

# BAR BRIEFS

Official Publication of the Macomb Bar Association

August 2023



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## **Former Detroit Lions Help Macomb Bar Kick Off Book Club**

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# Bar Briefs

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MACOMB BAR ASSOCIATION

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# Team Strength

*By Ryan Zemke, President of the Macomb Bar Association*

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**“The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team.”**

*— Phil Jackson*

Several past MCBA Presidents have reached out to welcome me but also to give me a few warnings. Aside from being warned about the joy of authoring a monthly BarBriefs article, the main thing that I was warned about was being ready for whatever curveballs got thrown your way during your term. You would never know what was coming or when it was coming but as President you would be the one who gets to weather the storm as the head of the association. For me, the first pitch I saw as President would turn out to be that curveball.

As the 95th President of the Macomb County Bar Association my term begins with no Executive Director in place for the first time in over 2 decades. The knowledge and experience of someone who had been in place since I was in high school cannot be replaced overnight and will be no small task. Undoubtedly, there will be some bumps in the road as the board begins to search for a replacement. However, as an association it is my absolute belief that we can take this curveball and hit a home run – taking the Macomb County Bar Association to new heights and exploring new and exciting opportunities together.

I grew up in the Chicago area in the 90s, so I was naturally a huge Chicago Bulls fan as my childhood included watching Michael Jordan in his prime (sorry Pistons fans). Former Bulls coach Phil Jackson once said, “The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team.” I believe this is also true when it comes to the bar association. Each of you joined the bar association for a different reason. Each of you have benefitted in different ways from your membership. Each of you provides benefits to other members in ways that you may not even realize. Together we are more but individually we are all amazing

in our own right (even if some of you don’t recognize that yet). Everyone has a role in the organization, and everyone has a voice that deserves to be heard.

As we move forward together as an association, I, as well as the board, will need the feedback and assistance of our full membership so that we can create a future for the organization that best represents who we are and who we want to be. We have an incredible opportunity to work together to strengthen the bar association and adapt to changes so that future generations can benefit for many years to come. If you loved things that have occurred in the past – we want to hear about it. If you see opportunities for improvement – we want to hear about it. Each of you brings value to the profession and each of you brings value to the team that we call the bar association.

The entire board, me included, wants to hear the good, the bad, and the ugly so that we can get to work pursuing our mission and working with the membership to accomplish goals. Each member has taken a different path and has gone through different experiences. By sharing your unique perspective, we are able to move the bar association forward in ways that each board member may have never considered without your individual feedback.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to the board (many have already done so) and discuss things. We may not always be able to tell you what you want to hear, nor can we always make everyone happy, but I assure you that we are listening and feedback from membership is a constant part of the conversation at board meetings and is highly valuable. I look forward to entering this next chapter together with all of you and wish you all the best in the coming bar year.

# Macomb County Prosecutor Ties Office Record For National Awards

*From the Macomb County Prosecutor's Office*



Prosecutor Peter J. Lucido's office received an impressive seven Achievement Awards from the National Association of Counties (NACo) - tying the record set by the office last year for the most awards the county prosecutor's office has ever received at one time!

"This national recognition shows remarkable progress is taking place in the Macomb County Prosecutor's Office where significant and positive changes continue," said Macomb County Commission Chairman Don Brown.

The awards honor innovative, effective county government programs that strengthen services for residents. Until last year, it was at least 13 years since the Prosecutor's Office received this national recognition, according to the NACo Web site.

"As the chair of the Records and Public Safety Committee, I am thrilled to witness the incredible progress and achievements taking place within the Macomb County Prosecutor's Office. It is truly remarkable to see how this office is making great strides," said County Commissioner Joseph V. Romano.

The recent achievement awards continue the Macomb County Prosecutor's path towards becoming one of the leaders in using technology to enhance Michigan law enforcement.

Since its inception in 1970, the NACo's annual Achievement Awards program has been dedicated to recognizing county government innovations. Each nominee is judged on its own merits, emphasizing the individual impact and significance of their initiatives. The awards show the Macomb County Prosecutor's Office exemplifies the spirit of innovation, service, and dedication.

"Together, we celebrate these achievements as a reflection of our collective commitment to serving and

protecting the residents of our county. These accolades stand as a testament to the remarkable efforts and dedication of our assistant prosecutors and staff," said Macomb County Prosecutor Peter J. Lucido. "We are in an environment conducive to innovation and excellence, allowing us to implement groundbreaking programs and initiatives that positively impact our community."

The prosecutor's office received 2023 National Association of Counties Achievement awards in the category of Criminal Justice and Public Safety for the following:

1. Death case dashboard improves administration of cases involving death.
2. Paperless victim rights requests improve service.

**"I am thrilled to witness the incredible progress and achievements taking place within the Macomb County Prosecutor's Office."**

**– County Commissioner Joseph V. Romano**

3. Payment processing tech improves criminal case “discovery digital media fee” processing.
4. Prosecutor converts digital evidence platform to staff training platform.
5. Prosecutors streamline access to justice with electronic victim advocate assistance requests.
6. Technology pushes instant warrant and courtroom manual updates to assistant prosecutors.
7. Weekend warrant authorization improved with jail duty tracker.

The programs recognized by the NACo Achievement Awards are not the only improvements Prosecutor Lucido has made since January 2021. In addition to successfully prosecuting crimes throughout the county, other progress includes:

• **Child support collections increased.**

Prosecutor Lucido’s office increased focus to collect child support from parents who owe \$5,000 or more. Thanks to support from the County Commission and County Executive, the office collected over \$100,000 so far this year for the direct benefit of Macomb County children.

• **Mental health assessments sought as a condition of bond in gun crime cases.**

With this first-in-Michigan policy to seek mental health assessments as part of bond in all gun crime cases, Prosecutor Lucido recognizes that some defendants struggle with mental health issues, which might be addressed through early identification and provision of appropriate services before defendants get an opportunity to commit another crime with a gun.

• **School threats are taken seriously.**

Prosecutor Lucido has authorized several school threat

cases. “We promise to prosecute every one of these threats,” said Lucido.

• **Conviction Integrity Unit exoneration.**

This unit investigates claims of innocence to determine whether there is clear and convincing new evidence that the convicted defendant was not the person who committed the offense and to review claims of factual innocence based on new evidence. Thanks to support for this unit from the County Commission and County Executive, a person was exonerated this year.

• **Major Crimes Unit launched.**

Prosecutor Lucido organized the top-ranked assistant prosecutors to focus on major crimes, and train more APAs to handle these types of cases.

• **Warrant Appeals Unit launched.**

Victims and law enforcement officials are now given the right to have a second set of eyes to review cases where charges are denied, the first known unit of its kind in the state.

• **Digital Evidence Management platform implemented.**

With more than 400,000 pieces of digital evidence in the system, the volume of digital evidence is higher than it’s ever been, and keeps increasing. Police agencies now upload digital evidence, the Prosecutor’s Office reviews it, and defense lawyers can directly download the evidence.

• **More interns equals more justice.**

Prosecutor Lucido hosted over 200 law school and college interns, so far! Michigan Court Rules allow law students this exciting opportunity to handle court hearings under supervision, which helps the office move cases forward more quickly.

• **Paperless crime victim rights.**

Prosecutor Lucido implemented the county’s first paperless system for crime victims to request rights and notification. Crime victims may now request victim information via text message, or entirely online via the Prosecutor’s Office Website.

• **Providing police training.**

Prosecutor Lucido regularly sends assistant prosecutors to every police agency in Macomb County to provide training, including updates on recent court cases.



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# Three Former Detroit Lions Help Macomb Bar Kick Off Book Club

*By Steve Steinhardt, Wayne County Assistant Prosecutor*

By the time you are reading this, the NFL pre-season will be under way. The days will be getting shorter, the air starting to cool, leaves beginning to change color, the children will be going back to school, and the smell of cider and apples be in the air.

And then, perhaps the best part of fall...  
**FOOTBALL SEASON !**

Three former Detroit Lions will help the Macomb Bar kick off the re-established book club at Barnes & Noble. Keith Dorney, attorney Rich Strenger, and Ron Rubick are all scheduled to be present. This year will be especially exciting as the Detroit Lions have re-built what should be a winning team, with a real chance to make the playoffs after a strong second half of the season last year. The NFL season kicks off Thursday, September 7, with the Lions taking on the Super Bowl Champion Kansas City Chiefs in Kansas City.

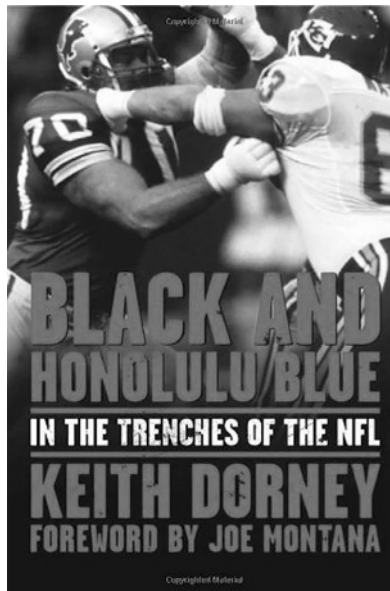
To have been selected for this showcase game demonstrates how far the Lions have come, and how high expectations are this season.

The Macomb Bar is excited, too, and all members of the bar, their friends, family, and all members of the public are invited to celebrate the season with this exciting event two days before the season starts. The Macomb Bar Book Club, which has been dormant for a few years, will resume live sessions this fall.

As before, we will meet at the Barnes and Noble located at 14165 Hall Road, Shelby Twp., Michigan. These sessions are free and open to the public. The books we choose will be available there, and attendees are encouraged to read them ahead of time. However – there's no test! The format is more of a presentation by the guests, and the book will also be available for purchase the day of the event.

There also will be time for discussion, questions, answers, and book signing. Our first event will be held on Tuesday, September 5, 2023. The former Lions will be present at 6:30 p.m. to sign the books, with the discussion starting at 7 p.m., and run for roughly an hour. The first book is *Black and Honolulu Blue: In the Trenches of the NFL*, authored by Keith Dorney, with a forward by NFL Hall of Famer Joe Montana.

Montana writes, "Even if you are not the biggest of football fans, you'll have trouble putting it down. It is a fun, insightful, action-packed and at times hilarious read, and it leaves you craving for more."



*Black and Honolulu Blue: In the Trenches of the NFL, by Keith Dorney*

Dorney was a two-time All-American Lineman at Penn State who was drafted by the Lions as their overall 10th pick in the first round of the 1979 draft, after he was named to the Pro Football Writers Association all-rookie team that year. He played with the Lions from 1979-1987, and was named to the Pro Bowl in 1982.

Local attorney Rich Strenger is also on the host committee. Strenger was an All-Big Ten Conference tackle at the University of Michigan before being drafted by the Lions in the second round of the 1983 draft. Strenger played with the Lions from 1983 until 1987, and then played one year for the Buffalo Bills in 1988.

Their teammate, tight end Ron Rubick, is also scheduled to be present. Rubick played at Grand Valley State and grew up in Newberry, Michigan in the Upper Peninsula. Today, he covers the state high school football playoffs and the high school game of the week for Bally Sports Media.

So come support our Detroit Lions and the Macomb Bar for what we are sure will be an interesting and exciting event.

Hope to see you there!

## COMING ATTRACTION IN OCTOBER

Our next event on October 19 will feature longtime journalist and author **Jack Lessenberry** talking about two of his recent books:

*Reason vs. Racism*, the story of how a newspaper chain covered and dealt with questions of race over a century.

*Thinking About the Other Fella*, the life and legacy of a man so many of us knew, the late U.S. District Judge Avern Cohn.



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# Golf Outing Spotlight

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**Gowanie Golf Club  
June 2023**





# D&I Committee Is Kicking Off Summer '23 Right

We are always recruiting people to the committee as we get restarted. We are planning fun and social events, inviting esteemed members of our local legal community to speak and share, young lawyer outreach and support, and a sounding board to ask anonymous questions on diversity and inclusion issues. Join us!

## Future Meeting Schedule:

Every 3rd Wednesday of the month at 5:00 pm,  
for about 1.5 hour

## Location:

O'Reilly Rancilio  
12900 Hall Road, Suite 310  
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*\*\*Any location change for a future meeting will be  
communicated via email blast in advance\*\**

July 19, 2023

August 16, 2023

September 20, 2023

October 18, 2023

November 15, 2023

December 20, 2023

January 17, 2024

February 21, 2024

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April 17, 2024

May 15, 2024

June 19, 2024



*The D&I Committee at a Recruiting Mixer on June 21, 2023 at Madison's in Mount Clemens*

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# Macomb Bar Family Law Spotlight

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Members of the Macomb Bar Family Law section had a great time at the *“Evening with the Referees: Do’s and Don’ts of Motion Practice & Evidentiary Hearings”* at Simple Palate in Warren.



Several members were in attendance including the Hon. Tracey A. Yokich, Chief Referee Brian Nicholas, Referee Rebekah Sellers, Gregory Toler, and Referee Jacqueline Wright.





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### CDAM 2023 FALL CONFERENCE (IN PERSON)

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