

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, December 7, 2013

Got the holiday spirit? Looking to spread a little cheer? RLS' good friend Kate Koch, owner of Simply Beautiful Spaces in Stafford, will be donating a percentage of her profits from that day to RLS. Stop by her shop to find unique gifts for family and friends and you will be giving in more ways than one! For more details, visit RLS' Facebook page.

DON'T FORGET

40 FOR THE 40TH CAMPAIGN

Joining the Equal Justice Society is easy and rewarding, do it today! Find out how at www.raplegal.com.

APPLAUSE, APPLAUSE!

Kudos to Stage Door Productions for their excellent adaptation of *Inherit The Wind* during the first weekend of October! The cast was superb, the venues were perfect and the play timely. To area attorneys who joined the cast:

Stacey Garcia

Emily Gold

Jason Greenwood

Thom Savage

Tom Shaia

Kathleen Smith

Well done!

And special thanks to

Kimberly Kemp for bringing her vision to life.



RLS | *Because Justice Really Should Be For All*

In Practice of Civil Poverty Law, Housing Matters

For most of us, the process to resolve Landlord/Tenant disputes may appear pretty straightforward. As an example, if a tenant fails to pay rent, the landlord takes appropriate legal measures seeking remedies such as eviction and payment of back rent. But all too often, the manner in which the dispute plays out is just not that simple. What happened to Jan, a pseudonym to protect client confidentiality, illustrates the more complicated reality underpinning housing-related legal disputes, the kind that are often found on RLS' caseload.

Jan and her husband gave notice to their landlord because they were no longer able to afford the \$1,200 a month rent. The couple called the residence home for a decade, but the loss of Jan's job and her husband's medical bills from a car accident created the perfect storm of disastrous economic circumstances from which they were unable to escape. And two rent increases during each of the previous two years only compounded the problem.

Several months after they had moved out, Jan and her husband received a summons from the court stating that their landlord was seeking more than \$6,000 in compensation due to a broken lease. The landlord also claimed that there were damages to the residence, but had no evidence to prove the allegation. Upon receiving the case, RLS' housing attorney, Daniel Turczan, discovered that the lease the landlord provided to the court was fraudulent. Jan denied signing a lease during their last year of occupancy; but the landlord entered one into evidence nonetheless. It turned out that the landlord copied a signature page from a signed lease five years earlier and tacked it onto a document purported to be a valid contract. Once Daniel discovered that fact and brought it to the attention of the landlord's attorney, a settlement was quickly reached.



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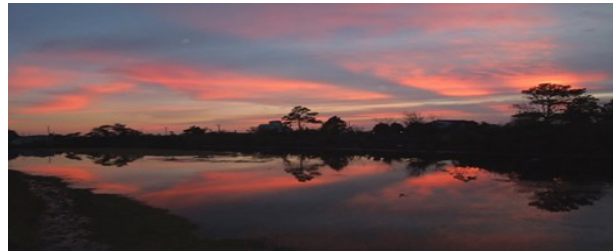
Because Jan had able representation in Daniel, she was no longer at a disadvantage and Daniel bargained for an agreeable settlement that was far superior to what Jan could have obtained on her own. Because Jan gave oral notice instead of written, the settlement of \$1,200 accounted for one month's rent, which, by the landlord's own admission, was the actual period of time the residence was unoccupied due to Jan's departure. Because the landlord had no evidence to prove damage and Jan had pictures showing the condition of the dwelling upon her departure, that claim as well as the late fees (sought as a result of a fraudulent lease), court fees and attorney's fees were also dropped. In total, Daniel's advocacy saved Jan more than \$4,500.

NUMBERS COUNT

An RLS reality: 5 Attorneys covering 17 counties with a poverty population of 52,000+

Thoughts on Chincoteague

A Donor's Reflection on the Weekend Getaway That Resulted From a Private Attorney Fund Drive Contribution



Thank you. Thank you! My husband and I thoroughly enjoyed our weekend at Bill Botts' townhouse on Chincoteague Island, VA. When I received the email that we had won the drawing, I was surprised, to say the least, because I didn't know that we were entered. Turns out you need to read the "fine print" on all of the correspondence you receive from RLS.

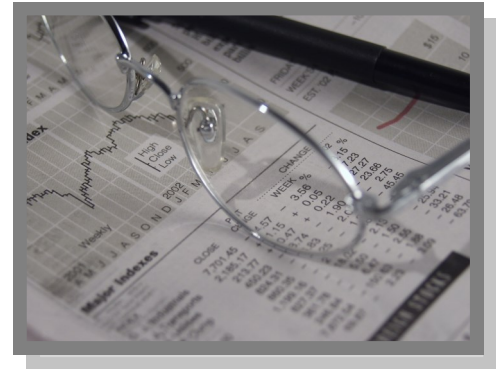
It had been years since either of us had been to Chincoteague. My husband had been more recently than I so he really noticed the changes. I was last there as a child and remember only that my parents had taken me to see Misty. (Yes, it's been a few years!) Though the island has changed, it is still a quiet, relaxed place. There is a different pace of life on Chincoteague that one does not encounter everywhere. We walked on Main Street, shopped in the local businesses and ate fresh fried oysters, shrimp and other delectable offerings.

We drove over to Assateague Island, walked on the beach two mornings and collected beautiful shells, visited the Wildlife Center and climbed the Assateague Lighthouse. Although we did not see either of the large herds of wild horses, we did get to see a few of the foals that will be auctioned soon to keep the herd size stable.

There's much more to see and do on the island (and we plan to go back soon), but you have to contribute to RLS each year to be eligible to **win** this fantastic weekend. So, when the annual appeal letter comes from RLS, get out that checkbook and send your check in thus assuring that you will have a chance at winning a magical weekend on a Virginia Island.

The Justice Fund You Can Help Secure the Future of RLS

Now you can do something to enhance RLS' fiscal strength in perpetuity. Consider The Justice Fund. In 2013, RLS received a significant gift intended to be used as the corpus for a managed fund that is being stewarded by The Community Foundation of the Rappahannock River Region (CFRRR). With CFRRR's professional expertise on tap, RLS is able to accept gifts of appreciated securities, life insurance, IRA distributions, real property, mutual fund shares, art as well as cash. Gifts can be made now or later as with a bequest or remainder gift. Why is your gift to The Justice Fund so important? It allows RLS to plan long-term, cushion our budget in tough times and grow to serve more people in need. For more information, contact CFRRR at 540-373-9292 or visit their website at cfrrr.org.



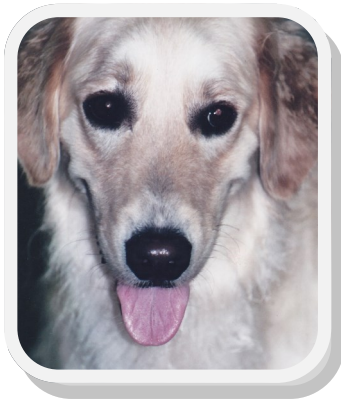
RLS' Tamara Moore Grounded in Advocacy

Tamara Moore is exactly where she wants to be, and so much of what she did leading up to her job as the managing attorney of RLS' Culpeper Office laid the groundwork for her current position.

Tamara decided in elementary school that she wanted to be an attorney. She attributes that early conviction to the power of role models: her mom and Clair Huxtable, to be exact. And as Tamara pursued her own career goals, working at different jobs and internships along the way, a common theme in her practical experience emerged, providing her with substantial working knowledge of an issue she regularly confronts as an attorney with RLS: domestic violence.

As a senior at George Mason University, Tamara completed an internship with the probation office at the Rappahannock Regional Jail. Later on, while in law school, Tamara volunteered at a battered women's shelter. But just prior to attending Thomas M. Cooley Law School in Lansing, Michigan, Tamara worked for five months at RCDV (now Empowerhouse), a Fredericksburg area battered women's shelter, in what she describes as the experience that most impacted and inured her to the sheer profundity of domestic violence victims' physical and emotional wounds. Being trained at RCDV, Tamara says, prepared her for the kinds of cases she now typically handles.

Tamara's informed perspective on the destructive effects of domestic violence motivates her to do her utmost to ensure that the cycle does not repeat itself in the next generation of the families she assists. Part of Tamara's sense of job satisfaction is derived from the fact that she can focus on that kind of advocacy; working at a nonprofit like RLS, the focus is mission-oriented, the work is people-centric, and that is just the way Tamara likes it.



Corky



Buddy

In addition to her passion for assisting clients, Tamara possesses several other key foci, one of which is her pets. Anyone who knows Tamara knows how much she loves her golden retrievers, Corky and Buddy, seen here. In fact, Tamara has been lobbying for a pet friendly office so that these awesome pooches can spend their days helping out, too.

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