



MESSAGE & BULLETIN

A Newsletter from Martinson & Beason, P.C., Attorneys at Law

February 2012 • Volume II • Issue 1

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M&B is a full service law firm that has attorneys who specialize in the following areas:

- Serious Personal Injury
- Car, Truck & Motorcycle Accidents
- Wrongful Death
- Breach of Contract & Fraud
- Probate, Estates & Trusts
- Real Estate Transactions
- Business Law

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1-800-255-6534

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martinsonandbeason.com and
enter your questions.

You will get confidential answers
from an attorney
with no obligation.

YEAR 75 AND BEYOND

By Doug Martinson, Sr.

A license to practice law was issued to my father, Douglas Carroll Martinson. The year was 1937. 75 years later, with thanks to the many thousands of loyal, repeat clients, and a constant stream of new clients, my father's law practice has continued to exist, now under the name of Martinson & Beason, P.C.

Martinson & Beason's legal roots began three years before I was born, but over 75 years of practice, three generations of family members have had Martinson & Beason attorneys serve them. And now, the fourth generation is approaching very rapidly.

One of our oldest corporate clients is the New Hope Telephone Cooperative (NHTC), which was formed in 1951. A group of citizens in the City of New Hope and Towns of Owens Cross Road and Grant and the counties of Madison, Marshall and Jackson hired my father to organize the NHTC. At that time, telephone subscribers were elated to receive a four-party line crank telephone. Their grandchildren and great-grandchildren are just as elated to receive telephone, cable television and high speed internet service through high tech state-of-the-art fiber optic lines being connected at the rate of five

customers per working day as I write this article.

The transfer of the work load from my father to me was seamless. This was due in large part to the fact that many families became friends and we knew the entire family and they knew us. That tradition is continuing with long term relationships.

Over the years, as M&B has grown, we have expanded our areas of practice. Today we have attorneys that specialize in personal injury and wrongful death cases, probate and estate planning, real estate law and business litigation. While the size of our firm has grown over the years, we take pride in giving each of our clients' cases the personal attention their case needs and deserves. The values and principals M&B was founded upon 75 years ago are still the building blocks for our firm. We want our clients to think of us as their law firm. We are truly a full service law firm.

Again, thanks to the many thousands of clients and companies who have trusted the attorneys at M&B to handle their legal affairs for the last 75 years.

Congratulations, Morris Lilienthal!

M&B is pleased to announce that Morris Lilienthal is now a shareholder in the law firm of Martinson & Beason. Morris grew up in Carrollton, Alabama and is a graduate of Maryville College. While at Maryville, he was a member of the Fighting Scots football team and vice president of his senior class. Morris is a 2003 graduate of Cumberland School of Law where he finished in the top 20% of his class. Morris is married to Shannon Johnson Lilienthal who teaches 6th grade at Madison Elementary and they have a 19-month old son Wyatt.

Morris joined M&B in November of 2008 and focuses his practice on various types of personal injury cases including, motor vehicle accident claims, wrongful death claims, and premises liability claims.



Congratulations to M&B attorney Andrew Sieja and his wife Briana on the birth of their daughter Edith Amelia Sieja on September 6th, 2011. Pictured are Andrew, Briana, Oliver (brother) and Edith.

New Year's Resolution: Fiscal Planning Shape

As people across the world rang in the 2012 New Year, there were probably billions of New Year's resolutions made. Most of them probably had to do with your physical shape, but it's also likely that many of those resolutions had to do with your fiscal shape—including your financial and estate planning. Hopefully you are still going to the gym and you have made an appointment with your attorney and financial planner to ensure that your Will, estate and financial planning are up to date.

Along those lines, Alabama recently enacted a new Alabama Uniform Power of Attorney Act, which took effect January 1, 2012. This act is effective for Powers of Attorney issued on or after January 1. The prior act will continue to govern all Powers of Attorney executed prior to that date, however, there are a number of specific changes to the law, including provisions regarding health care decisions and Health Care Powers of Attorney, that should be discussed with an attorney.

Another factor to consider in reviewing your financial and estate planning is the federal estate tax law. Currently, the federal estate tax exemption is \$5 million per person, therefore, with proper planning, a husband and wife can pass \$10 million to the next generation without any estate taxes. However, there is one important caveat in that this exemption amount is effective through 2012 unless changed by Congress. Because of these recent changes in the law, it would be a good time for you to make sure that you keep your fiscal resolutions. And as far as those other resolutions, I'll see you in the gym!

February is American Heart Month



Heart disease, including stroke, is the leading cause of death for men and women in the United States and a major cause of disability. About 1,255,000 Americans had a

heart attack in 2010. Risk of heart disease can be greatly reduced by taking steps to prevent or control risk factors, knowing the signs and symptoms of a heart attack, and maintaining a heart-healthy diet and exercise habits.

Prevent or control risk factors for heart disease:

You are at a greater risk for heart disease if you have one of the following conditions: arrhythmia, heart failure, peripheral artery disease (PAD), high cholesterol, high blood pressure, or diabetes. Tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, and secondhand smoke also contribute to your risk of heart disease. Take steps to prevent and control these conditions and habits in order to lower your risk of heart disease.

Know the signs and symptoms of a heart attack and call 9-1-1:

- Chest discomfort
- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea, lightheadedness, or cold sweats

Maintain a heart-healthy diet:

- Select lean meats and poultry
- Choose low-fat dairy products
- Avoid foods that contain partially hydrogenated vegetable oils
- Limit foods high in dietary cholesterol
- Cut back on foods and beverages with added sugars
- Consume no more than one alcoholic beverage per day if you're a woman, and no more than two if you're a man.
- Maintain portion control



RECIPE OF THE MONTH OATMEAL BROWNIES

By Lauren Martinson,
Wife of M&B Attorney Doug Martinson, Jr.

Oat Crust

- 1 cup quick-cooking oats
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, melted

DIRECTIONS:

For the crust, preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Combine the oats, flour, brown sugar, baking soda and salt in a bowl and mix well. Stir in the butter. Spread the oat mixture over the bottom of a greased 9x9-inch baking pan and bake for 10 minutes. Maintain the oven temperature.

For the brownies, mix the brownie mix according to the directions on the box. Spread the brownie mixture over the baked crust layer and bake for 25 minutes. Cool in the pan on a wire rack. (Tip: go ahead and mix up the brownies while the crust is baking so you can pour the mixture onto the hot crust and pop it in the oven.)

For the icing, combine the confectioner's sugar, butter, baking cocoa, milk and vanilla in a bowl and stir until spreading consistency. Spread over the top of the cooled brownies. (Tip: wait to mix together the icing until after the brownie comes out of the oven. This time lapse will be just enough for the brownies to cool just a tad and not completely melt the icing.) *Let stand until set before cutting.*

Brownies

One box brownie mix and related ingredients

Cocoa Icing

- 1 ¾ cups confectioners sugar
- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter, softened
- ¼ cup baking cocoa
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

How To Protect Your Identity - a 3 Part Series

Part II: How to Detect Identity Theft

Identity theft affects over 10 million consumers a year. How can you protect yourself from this crime? The first step is to understand how identity thieves use your personal information. Identity thieves may:

- Call your credit card company and change your billing address and have your billing statements redirected to the impostor address.
- Open new credit accounts in your name.
- Open a bank account in your name and write bad checks.
- Establish a cell phone or Internet service account in your name.
- Get a job in your name and file fraudulent tax returns.
- They may file for bankruptcy in your name to avoid paying debts they have incurred in your name.

STAY ALERT! You can stay alert and detect identity theft by monitoring your credit report, reviewing your credit card and bank statements, and questioning creditors or potential employers about being denied credit or employment.



- Obtain your credit report from Equifax, Experian and Trans Union, at least once a year by mailing your written request to Credit Report Request Service, PO Box 105281, Atlanta, Georgia 30348-5271. Contact us for the free credit report request form. Or, request your free credit report within 60 days of receiving a credit or employment declination letter.
- Review all of your credit reports and make sure your personal information is correct, such as name and name variations and current address and previous addresses.

Incorrect information in your report may indicate you are a victim of identity theft or that the credit bureau has mixed your file with someone else. Also, check the public records section for incorrect information (judgments, bankruptcies and liens) and check each account to make sure it is being reported correctly (belongs to you, correct balance, payment history). Dispute all inaccurate items with each of the credit bureaus in writing and provide the credit bureaus with copies of any information that supports your dispute.



M&B sponsored a Tinsel Town tree this past December and had students from Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary decorate the tree. Jennifer Beason Douthit, principal of MLK, Jr. Elementary, is the daughter of M&B attorney George Beason.

Cure for the common cold? Maybe it's yogurt

Colds, sinus infections, and other upper respiratory tract infections are the leading reason for visits to the doctor in the United States. But according to a study reported by Yahoo News, eating yogurt could help you avoid a cold.

Yogurt contains probiotics—bacteria that can benefit the body's immune system. In addition to yogurt, probiotics are found in fermented and non-fermented dairy products and in soy products like miso and soy drinks. A review of data involving more than 3,000 participants found that patients who consumed foods with probiotics for more than one week came down with 12 percent fewer upper respiratory infections than those who were treated with a placebo, or who ate probiotic foods for less than a week.

Martinson & Beason Employee Spotlight

Angela Riley

This month, Angela celebrates her 10th year of employment with Martinson & Beason, P.C. Soon after high school, Angela realized she had to find a “real” job while



in college, and in 2002 joined the firm as the receptionist. After a few years at the front desk, she transitioned into her position as the paralegal to Douglas C. Martinson, II.

Having worked for Martinson & Beason for 1/3 of her life, Angela has developed a passion for the legal field (especially probate, which is the central focus of her work) and has built many great relationships. She says she has “grown up” with her M&B family and is happy to still be a part of the team. Angela has a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration and is currently working on her MBA at the University of North Alabama.

Angela has a daughter, Alyssa, who is in the second grade. In their free time, they love to play sports, watch movies and play with their cat (Miley) and dog (Samee).

Referrals

We want you to think of us as your law firm. If you have a legal matter that needs attention, let us know. If we can't handle the matter, we will refer you to a firm that can. Please feel free to refer us to your friends and family for their legal needs. A referral from a former client or friend is the greatest compliment our firm can receive. We welcome the opportunity to help. Thank you!

Client's Bill of Rights

Lawyers will tell you that it is impossible to offer a guarantee in the legal business. **WRONG!** We say that law firm clients should settle for nothing less! Remember, your attorney works for you – not the other way around.

At Martinson & Beason we believe we can promise our clients quality service with personal attention. We believe that as our client you are entitled to have the:

1. Right to loyalty to you and your cause.
2. Right to be updated regularly and in a timely manner as to the progress of your case.
3. Right to our respect.
4. Right to expect competence from our firm and all who work here.
5. Right to know the truth about your case.
6. Right to prompt attention from us.
7. Right to have your legal rights and options explained in plain English without legal mumbo jumbo.
8. Right to a fair written fee agreement with our firm.
9. Right to a fair fee for the work we do.
10. Right to make the ultimate decision on your case.



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Martinson & Beason
Attorneys at Law
115 North Side Square
Huntsville, AL, 35801
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Take a Smart Approach to Social Networking For Kids

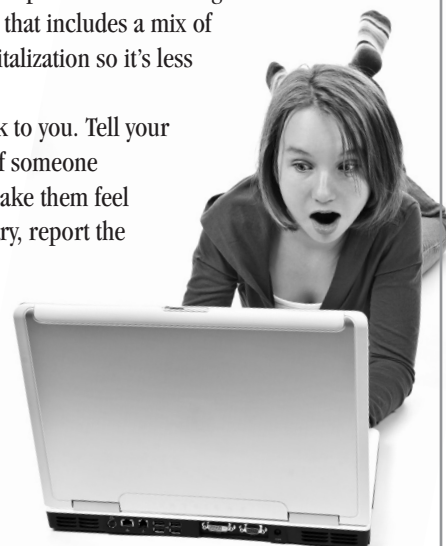
You can't escape social networking these days: Facebook, LinkedIn, Google Plus, and all their online cousins are everywhere. If you've got kids, chances are they're eager to join all their friends in cyberspace.

Worrying about their safety is natural, but hoping social networks will go away isn't very realistic. You're better off working with your children so they don't hide their online activities from you. Take these steps to help them enjoy social networking safely:

- Start with kid-friendly sites. Facebook is far from the only place for people to go. A quick Internet search will help you locate lots of sites just for children. You'll want to investigate them thoroughly, of course, but they can serve as a good introduction for your children to the world of online networking.
- Talk about privacy. Have a serious discussion with your kids about guarding their personal information online. They should understand that data like their full names, address, phone number, school, and birth date should be kept private for their own protection. Emphasize

that once something is posted online (a message or a photo), they can't remove it entirely even if they delete the information from their profile.

- Choose a secure password. A password that your child can remember easily may be simple for a hacker to guess. Come up with a password that includes a mix of letters, numbers, and capitalization so it's less vulnerable to attack.
- Encourage children to talk to you. Tell your children to let you know if someone online does anything to make them feel uncomfortable. If necessary, report the person to your site's administrator. At the same time, talk about the need for your children to treat everyone with respect, online as well as in the real world.



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BBB Rating: A+



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