



Seth Park

Seth Park to Fast Track MBA at Emory University

In a last-minute decision, when Seth Park, son of Alton and Nari Todd, returned to Emory University this fall, instead of beginning his last year of law school, he took advantage of the opportunity to enter the MBA program at Emory's Goizueta Business School. He will fast track his MBA, graduating in May 2016 with an MBA and a JD from Emory Law School. He is one of only six law students in this MBA program. Seth has always been interested in business; both his Bachelor's and Master's degrees are in accounting. His hope is to pursue a career that will utilize his law degree, his CPA and MBA.

Considered one of the leading business schools in the nation, Goizueta is globally recognized for developing resourceful professionals, focusing its MBA programs on expanding students' business acumen and empowering their leadership.

This fall the MBA students were encouraged to leave Atlanta for a week on specific modules, designed to supplement their education, expose them to different industries and initiate the interview processes. Seth chose marketing in New York City and energy in Houston. In New York he visited Madison Square Garden, Lippincott, Citi and Interbrand. In Houston he met with Wells Fargo, Citi, Jefferies and J.P. Morgan.

Seth is actively pursuing a summer job in energy investment banking, and his parents are hopeful that will be in Houston, the "Energy Capital of the World."

Perry Defenders Want Charges Dropped; Texans Don't

Despite a tendency of the national media to minimize the indictment of Gov. Rick Perry and the filing of an amicus brief on his behalf by a diverse, bipartisan coalition of legal experts, leading Texas newspapers and the grand jury that indicted him stress that the investigation should proceed to trial. On Nov. 7, the state denied the governor's writ application to dismiss the indictment, promising that "the state has more evidence to present."

Those who argue that the counts of Perry's indictment on charges of abuse of official capacity and coercion of a public servant are unconstitutional and must be dismissed represent 14 of the nation's best known lawyers and legal scholars. They include both Republicans and Democrats, such as Ted Olson, former U.S. Solicitor and Paul Coggins, a former U.S. Attorney appointed by President Bill Clinton.

Perry's defenders say that the governor had every right to exercise his veto power if Travis County District Attorney Rosemary Lehmborg, an elected Democrat arrested for drunken driving, did not resign her office. The state legislature, they said, criminalize his veto power in the first place and he is entitled to absolute legislative immunity anytime he uses it. The brief contends that if the investigation moves to trial, the damage has already been done even if Perry

is ultimately acquitted: "The mere knowledge that an indictment can be maintained would itself cast a vast spectrum of constitutionally protected political speech by other political officials."

The *New York Times* Editorial Board, on August 18, considered Perry's political activity a matter of bad judgment: "Gov. Rick Perry... is one of the least thoughtful and most damaging state leaders in America, having done great harm to immigrants, abortion clinics and people without health insurance during his 14 years in office. But bad political judgment is not necessarily a felony, and the indictment handed up against him... given the facts so far... appears to be the product of an overzealous prosecution."

While the national press decriminalizes Perry's actions, the local Texas media echo the sentiment of those more knowledgeable about the state, like Glenn W. Smith, director of the Progress Texas PAC, who said, "It was very clear to me that some of the pundits-at-a-distance based their initial opinions on two false assumptions: 1) That the Perry indictments were the product of a nest of angry but unsophisticated Austin liberals and 2) That it was a governor's constitutional power of the veto that was being challenged."

(Continued on page 2)

And So, as Tiny Tim Said

"A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO US ALL"



Casual Friday at The Law Firm of Alton C. Todd: L-R at bottom of stairs: Jeff Todd, Jennifer Todd Evans, Alton Todd; on stairs in ascending order: Heather Ybarra, Dena Kena, Carole Brooks, Crystal Salinas and Faith Falcon

YOUNG PHILANTHROPISTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

This year's Dallas Autumn Ball on November 7 raised more than \$30,000. That money goes directly to Project: Amplify and



Dallas Autumn Ball founder Adam Kraus and Kamilah Todd, daughter of Alton and Nari Todd

Impact, Dallas ISD, the Dallas Education Foundation's in-school tutoring and mentoring programs.

The opportunity to party at the Hotel Zaza while raising awareness for educational causes came with the bonus of hearing and dancing to the renowned Emerald City event band. Emerald City Band has performed for President and Mrs. Bush twice at the White House, Ford Motor Company, Southwest Airlines, Microsoft, Super Bowl XLV, Apple and American Airlines to name a few.

Neither membership nor invitation was needed to attend this open black tie event focused on celebrating charity. Allowing a diverse group of young adults to come together for one cause in a festive setting is the backbone of the Dallas Autumn Ball. "Young adults are looking for ways to give back, and we have all of the tools we need to be emerging leaders in Dallas now, rather than waiting to inherit leadership for when we get older," said Adam Kraus, founder and chairman of the Dallas Autumn Ball.

The Insanity Plea

Houston Lawyer Pens 4th Courtroom Thriller

Friend and founder of Lorange and Thompson, P.C., Larry D. Thompson has once again created a suspenseful marathon read in this year's release of *The Insanity Plea*. It is everywhere evident that the successful Houston trial lawyer draws from courtroom experience in this compelling tale of a hot-shot Texas attorney and a diabolic serial killer.

Thompson's extensive representation in the healthcare industry also lends authenticity and relevance to the novel's incorporation of a medical condition, too often misunderstood or ignored. The spellbinding tale of four amateur sleuths who

must find, track and trap a serial killer, while preparing to defend the attorney's mentally ill brother, has earned a close to 5-star rating in Amazon customer reviews.

Thompson is the author of three earlier, equally riveting novels: *Dead Peasants*, *The Trial* and *So Help Me God*.

Perry Defenders

(Continued from Page 1)

Not one but two Republican judges failed to dismiss the criminal complaint against Perry, and a well respected, conservative special prosecutor, Michael McCrum, oversaw the grand jury indictment. The indictment was not brought by the Travis County DA, nor were any other Democrats involved at any point in the process except to recuse himself or herself.

Further, the indictment is *not* an attack on the governor's right to veto, and Perry *did* have a prima facie political motivation to go after Lehmborg: her office was investigating corruption involving Perry cronies at the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas at the time he sought to force her out and replace her with his own appointee.

OTHER CASES, OTHER CAUSES

An outdoor display of a church directory has disturbed an Athens County, Ohio man since he first moved there 38 years ago. Finally, Eliot Kalman did something about it. He covered the directory with a text of the First Amendment and was subsequently charged with a criminal mischief misdemeanor case. Pleading not guilty, Kalman said that because other First Amendment concerns have kept him busy, it took this long to express his displeasure. The directory, maintained for decades by the Athens Christian Education Committee, is reportedly all inclusive, listing all denominations and homeless shelters, as well. The county board of commissioners president stated that "we believe that it is for secular information for the community and do not maintain control of the information."

A beagle is killed by four pit bulls declared dangerous by the city of Texas City, and their owner is suing the deceased dog's owner, her neighbor, for up to \$1 million. According to documents filed in the 405th District Court, the plaintiff claims that she was viciously attacked by the beagle and suffered serious bite and scratch type injuries when she entered the defendant's property to retrieve her dogs. The beagle had entered the plaintiff's premises through a hole in a mutual fence separating the properties, and the pit bulls chased the intruder home. The plaintiff further claims to suffer from "fear, anxiety and trepidation." A reasonable man, the owner of the massacred dog, a loyal family companion, had opted not to sue because it wouldn't bring the dog back, and he was satisfied with the requirements of the dangerous dog ordinance imposed.

A French tourist was charged with reckless endangerment and criminal trespass when he walked out onto the beams over traffic on the Brooklyn Bridge. Prosecutors said Yonathan Souid climbed over a fence on the bridge's pedestrian walkway and was standing on beams connected to the tower on the Manhattan side. Although he was only trying to get a good photo and, according to his attorney, unaware of what the act meant in post-911 New York, Brooklyn District Attorney Kenneth Thompson said such conduct is dangerous and won't be tolerated. The daredevil stunt occurred several months after two German artists scaled both towers of the bridge and switched American flags for white flags, and a Russian tourist climbed to the top of the famed span to take pictures.

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Medieval and Cosmopolitan Treasures Attract Todd Tourists

Architectural and natural wonders, austerity and opulence, marked the Todd family's August introduction to Eastern Europe via the Viking River Cruises *Aegir*. In the pedestrian-friendly capital of the **Czech Republic, Prague's** divisions into Old Town, New Town and Lesser Town lent an interesting contrast between medieval splendor and modern bustling boulevards. The city is replete with old world charm, its skyline dominated by the enormous Prague Castle where Czech rulers governed for more than a thousand years and the famous Charles Bridge whose namesake Charles IV ruled his vast empire in the 14th century.

A much less ancient attraction in Lesser Town is the colorful remnant of an unlikely phenomenon originating in 1980. Although the banner of Lenin's ideas long hovered over the Czech people, it was the rock singer John Lennon who left another kind of mark, giving many locals hope and a vision of freedom. When Lennon was killed, a large Lennon Wall was spontaneously covered with memorial graffiti. Night after night, police painted over "Imagine" and "All You Need Is Love," and day after day the song titles reappeared. Independence finally came in 1989, and the wall seems here to stay.

Leaving Prague by train, the Todds arrived in **Budapest** eight hours later, adding another pre-cruise extension to tour the enchanting city of two distinct personalities, the hilly imperial "Buda" and the flat and populous "Pest," separate towns united as one in 1873. Hearing that it was practically obligatory to "take the waters" in Budapest, the Todds relaxed in one of the thermal baths renowned throughout the world, some in operation after 500 years. The spa they chose is said to be medically the most effective bath, but that cannot be documented by the experience of the Texas tourists.



At Bucharest, Palace of Parliament: Don Podnar, Kamilah, Alton and Nari Todd, Diane Podnar and Caleb Keys

The *Aegir's* first Hungarian port of call was **Kalocsa**, capital of the country's celebrated paprika production. Here, a special treat was the breathtaking performance of horsemanship and death-defying stunts by the fabled Horsemen of the Pusztá. After stops in **Vukovar** and **Osijek**, eastern Croatia's largest city, the cruise departed for **Belgrade**. Another city of vivid temporal contrasts, Belgrade is home to the largest Orthodox Church in the world, as well as the sprawling Kalemegdan Fortress, dating back to the 1st century AD. A Serbian delight was the country's #1 "fast food" snack, the *burek*, a tasty warm pastry, filled with cheese, minced meat, vegetables or sweet treats.

Easily visible in **Bulgaria** were the effects of demographic crisis, a long-lasting emigration wave following the country's economic collapse in the early 90's and the resignation of the government in 2013. Low living standards, the failure of a parliamentary democracy and a corrupt and inefficient

judiciary resulted in the lowest average individual income in the EU. The troubled economy, however, could not detract from the majestic rock phenomena of Belgradchik Rocks and Fortress in **Vidin**. The rock formations that began to take shape more than 230 million years ago at the bottom of the shallow sea are home to hundreds of caves, each formation bearing a different name, each with its own legend.

Scenic sailing along the Danube offered one of the most spectacular areas of natural beauty—the soaring white cliffs of the **Iron Gates**. As the Danube enters the border between Romania and Serbia, its banks narrow into a series of high cliffs, creating a series of four steep gorges—the Iron Gates.

From **Rousse**, Bulgaria, the cruise departed for **Giurgiu, Romania** and disembarkation. The Todd cluster added a post-cruise extension in **Bucharest**, appreciating in the "Paris of the East" both an urbane setting and ancient treasures, including the luxurious Palace of Parliament, the world's largest and most expensive administrative building, containing 1100 rooms on 12 floors.

The rewards of traveling to less frequented places are not measured by an entertainment yardstick but by a lasting impression of what life is like around the world. As most Americans do not live in New York City, most Europeans do not live in Paris or London. The former Communist countries on this visit have a rebuilding of lives and infrastructure that will take generations to be on par with the more prosperous First World countries. In countries where a physician earns \$400 a month, those who are able flee, and those who cannot continue their struggles. How fortunate to be Americans and how wonderful to come home.



Nari and Alton Todd at colorful Lennon Wall, a Prague fixture in Lesser Town since 1980

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Unprecedented Judicial Gridlock Possible During GOP Congress

The judicial importance of a Republican-controlled Senate cannot be overstated. Crippling chances of the President to confirm judges could lead to two years of gridlock and a constitutional crisis.

Since the pre-World War II era, Supreme Court vacancies have generally been filled with little delay, and nominees rejected were for reasons other than partisan gridlock. The closest precedent was President Lyndon Johnson's nomination of then-Associate Justice Abe Fortas who was filibustered by a Democratic Senate over concerns about his liberal opinions and close association with Johnson.

Reflecting the fact that Supreme Court nominees are especially likely to be rejected for partisan reasons at the end of a lame-duck Presidency, the Congressional Research Service reported that "opposition to the

nominating President played a role in at least 16 of the 34 nominations that were not confirmed. Many of the 16 were put forward by Presidents in the last year of their presidency."

The last time a Democratic president nominated a justice while facing a Republican Senate was in 1895 when Republicans joined Democrats in approving Grover Cleveland's nomination of Rufus Peckham. In a reverse dynamic, Republican Presidents Eisenhower, Nixon, Ford, Reagan and George H.W. Bush, all who faced Democratic Senates, found nominees that the Senate accepted.

President Obama said in August that Democrats must win the Senate because he expected to nominate Supreme Court justices during the remainder of his term and would urgently need them confirmed. According to a 2006 Harvard study, the average Supreme Court retirement age is 78.7 years. Justice Ginsburg is 81, Justices Scalia and Kennedy are 78, and Justice Breyer is 76.

Although Democrats have voted for nominees with whom they disagreed, like Justices Clarence Thomas and Antonin Scalia, there seems every reason to expect that Republican Senators will strategize to leverage their majority. Jonathan Chait, writing in the October 31 *Daily Intelligence*, stated that "the difference between 50 Democratic senators (plus a tie-breaking vote by Joe Biden) and 49 Democratic Senators is the difference between two full years of filling the judiciary and two years of likely gridlock.

Filing An OSHA Complaint Employees' Accessible Right

If you find yourself confronted with a dangerous or discriminatory situation at your workplace, it's a good idea to go first to management, your union or employee group if there is one or the shop steward or your foreperson or immediate boss and report it. Hopefully, the problem will be resolved. But, what if it isn't? You should know that it is your right to report the matter to OSHA and you can be assured that they will not ignore it!

The best way to go about it, if you have computer access and basic skills, is to go to www.osha.gov. Once there, just follow the prompts. You can fill out the Online Whistleblower Complaint Form, or you can download the fax/mail complaint form, complete it at home and mail or fax it back. You can also call the OSHA Regional or Area Office. Texas is in OSHA Region VI, located in Dallas. The phone number there is (972)850-4145. If a person answers, he or she will take your information. To respond to a message, just follow the phone prompts and leave the requested call-back information.

The Houston area is broken up into the Houston North Area, (936)760-3800, in Conroe and the Houston South Area, (281)286-0583, on El Camino Real. Note that you can report both safety and discrimination claims. If your safety, health or rights are being ignored or threatened, please call now and get the help you need!

ALTruism

***At Christmas, all
roads lead home.***

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