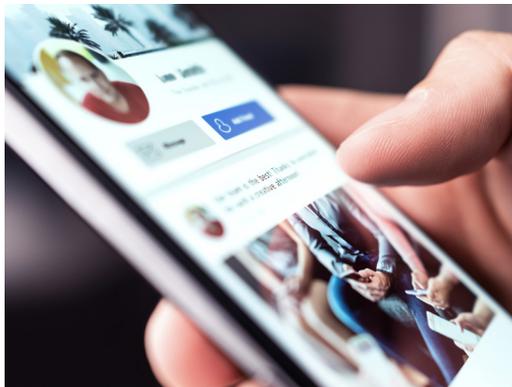


OUT THERE

Busted on the Bench



The Oklahoma Council on Judicial Complaints is investigating a district court judge after she repeatedly checked her smart phone during a seven-day murder trial over which she presided.

Footage from a security camera mounted over Judge

Traci Soderstrom's desk shows her using the phone while the victim's mother testified; it also shows her scrolling through her Facebook feed and sending a GIF from her phone.

The footage shows that Soderstrom began checking her phone shortly after instructing members of the jury at the start of the trial to turn off their electronic devices so that they could concentrate on the evidence.

The trial was Soderstrom's first since being elected by Lincoln County voters in November 2022.

Source: Yahoo! News **WL**

DID YOU KNOW?

That's Bananas

A Miami artist who duct-taped a banana to a wall in 2001 recently lost a lawsuit that he filed against an Italian artist who duct-taped a banana to a wall in 2019.

The Italian artist, Maurizio Cattelan, installed his "sculpture" of a banana duct-taped to a wall, titled *Comedian*, in Miami. In 2019, Cattelan sold *Comedian* for \$120,000.

A copyright infringement lawsuit by Miami artist Joe Morford followed.

Morford copyrighted his work, titled *Banana and Orange*, in 2020. But a federal judge ruled that Cattelan's *Comedian* was distinguishable from Morford's work.

In *Banana and Orange*, the judge pointed out, Morford taped a banana to a green background, slightly angled above horizontal. In *Comedian*, Cattelan taped the banana to a blank wall, and at a more pronounced angle.

Source: artnet.com **WL**



GOOD IDEA?

Fest Fight

The company that runs Milwaukee's Summerfest music festival has sued the Minnesota Twins over the team's use of the term "TC Summer Fest."

In the lawsuit, which was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin, Milwaukee World Festival Inc. (MWF) alleges that by using the term "TC Summer Fest," the Twins are trying to trade on the goodwill developed by MWF.

TC Summer Fest, which took place on July 14 and 15, featured several headliners who also played at Summerfest, which was held June 22-24, June 29-July 1, and July 6-8.

The Minnesota event, which the Twins have held annually since 2019, was previously called Summer Jam. Summerfest was first held in 1968.

Source: MinnLawyer.com **WL**

ON THE RADAR

Task Force on Democracy

The American Bar Association (ABA) has launched a task force to explore ways to boost Americans' trust in elections.

J. Michael Luttig, a former judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, and Jeh Johnson, a former U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security, will co-chair the task force.

The task force will focus on depoliticizing election administration, teaching the public about democratic principles, and identifying changes to the country's elections systems.

"The nation's more than 13 million attorneys represented by the ABA have a special obligation and responsibility to step up and speak out in defense and support of our imperiled democracy," said ABA president Mary L. Smith.

Source: ABA **WL**

QUOTABLE

"There is a difference between material that is obscene in the vernacular, and material that is obscene under the law."

– U.S. District Court Judge Thomas Parker

A federal judge has struck down the nation's first law aimed at curtailing drag shows.

Judge Thomas Parker, with the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Tennessee, ruled in June that a Tennessee law that prohibits drag shows on public property or anywhere minors might be present is unconstitutionally vague and overbroad.

Parker also ruled that the law would encourage discriminatory enforcement.

"No majority of the Supreme Court has held that sexually explicit – but not obscene – speech receives less protection than political, artistic, or scientific speech," Judge Parker wrote.

Source: AP **WL**