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## Six Judges Honored For Their Expertise, Legal Acumen and Contributions To the Community

CLEARWATER - Six judges in the Sixth Judicial Circuit were over the last three months recognized for their professionalism, high standards of conduct, and contributions, both in and out of the courtroom.

Pinellas-Pasco Circuit Judge Walter L. "Skip" Schafer Jr., who died in January following a lengthy battle with an undisclosed illness, was posthumously given the John U. Bird Judicial Excellence Award by the Clearwater Bar Association, at its Annual Law Day Luncheon at the Safety Harbor Resort and Spa on May 12.



Judge Skip Schafer

The award was created to recognize honor, high ideals, personal character, judicial competence and service.

Also recognized at the luncheon was Pinellas-Pasco Senior Judge W. Douglas Baird, who was given the coveted George W. Greer Judicial Independence Award, named after the judge who presided over the Terri Schiavo case.



Judge Doug Baird

Judge Baird was cited for his work as the presiding judge in a Florida Bar trial involving three attorneys accused of setting up another attorney for a dui arrest, to gain an advantage in a defamation suit involving two radio personalities. Judge Baird recommended disbarment, and the Florida Supreme Court followed his recommendation.

Earlier in the month, on May 5, Pinellas-Pasco Judge Patrice Moore was recognized by the St. Petersburg Bar Association. Judge Moore was given the bar's Judicial Appreciation Award at the bar's Annual Law Day Luncheon, which this year was held at the Mirror Lake Lyceum in St. Petersburg.



Judge Patrice Moore

A local jurist typically wins the award after the bar solicits nominations. Among the factors considered are a nominee's courtroom demeanor, his or her judicial experience, helpfulness to lawyers and litigants, and activities off the bench that promote the administration of justice and civic participation.

Earlier in the spring, Pinellas-Pasco Circuit Judge Linda Babb was awarded the 2017 Judicial Professionalism Award by the group, the Women Lawyers of Pasco, at a ceremony on April 18. The judge was recognized for, among other things, encouraging those who practice law to maintain high ethical standards.

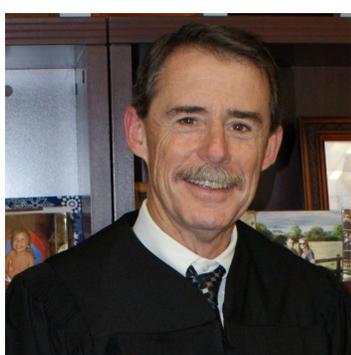


Judge Linda Babb

On June 15, Pinellas-Pasco Circuit Judge Thane Covert received the coveted William J. Castagna Award for Judicial Excellence from the Barney Masterson American Inn of Court, at its 29th annual banquet. For the award, named after a distinguished federal district court judge, members of the Florida Bar cast votes for the person they believe displays the highest standards in all aspects of judicial performance, including knowledge of the law, ethics, civility, professionalism, and demeanor.



Judge Thane Covert



Judge Declan P. Mansfield

On June 16, 2017, Pinellas-Pasco Circuit Judge Declan P. Mansfield was awarded the coveted 2017 President's Heart Award by the West Pasco Chamber of Commerce. The award is also called the Heart of the Community award. While presenting the award to Judge Mansfield, WPCC President Chip Wichmanowski noted the judge works tirelessly to support the community, either by attending or volunteering at sporting events, the Holiday Rotary Extravaganza, and the Chasco Fiesta, among others.