CRIME & COURTS

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Jamie Satterfield Knoxville News Sentinel

Published 10:00 p.m. ET March 21, 2021

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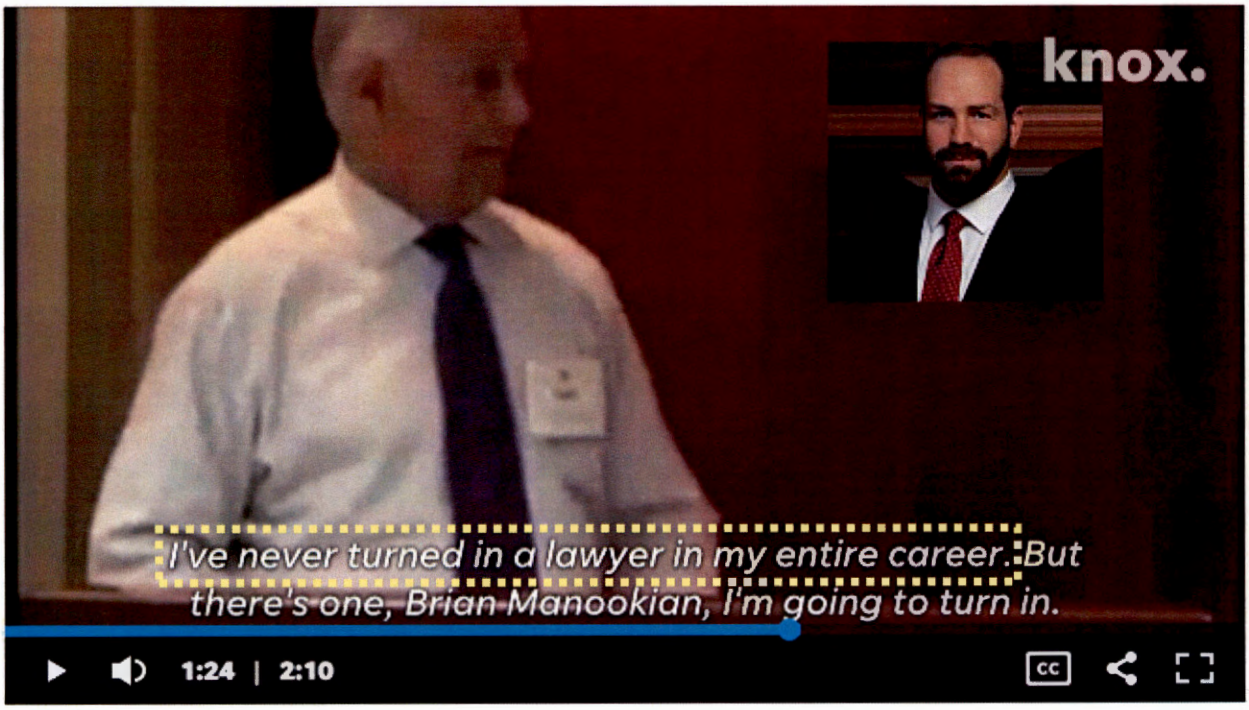

Judge: 'Revenge is mine'

ABOVE WHERE JUDGE MICHAEL W. BINKLEY SAYS:
"I'VE NEVER TURNED IN A LAWYER IN MY ENTIRE CAREER."

CORRECTING OR REPORTING MISCONDUCT IS NOT "OPTIONAL" FOR A JUDGE!

NOW THIS MAY SOUND HARSH, BUT HERE IS HOW I INTERPRET HIS CLAIMS:

1.) I've never obeyed the Judicial Canons or the Rules of Professional Conduct.
2.) I let my "FRIENDS" lie, misquote and break the law, court orders... do whatever they want!
3.) I want to party and play games with Attorneys! I want all the respect and the power, of a Judge, without acting honorably, respecting the rights of others, or trying to remain impartial, **"fair"** (that's sometime in the fall...), and treating every person equally.
4.) **I go with my gut feelings about people.** Some of these deadbeats need to be **taught a lesson!**
5.) **I reign with an iron fist!** Constitution? **I AM THE LAW!** Conduct? **Get OUT of HERE!**

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SEVENTY (70) EXAMPLES! NO, THAT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE A "BLACKMAIL LIST", THAT "JUDGE BINKLEY" KEPT IN HIS TOP DESK DRAWER FOR A "RAINY DAY", OR THAT HE PURCHASED FROM A "FRIEND", OR THEY GAVE HIM AS A SPECIAL "FAVOR"!

Judge Binkley admitted he **NEVER** turned in an Attorney IN HIS ENTIRE CAREER, until **NOW**, for a "**Vendetta**" no less, connected with an alleged **Prostitution Sting** he got **Arrested** in, and **Expunged** by a **Convicted Felon**.

Nah... this doesn't sound like "ORGANIZED CRIME", it's just another day at Court in Middle Tennessee! *(Doesn't it ever get embarrassing?)*

So WHY hasn't Binkley been IMPEACHED YET for his TESTIMONY in this VIDEO alone? Oh... that's right, he's "connected"! How much do you think the State of Tennessee should OWE ME for 2-years of idiocracy?

I must admit, I have the feeling that **Mr. Michael W. Binkley NEVER DESERVED to SIT in JUDGMENT OVER ME!** WHY has the SCARY, INTIMIDATING, THREATENING, CRIMINAL, who HATES others having RIGHTS and FREEDOM **been allowed to** CRIMINALLY EXTORT my SILENCE ABOUT HIS and ATTORNEY STORY'S **CRIMES AGAINST ME** AND MY FAMILY **FOR OVER 2-YEARS NOW?** While not one prestigious "Member of the Court" can scratch their head, and think that **maybe** my **10,000 hours** worth of **WORK**, while not asking for a penny, **just to GET FREE from 600-MILES AWAY**, might actually have some **MERIT?**

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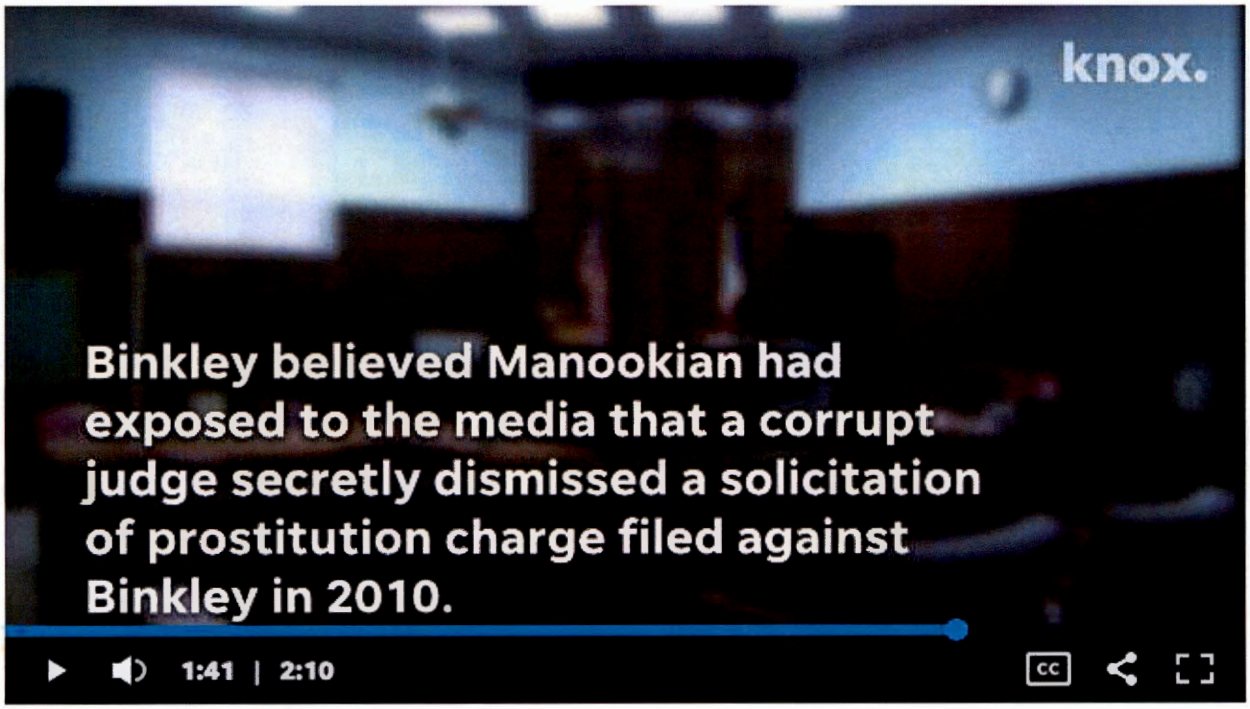

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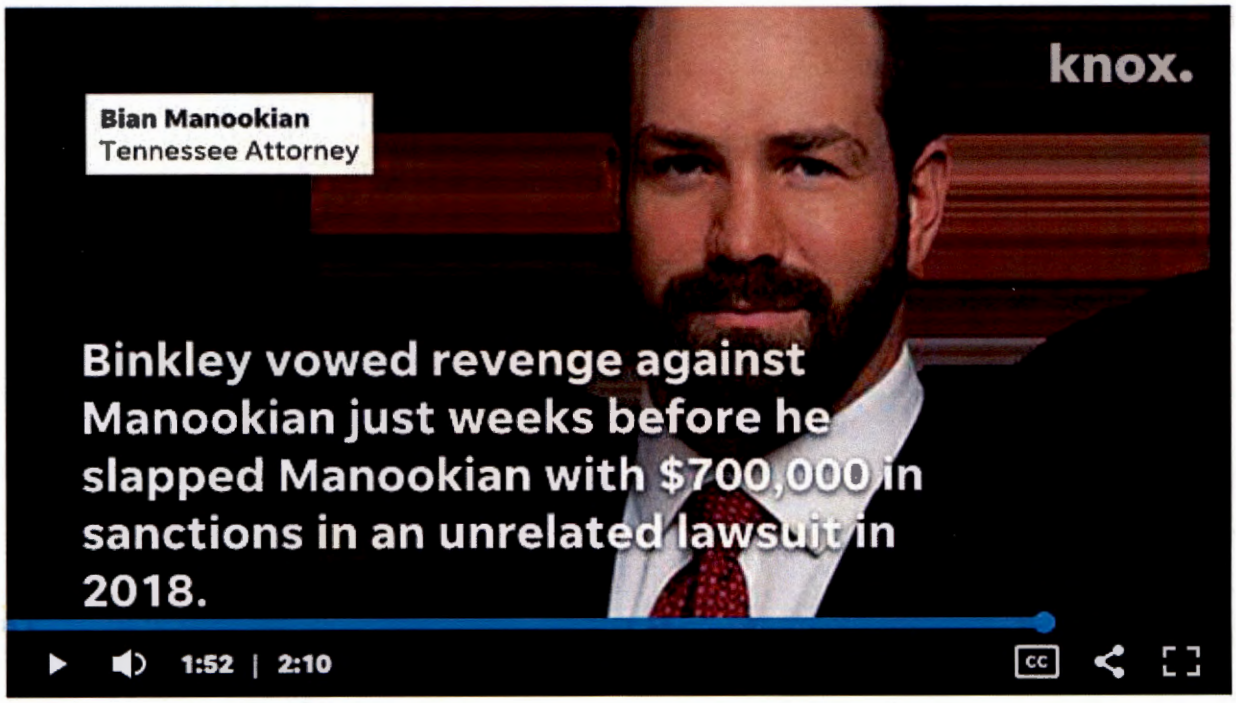

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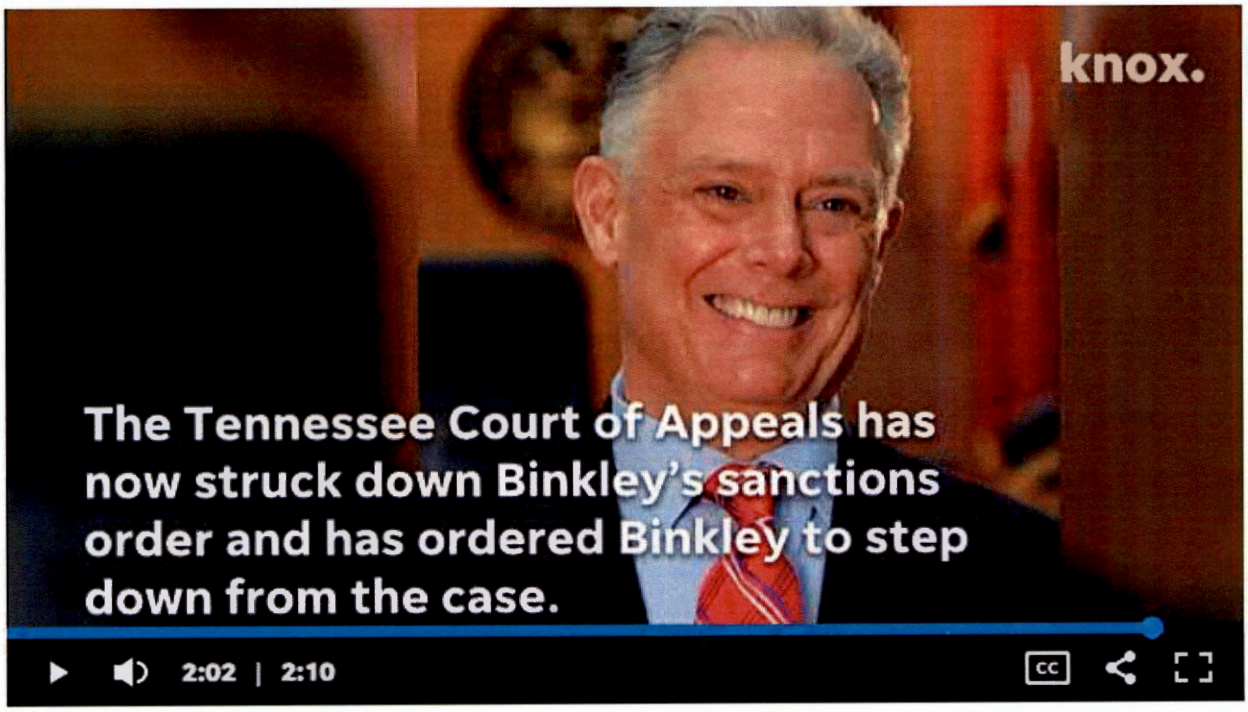

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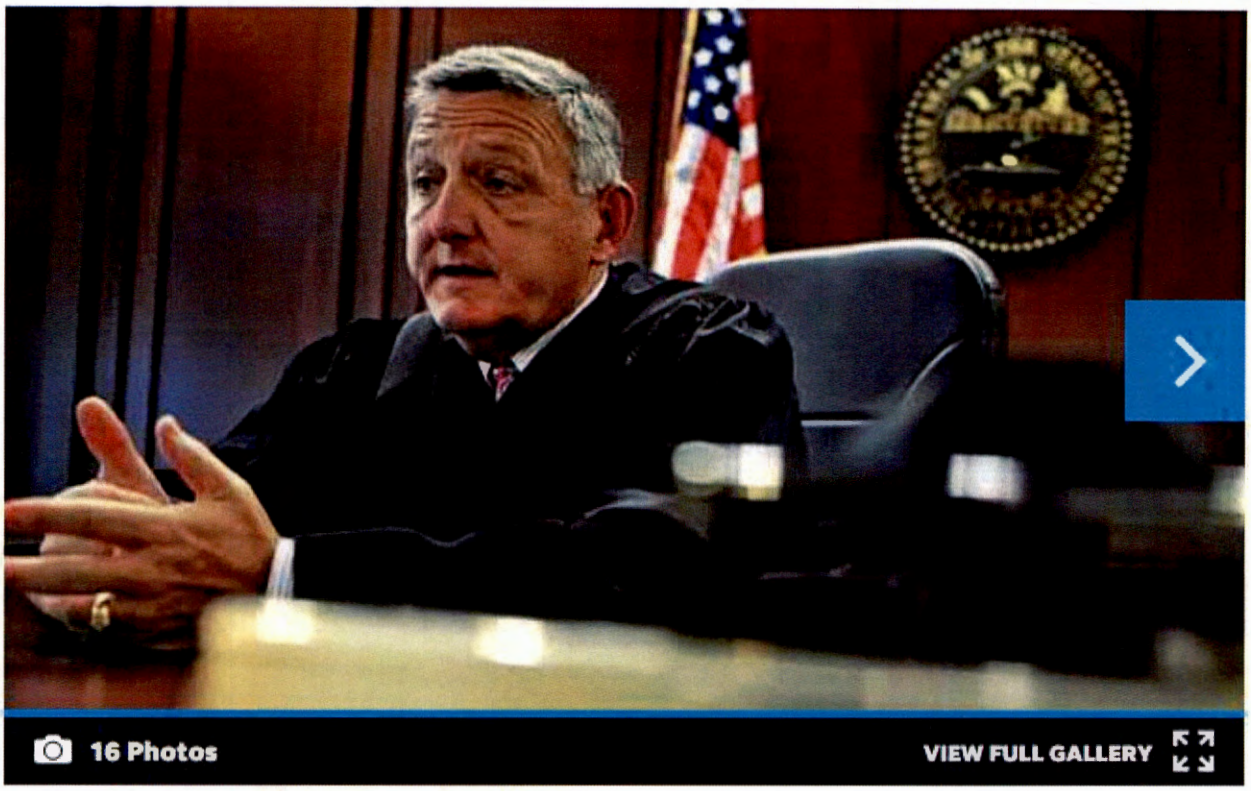

Former Nashville judge Casey Moreland

Former Nashville Judge Casey Moreland pleaded guilty in May, admitting he attempted to bribe an ex-paramour and that he conspired to steal from a program for recovering drug addicts.

Now, a state appellate court is booting Binkley off the bench in that case and striking down his sanctions order in an opinion that lays bare the very thing Binkley wanted to hide.

Binkley had been caught in a prostitution sting in 2010, two years before he was elected to the bench. But one of Tennessee's most powerful judges — former Davidson County General Sessions Court Judge Casey Moreland — erased all record of it.

IT'S NOT ABOUT MONEY OR DISCUSSING ACTIVE CASES, IT IS ABOUT THE FLAWS OF HUMANITY, THE UNCONSCIOUS STRINGS OF THE HEART, THE FACT THAT THE KNOWN AND TRUSTED PARTY WILL ALWAYS HAVE AN ADVANTAGE OVER THE UNKNOWN, ESPECIALLY WHEN THERE'S A LARGE DISPARITY BETWEEN CLAIMS!

Tennessean.

WILLIAMSON

How close can judges be with lawyers? Emails including Williamson Co. judge raise questions

Elaina Sauber The Tennessean

Published 5:00 a.m. CT Aug. 30, 2018

Williamson County Judge Michael Binkley sent an email to his wife in April 2016 to let her know a weekend lake trip organized for several judges and attorneys had been rescheduled to ensure the couple could attend.

"Looks like they made the lake party the second weekend so that you and I could be there. Very nice!! Put it on your calendar," Binkley wrote.

But the attorney who invited Binkley also had an active case before the judge in circuit court.

Three days before Binkley sent that email, the plaintiffs in a case he was overseeing, Sam and Shannon Clemmons, filed a motion asking the judge to recuse himself. Binkley later denied the motion.

One of the defense attorneys in the Clemmons' case, Virginia Story, invited Binkley, as well as his brother, Davidson County Judge Joe Binkley, on weekend trips in August 2015 and August 2016 featuring a houseboat, a lake house and dinners, according to emails obtained by USA TODAY NETWORK - Tennessee.

The Tennessee Administrative Office of the Courts refused to provide any emails about the trips, which were sent to or from judges' government-issued email addresses, claiming that the emails were not subject to inspection. This was in spite of the fact that the administrative office had previously produced some of those emails to another public records requester. The administrative office was specifically asked for those already-produced emails, but refused.

The lake trip emails sparked questions by the Clemmonses about whether judges can remain fair and impartial when presiding over cases while simultaneously vacationing with

attorneys in those cases.

Attorney James Oglesby, who said he's attended the trips in past years, said they are held at Center Hill Lake, and confirmed Story — the defense attorney in the Clemmons' case — hosts them.

The emails didn't raise concerns for the Tennessee Board of Judicial Conduct, which is the state's sole authority for investigating and reprimanding sitting judges who violate judicial conduct rules.

In a letter sent to the Clemmonses in March, responding to their 144-page complaint about Binkley, board chair and Judge Chris Craft noted that proof of a judge's ethics violation must be "clear and convincing."

"The investigative panel did not feel such a burden could be met in this case," Craft wrote.

The complaint was dismissed.

Binkley did not return a request for comment.

WHENEVER YOU SEE AN ALLEGED "PUBLIC SERVANT", REFUSING TO COMMENT, IT IS THE SAME AS "PLEADING-THE-FIFTH", IN CIVIL COURT. IT MEANS THEY ARE PROBABLY GUILTY!

'You're going to get yourself into trouble'

It's unrealistic to expect a person to relinquish all their personal relationships with fellow attorneys once they become a judge, said Charles Geyh, an Indiana University law professor and expert in legal and judicial ethics.

But judges should be careful, Geyh said, if activities go beyond a casual lunch or social event.

Judges should never preside over cases when they're close friends with any of the attorneys involved, Geyh said.

"You start vacationing with people, and you're going to get yourself into trouble," he said. "It's not cool if it reaches the point of creating the perception that there are lawyers who have special access (to the judge)."

Tennessee judges must recuse themselves from presiding over cases in which their impartiality might "reasonably" be questioned, according to the state code of judicial conduct.

"People with whom you socialize actively, vacation with, enter business relationships with - there's nothing wrong with continuing to do that after (you become) a judge," Geyh said. "You just can't hear cases in which those lawyers make appearances before you."

'Just something you do'

It's unclear how many attorneys and judges were invited to or attended the boating trips in 2015 and 2016. One email from Story about the 2015 trip was sent to Michael Binkley, Joe Binkley, Williamson County Judge Joseph Woodruff, and more than a dozen Williamson County attorneys.

Some attorneys who were included in the emails and contacted by The Tennessean for comment said they didn't think judges and attorneys vacationing together was an issue.

"I don't think it's any business the public needs to have. It's just something you do," said Lori Thomas Reid, a Franklin family law attorney who was included on one of the emails.

Attorney Michael Fort said the trips are harmless and likened them to events held by the Tennessee Bar Association or American Inns of Court, an organization comprised of local chapters of lawyers, judges and other legal professionals.

"I don't understand the concern about it," he said.

It's common for lawyers' families to accompany them on the trips, Fort said.

"It's not a place for conversation on cases. You've got kids running around and swimming and (water) skiing," he said. "It's a place to let that guard down a little bit and personalize everybody."

Oglesby echoed those sentiments, saying the trips are "purely a social thing."

Story did not return a call for comment.

Judges required to report some gifts

When a judge won't recuse themselves from a case, it's rare for higher courts to overrule them, said Richard Flamm, a California-based attorney who has published books on judicial and lawyer disqualification.

"When it comes to disqualifying judges, there never seems to be enough of a reason," Flamm said. "There's very little case law you can find when moving to disqualify a judge."

It's unclear whether attorneys paid for any of Judge Michael Binkley's expenses on the 2016 lake trip. If they did, that could prove problematic.

THE STATE OF TENNESSEE HAS NO LEGAL AUTHORITY OR JURISDICTION TO FORCE THE PEOPLE TO SUBMIT & PARTICIPATE IN A SYSTEMICALLY BIAS, PARTIAL, AND CORRUPT COURT SYSTEM! WE ARE AMERICAN CITIZENS!

"If the attorney inviting the judge is paying for the lodging and the judge's meals, then the judge is accepting gifts of more than ordinary social hospitality," Flamm said. "That's improper."

Tennessee judges are required to report to the Administrative Office of the Courts certain gifts they receive from outside parties, including attorneys.

For example, a judge must report gifts valued at more than $250. A judge must also report money received from "extrajudicial activities," such as giving a lecture or speech.

Binkley reported that he didn't receive any gifts in 2016 or 2017, according to public compensation reports filed with the Administrative Office of the Courts.

Rule 10 of the Code of Judicial Conduct says judges may accept "ordinary social hospitality," but does not elaborate on what that includes.

In other states, judges cannot accept gifts or go on paid trips with attorneys who are involved in a case over which those judges are presiding.

Louisiana judge Robin Free accepted an all-expenses-paid trip on a private jet to a Texas ranch in 2010 that was organized and paid for by attorneys with a personal injury case before the judge at the time.

Four years later, the Louisiana Supreme Court determined Free had violated its code of judicial conduct, and suspended him for 30 days without pay and imposed a $7,000 fine, according to Reveal News, with the Center for Investigative Reporting.

In May, county court judge Maria Ortiz in Miami, Fla., agreed to pay a $5,000 fine for failing to report free hotel stays and gifts she and her husband received, according to the Miami Herald. Florida judges are required to report all gifts that could give the public reason to question their impartiality.

Reach Elaina Sauber at esauber@tennessean.com, 615-571-1172 or follow @ElainaSauber on Twitter.

IF THE TENNESSEE BOARD OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT HAD USED A TINY BIT OF "6TH GRADE COMMON SENSE", OR SHOWED THE SLIGHTEST BIT OF CARE OR KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HISTORY, THE WORLD OVER, THROUGHOUT THOUSANDS OF YEARS, AND FIXED THIS ETHICALLY IN 2018, IT WOULD HAVE SAVED YEARS OF MY LIFE, AND WELL OVER A MILLION DOLLARS OF LOSSES IN MY LIFE ALONE! WHILE I KNOW THAT MANY OTHER PEOPLE AND FAMILIES HAVE LIKEWISE SUFFERED GREATLY FROM THIS PROFESSIONAL NEGLIGENCE (BORDERING UPON TREASON). REFUSING TO PRIORITIZE PROTECTING THE JUDICIAL INTEGRITY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, OVER THE PLEASURES OF PLAYING "COURT" WITH THEIR FRIENDS! (ASK A HOMELESS PERSON, THEY'LL SHOW MORE ETHICAL FORTITUDE & "COMMON SENSE" THAN THE ELITE JUDICIARY HAS IN THIS AREA!)

Tennessean.

WILLIAMSON

Williamson County judge says there's nothing wrong with boat trips he takes with lawyers

Elaina Sauber The Tennessean

Published 6:00 a.m. CT Sep. 24, 2018

A Williamson County judge said he isn't doing anything wrong when he takes boat trips with lawyers, and he denied an attorney's emergency motion for time to try to learn more about the trips.

Judge Michael Binkley confirmed in emails obtained by the USA TODAY NETWORK - Tennessee that he would attend a three-day lake trip in 2016 with several attorneys, including one who had an active case before him at the time.

More: How close can judges be with lawyers? Emails including Williamson Co. judge raise questions

"If the public is as smart as everybody says they are, most people who have any common sense are going to say, 'What is wrong with judges and lawyers having fun together?' Nothing," Binkley said during an open court hearing on Aug. 30, the same day the USA TODAY NETWORK - Tennessee published a story about the Center Hill Lake trips.

Binkley, who didn't respond to a request for comment before that story published, said at the hearing he looks forward to the boat trips each year.

Virginia Story, the attorney who invited Binkley on the trip in 2016, had an active case before the judge in circuit court, which sparked questions about whether judges can remain fair and impartial when presiding over cases while simultaneously vacationing with attorneys in those cases.

Story, who attended the hearing where Binkley discussed the trips, said they were "benign."

"They are absolutely a blast," Binkley said. "I am with my friends, who are lawyers. Some family