

17423

NORTH CAROLINA

WAKE COUNTY

BEFORE THE
GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE
OF THE
NORTH CAROLINA STATE BAR
04G0067

IN THE MATTER OF)

BENITA W. GIBBS,)
Attorney At Law)

REPRIMAND)

On October 19, 2006 the Grievance Committee of the North Carolina State Bar met and considered the grievances filed against you by Gerard & Angelique Falzon.

Pursuant to Section .0113(a) of the Discipline and Disability Rules of the North Carolina State Bar, the Grievance Committee conducted a preliminary hearing. After considering the information available to it, including your response to the letter of notice, the Grievance Committee found probable cause. Probable cause is defined in the rules as "reasonable cause to believe that a member of the North Carolina State Bar is guilty of misconduct justifying disciplinary action."

The rules provide that after a finding of probable cause, the Grievance Committee may determine that the filing of a complaint and a hearing before the Disciplinary Hearing Commission are not required, and the Grievance Committee may issue various levels of discipline depending upon the misconduct, the actual or potential injury caused, and any aggravating or mitigating factors. The Grievance Committee may issue an admonition, a reprimand, or a censure to the respondent attorney.

A reprimand is a written form of discipline more serious than an admonition issued in cases in which an attorney has violated one or more provisions of the Rules of Professional Conduct and has caused harm or potential harm to a client, the administration of justice, the profession, or a member of the public, but the misconduct does not require a censure.

The Grievance Committee was of the opinion that a censure is not required in this case and issues this reprimand to you. As chairman of the Grievance Committee of the North Carolina State Bar, it is now my duty to issue this reprimand.

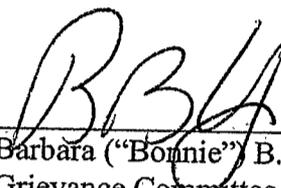
The loan refinancing for the Falzon's occurred on December 12, 2003. However, you did not pay off the loan in a timely manner in violation of Rule 1.3, Diligence. An audit of your trust account revealed that you have several problems including failure to make timely deposits, receiving notices for insufficient funds, and failure to reconcile. Although you represented to the Bar that you had hired someone to assist with reconciliation of the trust account, you have not

done so. You have therefore violated Rule 8.1(a), Bar Admission and Disciplinary Matters, Rule 1.15-2(a)(d), General Rules and Rule 1.15-3(a)(c), Records and Accountings. You also failed to respond to a request for additional information regarding a Non Sufficient Funds Notice dated June 3, 2005 and therefore have violated Rule 8.1(b), Bar Admission and Disciplinary Matters.

You are hereby reprimanded by the North Carolina State Bar for your professional misconduct. The Grievance Committee trusts that you will heed this reprimand, that it will be remembered by you, that it will be beneficial to you, and that you will never again allow yourself to depart from adherence to the high ethical standards of the legal profession.

In accordance with the policy adopted October 15, 1981 by the Council of the North Carolina State Bar regarding the taxing of the administrative and investigative costs to any attorney issued a reprimand by the Grievance Committee, the costs of this action in the amount of \$50.00 are hereby taxed to you.

Done and ordered, this the 8th day of December, 2006



Barbara ("Bonnie") B. Weyher, Chair
Grievance Committee

HB/lr