



Amicus Curiae

The Association of Retired Attorneys of Sarasota, Inc.

www.retiredattorneyssarasota.org

October 2026

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New Member

Barbara Botein

NEXT MEETING

Friday, October 30

12 Noon
at the Varsity Club
University Park CC

Officers

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Benjamin I. Berman, Treasurer
Milly Collins, Secretary

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October Program:

The Legalization of Hemp

About Our Speaker – Judge Erika Quartermaine

Judge Quartermaine serves as a Sarasota County judge, where she presides over county criminal and civil divisions. Judge Quartermaine received a BA from Stetson University in 2000, and a JD from the University of Miami in 2003.

Governor Scott appointed Judge Quartermaine to the bench in 2013 following her nomination by the Twelfth Judicial Circuit's Judicial Nominating Committee. She was born and raised in Sarasota County and graduated from Pine View School for the Gifted. She earned a bachelor's degree in Economics with concentrations in French and Philosophy from Stetson University. She earned her law degree with honors from the University of Miami School of Law. While in college, Judge Quartermaine studied at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, France. During law school, she interned for the United States Department of Justice. After graduating from law school, Judge Quartermaine practiced creditors' rights in federal court in Tampa. She then returned to Sarasota where she worked as Court Counsel for the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, performing a variety of research and legal services for three years to this Circuit's judges and Court Administration. Judge Quartermaine then joined the State Attorney's office where she practiced as a prosecutor in both the misdemeanor and felony divisions, prosecuting thousands of defendants including, violent felons, career criminals, and gang members, and she was the first prosecuting attorney of the State Attorney's Office's white-collar division where she specialized in fraud and elder exploitation cases as well as animal cruelty cases.

In 2015, Judge Quartermaine was named in the 40 Under 40 in the West Coast of Florida by the Business Observer. In 2016, she was the recipient of the Sarasota County NAACP Chapters Freedom Award for Public Service and the West Coast Woman Magazine featured her as a "West Coast Woman". In 2017, she received the Unity Award from the 041 CEO Magazine and was one of five nominees for the Florida Supreme Court Chief Justice Award. In 2018, she received an acknowledgment from the Sarasota Chapter of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers for her work with Mental Health Court. In 2018, the Supreme Court of Florida appointed her to the Steering Committee on Problem Solving Courts where she and the other appointees drafted the Florida Adult Mental Health Court Best Practice Guidelines, which were adopted by the Supreme Court of Florida in 2023. In 2021, the City of Sarasota presented Judge Quartermaine with the Key to the City in honor of her work with those criminal defendants experiencing homelessness and severe mental illness. In 2022, the Sarasota Coalition on Substance

Abuse named Judge Quartermaine the Citizen of the Year. Additionally, she has served as the President of the Thomas E. Penick Jr. Elder Law Inn of Court and as President of the John M. Scheb Inn of Court. She has served a faculty member in the Conference of County Judges and the Advanced Judicial Studies College and she is currently an adjunct professor at the University of South Florida.

Judge Quartermaine is a proponent of problem-solving courts and has presided over several programs including: the Comprehensive Treatment Court ("CTC"); Health Care Court ("HCC") and Turn your Life Around Court ("TYLA").

HCC is a mental health court program that Judge Owens started in 2008. It is designed for individuals who are experiencing mental illness which likely led to the commission of the crime and where the interests of justice are best served by offering treatment to the offender. Judge Quartermaine presided over that program from 2014 until 2019.

CTC is a post-booking diversion program for seriously mentally ill low-level offenders. Judge Quartermaine spearheaded this program beginning in 2013 and it took its first participant in 2017 after a four-year collaboration with numerous community organizations and units of government and the procurement of \$2.4 million in grant funding. The program was a response to the lack of resources for the seriously mentally ill and the corresponding significant rise in their incarceration. She presided over CTC from its inception until 2021.

Additionally, in 2015, Judge Quartermaine partnered with various members of the criminal justice community, including Selah Freedom, to start TYLA which is a specialized program for those charged with prostitution and related crimes. The intent of TYLA is to address the individual's underlying issues such as trauma and addiction as well as to provide resources for victims of human trafficking. It was the first program of its kind in the United States. She currently presides over this program.

Judge Quartermaine lectures frequently on problem-solving courts and the intersection of mental health and the criminal justice system. Over the years, she has volunteered in numerous community organizations, including the Sarasota Junior League, the Sarasota Ski-a-Rees and the Safe Place and Rape Crisis Center. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Sarasota County Agricultural Fair and Second Heart Homes.

Judge Quartermaine is a proud wife and mother of two young men. She enjoys boating and traveling.

September Meeting

Linda Harradine, CEO of Legal Aid of Manasota for the past 25 years, was ARAS' guest speaker for the opening meeting of the 2026/27 program year. She earned a Master's degree in Social Work and a JD from the University of Buffalo before beginning her legal career as a staff attorney for Legal Aid. Linda is the past President of the Civil Legal Aid Association, a group of the 30 CEO/Executive Directors of legal services programs in Florida.

Legal Aid of Manasota commenced serving eligible clients in civil matters in Sarasota and Manatee County in 1991. Qualified recipients have incomes of no more than \$60,000 for a family of four. A no-fee non-profit entity, it has 9 attorneys who meet weekly to triage some 30 new matters approved for services. Linda informed the attendees that the workload of LAS consists of approximately matters 1/3 pertaining to housing, 1/3 to family law and domestic violence and the remaining 1/3 to guardianships; wage garnishments, and special projects such as working with veterans; Sarasota Memorial Hospital for patients needing legal assistance; Sheriffs in housing matters; guardian ad litem needs for older children, and hurricane preparedness advice, and working with FEMA after disasters, for communities with LAS clients.

Linda shared that LAS has 8 to 10 emeritus attorneys assisting its efforts. She indicated that about 50% were from Florida, and that supervision of Legal Aid attorneys of those serving had been approved after vetting by Florida courts.

After her presentation Linda answered questions from the attendees and invited those interested to stop by the LAS offices if interested in assisting its efforts.

Amicus Personae – William "Bill" Kopcsak

Member of the Association of Retired Attorneys of Sarasota

William "Bill" Kopcsak was raised in Pittsburgh, PA and is a loyal follower of the Steelers. Both of his grandfathers were coal miners. He attended St. Meinrad College and Indiana University where he obtained a BA degree with majors in history and economics. He then attended Indiana University School of Law in Bloomington, Indiana obtaining a JD degree in 1969.

Bill filled out the paperwork to enlist in the Marines but, at the urging of his father and also famed attorney, F. Lee Bailey, he decided to join the United States Army Judge Advocate General Corps. He served as a Captain in the Corps for four years initially at the U.S. Army Claims Service affiliated with the Pentagon and was later stationed at Edgewood Arsenal and Aberdeen Proving Ground serving as a prosecutor in numerous court-martials.

Upon his discharge from the Army in 1973, Bill and his bride, Pat, moved to rural Lancaster County, Virginia on the shores of the beautiful Chesapeake Bay. This bucolic area is blessed with down to earth folks who farm and fish as well as many retirees who discovered this gem while sailing on the Bay. The young couple knew it would be a great place to raise their future children.

Bill likes to joke that he is a VIP lawyer. He passed the Bar and was admitted to practice in Virginia, Indiana and Pennsylvania. The most difficult Bar exam was in Virginia since, by then, after four years in the army, he had to recall what he learned in law school and update all changes in the interim including mastering laws unique to Virginia. Bill is also admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court and the U.S. Court of Claims.

For over 40 years, Bill, from his home base of Irvington, VA, practiced general criminal and civil law in state and federal courts all over Virginia with an emphasis on litigation. Kopcsak Breeden and Hubbard was one of the youngest law firms ever listed in the National Bar Register.

Bill was a founding member and general counsel for Rappahannock General Hospital. He is a past member of the Virginia Trial Lawyers Association, the American Society of Law and Medicine and the National Health Lawyers Association. After he retired, Bill served on the Board of Legal Aid in Fredericksburg, VA. He is a past Director of Indian Creek Yacht and Country Club and past Commodore of the Windmill Point Yacht Club. As the President and sole shareholder of Greatland Corporation, he developed the prestigious, 150 acre, waterfront community of Riverwood in Lancaster County, VA. In Florida, Bill served as a guardian ad litem, is a member of Our Lady of the Angels Catholic Parish and the Knights of Columbus. For the past six years, he has been an active volunteer for Tidewell Hospice.

Bill and his wife, Pat, have been married for 56 years. They live, full time, in Lakewood Ranch and often enjoy getting together with their grown children and six grandchildren.

Luncheon & Dues Payments

Our October 30th luncheon selections are a chicken quesadilla or a Caesar salad with a four ounce grilled salmon filet.

Please remember to schedule your lunch and choose your preferred menu on a timely basis. Walk-ins may have more limited menu options and delayed service.

You may make payments on our website at the bottom of the [Events](#) page:

\$32 for lunch and/or \$65 for dues using PayPal at www.retiredattorneyssarasota.org

Or you may mail a check for the luncheon payment of \$32 payable to:

Association of Retired Attorneys of Sarasota, Inc.

Please send to: **Ben Berman, 4223 MacKay Falls Terrace, Sarasota, FL 34243**

We are pleased to accept your payment by check or through our online payment option. Please get your luncheon payment and luncheon selection to Ben prior to Wednesday of the luncheon week. After that Wednesday, no refunds can be given since the venue will have been notified of your intention to attend.

Future Programs

Please note the following dates for the next luncheons.

Friday, October 30, 2026

Judge Erika Quartermaine

Friday, November 20, 2026

Jim Champy

Friday, December 18, 2026

Bonnie Kistler

Friday, January 29, 2027

Judge Frank Pfeiffer

Friday, February 26, 2027

Alan Spoon

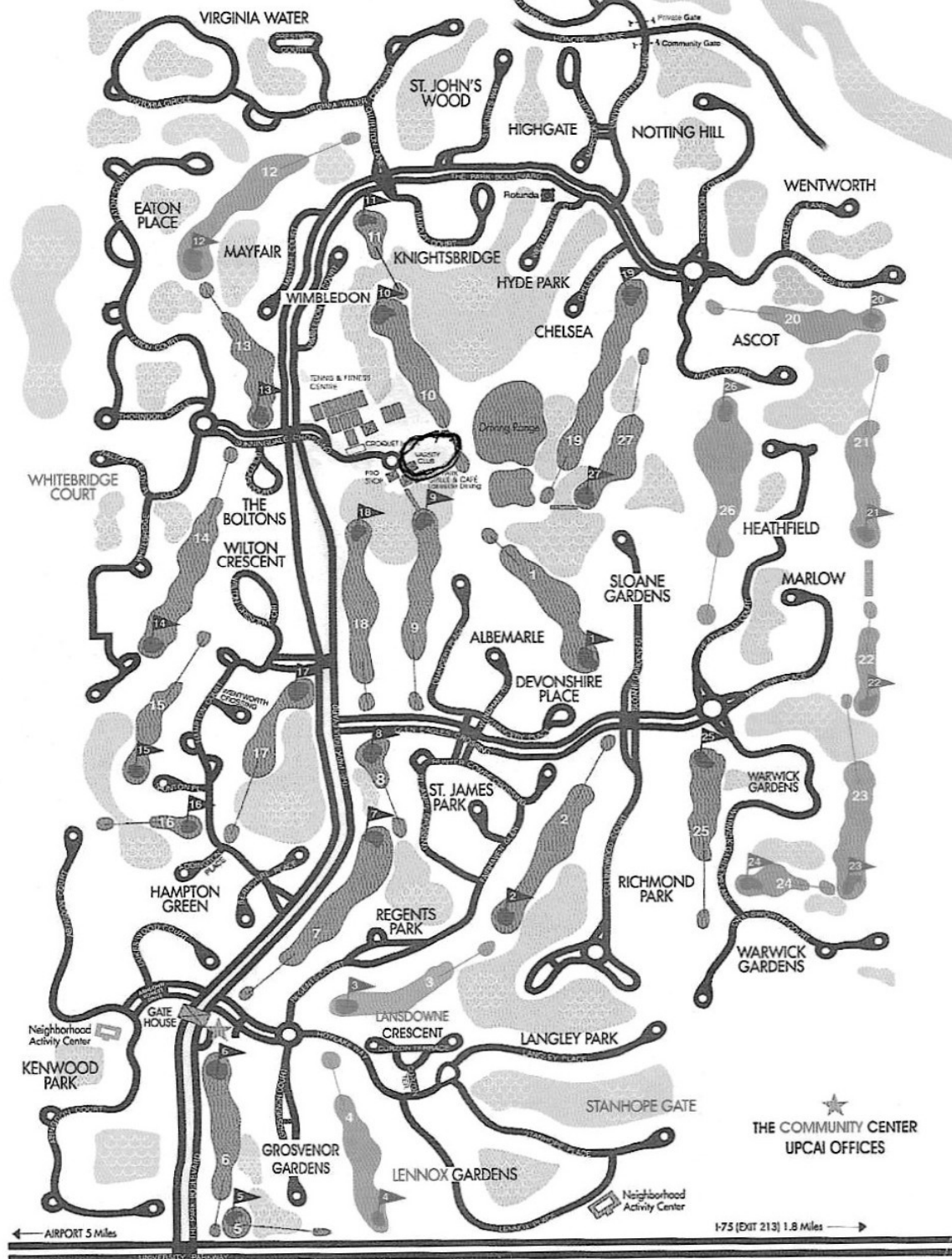
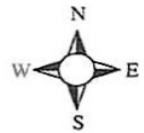
Program Committee

The Program Committee invites Members to let its Chairman, Harold Zabin, know if you are interested in joining that committee. The job entails working with other members of the committee to select topics for ARAS monthly luncheon meetings, and line up speakers for those meetings. Areas considered by the committee include law, business, government, media and the arts. The committee meets at least quarterly in person or by Zoom. Harold can be contacted at hpzabin@aol.com.

Amicus Submissions

If you have items of interest to the members, please forward them to David Goldrich at petsdad@aol.com

UNIVERSITY PARK



University Parkway
Front Gate

— ASK FOR DIRECTIONS AT GATE HOUSE