

Discipline

PUBLIC DISCIPLINE

JULY 2 THROUGH AUG. 26, 2004

Bucks County

The Supreme Court on Aug. 19 ordered **John M. Larason** suspended for three months, as recommended by the Disciplinary Board. According to the discipline report, Larason “knowingly made a false statement of material fact to a tribunal” by altering a document he previously submitted to the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania and submitting it to a local district court.

Philadelphia

The Supreme Court on July 8 ordered **Charles C. Staropoli** suspended for one year, retroactive to July 1, 2003, the date he voluntarily was transferred to inactive status. According to the disciplinary report, in a single instance Staropoli improperly handled funds belonging to his former law firm, depositing the funds into his own bank account, then made a series of misrepresentations to the firm regarding his actions. The Disciplinary Board had recommended a six-month suspension and in the report noted that it “does not perceive that Respondent is so unfit that he must petition for reinstatement to prove his fitness subsequent to his suspension.” (*See* below under REINSTATEMENTS.)

The court on July 15 ordered **Chauncey Harris** suspended for one year and one day, as recommended by the Disciplinary Board. According to the discipline report, while Harris was on inactive status for failure to complete CLE requirements, he engaged in “unauthorized practice of law [in] one client matter” and “continued to hold himself out as eligible to practice, advertising his services with a large sign.” Citing a history of two informal admonitions and three separate periods on inactive status from Dec. 16, 1995, to the present, the report stated that Harris’s “pattern of failing to fulfill his [CLE] credits and failing to pay his attorney registration fee evidences a general neglect of his professional responsibilities.”

The court on July 15 ordered **Antoinette M. J. Bentivegna** suspended for two years. A majority of the Disciplinary Board had recommended a suspension of one year and one day, with one member dissenting and recommending disbarment, citing a “history of misrepresentations and deceitful conduct.” According to the discipline report, Bentivegna “engaged in the serial filing of bankruptcy petitions and pleadings without authorizations from her purported clients,” with her actions in four cases “providing a clear snapshot of her dubious practice habits.”

The court on July 29 ordered **Robert S. Fisher** suspended for one year and one day, as recommended by seven members of the Disciplinary Board who dissented from the board’s recommendation of a one-year suspension, the threshold of time beyond which a disbarred or suspended lawyer must file a petition for reinstatement. According to the discipline report, Fisher committed “an isolated, aberrational act of serious misconduct” for which he was convicted in 1992 of one count each of insurance fraud, forgery and criminal conspiracy. Disciplinary procedures began after the appellate process in that case concluded in May 2002.

Wyoming County

The Supreme Court on Aug. 1 ordered **Clyde Kevin Middleton** to be subjected to public censure.

Disbarments on Consent

The following attorneys have been disbarred on consent under a rule of disciplinary enforcement pertaining to resignations by attorneys under disciplinary investigation: **George Guyer Young III**, Delaware County, on July 8; **Michael D. Bart**, Luzerne County, on July 29; **David Sangho Kim**, Montgomery County, on Aug. 12; **Joseph Anthony Duva**, Westmoreland County, on Aug. 24; and **William C. King Jr.**, Allegheny County, on Aug. 24.

Reciprocal Discipline

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court has imposed reciprocal discipline on the following attorneys: **John P. Gross**, out of state, disbarred on July 29, for like discipline imposed by the Supreme Court of New Jersey; and **Linus Gilbert Farr**, out of state, disbarred on Aug. 19, for like discipline imposed by the Supreme Court of New Jersey.

Temporary Suspension — Rule 214

The following attorneys have been placed on temporary suspension under a rule of disciplinary enforcement pertaining to attorneys convicted of serious crimes: **Andrew C. Abrams**, Delaware County, on July 29; **Michael Radbill**, Philadelphia, on July 29; and **Frederick C. Hanselmann**, Montgomery County, on Aug. 24.

REINSTATEMENTS

JULY 2 THROUGH AUG. 26, 2004

Centre County

The Supreme Court on July 16 ordered **Karen Gwyn Muir** reinstated to practice from a three-month suspension ordered March 1, 2004.

Philadelphia

The court on July 29 ordered **Philip A. Valentino Jr.** reinstated to practice from a five-year suspension ordered May 20, 1999, and retroactive to Feb. 24, 1997. Justice Thomas G. Saylor dissented in favor of denial. The Disciplinary Board had recommended reinstatement. According to the discipline report, Valentino was suspended for submitting fraudulent medical records and medical bills in five client matters, one of which resulted in his conviction on one count of mail fraud. The board found that Valentino “presented conclusive evidence that he has rehabilitated himself” and “has met with clear and convincing evidence his burden of proving that he is morally qualified, competent and learned in the law.”

The court on Aug. 12 ordered **Charles C. Staropoli** reinstated from the one-year retroactive suspension described above.