



Amicus Curiae

Association of Retired Attorneys of Sarasota, Inc.

www.retiredattorneysarasota.org

June 2021

Officers

Stephen Sturm,
President
Richard Bruning,
Vice President
Benjamin I. Berman,
Treasurer
Karen Mason,
Secretary

Directors

Benjamin I. Berman
Richard Bruning
James Case
Millie Collins
Joel Helmrich
Michael Krasnow
Karen Mason
Judith Starr
Stephen Sturm
Harold M. Zabin

Newsletter Editor

Michael Krasnow

Administrative Assistant

Judy Dean

Table of Contents

| | |
|------|---------------------------------------|
| Page | |
| 1 | Monthly Meeting Topic |
| 2 | Amicus Personae Robert Wolfe |
| 3 | Membership Meetings |
| 3 | Ideas for Future Programs |
| 3 | .. Suncoast Community Mediation |
| 3 | Newsletter Ideas Welcome |

Friday, June 25
will be our final Zoom
membership meeting at 12 noon.

Commencing September 24 we will
return to Marina Jack.

Further information will follow.

June Speaker: Michael Lang, J.D.

Topic:

"Conflict resolution during the pandemic and mentoring colleagues"

For over 40 years Michael has mediated family, workplace and organizational disputes.

He has designed and presented introductory and advanced mediation and conflict management courses, workshops and webinars in the US and internationally.

Michael created one of the first graduate programs in conflict resolution in the US at Antioch University in 1992 and served in a similar role at Royal Roads University in Victoria, BC.

He has authored The Practitioners Guide to Reflective Practice in Conflict Resolution (2019), co-authored The Making of a Mediator: Developing Artistry in Practice, (2000). He is the lead author for a series of ebooks, Divorce and Separation: A Practical Guide To Making Smart Decisions. He is the co-creator and co-editor of Living Together, Separating, Divorcing: Surviving During a Pandemic (2020) and Family Conflict During a Pandemic: Stories of Struggle and Hope (2021).

Because of the wealth of talent and interesting lives led by our very diverse membership, we continue our series of stories focusing on the lives of our members. It is our hope to eventually cover every member.

“Amicus Personae” – Robert Wolfe
Member of The Association of Retired Attorneys of Sarasota

Robert Wolfe was born in Omaha, Nebraska and moved at age 14 to Highland Park III, a suburb of Chicago. His mother had assured him that he could do anything in life that he wanted “as long as you are prepared to give up your god given gift to be a lawyer.” With that very much in mind, he was an honors graduate of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia and went on to receive his law degree from Columbia Law School, cum laude, where he was an editor of the Law Journal and a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar.

After graduating from Columbia, Robert joined the 125-year-old Wolf Haldenstein firm in New York City where he became the youngest partner of the firm in its history. After the usual training in all departments, he settled into the corporate, mergers and acquisitions practice of the firm. Having settled in New Rochelle, he later formed a new firm which became the largest law firm north of New York other than those based in the city.

Wolfe was appointed Chairman of the New Rochelle Industrial Development Agency and served in that capacity for 12 years. He claims his chairmanship and longevity was because he was the only person in town who was hated with equal fervor by both Republicans and Democrats. Simultaneously, Robert served on the Board of Westchester Jewish Community Services, a large county-wide mental health social services organization, serving on the Board for over 25 years and as the Agency President for two years.

By referral from his young son, Wolfe was retained by one of the Internet’s original success stories which became one of the first web companies to go public with spectacular results. Early in that representation he developed the basic documents which established the museum store for New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art. When the first meeting of the parties took place in the Museum Board Room, he and Museum counsel admitted to one another that they had no idea what they were doing. Nonetheless, the store is thriving to this day.

Ultimately, Robert endured a brainstorm which caused him to write and have approved three US and foreign patents which led to the founding of a software development company. Wolfe would later sell the company to a public company and take on the role of Executive Vice President and General Counsel of the combined companies. In that role, he negotiated and closed long-term licensing agreements with US and foreign cable television operators who sought to incorporate the company’s software into cable set top boxes in the US, Europe and Japan.

Robert left his company without having learned the skills of golf or retirement. He sought to use his legal skills and became Associate General Counsel and Director of Technology and Transactional Law at New York’s largest hospital system, New York Presbyterian Hospital, the hospital of Cornell Medical School and Columbia’s College of Physicians and Surgeons. His assignments ranged from conversion to electronic medical records to acquiring the Hospital’s first three-armed robot. After closing on the robot, the Hospital decided they really needed a four-armed robot. So goes medical technology.

Continued on Page 3

By 2010, Robert and his wife had had enough cold weather and moved to Florida where Robert continued his work remotely for the Hospital and his wife founded a computer training business for seniors. Robert tried to retire after about a year, but the law beckoned again. Therefore, he became one of the oldest persons to sit for the Florida Bar Exam. Upon receiving a passing mark, he declared proudly "Never Again!" He also serves as the District 22 Law Officer of the United States Power Squadrons and as a member of its national law board. He spends much of his spare time as Editor of the SPSS South Wind newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

In view of the clearly improving situation with respect to the pandemic, and anticipating continued improvement over the next several months, the Board of Directors of the Association of Retired Attorneys of Sarasota has approved resuming our monthly luncheon membership meetings at Marina Jack commencing September 24, 2021.

We look forward to seeing each other in person and having lunch together again. Look for notices in the coming months as to the programs to be presented at our future meetings.

Our June 25, 2021 meeting will be our last meeting on Zoom.

Ideas for Future Programs?

The Program Committee is always receptive to ideas for future programs. If any member has a topic or a speaker to suggest, please contact Judith Starr at jrstarr@tampabay.rr.com. Any member interested in participating in the Program Committee should notify Judith Starr, Chair of the committee. Her contact information is in our Directory. The committee is planning to meet by zoom sometime in September or October.

Judith Starr is a member of the Board of Directors of our Association, and is excited to announce the formation of Suncoast Community Mediation, Inc. (SCM), a Florida non-profit with the mission to provide dispute resolution services to underserved people and communities in the Sarasota and Manatee County area. SCM is one of five community mediation centers being formed with a grant from the National Association for Community Mediation, and, with a fellow center being formed in West Palm Beach, will be the first non-court community mediation centers in Florida. Community mediation centers provide dispute resolution at the earliest stage of conflict, offer an alternative to the judicial system, help to increase collaborative community relationships, and engage in educational activities about dispute resolution.

Judith is serving as a director and Secretary to SCM. The Peace Education and Action Center of Sarasota has agreed to serve as SCM's fiscal sponsor, which means that it will be responsible for tax-deductible fundraising so SCM can focus on becoming operational before applying for its own federal tax exemption. This summer SCM will focus on developing a pilot project to provide mediation through one or more service organizations. Once Suncoast is operational, Judith will be seeking volunteer mediators and hopes to find some among our members.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

If you have items of interest to the members, please forward them to Michael Krasnow at mekraz@sbcglobal.net.