie Berg, Ray Carey, Meghan Cavanaugh, Peggy Costello, Sue Evans, Kevin Fanning, Brian Figot, Rita Foley, Holly Gottschalk, Geneva Halliday, Dan Hurley, Dennis Levasseur, Michael Leibson, John Mayer, Mike Palizzi, Barbara Radke, Meghan Kennedy Riordan, Tom Schehr, Bill Schikora, Dan Sharkey, Elizabeth Stafford and Cathrine Wenger, for their outstanding program, education and community outreach efforts.

- Past Presidents Chris Dowhan-Bailey, Dennis Clark and Dennis Barnes, for their active level of ongoing support and involvement with the Chapter U-, &^!•ÉÁ æ } áÁ Úæ•cÁ Ú!^•áá^ } cÁ R [ ^Á Öá] [ ] } ÉÁ - [ !Á @á•Á kind sponsorship of the Past Presidents Luncheon Meeting and Chapter Annual Dinner at the Detroit Athletic Club.

- Chapter Bar Foundation Trustees Dennis Clark, Bob Forrest, Geneva Halliday, Ed Kronk and Charlie Rutherford, for their promotion of scholarship and charity on behalf of the Chapter.

Chapter Executive Director Brian Figot is also most deserving of special recognition for his tremendous efforts in handling with such profession-

alism, creativity and dedication all of the Chapter's daily administrative and operational needs, demonstrating time after time that he really is one of our Chapter's most valuable assets. As a personal note, I am very grateful for Brian's unwavering sponsorship. Brian became a member (particularly this past year) and for his reliably good humor and friendship at all times of the day.

Dykema Gossett, for enthusiastically supporting my involvement in the Chapter

To my parents, Peter and Star Gilezan, I can't thank them enough for generously affording me every opportunity to become a lawyer and for always being such an incredible source of wisdom and encouragement.

Lastly, I want to thank my wife, Krisztina, and daughters, Lauren and Holly, for enabling me to serve the Chapter with a deep sense of commitment and passion, allowing me the precious extra time to do so and making every provision for me to really

As I said at our Annual Dinner, the view from the with the future being propelled by a formidable 50-year legacy. It has been an honor to serve such a , } ^Á [ !\*æ } á: æcá [ ] ÉÁæ } áÁ , @á^ÁQÁæ { Á } ! ~ áÁ [-Ác^Á { æ } ^Á Ó^•cÁ , á•@^•Á- [ !ÁæÁc^!iá, &Á•~ { { ^!É

## Supreme Court Adds Teeth to Rule 8 (from page 1)

Rule 12(b)(6) for failure to state a claim. In doing so, the Court "retired" its famous Rule 12(b)(6) standard set forth in *Conley v. Gibson* (1957): "a complaint should not be dismissed for failure to state a claim unless it appears beyond doubt that the plaintiff can prove no set of facts in support of his claim which would entitle him to relief."

The *Twombly* Court reasoned that, taken literally, this language would permit conclusory, speculative claims to survive a motion to dismiss "whenever the pleadings left open the possibility that a plaintiff might later establish some set of undisclosed facts to support recovery." Such a rule, the Court held, does not adequately encompass the requirement of Rule 8 that a plaintiff set forth his "grounds" for relief. In the Court's view, complying with this pleading requirement obligates a plaintiff to provide "more than labels and conclusions, and a formulaic recitation of the elements of a cause of action will not do." Rather, "[f]actual

allegations must be enough to raise a right to relief above the speculative level."

With this understanding of Rule 8, the Court explained, *Conley's* "no set of facts" language is best seen as speaking not to the pleading requirements under Rule 8, but to the plaintiff's evidentiary burden. *Conley*, the Court explained, is thus best read as providing that "once a claim has been stated adequately, it may be supported by showing any set of facts consistent with the allegations in the complaint." In other words, "*Conley*, then, described the breadth of opportunity to prove what an adequate complaint claims, not the minimum standard of adequate pleading to govern a complaint's survival."

Cv"Étuv"dnwuj."Twombly"cr rgctu"vq"tgrtgugpv"cuiki pkl- cant alteration in the standard the federal courts should use to evaluate claims attacked by a Rule 12(b)(6) motion to dismiss. A number of commentators initially reacted to the decision by commenting that, as Professor Scott Dodson put it, under *Twombly* "Rule 8 requires 'notice-plus' pleading." This is the clear implication of the Court's language rejecting the *Conley* "no set of facts" standard. However,

*Twombly*’s opinion for the Court focuses extensively on the high costs associated with discovery in an antitrust case. The Court’s decision in *Twombly* heightened pleading standard.

And, just one week after its *Twombly* decision, the Court issued a per curiam summary reversal softening the impact of *Twombly*. In *Erickson v. Pardus*, decided June 4, the Court reversed the district court’s dismissal of a prisoner civil rights complaint alleging inadequate medical care. The Court found that the dismissal of the prisoner’s complaint—which alleged the treatment he was denied and the consequences he suffered as a result—departed in a “stark . . . manner from the pleading standard mandated by the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.” The Court reiterated that Rule 8 provides a liberal pleading standard, and that the dismissal of the prisoner’s complaint does not give the defendant fair notice of the grounds of the claim. The Court explained that the district court’s decision was particularly inappropriate in light of the liberal treatment given to pro se complaints.

It remains to be seen how this will play out. It could be that *Twombly* will be applied by the lower courts in such a way that notice pleading and Rule 12(b)(6) practice will be required to allege dismissal for failure to state a claim. Or, in light of *Erickson*, it could be that the courts will treat *Twombly* as merely emphasizing that purely speculative allegations are not sufficient to state a claim. The pleading standard.

Finally, in light of the language of *Twombly* focusing on the cost of antitrust litigation and the nature of concerted action allegations, the courts may adopt a middle ground, requiring somewhat heightened pleading for cases involving expensive litigation and conspiracy or similar allegations, but following the *Conley* approach in run-of-the-mill cases. While this issue is being played out in the courts, however, practitioners certainly will need to be familiar with *Twombly* and to keep abreast of post-*Twombly* developments.

\*Bryan Schneider is Career Law Clerk to Hon. Paul J. Komives.

## Gilman Award *(from page 1)*

Following the award presentation, past Gilman Award recipient David F. DuMouchel introduced the keynote speaker, Justice Maura D. Corrigan of the Michigan Supreme Court. A Gilman Award winner herself, Justice Corrigan spoke about Lenny Gilman’s legacy, the lessons he taught, and what a wonderful mentor and role model he was.

Approximately 215 people attended this event, including eight Gilman award winners; Mr. Thomas’s wife, Jackie; two of Thomas’s three daughters and members of his family.

The following paragraphs capture the essence of Judge Rosen’s remarks honoring Jim Thomas.



*Jim Thomas, Judge Rosen, Grant Gilezan, Justice Corrigan and David DuMouchel*

“I’ll start with what Jim’s adversaries say about him. To a person, they describe him as both an extremely talented defense lawyer and tenaciously with complete dedication to his clients’ cause, but yet at the same time as a thorough professional of great integrity and complete trustworthiness. One senior federal prosecutor described Jim by saying ‘He’s not only a very effective lawyer who never sells out a client for a quick deal,

but he’s a gentleman whose word is his bond. Unlike with some lawyers, with Jim, a handshake is good enough for me.’ Another prosecutor described Jim as ‘a class act, both in the courtroom and personally.’ Yet another said that he always appreciates having Jim on a case because he knows that there will be ‘no game playing and that only the real issues in the case will be contested.’

“Jim’s colleagues in the defense bar are equally fulsome in their praise. Before I survey their comments, I think it’s interesting to note that in my conversations with these lawyers, I never once detected even a hint of rancor or professional envy. Jim’s colleagues were not only unanimous in their admiration and respect for him as a lawyer and as a professional, but were genuinely happy that Jim has been recognized with this very prestigious award – in fact, a couple of them said, ‘it’s about time.’ . . .

*(continued on page 4)*

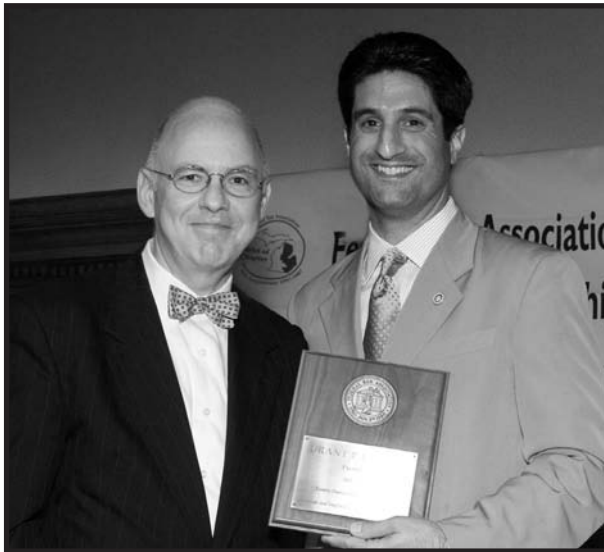
## Gilman Award *(from page 3)*

“So, what did Jim’s colleagues say? Well, one said that what he admired most about Jim was his passion and dedication. He observed that unlike some lawyers, Jim has never become calloused or cynical, and that he never ‘mails it in.’ He always provides his clients with the very best defense they could possibly have – sometimes a lot better than they deserve. A senior federal defender said that one of the things that was most admirable about Jim was that he is always willing to take the toughest and most unpopular panel assignments with some of the very best criminal defense lawyers in the state. If I

another very prominent defense lawyer said ‘Jim is unflappable. No matter how tense the situation, Jim is the coolest head in the room.’ Echoing what the prosecutors told me, another lawyer said, ‘Sometimes your greatest potential problem in a case is not the Government, but your co-counsel. Jim is completely trustworthy – he will watch your back and never blind-side you. At the end of the trial, there will be no teeth marks on your back.’ And the highest praise possible, from one of our most prominent lawyers, ‘Quite simply, Jim has become one of the very best criminal defense lawyers in the state. If I

ygte"kp"vtqwdng."jgou"qpg"qh"vjg"Łtuv"nc y {gtu"Køf"ecnn}ø

The complete text of Judge Rosen’s remarks honoring Jim Thomas may be found on the Chapter website [www.fbamich.org](http://www.fbamich.org) under Speeches/Remarks.



*Incoming President Mark A. Goldsmith and Outgoing President Grant P. Gilezan*

## Annual Dinner Celebrates Chapter’s 50th Year

On June 7, 2007, the Chapter held its 28th Annual Dinner at the Detroit Athletic Club. This year, the Eastern District of Michigan and celebrated our Chapter’s 50th year of service to the bench and bar. The celebration began with an outdoor cocktail reception at the Stadium Pavilion with its

panoramic view of Comerica Park and continued indoors in the elegant Main Dining Room.

The event was well-attended. There were over 240 guests, including four Oakland County Circuit Court Judges: President-elect Hon. Mark Goldsmith, Hon. Edward Sosnick, Hon. Wendy Potts, and

Hon. Fred Mester; Federal Appellate, District Court and Magistrate Judges; private practitioners; U.S. Attorneys; Federal Defenders; judicial law clerks; and their guests. State Bar Executive Director Janet K. Welch was also in attendance. All gathered to celebrate our Chapter’s 50th Anniversary, to pay tribute to and mingle with the judicial business, and to enjoy the



*Mark Lezotte, Sara Fischer, Mike Leibson, Joe LaBella, Justin Klimko, Angela Williams, Brian Figot, Judy Zorn and Jim Robb*



*A (Habeas) Chorus Line performs at the Annual Dinner. Pictured from left to right are Mike Leibson, Mark Lezotte and Brian Figot.*



*Past Presidents attending the Annual Dinner: Richard A Tarnas, Christine Dowhan-Bailey, Hon. Fred M. Mester, Brian D. Figot, Grant P. Gilezan, Dennis J. Clark, Wallace D. Riley, Hon. Ralph B. Guy, Jr., John P. Mayer, Alan C. Harnisch, Thomas W. Cranmer, Joseph F. Dillon, Charles R. Rutherford, Russell M. Paquette, Daniel P. Malone, John R. Runyan, Jr., Hon. Virginia M. Morgan, Lawrence G. Campbell, Michael C. Leibson, Richard A. Rossman, and Edward M. Kronk.*

camaraderie of fellow FBA members.

Chief Judge Bernard A. Friedman addressed the group. Mark A. Goldsmith, President; Barbara L. McQuade, President-Elect; Elisa M. Angeli, Vice President; Barbara J. Rom, Secretary; Laurie J. Michelson, Treasurer; and Michael J. Riordan, Program Chair.

As his first official act, President Goldsmith acknowledged the dedication and leadership of outgoing President Grant Gilezan. He then introduced Charles R. Rutherford and Brian D. Figot, who provided historical remembrances from our Chapter's earlier days. The following past presidents were then introduced and proceeded to the Pontchartrain Room for their group photograph (and some spontaneous singing): Richard T. Tarnas, Christine M. Dowhan-Bailey, Hon. Fred M. Mester, Brian D. Figot, Grant P. Gilezan, Dennis J. Clark, Wallace D. Riley, Hon.



*Charlie Rutherford at the Annual Dinner.*

Ralph B. Guy, Jr., John P. Mayer, Alan C. Harnisch, Thomas M. Cranmer, Joseph F. Dillon, Charlie R. Rutherford, Russell M. Paquette, Daniel P. Malone, John R. Runyan, Jr., Hon. Virginia M. Morgan, Lawrence G. Campbell, Michael C. Leibson, Richard A. Rossman, and Edward M. Kronk.

The evening concluded with a performance by our legal community's talented musical parody troupe, A (Habeas) Chorus Line, consisting of Brian Figot, Sara Fischer, Justin Klimko, Joseph LaBella, Michael Leibson, Mark Lezotte, James Robb, Angela Williams, and Judith Zorn.

The Chapter thanks its sponsors for their contribution to the 28th Annual Dinner. Thanks in large part to these sponsors, our Chapter is once again able to contribute several thousand dollars to the Federal Bar Foundation. This year's sponsors were:



*Oakland County Circuit Judges Wendy Potts, Fred Mester, Mark Goldsmith and Ed Sosnick.*

*(continued page 6)*

## Annual Dinner *(from page 5)*

Barris Sott Denn & Driker PLLC  
Bodman LLP  
Brooks Kushman PC  
Butzel Long PLC  
Charles Taunt & Associates PLLC  
Clark Hill PLC  
Dickinson Wright PLLC  
Dykema Gossett, PLLC  
Foley & Lardner LLP  
Harness, Dickey & Pierce PLC  
Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn LLP  
Howard & Howard Attorneys  
Kitch Drutchas Wagner Valitutti & Sherbrook  
Oknngt"EcpLgnf"Rc f f qem"cpf"Uvqpg"RNE  
Pepper Hamilton LLP  
Rader, Fishman & Grauer PLLC

We also thank Honigman Miller for providing the invitations and programs for the Annual Dinner and the Chairs, Theresa Serra, Cameron Evans, and Susan Evans, for their dedication in making this 28th Annual Dinner and celebration of our Chapter's 50th year so memorable.

## Recent Targets on the IP Radar Screen

By William G. Abbott\*

Two targets recently popped up on the IP radar screen: (1) a Pricewaterhouse Coopers ("PWC") survey of federal district court IP cases; and (2) the United States Supreme Court's decision in *MUT"xj"Vngtgz"Kpel*, 127 S.Ct. 1727 (2007) (Kennedy, J.), a case which originated in this district.

**The PWC Survey** -- PricewaterhouseCoopers recently studied damages awards in patent and trademark cases. Of the 2193 federal district court cases studied, 1367 were patent cases, 797 were trademark cases, and 29 cases included both patent and trademark issues. Of the 350 Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit cases considered, 273 were patent cases, 70 were trademark cases, and 7 cases included both issues.

Vjg"uwtxg{"eqpukfgtgf"v y gpv{/Lxg"Lngf"kp"vjg"Gcuvgtp" District of Michigan that were decided between 1996-2006. Seventeen were decided on summary judgment, and 8 were tried. Plaintiff won 3 times, and lost 22 times (12%). How these cases fared on appeal was not reported.

Concluding that the lowest win rate nationwide for plaintiffs occurred in the Eastern District of Michigan, the

study noted that the Western District of Wisconsin was the most favorably disposed to plaintiffs, with a win rate of 63% overall. Interestingly, that court is one of the jurisdictions that has adopted patent rules for litigation. Others include California, Texas, Georgia and Pennsylvania.

The survey observed that "carefully choosing the right . . . venue . . . has never been more important to achieving success in IP litigation." A copy of the report can be obtained from Kathryn Oliver. Her e-mail address is kathryn.oliver@us.pwc.com.

*MUT"xj"Vngtgz* -- Imagine that you drive a car and that you are short in stature. Depending on the car, an accelerator pedal assembly may be available that includes an adjustment apparatus which allows the position of the pedal arm and/or a pedal pad to be moved upwardly so that it can be situated closer to you. As technology advances, an electronic throttle control assembly may replace traditional mechanical linkages between the pedal arm and the engine throttle. Problem solution assumes problem recognition. As an astute inventor, you realize that when a vehicle control pedal assembly includes an adjustment apparatus and an electronic throttle control, the pedal assembly can be quite complex. Such pedal assemblies can be expensive, time-consuming to assemble, and require a uk i pkLecpv"o qwpv"qh"rcemc i kpi"urceg0" [qw"cum" {qwtugnh" -- wouldn't it be nice to simplify things?

So you invent a vehicle control pedal assembly that is less expensive, uses fewer parts, and is easier to package within the vehicle. Your solution has an electronic throttle control that is responsive to a pivot for providing a signal corresponding to the pedal arm position as the pedal arm r kxqv"cdqvv"vjg" r kxqv"czku0" [qw"Lng"c"rcvqpv"cr rnkcvkqp0" The patent examiner considers prior art that includes a sliding mechanism where both the pedal and the pivot point are adjusted. He allows your application to issue as c"rcvqpv"dgecwug" {qwt"enck o u"kpaw fg"cnk o kvcvkqp<"c"Lzgf" pivot position, which distinguishes your design from the prior art. Your patent issues. Your role in this scenario is akin to inventor Engelgau, who assigned his patent, U.S. Rcvqpv"Pq0"8.459.787"vq"Vngtgz0

General Motors (GMC) chose KSR to supply adjustable pedal systems for trucks using computer-controlled v j tqvngu0"Chvgt"hgctpkp i "qh"MUTo"fguk i p."Vngtgz"uwgf"hq" infringement, asserting that KSR's pedal system infringed the '565 patent. But KSR's view was that the patent was invalid under 35 U.S.C. § 103 of the Patent Act, which forbids issuance of a patent when ". . . the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art." In other words, Vngtgz"ct i wgf"vjcv"vjg"kpvgpvkqp"ycu"qdxkquw0"

Holding the ‘565 patent invalid, the district court granted KSR’s motion for summary judgment of invalidity. The district court found “little difference” between the prior art’s teachings and the patent. The court reasoned that (1) the state of the industry would inevitably lead to combinations of electronic sensors and adjustable pedal, (2) three prior art patents collectively provided the basis for these developments, and (3) the prior art taught a solution

of obviousness are set out in *Graham v. John Deere & Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 17-18 (1966): “[T]he scope and content of the prior art are . . . determined; differences between the prior art and the claims at issue are . . . ascertained; and the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art resolved. Against this background the obviousness or nonobviousness of the subject matter is determined. Such secondary considerations as commercial success, long felt but unsolved needs, failure of others, etc., might be utilized to give light to the circumstances surrounding the origin of the subject matter sought to be patented.”

To resolve the obviousness question with more uniformity and consistency and impose an “objective” standard for properly combining prior art, the Federal Circuit has used a “teaching, suggestion, or motivation” (TSM) test. Under the test, a patent claim is obvious only if the prior art, the problem’s nature, or the knowledge of a person having ordinary skill in the art reveals some motivation or suggestion to combine the prior art teachings. Criticisms of the PTO examiner is precluded from rejecting claims based on his own gut reaction; and expert witnesses at trial are inhibited from expressing their own opinion from the viewpoint of one of ordinary skill in the art.

Thus, by using a common sense approach, including considering the state of the industry, the district court departed from strict adherence to the TSM test in holding that the ‘565 patent was invalid. The Federal Circuit patent was not invalid and that the lower court incorrectly applied the TSM test.

Faced with the risk of paying damages, KSR turned to the Supreme Court for help. KSR was of the view that the ‘565 patent was indeed invalid for obviousness under § 103. background, the question framed by the Supreme Court was whether “a claimed invention can be ‘obvious’, and therefore unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), without proof of some ‘teaching, suggestion, or motivation’ to modify or combine the prior art in the manner claimed.”

Agreeing with the District Court’s recitation of the relevant prior art and its determination of the level of ordinary skill in the art, the Supreme Court ruled that claim

4 of the ‘565 patent was obvious. In the Supreme Court’s view, “KSR provided convincing evidence that mounting was a design step that was well within the grasp of a person of ordinary skill in the relevant art.” *KSR*, 127 S.Ct. 1727 at 1945. Further, “in rejecting the District Court’s rulings, the Court of Appeals analyzed the issue in a narrow, rigid manner inconsistent with § 103 and our precedents.” *Id.* If you were in the shoes of inventor Engelgau, wouldn’t you (to put it mildly) be disappointed?

The ruling has been praised by some observers and criticized by others. In the Supreme Court’s view, the Federal Circuit erred by applying a rigid rule to prevent incremental or ordinary inventions. Other commentators observe the Supreme Court made it “harder to get new patents and to defend existing ones, giving new force to the law that denies patents to inventions deemed ‘obvious.’” WALL ST. JNL., p. A3 (May 1, 2007). Some observe that a technology company, whose software programs may be built on small improvements in prior design, may be hard hit by the ruling. Others that may be touched include “business method” patents, which may be granted

At this writing, *KSR* is now over one month old. In that time, appellants have not fared well at the PTO. In May 2007, the PTO issued obviousness rejections. “Peter Zura’s ‘271 Patent Blog,” June 5, 2007. It appears that appellants have managed to overturn obviousness rejections in only 36% of appeals decided in the PTO during that month. *Id.*

Before *KSR*, there was a fairly strict prerequisite to establishing obviousness – it was necessary to show a teaching, suggestion, or motivation to combine prior art teachings. Now, under *KSR*, TSM is only one of the factors that can be considered in determining obviousness. In its last analysis, the *KSR* decision probably did not shake up that much about obviousness, because for over forty years, circumstances surrounding the origin of the subject matter sought to be patented, such as commercial success, long felt but unsolved needs, the failure of others, etc. *Graham*, 383 U.S. at 17-18.

\* *Mr. Abbott is a Shareholder at Brooks, Kushman, Rutledge & King LLP. He may be reached at (248) 358-4400 and at wabbatt@brookskushman.com.*



## Chapter Headings and Footnotes

By Brian D. Figot,  
Executive Director

If I had obtained my undergraduate degree before the hoopla of the National Bicentennial of 1976, instead of two years after it was done, there

is little doubt that I would have chosen to be an historian instead of a lawyer. There is therefore a certain symmetry in undertaking to compile and chronicle our Chapter's history during our semi-centennial celebration of 50 years since the founding of the Detroit Chapter.

There are several intertwined subjects that need to be researched simultaneously:

- **Historical:** We must learn more about the people who have been members, leaders, scholarship recipients, luncheon speakers and who have in other ways made the commitments and contributions that have sustained us over the years;

- **Organizational:** We must chart how the collective outlook, structure and focus of the Chapter has changed -- the dynamics of the organization itself, as a vibrant and living entity which has to be responsive to the needs of its constituent members;

- **Contextual:** The impact that changing times has had on who we are and what we do;

- **Memories and "Stuff":** We need to have people let us know what they know and permit us to view and/or obtain memorabilia such as notes, clippings, pictures, anything else that helps us compile the information and overall sense by which the biographical, organizational and contextual are accomplished.

The admixture of those four areas became evident to me when I was tasked with giving a 5-10 minute presentation to this year's Annual Dinner, on the topic of broad consensus, I called around to some of the more recent chairs.

The overwhelming response was: We tried to sustain and build upon what we found already in place. That is what makes for a successful chapter and that is what has made ours a successful chapter. It is why people renew their memberships and stay involved. It is why other organizations have stagnated and why ours continues to grow:

a process of evolutionary change.

However, I also found a theme of revolutionary change that twice predominated over the past quarter century, as the of particular individuals leading a willing organization in

were necessary and desirable.

Alan Harnisch was our Chapter president. Before Alan's year, we had been involved with National FBA, and part of continuing with Dick Tarnas, as 6th Circuit Vice Presidents. Alan built upon that – and in the process brought profound changes to the National structure.

At that time, FBA chapters, ours included, were locally based and locally focused.

Alan led a movement by which the chapters, nationwide, became a fully integrated and vital part of the previously parochial National organization. National got the chapters, led by Alan and by Geneva Halliday, obtained became President of National – only the second “outsider”

The second overwhelming consensus I found was the undying gratitude our Chapter owes to a past president who came forward, long after his year as president was up, to lead the technical revolution which brought us into the new century.

John Mayer was president five years after Alan Harnisch. He was, at the same time, Court Administrator for the Eastern District of Michigan. Fifteen years later, John was enjoying a nice, quiet, well-deserved retirement on the waterfront in Wyandotte. The Chapter, however, found itself in a crisis. We had had executive secretaries, later called executive directors, for many years. However, we needed an administrator – and John agreed to serve. He lent us his experience, his leadership, his imagination and his friendship. With John's guidance, for which I am personally indebted – we got a computer, got our membership system computerized and built a web capability and presence that is the envy of FBA chapters nationally.

And so we grow. Now, to continue the historical compilation, we need your help.

From contemporaneous articles in the Federal Bar News, we know the names of our earliest members and a know about that topic, an article is on-line at <http://www.fbamich.org/index.cfm?location=9> from our Winter 2003 FBA Newsletter.)

We also know a little bit about the celebration of our 25th Anniversary, on December 3, 1982, from which we have a program and an article that ran in the Detroit Legal Advertiser, which has since merged with the Detroit Legal News – a longtime friend of the Chapter.

However, having a little bit can be a big tease. The 1982 article has a picture of Judge Freeman and Louis M. Hopping as they “display the original composite picture of some of the chapter's charter members, taken 25 years



earlier." They are holding up an 8x10, but the newsprint does not allow a clearer view. Does anyone have a copy of that photo or know of any descendants of Mr. Hopping or Judge Freeman whom I could contact in trying to track this down?

Other than Annual Dinner programs, we have little else from the earliest period, 1957-1982. Remembrances from people like Charlie Rutherford, who spoke at our Annual Dinner this year, are invaluable. We need more people to come forward to share what they know. For all years and all members: we need you to search your attics, basements, steamer trunks and most of all your memories. Calls, cards, letters and emails are all welcome. Are you a second or third generation member? If so, what can you



## From Court Administrator Dave Weaver

Well, it's Summer, and I am ready to hit the beach, so just a few updates on activities at the Court:

The Court has appointed a Merit Selection Panel to make recommendations regarding the Flint Magistrate Judge vacancy. The Panel is chaired by attorney James Burdick and the vice-chair is Judge Denise Langford. Recommendations by August 17, 2007. The Court will then conduct its own interviews and make a selection by majority vote of the district judges in active service.

There is an interesting provision in the Judicial Conference regulations for selecting a new magistrate judge. If none of the additional candidates receives a majority vote, the Chief Judge has the authority to make a selection. Regardless of how the candidate is ultimately selected, he or she must undergo a complete FBI background check.

The Court recently approved a number of revisions to the CM/ECF Policies and Procedures. Please be sure to visit the Court's CM/ECF website regularly to obtain information on all current updates: [www.mied.uscourts.gov](http://www.mied.uscourts.gov).

The re-design of the Court's website is nearing completion. If you are interested in participating in a focus group that will review and provide feedback on the new design, please email me at the address below.

Remember, if you have any questions or comments, please send them to me at [mie\\_fba@mied.uscourts.gov](mailto:mie_fba@mied.uscourts.gov).

## Past Presidents Convene as Nominating Committee By Brian D. Figot, Executive Director

The past presidents of the Chapter meet with the current presidents to serve in their formal role as the heart of the Nominating Committee. This year, the meeting on May 3rd was generously and graciously hosted, once again, by past president Joe Dillon, and presided over by the Chapter's 47th and 48th presidents, Grant Gilezan and Judge Mark Goldsmith.\*

Among those present were some of our earliest presidents: Wally Riley (1963-1964), Charlie Rutherford (1966-1967), Russell Paquette (1967-1968), Dick Tarnas (1976-1977) and John MacMillan (1978-1979). They were joined by sixteen more Past Presidents for an early afternoon of important business for the future of the Chapter and equally important remembrances of the past.

At the Annual Dinner on June 7th, the past presidents again turned out in force to help celebrate our 50th year of service to the bench and bar.

Federal District Judge Fred Kaess, served from December 1957 until June 1960. A complete listing of our past presidents can be found on our website, [www.fbamich.org](http://www.fbamich.org), at "About Us."

## Chapter Leadership Directory Executive Board 2007-2008

### Term Ending 2008

Cameron J. Evans  
Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn  
660 Woodward Avenue #2290  
Detroit, MI 48226  
Phone: (313) 465 7370  
[cje@honigman.com](mailto:cje@honigman.com)

Claretta Evans  
211 West Fort Street #700  
Detroit MI 48226-3263  
Phone: (313) 226-7912  
[claretta.evans@usdoj.gov](mailto:claretta.evans@usdoj.gov)

David A. Lerner  
Plunkett & Cooney PC  
38505 Woodward Avenue #2000  
Phone: (248) 901-4010  
[dlerner@plunkettcooney.com](mailto:dlerner@plunkettcooney.com)

---

## Executive Board 2007-2008

### Term Ending 2009 *(from page 9)*

Dennis J. Levasseur  
Bodman LLP  
901 Saint Antoine Street, Floor 6  
Ford Field  
Detroit, MI 48226  
Phone: (313) 393-7596  
dlevasseur@bodmanllp.com

Thomas G. McNeill  
Dickinson Wright, PLLC  
500 Woodward Avenue #4000  
Detroit, MI 48226-5403  
Phone: (313) 223-3500  
tmcneill@dickinson-wright.com

Thomas Schehr  
Dykema Gossett, PLLC  
400 Renaissance Center, 35th Floor  
Detroit, MI 48243-1669  
Phone: (313) 568-6659  
tschehr@dykema.com

Dona A. Tracey  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
477 Michigan Avenue  
Detroit MI 48226-2523  
Phone: (313) 471-3644  
dona.tracey@mail.va.gov

### Term Ending 2009

Honorable Robert H. Cleland  
United States District Judge  
707 United States Courthouse  
Detroit MI 48226  
Phone: (313) 234-5525

Kimberly G. Altman  
Career Law Clerk to Hon. Avern Cohn  
219 United States Courthouse  
Detroit, MI 48226  
Phone (313) 234-5163  
Kimberly\_Altman@mied.uscourts.gov

Daniel J. LaCombe  
Barris, Sott, Denn & Driker  
211 West Fort Street #1500  
Detroit MI 48226  
Phone: (313) 596-9309  
dlacombe@bsdd.com

Jeffrey A. Sadowski  
Howard & Howard Attorneys  
39400 Woodward Avenue #101  
Detroit, MI 48226  
Phone: (248) 645-1483  
jsadowski@howardandhoward.com

Elizabeth A. Stafford  
Assistant United States Attorney  
211 West Fort Street #2001  
Detroit, MI 48226  
Phone: (313) 226-9692  
elizabeth.stafford@usdoj.gov

Adam B. Strauss  
Dykema Gossett, PLLC  
39577 Woodward Avenue #300  
Detroit, MI 48226  
Phone: (248) 203-0764  
astrauss@dykema.com

Kelly A. Walters  
Roumell, Lange & Cholack, PLC  
314 Town Center Drive  
Troy, MI 48084  
Phone: (248) 619-2500  
kwalters@lange-cholack.com

### Term Ending 2010

Honorable George C. Steeh  
United States District Judge  
235 United States Courthouse  
Detroit MI 48226  
Phone: (313) 234-5175

Honorable Mona Majzoub  
United States Magistrate Judge  
704 United States Courthouse  
Detroit MI 48226  
Phone: (313) 234-5205

Leslie K. Berg  
United States District Judge  
211 West Fort Street #700  
Detroit MI 48226  
Phone: (313) 226-7950  
leslie.k.berg@usdoj.gov

Kathleen Moro Nesi  
Assistant United States Attorney  
211 West Fort Street #2001  
Detroit, MI 48226-3202  
Phone: (313) 226-9518  
kathleen.nesi@usdoj.gov

Theresa M. Serra  
Career Law Clerk to Hon. Nancy G. Edmunds  
211 United States Courthouse  
Detroit MI 48226  
Phone: (313) 234 5158  
Theresa\_Serra@mied.uscourts.gov

Miriam L. Siefer  
Chief Federal Defender  
645 Griswold #2255  
Detroit MI 48226  
Phone: (313) 961-4150  
miriam.siefer@fd.org

Robert M. Vercruysse  
Vercruysse, Murray & Calzone PC  
31780 Telegraph Road #00  
Bingham Farms, MI 48025  
Phone: (248) 540-7011  
Fax: (248) 540-8059  
rvercruysse@vmclaw.com

## Officers 2007-2008

### PRESIDENT

Hon. Mark A. Goldsmith  
Oakland County Circuit Judge  
1200 North Telegraph Road  
Pontiac MI 48341-0404  
Phone: 248-858-0337  
goldsmithm@oakgov.com

### PRESIDENT ELECT

Barbara L. McQuade  
Assistant United States Attorney  
211 West Fort Street, Suite 2001  
Detroit MI 48226-3269  
Phone: 313-226-9725  
barbara.mcquade@usdoj.gov

### VICE PRESIDENT

Elisa M. Angeli  
Oknngt."EcpŁgnf."Rc f f qem" ( "Uvqpg"RNE  
150 W Jefferson #2500  
Detroit MI 48226-4415  
Phone: 313-496-7635  
cpi gnk B o k n n g t e c p Ł g n f 0 e q o

### SECRETARY

Barbara J. Rom  
Pepper Hamilton LLP  
100 Renaissance Center  
Detroit MI 48243-1157  
Phone: 313-393-7351  
romb@pepperlaw.com

### TREASURER

Laurie J. Michelson  
Butzel Long PC  
150 West Jefferson #100  
Detroit MI 48226-4450  
Phone: 313-983-7463  
michelso@butzel.com

### PROGRAM CHAIR

Michael J. Riordan  
Assistant United States Attorney  
211 W Fort St #2001  
Detroit MI 48226  
Phone: 313-226-9602  
michael.riordan@usdoj.gov

### IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Grant P. Gilezan  
Dykema Gossett PLLC  
400 Renaissance Center  
Detroit MI 48243-1669  
Phone: 313-568-6789  
ggilezan@dykema.com

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Brian D. Figot  
Ncy "QhŁegu"qh"Uvgr jgp"O0"Ncpfcw  
30100 Telegraph Road Suite 428  
Bingham Farms MI 48025-4564  
Phone: 248-358-0870 x-11  
bdf@slandau.com

## Calendar of Events

- Sept 11 **State of the Court Luncheon**  
Speaker: Hon. Bernard A. Friedman  
Atheneum Hotel, Greektown  
11:30 A.M. Reception  
12:00 Noon Lunch
- Sept 17 **State of the Bankruptcy Court Luncheon**  
Speaker: Hon. Steven W. Rhodes  
Site: TBA  
11:30 A.M. Reception  
12:00 Noon Lunch
- Oct 17 **Third Annual Walter Shapero Bankruptcy Symposium**  
Speaker: Professor Scott Norberg  
Topic: The National Empirical Study of the Consumer Bankruptcy System  
Site and Time: TBA
- Nov 12 **Annual Bankruptcy Seminar**  
Hold the Date  
Details to be announced.
- Nov 15 **Rakow Scholarship Awards/ Historical Society Luncheon**  
Topic: The Vincent Chin Murder Case  
Site: TBA  
11:30 A.M. Reception  
12:00 Noon Lunch
- Dec 4-5 **New Lawyers Seminar**  
United States Courthouse  
8:00 A.M. Registration

Updates and further developments  
at [www.fbamich.org](http://www.fbamich.org)  
See "Hot News" and "Events & Activities"

---

### Newsletter Committee:

Kimberly G. Altman,  
Co-Editor in Chief  
Career Law Clerk to  
Hon. Avern Cohn  
(313) 234-5160

Christina Farinola,  
Co-Editor in Chief  
Law Clerk to  
Hon. Paul J. Komives  
(313) 234-5200

Michael J. Riordan  
Assistant United States Attorney  
(313) 226-9602

Christine M. Dowhan-Bailey  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
(313) 226-6822

Thomas M. Schehr  
Dykema PLLC  
(313) 568-6659

John Mayer  
Management Consultant  
(734) 558-5593

Bryan J. Anderson  
Dykema PLLC  
(313) 568-5439

Dennis J. Levasseur  
Bodman LLP  
(313) 393-7596

### Executive Director:

Brian D. Figot  
Stephen M. Landau PC  
(248) 358-0870  
fbamich@fbamich.org

---

**Federal Bar Association**  
**E. D. Michigan Chapter**  
30100 Telegraph Rd., Suite 428  
Bingham Farms, MI 48025-4564

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Wyandotte, MI  
PERMIT #153

WINNER  
4 YEARS  
National FBA  
Outstanding  
Newsletter  
Award

---