

## **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.

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## **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](#).

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## **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.

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## 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?<sup>1</sup> 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.”<sup>2</sup> Well, quote this, Mr. Garner: Nobody asked you!<sup>3</sup>

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,<sup>4</sup> maybe one day I will find a legal point worth exclaiming.

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<sup>1</sup> Perhaps that footnote said, “Above all, do not use exclamation points!”

<sup>2</sup> Bryan A. Garner, *The Redbook: A Manual on Legal Style* § 1.76 (3d ed. 2013).

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> 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?

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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
- Kelly Kuglitsch - Employment Law - Management
- 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.

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## **ATTORNEY JACOB LLOYD HAS JOINED O'NEIL CANNON**

Attorney Jacob Lloyd, a *summa cum laude* graduate of Marquette University Law School, has joined O'Neil Cannon's Litigation Practice Group. He brings valuable experience from interning for Chief Justice Annette Ziegler of the Wisconsin Supreme Court and Chief Judge Diane Sykes of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, providing him with a deep understanding of state and federal judicial systems. Additionally, Lloyd has volunteered with the Marquette Legal Clinic, the Afghan Asylum Project, and the Special Olympics of

Wisconsin. We are pleased to welcome Lloyd to O'Neil Cannon.

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## **ERICA REIB NAMED ONE OF WISCONSIN LAW JOURNAL'S POWER 30 EMPLOYMENT LAWYERS**

Erica Reib leads O'Neil Cannon's Labor and Employment Practice Group. She represents businesses in state and federal courts, administrative agencies, arbitrations, and mediations; assists clients with drafting, enforcing, and defending employment agreements, restrictive covenants, and employee handbooks; provides clients with day-to-day advice, counseling, and training on labor and employment matters; and supports clients with the labor and employment aspects of transactions.

THE  
**POWERLIST**  
WISCONSIN LAW JOURNAL



**ERICA REIB**  
**O'NEIL CANNON HOLLMAN**  
**DEJONG & LAING**

Erica Reib is the head of the Labor and Employment Practice Group with Milwaukee-based O'Neil Cannon Hollman DeJong & Laing.

Reib works on a broad range of labor and employment issues for companies, including employment discrimination litigation and employment policy.

According to Reib, her law practice has been very fulfilling.

"I enjoy helping companies solve problems to try to find solutions to employment law issues," Reib said.

Reib received her undergraduate degree from West Virginia University and graduated from Marquette University Law School.

She is admitted to practice with the State Bar of Wisconsin, Eastern District of Wisconsin, Western District of Wisconsin, 7th Circuit Court of Appeals, and the Northern District of Illinois.

Reib is no stranger to award recognition and has received awards for: Joseph E. O'Neill Prize for Student Writing, 2011; Martin J. Greenberg Award, 2011; Joseph E. Tierney Jr. Award, 2011; Editor-in-Chief of the Marquette Sports Law Review, 2010-2011; CALI Award, Employee Benefits, 2010; CALI Award, Professional Sports Law, 2010; CALI Award, Amateur Sports Law Workshop, 2010; and the Posner Pro Bono Society, Sports Law Certificate.

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# **KELLY SPOTT ELECTED PRACTICE GROUP LEADER FOR THE TRUST, ESTATES AND SUCCESSION PLANNING GROUP**

O'Neil Cannon proudly announces the election of Kelly Spott as the practice group leader for the Trust, Estates and Succession Planning Group, effective July 1, 2024.

*"I am honored to have been elected as the new practice group leader for the Trust, Estates and Succession Planning Group," said Spott. "I look forward to leveraging my experience and passion for assisting families to further strengthen our services in estate planning and tax matters."*

Spott has been a vital part of the O'Neil Cannon team since 2017, specializing in estate planning, succession planning, probate administration, trust administration, and inheritance litigation. She is licensed to practice in Wisconsin and Florida.

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# **O'NEIL CANNON SERVES AS LEGAL ADVISOR TO ENGENDREN CORPORATION IN ITS SALE TO CUMMINS INC.**

O'Neil Cannon advised Engendren Corporation in its recent sale to Cummins Inc., a global powertrain manufacturer. Over the past couple of years, Engendren has experienced tremendous growth, and it looks forward to continued advancement and expansion as Cummins invests in improving Engendren's capabilities. This support will further enable Engendren to provide world class cooling solutions for all its customers. Engendren is part of the Cummins Power Systems Business but will continue to operate independently.

The O'Neil Cannon deal team was led by Chad Richter with assistance provided by Pete Faust, Britany Morrison, Sam Nelson, Erica Reib, Nick Chmurski, and Kelly Kuglitsch.

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# **ATTORNEY EMILY BEHN HAS JOINED O'NEIL**

# CANNON

Attorney [Emily Behn](#), a *cum laude* graduate of the University of Wisconsin Law School, has joined O'Neil Cannon. Emily is a member of the firm's Litigation Practice Group, where she assists clients in a wide variety of both personal and commercial litigation matters ranging from inheritance and contract disputes to business shareholder disputes, property disputes, and renovation and construction disputes. Prior to law school, Emily studied journalism and worked in public relations telling the stories of both public and private sector clients in the health care, food and beverage, agriculture, and gaming industries. She now leverages her communications experience in her legal advocacy. We are very pleased to welcome Emily to O'Neil Cannon.

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## WELCOME BACK, GLENN "DOC" RIVERS

In the summer of 1982, when Glenn "Doc" Rivers was a student-athlete at Marquette University, he was a messenger at our firm, running errands and playing on the firm's softball team (he pretty much covered the entire outfield). Likely due to the tremendous training and experience he received from our firm, Doc has had great success since then. He played in the NBA for 14 years; has been a head coach in the NBA for 25 years; won an NBA championship; was named Coach of the Year in the NBA; and is now the head coach of the Milwaukee Bucks. Welcome back to Milwaukee, Doc. It was clear to us way back in 1982 that Doc was destined for great things.

