LAING WINS INAUGURAL FIRM POOL TOURNAMENT

Making good use of the recent office renovations at O'Neil Cannon, the firm organized a pool tournament for its employees to break in the pool table in the new café on our upper floor. All 28 participants fought through group play, with the top 14 moving on to a single-elimination round.

Litigation attorney Dean Laing emerged as the champion, beating corporate attorney Pete Faust two out of three games in the tournament final.

While we are all better lawyers and legal professionals than we are pool players, we still enjoy a chance to flex different muscles and mingle with our colleagues with some friendly competition. Laughter, cheers, and good-natured banter brightened the café and the halls as the tournament progressed.

The whole firm was invited to watch Laing, the past president of the firm, edge Faust, the current president of the firm, for the coveted title of inaugural champion.





FOUNDER DINO ANTONOPOULOS OF ANTONOPOULOS LEGAL GROUP JOINS O'NEIL CANNON

O'Neil Cannon is pleased to announce that Dino Antonopoulos, founder of Antonopoulos Legal Group, is bringing ALG's successful practice to O'Neil Cannon. Antonopoulos, a highly respected attorney known for his client-centered approach and dedication, will be a great

addition to O'Neil Cannon's Business and Real Estate Practice Groups.

With almost 20 years in the legal profession, Antonopoulos has built a strong reputation as a corporate and real estate transactional attorney with excellent communication skills, strong client advocacy, and a track record of favorable results. He began his legal career representing closely held businesses and financial institutions in complex commercial litigation and handling high-stakes jury trials involving seven-figure disputes. This foundation in litigation has enriched Antonopoulos's transactional work, particularly in business, real estate, and finance transactions.

At O'Neil Cannon, Antonopoulos will continue representing financial institutions and closely held businesses across a wide range of industries, including manufacturing, distribution, retail, construction, and real estate. In his role as outside general counsel, he provides in-depth advisory and consulting services, offering strategic and practical solutions tailored to each client's unique challenges. Antonopoulos is committed to upholding the same client-first values he established at ALG and looks forward to collaborating with O'Neil Cannon's team.

SUPER LAWYERS RECOGNIZES 30 O'NEIL CANNON ATTORNEYS

Each year, *Super Lawyers* surveys the State of Wisconsin's 15,000 attorneys and judges, seeking the State's top attorneys. Recently, *Super Lawyers* published its lists for 2024, which include the Top 10 Attorneys in Wisconsin, Top 50 Attorneys in Wisconsin, Top 25 Attorneys in Milwaukee, Super Lawyers (consisting of the top 5% of attorneys in Wisconsin), and Rising Stars (consisting of attorneys who are 40 years old or younger or who have been in practice for 10 years or less).

Thirty of our attorneys were recognized by *Super Lawyers*, which has referred to the firm as "the Milwaukee mid-sized powerhouse." Those attorneys are the following:

- Emily Behn:
    - Rising Star
- Nick Chmurski:
    - Rising Star
- Doug Dehler:
    - Super Lawyer
- Jim DeJong:
    - Super Lawyer
- Seth Dizard:

    - Top 50 Attorneys in Wisconsin
    - Top 25 Attorneys in Milwaukee
    - Super Lawyer
- Pete Faust:
    - Top 50 Attorneys in Wisconsin
    - Top 25 Attorneys in Milwaukee
    - Super Lawyer
- John Gehringer:
    - Super Lawyer
- Joseph Gumina:
    - Super Lawyer
- Jessica Haskell:
    - Rising Star
- Mike Kennedy:
    - Rising Star
- Grant Killoran:
    - Super Lawyer
- Dean Laing:
    - Top 10 Attorneys in Wisconsin
    - Top 50 Attorneys in Wisconsin
    - Top 25 Attorneys in Milwaukee
    - Super Lawyer
- Trevor Lippman:
    - Rising Star
- Greg Lyons:
    - Super Lawyer
- Patrick McBride:
    - Super Lawyer
- Jason Meehan:
    - Rising Star
- Britany Morrison:
    - Rising Star
- Joe Newbold:
    - Super Lawyer
- Erica Reib:
    - Rising Star
- Chad Richter:
    - Super Lawyer
- Ryan Riebe:
    - Rising Star
- John Schreiber:
    - Super Lawyer
- Jason Scoby:
    - Super Lawyer
- Steve Slawinski:
    - Super Lawyer
- Kelly Spott:

    - Rising Star
- Christa Wittenberg:
    - Rising Star

Super Lawyers is a national rating service that rates attorneys in all 50 states. The selection process utilized by *Super Lawyers* is multi-phased and includes independent research, peer nominations, and peer evaluations. One court recently had this to say about *Super Lawyers*:

"[T]he selection procedures employed by [*Super Lawyers*] are very sophisticated, comprehensive, and complex. It is abundantly clear . . . that [*Super Lawyers* does] not permit a lawyer to buy one's way onto the list, nor is there any requirement for the purchase of any product for inclusion in the lists or any quid pro quo of any kind or nature associated with the evaluation and listing of an attorney or in the subsequent advertising of one's inclusion in the lists."

We are proud to be one of the few firms in Wisconsin that had more than 50% of its attorneys receive recognition by *Super Lawyers.*

O'NEIL CANNON RANKED BY BEST LAW FIRMS® IN 2025

O'Neil Cannon has been recognized regionally in the 2025 edition of Best Law Firms®, ranked by *Best Lawyers*, in 18 practice areas, including two newly added categories: Litigation – Health Care, and Litigation – Real Estate.

- Bankruptcy and Creditor Debtor Rights / Insolvency and Reorganization Law
- Business Organizations (including LLCs and Partnerships)
- Commercial Litigation
- Construction Law
- Corporate Law
- Employment Law – Management
- Litigation – Bankruptcy
- Litigation – Health Care
- Litigation – Insurance
- Litigation – Labor and Employment
- Litigation – Real Estate
- Mergers and Acquisitions Law
- Personal Injury Litigation – Plaintiffs
- Product Liability Litigation – Defendants
- Real Estate Law

- Securities / Capital Markets Law
- Tax Law
- Trusts and Estates Law

Firms included in the 2025 Best Law Firms® list are recognized for professional excellence based on ratings from clients and peers.

STEVE SLAWINSKI PUBLISHED IN STATE BAR'S CONSTRUCTION BLOG

Construction lien waivers are an indispensable part of the traditional construction payment process, allowing parties to waive their right to file a lien in exchange for payment. Among these waivers, conditional lien waivers represent a specific type that becomes effective only once payment has been received or certain conditions have been met. However, depending on the circumstances, the risks associated with conditional lien waivers may outweigh any potential benefit. To help navigate this process, Steve Slawinski recently authored an article entitled "Conditional Lien Waivers Under Wisconsin Law – Proceed with Caution," which appeared in the State Bar of Wisconsin's Construction Blog.

Read the full article here.

For more information on this topic contact Steve Slawinski at 414-276-5000 or steve.slawinski@wilaw.com.

STEVE SLAWINSKI AND JOHN GEHRINGER RECOGNIZED IN WISCONSIN LAW JOURNAL'S POWER LIST

Recently, attorneys Steve Slawinski and John Gehringer were named in the Wisconsin Law Journal's Power List for Real Estate and Construction Law Attorneys. See their recognition below.

Steve Slawinski

O'Neil, Cannon, Hollman, DeJong & Laing S.C.



Steve Slawinski has represented clients in complex construction, business and real estate litigation for more than three decades.

"As a construction litigator, I strive to provide comprehensive, strategic legal representation tailored to the unique challenges of each case," he said.

Most recently, he's worked on complex multi-million-dollar lawsuits arising from failed commercial construction projects located in Charlotte, North Carolina, and in Kansas City, Missouri. He has also litigated cases arising from both public and private construction projects.

"I especially enjoy the investigative aspect of my work, where I get to dive deep into the facts and evidence and see the story develop through the discovery process," he said. "Piecing together the details and building a strong case is both challenging and rewarding."

John Gehringer

O'Neil, Cannon, Hollman, DeJong & Laing S.C.



Construction real estate law is John Gehringer's specialty at O'Neil, Cannon, Hollman, DeJong & Laing – namely, construction and commercial financing, commercial leasing, condominium development and association management issues, planning and zoning and land use. He also has significant experience in environmental matters and brownfields redevelopment.

Gehringer has had many prominent wins throughout the course of his legal career. Two of the most notable are serving as local counsel for an international construction and engineering firm for the development of a $2.2 billion power plant and representing a commercial bank on the syndication, acquisition and closing of a $71 million construction loan for a 17-story Class A office building.

ATTORNEY MAURA FALK HAS JOINED O'NEIL CANNON

Attorney Maura Falk, a graduate of the University of Wisconsin Law School, has joined O'Neil Cannon's Family Law Practice Group. Falk focuses on helping her clients navigate the complexities of divorce, custody disputes, and other family-related legal issues. With prior experience in criminal defense, civil litigation, and a judicial internship at the Wisconsin Supreme Court, Falk offers a well-rounded approach to family law. We are pleased to have her join the firm.

O'Neil Cannon, founded in Milwaukee in 1973, is a full-service law firm that focuses on meeting the many needs of businesses and their owners. Our experienced attorneys work with businesses and their owners at all stages of the business life cycle, helping them start, grow, and transition their businesses. We also assist business owners with their personal legal needs, including tax and estate planning and family law. For more information about the services we provide, please visit our website.

GREG LYONS HONORED FOR SAVING LIFE

Attorney Greg Lyons was recently honored, along with others, for his heroic actions in saving the life of West Bend Alderman Mark Allen who suffered a cardiac arrest. Without hesitation, Lyons stepped in and performed CPR, stabilizing the situation until paramedics arrived. As the leader of the firm's safety response team, Lyons actively promotes CPR training within the organization, resulting in many employees taking part in the life-saving training. Reflecting on the incident, Lyons humbly remarked, "I was just in the right place at the right time. Adrenaline kicked in, and that took over." His quick thinking and preparedness highlights the importance of CPR training in emergency situations.

Read the full story here.

WITTENBERG WINS JUDGE TERENCE T. EVANS HUMOR AND CREATIVITY IN LAW COMPETITION, AGAIN!

O'Neil Cannon attorney Christa Wittenberg was recently announced the winner of the 2024 Judge Terence T. Evans Humor and Creativity in Law Competition, sponsored by the Eastern District of Wisconsin Bar Association. The award is given each year to one attorney whose original creative law-related writing piece is selected by the review committee. Wittenberg is honored to be the first repeat winner of the award, having previously won in 2019. The competition honors the memory of the Honorable Terence T. Evans, former judge of the U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Wisconsin, and U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, who was known for his wit and creativity throughout his life and his work. At the EDWBA Annual Meeting in May, Wittenberg happily accepted the traveling trophy and brought it back to her office to display for another year. Her winning article is below.

A Point Worth Exclaiming

I have a secret love, hardly befitting a self-anointed top-notch legal writer: I love the exclamation point! There are few greater joys in life than the jovial enthusiasm conjured by that expressive mark. No wonder legal writers scoff—joviality and enthusiasm have no place

in legal prose.

My closet adoration isn't all my fault. As with most of my flaws, I can blame my parents. My father has seldom written a text message or email that was not overflowing with exclamation points. In fact, when his stepmother passed away some years ago, he announced it to my sister and me with the following text message:

> *Girls, I have news!! Grandma Beverly passed this morning!*
>
> *So sad, but we're glad she's no longer in pain! I love you both!!*

That is six too many exclamation points to use to announce someone's death! Yet, outside of death announcements, I also default to the exclamation point in casual writing.

Despite my genetic predisposition toward the exclamation point, I meekly allowed law school and lawyering to beat that penchant out of me. Like one with Stockholm syndrome, I became a militant eradicator of all frivolous punctuation in legal writing. In one of my very first assignments as a young lawyer, fresh out of my federal clerkship and eager to show my legal writing chops, I was asked by a shareholder at my firm to edit a draft brief. I was horrified to see an offending exclamation point in the conclusion of the brief: "The petition must be denied!" I promptly deleted that slender eyesore and put in a modest period. Crisis averted. My colleague narrowly avoided the embarrassment of showing weakness through emphatic punctuation.

Similarly, in professional emails, my legal training and desire to be taken seriously compelled me to banish that beloved bang. Sure, I might want to wish my client a wonderful day, but I sure as hell wouldn't finish it off with such childish punctuation. So, I would sometimes type this: "Have a nice day." And then I would promptly delete it because that period changes everything.

"Have a nice day!" says I sincerely hope your day is happy. In contrast, "Have a nice day." says one of two things: (1) You are my opposing counsel and I know you are going to be filing a copy of this email with the court, so I'd better say something that seems cordial; or (2) I'm a serial killer and you're my next mark. Either way, it's not the message I want to send in most of my emails.

I started to wonder about the source of this shared understanding that exclamation points in legal writing are unprofessional. Was it in a footnote in our legal writing textbooks, amidst the lesson on how not to be funny?[1] Is there really any legitimate authority for this ban anyway? Actually, yes, as it turns out. In a leading legal style manual, The Redbook, the esteemed Bryan Garner decrees, "An exclamation mark is rarely justified in legal writing except in a direct quotation."[2] Well, quote this, Mr. Garner: Nobody asked you![3]

After more than a decade of living a double life—exclamation-point-teetotaling by day and exclamation-point-binging by night—I recently took a bold step: I now sometimes use exclamation points in professional emails with people who I know well enough and who have first used an exclamation point in their own emails to me. No doubt, my nomination for the Ruth La Fave Trailblazer Award is forthcoming.

Will I be using an exclamation point in my next brief? Of course not! I'm not a lunatic. But if Judge Easterbrook can whip out an interrobang in a court decision,[4] maybe one day I will find a legal point worth exclaiming.

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[1] Perhaps that footnote said, "Above all, do not use exclamation points!"
[2] Bryan A. Garner, The Redbook: A Manual on Legal Style § 1.76 (3d ed. 2013).
[3] If ever Bryan Garner stumbles upon this piece of writing, this footnote is for him: I'm actually a huge fan and I generally follow all of your advice. I trust you recognize and appreciate humor when you see it.
[4] Elevated in status by Judge Easterbrook's nonchalant use in the decision in Robert F. Booth Tr. v. Crowley, 687 F.3d 314, 319 (7th Cir. 2012), the interrobang is a nonstandard punctuation mark that overlays an exclamation point and a question mark when just one won't do. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interrobang. But don't check Westlaw to see it—the version online swaps in a "!?" instead of a proper interrobang. Isn't that ridiculous?

Read Wittenberg's previous award-winning article from 2019 **here**.

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20 O'NEIL CANNON LAWYERS SELECTED AS 2025 BEST LAWYERS; ANOTHER 5 NAMED BEST LAWYERS: ONES TO WATCH

We are pleased to announce 20 of our lawyers have been included in the 2025 Edition of *The Best Lawyers in America*, and an additional five have been selected as 2025 *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch*.

The following are the O'Neil Cannon lawyers named to the 2025 lists:

Best Lawyers in America

- Doug Dehler – Litigation – Insurance
- Jim DeJong – Corporate Law, Mergers and Acquisitions Law, and Securities / Capital Markets Law
- Seth Dizard – Bankruptcy and Creditor Debtor Rights / Insolvency and Reorganization Law and Litigation – Bankruptcy
- Pete Faust – Corporate Law and Mergers and Acquisitions Law
- John Gehringer – Commercial Litigation, Construction Law, Corporate Law, and Real Estate Law
- Joseph Gumina – Employment Law – Management and Litigation – Labor and Employment
- Dennis Hollman – Corporate Law and Trusts and Estates
- Grant Killoran – Commercial Litigation and Litigation – Health Care
- JB Koenings – Corporate Law
- Dean Laing – Commercial Litigation, Personal Injury Litigation – Plaintiffs, and Product Liability Litigation – Defendants
- Greg Lyons – Commercial Litigation and Litigation – Insurance
- Patrick McBride – Commercial Litigation
- Joe Newbold – Commercial Litigation, Litigation – Real Estate, and Personal Injury Litigation – Plaintiffs
- Chad Richter – Business Organizations (including LLCs and Partnerships) and Corporate Law
- John Schreiber – Bankruptcy and Creditor Debtor Rights / Insolvency and Reorganization Law and Litigation – Bankruptcy
- Jason Scoby – Banking and Finance Law, Business Organizations (including LLCs and Partnerships), and Corporate Law
- Steve Slawinski – Construction Law

Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch

- Emily Behn – Commercial Litigation
- Trevor Lippman – Litigation – Trusts and Estates
- Erica Reib – Labor and Employment Law – Management and Litigation – Labor and Employment
- Kelly Spott – Trusts and Estates
- Christa Wittenberg – Commercial Litigation

About Best Lawyers

Best Lawyers has published their list for over three decades, earning the respect of the profession, the media, and the public as the most reliable, unbiased source of legal referrals.

Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch recognizes associates and other lawyers who are earlier in their careers for their outstanding professional excellence in private practice in the United States.

Lawyers on *The Best Lawyers in America* and *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch* lists are divided by geographic region and practice areas. They are reviewed by their peers on the basis of professional expertise, and they undergo an authentication process to make sure they are in current practice and in good standing.