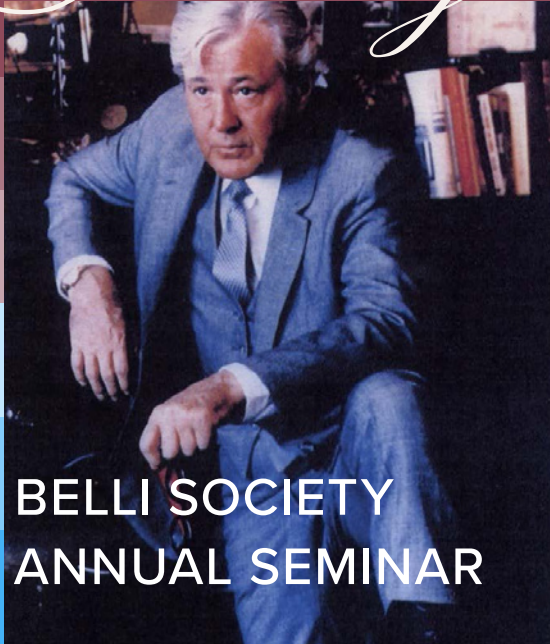




MELVIN M. BELLI

*Society*



MELVIN M. BELLI SOCIETY  
75<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SEMINAR

MARRIOTT PHILADELPHIA DOWNTOWN  
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA  
GRAND BALLROOM 5<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, SALONS A-D  
FRIDAY, JULY 14, 2023  
9:00 AM – 4:00 PM ET

If you are interested in joining the Society, see information in program on page 13.

# MELVIN M. BELLI, SR.

## JULY 29, 1907 – JULY 9, 1996

Mel Belli was born into a pioneer family in Sonora, Tuolumne County, the heart of California's Gold Rush region. His father, Caesar Belli, was born in Eureka, Nevada and was a prominent banker in California's Mother Lode region. His grandmother, Anna Mouron, was California's first woman druggist. Henri Mouron was a professor of languages at St Augustine's College and headmaster of the Young Ladies Seminar of St. Mary's of the Pacific, one of the first schools in California.

Mel Belli attended elementary schools in Sonora and Stockton, California, before attending the University of California and Boalt Hall School of Law, Berkeley where he received his LLB in 1933. His first job after graduation was posing as a hobo for the Works Progress Administration and riding on the railroad to observe the Depression's impact on the USA vagrant population. His findings were later used as the basis for transient relief programs throughout the nation.

He was admitted to the California Bar in November 1933 and served as counsel for the Catholic priest at San Quentin Prison. He accepted the challenge of representing men on Death Row. Thus began a legal career representing individuals in personal injury cases and in raising personal injury awards to then-unprecedented heights that earned him the title of "The King of Torts" by Life Magazine writer Robert Wallace in a 1954 profile. Wallace later wrote a book about Mel Belli and his work entitled, "*Life and Limb.*"

In his first personal injury lawsuit, Mel Belli represented an injured cable car grip-man. Over defense attorneys' objections, Belli brought a large model of a cable car intersection, and the gearbox and chain involved in the accident, to court to demonstrate to the jurors exactly what happened. Mel Belli was called the "Father of Demonstrative Evidence" for his pioneering work in illustrating in court the nature of his client's injuries. His early use of photographs, movies, scale models, human skeletons, animals, prostheses, and other devices was dramatic, riveting, and highly effective.

Mel Belli's high profile clients included Mae West, Errol Flynn, Lenny Bruce, Zsa Zsa Gabor, Muhammad Ali, Alex Haley, the so-called "Angel of Death" – the Nevada nurse accused of murdering patients, television evangelist Jim Bakker and his wife Tammy Faye, the Korean jetliner disaster, the MGM Grand Hotel fire in Las Vegas, the collapse of the Kansas City Hyatt walkway, the Benedictine birth defect cases, and Sirhan Sirhan. In his best known case, Mel Belli represented Jack Ruby on trial for the murder of Lee Harvey Oswald, the assassin of President John F. Kennedy. Belli attempted to show that Ruby was legally insane and had a history of mental illness in his family. On March 14, 1964, Ruby was convicted of "murder with malice" and received a death sentence. However, in late 1966, Ruby's conviction was overturned by the Texas Appellate Court, and he was granted a new trial outside of Dallas. Ruby died before the second trial could take place. Belli wrote a book, "*Dallas Justice,*" on his perspective of the Jack Ruby case.

Belli wrote more than 60 books including the multi-volume, "*Modern Trials,*" which is still considered a classic textbook on demonstrative evidence. Mel Belli loved the law and the limelight equally and left behind a legacy of both creative and controversial "lawyering." Belli reveled in his victories and after winning a big case, raised a Jolly Roger on the roof of his landmark building in San Francisco and fired off two blasts from a signal cannon. Belli once said, "There may be better lawyers than I, but so far I haven't come across any of them in court."

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2022-2023

<b>PRESIDENT:</b>	Marion Munley, Scranton, PA
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The Melvin M. Belli Society is an international group of trial lawyers dedicated to preserving and enhancing the Belli legal legacy.



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[www.bellisociety.org](http://www.bellisociety.org)

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2004-2005	Ronald J. Berke	1981-1983	Stanley E. Preiser
2003-2004	Randall H. Scarlett		

## PAST MEL AWARD HONOREES

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2007	Frank Branson	2017	Steven Gursten
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2010	Howard Nations	2019	Karen Koehler
2011	Betty A. Thompson	2022	Joseph A. Fried

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Richmond, VA

**Patrick Malone**

Patrick Malone & Associates  
Washington DC

**Melinda Ghilardi**

Munley Law, PC  
Scranton, PA

**Justin Kahn**

Kahn Law Firm, LLP  
Charleston, SC

*Morning Session Moderator: Jason Konvicka*

9:00 am – 9:05 am

**Opening Remarks**



**Marion Munley, Esq.**

Munley Law, PC  
Scranton, PA

9:05 am – 9:10 am

**Opening Remarks**



**Jason Konvicka, Esq.**

Allen, Allen, Allen & Allen  
Richmond, VA

9:10 am – 9:25 am

## **Avoiding Hackers and Bar Complaints: Technology Due Diligence?**



### **Tad Thomas, Esq.**

Thomas Law Offices, PLLC  
Louisville, KY  
tad@thomaslawoffices.com  
www.thomaslawoffices.com

9:25 am – 9:40 am

## **Build A Legacy With Your Firm**



### **Edward Allen, Esq.**

Richmond, VA  
edward.allen@allenandallen.com  
www.allenandallen.com

9:40 am – 9:55 am

## **Dynamic Public Speaking for Trial Lawyers**



### **Chadrick Mance, Esq.**

The Mance Law Firm  
Savannah, GA  
mancelawgroup@gmail.com  
www.mancelaw.com

9:55 am – 10:05 am

## **The Importance of Protecting the Plaintiff's Benefits**



### **The Halpern Group**

Natalie Sticesen  
Springfield, NJ  
natalie@halpern.com  
www.halpern.com

10:05 am – 10:20 am

## **How Thinking Like a Photographer Can Help Trial Lawyers**



### **Patrick Malone, Esq.**

Patrick Malone & Associates  
Washington DC  
pmalone@patrickmalonelaw.com  
www.patrickmalonelaw.com

10:20 am – 10:30 am

## **Break**

10:30 am – 10:45 am

## **Top Non-Legal Books Trial Lawyers Need for Their Practice**



### **Ken Levinson, Esq.**

Levinson and Stefani Injury Lawyers  
Chicago, IL  
ken@levinsonstefani.com  
www.levinsonstefani.com

10:45 am – 11:00 am

## **Cutting-Edge Access to Justice Developments**



### **Arthur H. Bryant, Esq.**

Bailey Glasser, LLP  
Oakland, CA  
abryant@baileyglasser.com  
www.baileyglasser.com

11:00 am – 11:15 am

## **Dehydrated to Death by the ICU: How Broken Systems Are Killing Patients**



### **Adam Malone, Esq.**

Malone Law Office  
Atlanta, GA  
adamm@malonelaw.com  
www.malonelaw.com

11:15 am – 11:30 am

**Trial Preparation: Mass Shooting Cases**



**Randall H. Scarlett, Esq.**

Scarlett Law Group  
San Francisco, CA  
rscarlett@scarlettlawgroup.com  
www.scarlettlawgroup.com

11:30 am – 12:00 pm

**The Sandy Hook Shooting:  
The Case Against Alex Jones**



**Josh Koskoff, Esq.**

Koskoff, Koskoff & Bieder, PC  
Bridgeport, CT  
JKoskoff@koskoff.com  
www.koskoff.com

12:00 pm – 12:30 pm

**Lunch**

*Afternoon Session Moderator: Patrick Malone*

12:30 pm – 12:45 pm

**Anchoring Bias: How it Affects Us and  
Why It's Important**



**Bruce H. Stern, Esq.**

Stark & Stark  
Lawrenceville, NJ  
bstern@stark-stark.com  
www.stark-stark.com



12:45 pm – 1:00 pm

## **The New US Supreme Court and the Civil Justice System: The Emerging Record**



**Paul Bland, Esq.**

Public Justice Foundation  
Washington DC  
pbland@publicjustice.net  
www.publicjustice.net

1:00 pm – 1:15 pm

## **Getting the Defense Off The Fence – They Key to Preparing Cases for Trial and Settlement**



**Joseph A. Fried, Esq.**

Fried Goldberg, LLC  
Atlanta, GA  
joe@friedgoldberg.com  
www.friedgoldberg.com

1:15 pm – 1:30 pm

## **Safety Rules in Practice: Building a Winnable Case from the Ground Up**



**Zoe Littlepage, Esq.**

Littlepage Booth  
Houston, TX  
zoe@littlepagebooth.com  
www.littlepagebooth.com

1:30 pm – 1:45 pm

## **Building Your Theme Through Adverse Witnesses**



**Kyle Findley, Esq.**

Arnold & Itkin  
Houston, TX  
kfindley@arnolditkin.com  
www.arnolditkin.com

1:45 pm – 2:00 pm

## Show Don't Tell – Visual Persuasion



### Justin S. Kahn, Esq.

Kahn Law Firm, LLP  
Charleston, SC  
jskahn@kahnlawfirm.com  
www.kahnlawfirm.com

2:00 pm – 2:10 pm

## Case on Life Care Plans



### Physician Life Care Planning Joseph Gonzales

San Antonio, TX  
josephj@physicianlcp.com  
www.physicianlcp.com

2:10 pm – 2:25 pm

## Why It Is Important to Divide and Conquer



### Christian Morris, Esq.

Christian Morris Trial Attorneys  
Henderson, NV  
christian@cmtrialattorneys.com  
cmtrialattorneys.com

2:25 pm – 2:40 pm

## Representing Survivors of Sexual Exploitation



### Neil T. O'Donnell

O'Donnell Law Offices  
Kingston, PA  
ntod@odonnell-law.com  
www.odonnell-law.com

2:40 pm – 2:50 pm

## Break

2:50 pm – 3:05 pm

## **Father-in-Law – Lessons in Law from a Father and Son**



**Eric Romano, Esq.**  
**John Romano, Esq.**

Romano Law Group  
Palm Beach, FL  
eric@romanolawgroup.com  
john@romanolawgroup.com  
romanolawgroup.com



3:05 pm – 3:20 pm

## **Pivoting to a Different Trial Strategy: A Case Study**



**Marion Munley, Esq.**

Munley Law, PC  
Scranton, PA  
mmunley@munley.com  
www.munley.com



**Andrew Buzin, Esq.**

Buzin Law PC  
New York, NY  
abuzin@buzinlaw.com  
www.buzinlaw.com

3:20 pm – 3:35 pm



## **PTSD and the Brain**

**Florence A. Murray, Esq.**

Murray & Murray, Co.  
Sandusky, OH  
fam@murrayandmurray.com  
www.murrayandmurray.com

3:35 pm – 3:50 pm



## **Don't Let Your Clients Trip Up.. Again: Updated Paradigm For Premises Cases & "Avoidable Accidents" Using "The Cone of Vision"**

**Tom Vesper, Esq.**

Westmoreland, Vesper & Quattrone  
Pleasantville, NJ  
tom@westmorelandvesper.com  
westmorelandvesper.com/

3:50 pm – 3:55 pm



## **Closing Remarks**

**Jason Konvicka**

Allen, Allen, Allen & Allen  
Richmond, VA

# MELVIN M. BELLI *Society*

## INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MELVIN M. BELLI SOCIETY MEMBER?

You need to be nominated by two existing Belli Society members. The members nominating you need to send your name and contact information to Belli Society Membership Chair, Ronnie Berke of Chattanooga, TN at [ronnie@berkeattys.com](mailto:ronnie@berkeattys.com). Once you receive an invitation letter, you will be prompted to pay a \$1,000 initiation fee. This fee includes your first year's dues. You will mail your check to the Melvin M. Belli Society Executive Office. If you have any questions please contact [info@bellsociety.org](mailto:info@bellsociety.org).

## THANK YOU TO OUR 2023 SPONSORS!



## NOTES

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## THE BELLI BUILDING

722 MONTGOMERY STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94111