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TODAY'S NEWS

Update

New York law firm associates earn considerably more than their counterparts around the nation, a survey by the National Association for Law Placement has confirmed. More than 500 firms nationwide, and about 30 in New York City, responded to the survey. It found that first-year associates nationwide earn a median salary of \$56,000, while they earn a median of \$80,500 at New York firms of all sizes. The city's largest firms pay a median of \$85,000, according to the survey's results. The differences in pay are even more pronounced at the top of the scale. Eighth-year associates earn a median salary of \$84,625 nationwide, but \$125,500 in New York City.

The Yonkers City Council has approved the appointment of Philip A. Zisman as the city's corporation counsel. Mr. Zisman, who had been the first assistant, joined the 11-attorney office in 1992 after six years as an assistant corporation counsel in New York City handling tort and civil litigation. Elsewhere, Francis J. Serbaroli, who had been a partner in health care law at Ober, Kaler, Grimes & Shriver, has become a partner at Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft.

The Housing Court Advisory Panel announced it is seeking comment on three housing judges who are seeking reappointment when their terms expire this summer. The judges are Jack Dubinsky of Manhattan, Emanuel Haber of Queens and Gerald Bank of Brooklyn. Comments should be sent by March 4 to the council's chairman, David Rosenberg, at the Civil Court's Administrative Office, Room 1240, 111 Centre Street, New York, N.Y. 10013.

Governor Pataki yesterday introduced a bill that overturn Court of Appeals rulings on search and seizure protections by amending the Criminal Procedure Law. The bill would not amend the state's Bill of Rights, but would decree by statute that courts "may not suppress evidence . . . on account of a violation of any right accorded by [Article I Section 12] of the Constitution of this state unless the court finds after a hearing that the conduct constituting the violation was committed in bad faith . . ." Mr. Pataki said the bill's effect would be to make any evidence that meets federal Fourth Amendment standards admissible in New York courts. "I think even some of the federal standards may go too far in hamstringing our police," he said.

Predictions that landlords would mobilize en masse last week to demand that judges order delinquent tenants to deposit their rents into a court escrow account failed to materialize, according to preliminary court statistics. Ernesto Belzaguy, deputy chief clerk for the city's Housing Court, said judges city-wide received 48 rent-deposit applications, "far, far fewer" than court officials had expected. Only one application was granted. An official with the Rent Stabilization Association, a landlord association, said the rent-deposit campaign had been useful in demonstrating that judges in Housing Court often side with tenants over landlords.

A computerized jury experiment that some news organizations linked to New York University School of Law was a hoax, its perpetrator has admitted. Details appear on page 2.

NYU Jury Project: 'It Was Only a Hoax'

THE SOLOMON Project, a computerized jury experiment that some news organizations incorrectly linked to New York University School of Law, is nothing more than a hoax.

Joey Skagg, who admitted perpetrating the hoax, reportedly has been duping the news media for nearly 30 years. Using the pseudonym Joseph Bonuso, Mr. Skagg claimed to be the founder of the project and a researcher affiliated with NYU School of Law. One hoax victim was CNN, which broadcast a report on Dec. 29 about the project and its alleged ties to NYU (NYLJ, Jan. 11). School officials demanded that the cable network run a retraction. Mr. Skagg said he was interviewed yesterday by a CNN reporter for a follow-up story.