

BY MICHAEL A. FAGONE

District of Maine Welcomes Peter Cary as New Bankruptcy Judge

Imagine getting two very important phone calls around the same time. In the first call, you're told that you've been certified in Business Bankruptcy Law by the American Board of Certification. In the second call, you are told that you've been selected to be the next bankruptcy judge in your district. While this might not be common, this is exactly what happened to **Peter G. Cary** last fall. He was installed as a bankruptcy judge for the District of Maine on Jan. 4, 2014.

Judge Cary was raised by his parents, Bob and Clare Cary, in Springfield, Mass., as the fifth of six children. He followed his three brothers to the University of Massachusetts, where he studied history and economics, became a member of Phi Beta Kappa and met his wife, Janine Bisailon. After graduation, Judge Cary worked several jobs (including painting houses and cutting cordwood) before deciding to go to law school. He graduated from Boston College Law School in 1987, becoming the second person in his family to obtain a law degree.

Judge Cary moved to Maine after law school and worked as a law clerk for Chief Justice Morton Brody of the Maine Superior Court. After the clerkship, he joined Mittel Asen, a small Portland-based law firm, where he worked for almost 26 years. For much of his career, he had a general litigation practice. In the early 1990s, he began working on bankruptcy cases, the first several referred to him by a local legal aid clinic on a *pro bono* basis. As his career progressed, he expanded his bankruptcy practice and began taking significant roles in commercial cases as well. He also developed a practice

as a private mediator in cases ranging from simple two-party disagreements to complicated multi-party disputes. Judge Cary developed a reputation among the local bar as having extraordinary legal skills and an even better temperament.



Hon. Peter G. Cary

An ABI member since 1997, Judge Cary reports two particularly rewarding aspects of his new job. First, he takes particular pride in ensuring that *pro se* consumer debtors are satisfied with the bankruptcy process (even if they are not always happy with the result of the process). The second aspect involves helping lawyers find creative solutions to the issues facing their clients. His least-favorite part: watching lawyers bickering and generally not cooperating.

Judge Cary is incredibly grateful for all of the support he has received from his wife and their two sons, Luc and Justin. Luc works for Twitter in San Francisco, and Justin is a sophomore at Colby College in Waterville, Maine. Judge Cary and his wife spend as much time possible outside with their extended family and the family dog, Otis. He rides his bike to work every day possible, only stopping when Maine winters bring a mix of ice, snow and salt.

While bankruptcy lawyers may have a knack for finding things to disagree about, there is unanimity among the Maine bankruptcy bar on at least one proposition: The public and the Maine bar are fortunate to have Judge Cary on the bench. **abi**



Michael A. Fagone
Bernstein, Shur,
Sawyer & Nelson, PA
Portland, Maine

Michael Fagone is a shareholder with Bernstein, Shur, Sawyer & Nelson, PA in Portland, Maine. He has been board certified in Business Bankruptcy Law since 2008.

Copyright 2015

American Bankruptcy Institute.

Please contact ABI at (703) 739-0800 for reprint permission.