



Mark Your Calendars Now!



3/11

New Volunteer
Orientation
CVLS Office
Noon

3/18

Board Meeting
CVLS Office
Noon

3/19

Seminar: "Advanced
Care Planning"
By Karen Long
CVLS Office
12:15 PM

4/1

GAL for Minors
Training
CVLS Office
12:00-2:00 PM

4/23

Seminar: "Mortgage
Loss Mitigation"
by Mike VanZalingen
CVLS Office
12:15 PM



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Be careful what you wish for.

Melissa's problems all started when she agreed to rent out a single family home. Upon moving in, her tenant agreed to pay \$800 -- \$750 for the rent and \$50 towards the security deposit. After the first year, the tenant signed another lease, this time for \$800 a month in rent. In August of 2005, the tenant moved out because the price of maintenance and heating was just too high. In October of that year Melissa requested the ex-tenant's forwarding address so she could send a letter regarding the return of the security deposit. In November she sent the tenant a check for \$200 and a list of itemized damages to the property, along with a receipt.

Melissa was later informed that her former tenant was suing her for \$14,000 plus attorney's fees because of alleged violations under the Landlord Tenant and Consumer Fraud Acts, namely failure to return and pay interest on a security deposit, failure to attach the RLTO summary to the lease, and failure to provide written disclosure of heating costs and commingling of funds. Distressed, Melissa did the right thing and turned to CVLS for help. CVLS volunteer **Terence Flynn** of **Flynn & Jones** answered the call.

In court, the ex-tenant said that she did not receive a copy of the Landlord Tenant Act or any other disclosures. She also testified that she paid the remainder of the security deposit in \$50 increments and by the end of the second lease it was paid in full. She said that upon moving in she bought her own stove and refrigerator for the property and left them when she moved. According to her, the property was in "bad shape" when she moved in, she made repairs to the property and paid \$300 to have the property cleaned when she moved out. Her witness, the cleaner, said that she in fact did not receive payment for the cleaning.

When it was Melissa's turn to testify, she stated that the tenant did in fact pay the full security deposit sometime during the middle of the second lease and that she didn't pay the tenant any interest on that deposit because she gave her a break on late fees as the plaintiff was consistently late. She did not set up a separate account for the security deposit because the tenant paid the money to her in random increments throughout the term of the lease. During the original walkthrough of the property, Melissa said that the two of them discussed heating and electricity. As for the new stove and refrigerator, Melissa stated that she found a hot plate and a broken stove after the tenant moved out.

Melissa testified that the tenant received Melissa's contact information when she signed the lease. In addition, she got the statutory RLTO summary because it came with the form lease that she purchased as a package from Office Max. The tenant was never available to do a final walkthrough when she moved out, but instead left her keys with a neighbor in September. Melissa said that she paid the plaintiff the \$200, not because she felt anything was in fact owed, but to prevent the tenant from harassing her and her son.

In the end the judge agreed that the evidence was sufficient to support payment of a full security deposit plus interest minus any unpaid rent and expenses for damages. Due to the evidence provided, including numerous photos of the property covered in trash and receipts for damages such as broken windows, the court found that the plaintiff was owed \$800, plus \$8 in interest, minus the expenses for damages totaling \$730. Since Melissa issued a check to the plaintiff in the amount of \$200, the court found that instead of receiving \$14,000 the plaintiff actually owed Melissa \$112.

Clearly this wasn't the verdict the plaintiff wanted, but it was the one she deserved. Thanks to Terence, Melissa did not have to pay \$14,000 to a difficult, lying ex-tenant. Good work and thank you.

Free Tax Preparation and Financial Services

For the 2008 tax year, United Way of Metropolitan Chicago will work in partnership with the Center for Economic Progress and other community-based organizations to assist lower-income families prepare their taxes. The Center for Economic Progress works with a 1,000-member volunteer corps to provide free electronic tax return preparation and filing, counseling on special tax situations, and connections to financial services for lower-income families. Last year, the Center put \$45 million back into the pockets of nearly 32,000 Illinois communities and saved families more than \$5 million in tax preparation fees. Volunteers help eligible families claim important tax credits, including the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Child Tax Credit, as well as refunds from overpayments. However, outreach to underserved communities is needed, as many lower-income families remain unaware of these tax credits.

More information can be found online at: www.cvls.org/downloads/2009_CFEP_Tax_site_flyers.pdf.

Court reporters scarce.

In a cost savings measure, Judge Evans will be furloughing a number of court reporters until, as of now, June 30, 2009. This will impact Adoption Court which requires court reporters for all parental consents. Judge McGann, Presiding Judge of County Division, has been able to arrange for a free court reporter on FRIDAYS for both the morning and afternoon calls. Although you can present an adoption case on any day, make sure you schedule it for Fridays if you intend to have a biological parent consent.

Babies babies everywhere!

This month we have a couple new additions to the CVLS family.

First up, we are delighted to announce the arrival of Ethan Gabriel Smith born to CVLS volunteer Angela Whiteside Smith and her husband Stan on Friday, February 6 at 12:31 PM. Ethan weighed in at 7 lbs, 9 oz. Stan, 'big brother Evan, and Angela thank you all for your thoughts and warm wishes and can't wait to introduce him to their friends.



Ethan Gabriel Smith was born on February 6 at 12:31 PM.

Also, congratulations to DLA Piper's Pro Bono manager and CVLS volunteer Annie Geraghty and her family! Annie and her husband Paul are proud to announce the birth of their son, Paul Michael Geraghty Helms, Junior. Whew, what a mouthful! Paul was born on February 12, 2009 at 10:11 am. He weighed 7 lbs., 12 oz. and was 19.75 inches long. Good luck mom and dad. Hopefully Paul Jr. isn't too much of a handful.



Amicus Poloniae CLE Classes

CVLS' Polish clinic, Amicus Poloniae, offers free CLE to those volunteer attorneys who have attended CVLS' New Volunteer Orientation and agree to stay at the clinic for the morning to help their clients. No need to speak Polish. Space is limited so call **Mark Dobrzycki** at **773.501.0601** to register.

Alexander Fiedotjen, co-chair of CVLS' Amicus Poloniae clinic, speaking about employment at the December CLE seminar.

© photo by Mark Dobrzycki 2009



Attendees of Amicus Poloniae's January CLE Seminar, Fair Labor Practices/ Over-time, listen intently as attorney Denise De Belle explains the ins and outs of the subject.

© photo by Mark Dobrzycki 2009

March 21st

Mediation

by attorney Anna Krolikowska

April 18th

Landlord-Tenant Law

by attorney Ziggy Sokolnicki

May 16th

Rebuttal-Order of Protection

by attorney L. Steven Rakowski

June 20th

Arbitration

by Chief Clerk Marta Almodovar
Circuit Court Cook County

Future Clinic Dates

July 18th

August 15th

September 18th

October 17th

November 21st

December 19th

Peter Speaks!

CVLS' managing attorney, Peter Ashmore, will be participating as a panelist at the DePaul Business & Commercial Law Journal's Seventh Annual Symposium, Into the Sunset: Bankruptcy as Scriptwriter of the Dénouement of Financial Distress, on April 16th.

Tickets are \$85.00 on or before March 16, 2009 and \$100.00 after that date. For more information, visit www.cvls.org/downloads/symposium_flyer.pdf.



Tax code cracked by Larry Krupp.

Larry Krupp was kind enough to once again come in and hold his yearly seminar on the latest version of the tax code on February 24th. Even with Congress' latest last-minute changes, Larry made quick work of explaining the ins and outs of the system. Attendees were able to ask how recent updates could affect their businesses, their clients businesses, or even their own personal finances. Nothing was too challenging for this veteran of the tax minefield and we thank him for sharing his knowledge with us.



Larry Krupp talking with attendees about their tax issues at CVLS' CLE seminar on February 24th, 2009.

Let's talk.

It isn't any secret that the economy is in shambles. Every day you hear about more layoffs and more foreclosures. To make matters worse, the stock market has sunk lower than Courtney Love's career.

What does this mean? To put it simply, CVLS needs your help. As you know, CVLS operates on a pro bono platform, supported by a small staff. Donations from volunteers and friends are crucial since the people we help are without any means to pay for legal representation. That means that we do not generate any income from our important work. Most of our grants come from the private sector, some of whom have been forced to lay off their own employees, or from foundations whose investments have been decimated by federal interest rates near zero and the stock market crash. They are cutting their grants which means that we have to rely more than ever before on our other source of income, individual donations from Chicago residents and volunteers like you.

We know that you are also feeling the pinch, but please find it in your hearts to donate what you can. Your donations go to representing the thousands of Chicago families who are struggling to make ends meet, who are now faced with civil legal problems that could literally make them destitute.

All the rules and regulations in the world mean nothing unless there are boots on the ground representing these people in court. Victims of predatory lending, children in disputed custody cases, the elderly and disabled adults who are all too often taken advantage of by the unscrupulous, all need your help.

We know that Chicagoans have some of the biggest hearts in the world and our volunteers and donors prove it to us time and time again. This is what makes the windy city such a great place to live. Thank you in advance for giving what you can. We really appreciate it and so do the thousands who are helped by your donations.

Donate online at www.cvls.org.

CHICAGO VOLUNTEER LEGAL SERVICES

presents



RACE JUDICATA®

2009 5k Run/Walk

chip timed > lakeside > afterparty

Thursday, July 30th

Lower Hutchinson Field

at Columbus & Balbo

Start Time: Runners 6:30 P.M.

Walkers 6:45 P.M.

Questions?

(312) 332-3319 or mnp@cvls.org

www.cvls.org/judicata

We have a variety of fantastic sponsorship packages available. Don't wait. The deadline to get your company name on all marketing materials is April 10th! Contact us today and find out how your company can be a part of this one of a kind event.

For more information visit www.cvls.org/judicata/sponsor.html

CVLS Seminar Registration

March and April 2008

March 19 “Advanced Care Planning”

by Karen Long

Advance care planning shouldn't simply focus on the selection of an agent and completion of a form Power of Attorney, it should also include a series of discussions about an individual's values and beliefs as they relate to healthcare. The results of those discussions are then developed into an advance care health plan that includes the durable power of attorney for healthcare and is a more effective method for honoring patients' wishes when they no longer are able to make decisions.

Karen Nisley Long, on behalf of the Someone to Trust (STT) Initiative trains healthcare providers, community volunteers, and attorneys to engage individuals in discussions geared to their healthcare status. She will discuss why advance directives currently don't work the way they were intended, the underlying ethical implications, and what needs to be done to make advance directives effective at the bedside. SST, an independent program of the Institute of Medicine-Chicago, is supported by coalition of healthcare organizations, policy-making bodies and community groups.

April 23 “Mortgage Loss Mitigation”

by Mike VanZalingen

Mike VanZalingen, Executive Director of Neighborhood Housing Services, a HUD certified counseling agency, will talk about how to work with lenders to get the best deal for a client who is behind on their mortgage or in foreclosure. He will talk about the loss mitigation process, options available and give tips on how to get the best results.

All seminars are held from 12:15 to 1:15 p.m. at 100 North LaSalle, Suite 900.

Archived seminars can be found at www.illinoisprobono.org.

Return to: Seminar Registration, Chicago Volunteer Legal Services

100 North LaSalle, Suite 900, Chicago, 60602.2405

FAX:312-332-1460

EMAIL: efranklin@cvls.org

Please Print Your Name: _____

Telephone Number: _____



One tough cookie.

Kazimierz Pulaski, or Casimir Pulaski if you insist on spelling everything in Americanese, was known for many things. Most notably was his uncanny ability to turn a bit of upper-lip hair into an attractive statement of power, taste and a certain *je ne sais quoi* that drove the ladies wild. What many people do not realize was that the man was also generally considered the father of American cavalry and one heck of a hell raiser.

Before dying of his wounds in the battle of Savannah, Kazimierz made a name for himself by taking on the Russian hegemony. He co-founded the Bar Confederation, and went to work trying to free the Polish commonwealth. The Russians were eventually able to pin him down in a two week siege at a monastery in Berdyczów, but were tricked into letting him go after he gave them an oath not to keep fighting. Clearly the Russians had not caught on to the crossed-finger rule yet because, before long, Kazimierz was back in the mix of things and was again under siege at the fortress of Okopy Świętej Trójcy. This time he eluded his enemies and escaped to the Ottoman Empire. He then, you guessed it, kept fighting the Russians. The man even tried to take the king hostage! Well this didn't sit well with the powers that be so he was basically kicked out of every European country and a price was put on his head. After a little running around for his life he found himself fighting in the American Revolution under the command of George Washington.

The man was good with a horse, no doubt about it. After Congress appointed him "Commander of the Horse", created a cavalry and put him at the head, Kazimierz spent his own money to make sure his men had the best equipment and protection and trained them into an impressive fighting force. Unfortunately as he was charging the British line at the battle of Savannah he was shot in the crotch and killed. What a way to go.

Being home to the second largest Polish community in the world, Illinois dedicates the first Monday in March to this hero of the Revolutionary war.

Fun March Facts

- Jesse James died at age 34, March 4, 1882
- The Battle of the Alamo ended after 13-day siege, March 6, 1836
- The Girl Scouts of America were founded, March 12, 1912
- United States House of Representatives began televising day-to-day business, March 19, 1979
- Congress outlawed polygamy, March 21, 1882

Sudoku!

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Difficulty: Evil



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