

Listen in to *Legal Talk*

By Susan I. Shiber

Photography by Kelly O'Keefe

*A*t first glance around Steve Karp's law office, you can't miss an enormous glass jar of brightly colored jelly beans. One wonders if the attorney has an insatiable sweet tooth, or is he a fan of President Ronald Reagan. Actually, the candy represents a pivotal conclusion in a personal injury

case. Karp & Hart is the only suburban law firm that limits its practice exclusively to personal and medical injury.

As for the jelly beans, Karp represented an automobile accident victim, who was in such pain that multiple pills were prescribed. "We could have merely pointed out that the man took lots of medica-

tion," says Karp. "So what? The jar contains more than 12,000 jelly beans. Each one symbolizes a pill. Each pill costs \$79. I poured the entire contents on the floor of the court room and announced that this is how many pills he required in four years since the accident. He was awarded a settlement."



Legal Talk, heard Tuesdays at noon on WCHE 1520AM radio and hosted by Peter Hart and Steve Karp, is a live call-in show which is both informative and entertaining and has been on the air for 23 years.

Legal Talk

Every Tuesday

Noon to 12:30 P.M.

WCHE 1520AM Radio

WCHE1520.com

“You have to be interesting to capture a jury’s attention,” adds Peter Hart. “We’re trial lawyers. If we can’t sell a story, we’re less likely to receive a verdict in favor of our client. Drama helps.”

Some of that drama is presented each week on *Legal Talk*, heard Tuesdays at noon on WCHE 1520AM radio. The live call-in show, which is both informative and entertaining, has been on the air for 23 years. As the nation’s longest running legal radio program, topics from car insurance to custody issues, movies to malpractice, novels to negligence, criminal cases to civil suits have been covered. Guests may be famous, infamous, or funny. Local judges, politicians, and educators join critically acclaimed authors, attorneys, and subjects of popular films on the roster. WCHE 1520AM is West Chester and central Chester County’s only community radio station.

From a cast of thousands, here is a selection of some of the most intriguing guests. Jan Schlichtmann became famous in the 1980s when he alleged that chemicals from W. R. Grace & Co. and Beatrice Co. had contaminated drinking water in Woburn, Massachusetts, causing children to die. The movie *A Civil Action* starring John Travolta was based on the case. Karp interviewed Schlichtmann and author Jonathan Harr, whose book resulted in the film. “The attorney turned down two million dollars based on principle,” recalls Karp. “He admitted if he knew then what he knows now, he would have accepted the money.”



Linda's Country Cleaners and Country Painting Inc.



OUR EXPERTS MAKE IT EASY TO IMPROVE & MAINTAIN YOUR HOME



Over 29 Years of Service

Residential and Commercial, No Job Too Big or Too Small, Individual Care, Old Fashioned Skills

Visit our website to see what customers are saying about us:

www.lindascountrycleaners.com

Home Maintenance Services

- Regular House Cleaning
- One Time Custom Cleaning
- Move-in/Move-out Service
- Window and Gutter Cleaning
 - Carpet Cleaning
- Wood Floor Care/Refinishing
 - Air Duct Cleaning
- Landscaping and Lawn Care
 - Hauling
- Interior and Exterior Painting
- Color Consulting to assist you in making the perfect paint color choice
 - Organizing & Staging
 - Handyman/Carpentry Jobs
 - Party Serving
- Power Washing and Deck Restoration • And More

610-644-9262 • www.lindascountrycleaners.com

136 W. Lancaster Ave, Suite 1 • Paoli, PA 19301 • email: lindascleaners@aol.com

Established 1982 ~ Fully Insured ~ Services Available 7 Days A Week

MARCH 16th, 17th & 18th



the Art of Chester County

CHESTER COUNTY ANTIQUES SHOW

A BENEFIT FOR THE CHESTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THE 30th ANNIVERSARY

PREVIEW PARTY

FRIDAY, MARCH 16 6:00PM - 9:00PM \$130

SHOW HOURS

SATURDAY, MARCH 17 10:00AM - 7:00PM

SUNDAY, MARCH 18 11:00AM - 5:00PM

EXPERT VERBAL APPRAISALS

SUNDAY, MARCH 18 11:00AM - 1:00PM

\$15.00 GENERAL ADMISSION

INCLUDES SHOW CATALOG AND FREE PARKING

Featuring 18th and 19th Century American and Continental Antiques.

PRESENTING MEDIA SPONSOR



PRESENTING CORPORATE SPONSOR



PRESENTING RADIO STATION SPONSOR

BrandywineRadio.com

AT WESTTOWN SCHOOL | WEST CHESTER, PENNSYLVANIA 19382

610-692-4800 | CHESTERCoHISTORICAL.ORG



Learning beyond four walls.

Tower Hill School's challenging academic program is a solid foundation, but it's not enough. Our upper schoolers pursue meaningful service, arts, athletics, and student-run outside activities to prep them for college and beyond.



Team Fox Pancakes for Parkinson's Fundraiser

Visit our Upper School during Open House:

Open Houses

Tuesday, March 6, 9:00 a.m. | Wednesday, April 11, 5:30 p.m. Lower School only
The 2-hour program begins promptly. R.S.V.P: 302.657.8350 or www.towerhill.org/openhouse



TOWER HILL SCHOOL | 2813 WEST 17TH, WILMINGTON | *Many Things Done Well*

Karp had the opportunity to reverse roles with one of his former Villanova University law professors. John Dobbyn came on *Legal Talk* to discuss his legal crime novel, *Frame Up*, that tells stories about real folks getting caught up in the system's fuzzy moral contours. "I told him I was going to grade him on his performance," he chuckles.

One of Hart's favorite shows featured local judge the honorable William P. Mahon. "He presides over Chester County Drug Court, a program that stresses accountability and productivity for non-violent offenders coping with addiction," explains Hart. "Judge Mahon stressed how much taxpayer money is saved by deferring charges and trials while individuals complete rehab."

Both men were pleased to show the real story behind the highly publicized Liebeck v. McDonald's Restaurants. "This was the most misunderstood case in many years," suggests Hart. "Susan Saladoff produced a documentary called *Hot Coffee*, and she shared what she learned with our audience."

In short, Stella Liebeck, a 79-year-old woman from Albuquerque, was a passenger in her son's car. She purchased

a cup of coffee from McDonald's drive-through and attempted to open it to add cream and sugar. She spilled the entire cup on her lap and suffered third degree burns on six percent of her body and lesser burns over 16 percent. She had skin grafts, lost 20 pounds, and required two years of medical treatment. What came out in the trial is that the restaurant requires its franchisees to serve coffee at 180 to 190 degrees when it should never be more than 140 degrees. At such high temperatures, third degree burns can result in 12 to 15 seconds after coffee touches the body, even through cotton sweatpants, such as those worn by Liebeck. Documents shown in court revealed that more than 700 people reported burns from McDonald's coffee.

The woman's lawsuit was the butt of late night talk show hosts, and people on the street berated her for audacity. Saladoff's piece presented the truth. "That's why we do the show," points out Hart. "Law is mystifying, and we attempt to demystify it. We keep it simple and try to make sense of what goes on behind-the-scenes."

One behind-the-scenes guest drew substantial interest. Joseph D. Pistone aka *Donnie Brasco* is a former FBI agent from Erie. He worked undercover for six years infiltrating the Bonanno crime family. His results convinced FBI leadership that undercover agents are powerful law enforcement tools. Johnny Depp portrayed Pistone in *Donnie Brasco*, a 1997 film that captured life among Mafia wise guys.

Gerry Spence, who gained attention for high profile cases, including the representation of Karen Silkwood's family, is another colorful personality, one that Karp insists *has an ego the size of Texas*. Philadelphia-born Gloria Allred, née Bloom, is equally notable for tales of her time on Court TV. Allred's colleague Catherine Crier wrote *The Case Against Lawyers* and came on the radio to criticize current legal system dysfunction and litigation-crazed culture.

Every few years, the attorneys invite callers to talk about their favorite legal movie. "To Kill a Mockingbird usually wins," notes Karp. "Topping the list, too, are *12 Angry Men*, *Inherit the Wind*, and *My Cousin Vinny*."

Consistently popular themes address callers' personal legal problems, such as traffic violations, wills and estates, and penalties for crimes. "We give a general overview and urge callers to contact an attorney," explains Hart. "If they call off-air, we often help them find an appropriate firm. We do not do the show to promote Karp & Hart. We do it to edify the public,

clarify legal concerns, and disclose misconceptions." **CCL**

Karp & Hart
Embassy Court
27 Turner Ln.
West Chester, PA 19380
610.430.2200
KarpHart.com

Custom Storage Solutions for Home and Office

Closets
Pantry
Home Office
Garage
Wall Beds
Laundry Room



© 2008 ORG



A Place For Everything!

Call today for your free
design consultation
and estimate

610-358-3171

ClosetClassicsOnline.com



© 2008 ORG



CLOSET CLASSICS
SIMPLY ORGANIZED

