

ADVICETALK

AdviceScene Monthly Newsletter

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AdviceScene's First Newspaper Article is out!

Saanich News

Lawyers dish the goods, free of charge

Roszan Holmen/News staff

Well, we did our first newspaper interview in March and the article came out in print on April Fool's day. There are no coincidences, they say! Many people reading the article probably thought, "Oh yeah, lawyers answering questions for free—GOOD ONE!" But it sounds as though many other people aren't quite as cynical as some of us. They believe this is really happening and many have stopped me to say what a great site it is. We still have a lot of work to do, but yes, we agree, the site is great!

New for April

The mythical CyberCourt: we can't tell you the details, but this brainchild of Nancy's is going to be really exciting! The idea has been in the works now for a year and a half, so Nancy is anxious to have it finally come to fruition. Also, we're working on a very exciting 'app' for phones; and hope to have it completed in the next few weeks. So get out those Blackberrys and iPhones and get ready to play!



As predicted, we've attracted some more lawyers to the site, and as you all know by now, one judge as well:



Justice Harvey Brownstone

Justice Harvey Brownstone, author of [Tug of War](#) has been answering questions steadily on the AdviceScene legal forum. He believes that educating the public about the law is an important part of his job as a judge. The AdviceScene legal forum is a perfect fit for this purpose. Justice Brownstone is the first and only judge in North America to have written a book that speaks directly to the public about the realities of family court. The book is written in plain language, demystifying complex legal principles and debunking myths about family law, surrounding such issues as joint custody, paternity, child support, and the interrelationship between criminal court and family court. *Tug of War* is now #7 on the national best seller list for Canada, with all of the royalties donated to the Children's Wish Foundation. The book has received widespread acclaim from the judiciary, the legal profession, family counsellors, mediators, the media and the general public. Justice Brownstone has launched the dawn of a new era in the way that the judiciary interacts with the public; he advocates that judges should be accessible as public educators and not just as adjudicators of disputes. He is a great role model for other judges and lawyers; and we look forward to his continued participation in the democratization of the law.

“Judges should be accessible as public educators and not just as adjudicators of disputes”



John Gustafson

(McCullough Blazina Dieno & Gustafson, Victoria, BC)



John is the newest lawyer member of the AdviceScene legal forum. He went to law school with Nancy at UVic, but that's not all he's known for of course. He practises criminal defence law out of his office in Victoria, though he travels all over the province for court dates. His practice is focussed on defending criminal cases involving drug trafficking and violence. A former bouncer, John understands the dynamics at play when confrontations become violent. He uses this insight to help present the best defence at trial.

When he's not busy helping people stay out of jail, John is an avid skydiver and weightlifter. So..., a skydiving, weightlifting, former bouncer? You don't want to go up against this guy in court or on the street for that matter! Just kidding, he's really just a big friendly giant willing to help people out whenever he can. He looks forward to being of assistance to anyone that finds themselves up against the law, by answering criminal law questions on the forum. John is a private citizen member of [LEAP \(Law Enforcement Against Prohibition\)](#), but he's not worried that legalizing drugs will put him out of work—he says that police will still have a lot to do by chasing after the real criminals; and he'll be there to make sure the police have done their job correctly.

[Law Enforcement Against Prohibition](#)



CLICK HERE
MPB
McCullough Blazina Dieno & Gustafson
John Gustafson B.A., LL.B., Criminal Law

Erik Magraken

(MacIsaac Group, Victoria, BC)

Erik joined the AdviceScene forum last month. He is a personal Injury and ICBC claims lawyer with a practice that takes him all over BC; but he's based in Victoria. His practice is restricted exclusively to plaintiff-only personal injury claims with a particular emphasis on claims involving orthopaedic injuries, complex soft tissue injuries, spinal cord injuries and brain injuries. Erik is an Internet saavy lawyer—you'll find him on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn; and he has his own [blog!](#) He is the lawyer mentioned in the recent Saanich News story. Nancy had told the reporter that Erik was well aware of the benefits of marketing himself through social networking; and that he was likely the best lawyer to interview about the AdviceScene legal forum. Erik is an avid information-poster—we all enjoy reading about recent court cases and interesting tidbits about ICBC personal injury cases. It's great to have you on board Erik!




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"My greatest professional satisfaction comes from teaching clients to better understand their legal rights"



MoralityMeter

Well, once again Canadians have decided that out of ten, six is a good, comfortable number! When asked “How morally bad do you think it is to use illegal drugs?” Canadians (well 32 of them anyway) decided that using drugs should not be legal but that it really isn't that big of a deal. So perhaps decriminalizing drugs would be an acceptable solution for those that voted. This would mean that using drugs would not lead to a jail term, but could lead to a fine instead.

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