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# CITATIONS

M A Y - T W O T H O U S A N D T E N

## JUDICIAL PROFILE: HON. PATRICIA M. MURPHY

*By Robert Long*

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Jack Trimarco & Associates  
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Dear Jack:

It was good to have a chance to talk with you today. I write to emphasize my appreciation for your good work on the cases on which you consulted with us.

I have found that your professionalism in conducting and scoring polygraph examinations is outstanding. Your reputation for integrity as a polygrapher was known while you were with the FBI and has continued into your years of private practice. Both your professional work product and your excellent reputation are particularly important to me as a criminal defense lawyer.

We do not routinely use polygraph exams but, when we do, we expect an honest confidential examination and report. Whether or not we choose to disclose the report, the examination and report are often very important to the client and often influence choices we make in strategizing with that client.

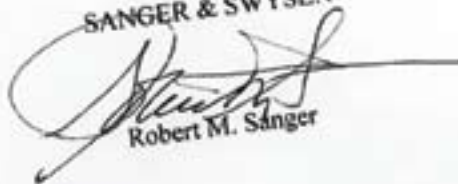
When we do decide to disclose the report in an attempt to convince a reluctant prosecutor of a client's innocence, a favorable polygraph report alone is not sufficient. The professionalism of the examination and the reputation of the polygrapher are critical.

In the recent case you worked on with us, we submitted your report along with witness interviews and other materials to the prosecutor. As you know, it was dismissed in its entirety on the day of trial. It was a felony case being vigorously prosecuted and the consequences of any conviction would have been devastating to my client's life and career. Being able to disclose your solid report backed by your substantial credentials was an important aspect of asserting our client's innocence.

Thank you again, Jack, and I will look forward to working with you in the future.

Best regards,

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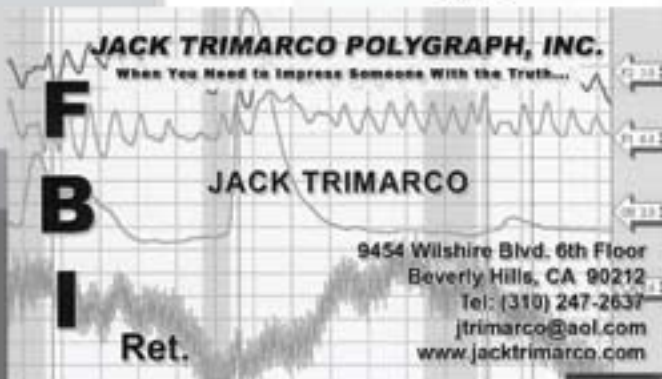
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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE PART ONE:

“THE NEW PHONEBOOK’S HERE, THE NEW PHONEBOOK’S HERE!”

By Kendall VanConas



As I sit down to write this column, I have just finished reviewing the new VCBA website. This has been a work in progress for many months, and there are probably dozens of metaphors I could use to describe the feeling I have about the launch of the new site. But I'll spare you. As happy as I am about the new site, it simply doesn't compare with the birth of my children, or the three-day brisket we barbeque for the Fourth of July. But it is a great new website, and I expect it to be up and running by May 15th.

Before we began the design of the new site, the IT committee and the VCBA staff spent time reviewing the current site. We talked to users to find out their likes and dislikes, and we also talked to people who work in IT to get a professional point of view on changes we had in mind. That process yielded a long list of complaints – an exercise not unlike the one I endure when my family reviews what I make for dinner, or when I have to buy a new bathing suit. In any event, it turned out to be the best way to go about designing the new site, and a lot of the constructive criticism yielded some great improvements. Here's a bit of what you will find when you visit.

The home page and the overall look and feel of the new site are quite different from the old one. The new site has a polished look, and the links to find information are intuitive. The previous home page was criticized for be-

ing too cluttered, and for having too much information posted in a somewhat scattered fashion. The new home page is cleaner, and I think you will find it easier to find what you are looking for.

The new website was built using new technology – “behind the scenes” stuff that makes it easier to keep the page updated and current. So today, for example, as I write this, the Law Day 5K is given prominence. But once May is over, we quickly and easily can – and will – start to publicize the next big event. As visitors see regular changes to the home page, they should visit more often.

As you navigate through the new site, you will discover how much easier it is to find information you are looking for. Most of what was contained in the old site is still there, but some of the content may have changed location, and some of the less-frequently used information was omitted. We have also tried to make some of the data easier to review. For example, you no longer have to scroll down multiple times to review the lists of our sections, or of our board members – small changes, but ones that make the site easier to use, which will hopefully make it used more often.

So, we've put a new spin on some of the same old things. But we've also gone beyond that, and when you visit, you will find some entirely brand new features. One of the things that

I'm most excited about is our new blog. The VCBA blog is the virtual town crier for our new website. It will become the place where our bar leaders can publicize upcoming events in their sections, or where members can educate others about their practice areas or developments in the law. Some of the content you regularly see in *Citations* – like the President's Message – will become blog entries, along with some content that can't fit into the hard copy of *Citations*. The blog will be an electronic companion to this publication, not a substitute for it, and will also serve our members who primarily like to get their information electronically. My goal is to get regular blog entries from each of our sections, committees and affiliates, as well as current and former bar leaders.

We also have an ongoing slideshow on the home page, featuring dozens of pictures from our various events. With 35 sections, committees and affiliates, and over 122 different continuing education events in 2009, we are indeed a vibrant bar association, and this is a way to showcase the many events that go on all year long. Like the blog, the slideshow will change, as the activities carry on through the year. And I promise to keep the embarrassing pictures of each of you to a minimum.

Please visit the new site, and keep coming back.

## President's Message Part Two: It's Nice To Know At Least Somebody Reads This Column

In last month's President's Message, I shamelessly wished myself a happy birthday, and invited donations to VLSP in lieu of the swag that I know you would all send my way. It was at the very end of the column, so you had to hang in there for the whole thing to see it. And while I'm certain that each and every one of my faithful readers made it to the end of my column, there was only one of you that took me up on my offer. I give many thanks to **Ben Schuck**, for making a donation to VLSP of \$25 in honor of my birthday. Although he might have thought his donation modest, if each member of VCBA did the same, we could raise over \$30,000 for legal services in the county. For those of you who missed my birthday, not to worry. Mother's Day is here.



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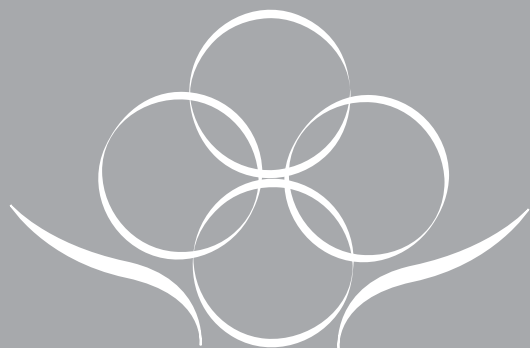
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## JUDICIAL PROFILE: HON. PATRICIA M. MURPHY

By Robert Long

Many of us started college without a clear career goal in mind, perhaps changing our majors or even our jobs before setting course on a career. Not so for Judge **Patricia Murphy**. From an early age she knew what she wanted to do with her professional life: be a prosecutor and then a judge. After graduating from Southwestern Law School in 1987 she was hired by the Ventura County District Attorney's Office, working her way to Chief Assistant District Attorney in 2002. Governor Schwarzenegger appointed her to the Ventura County Superior Court in 2006.

Not surprisingly, after nearly 20 years as a prosecutor Judge Murphy faced circumspection from the defense bar, but those concerns were soon laid to rest. **John McNamara** of the Ventura County Public Defender's Office estimates he has tried five or six matters in front of Judge Murphy and has no reluctance having future matters heard before her.

"I find her to be professional in every sense, even with difficult cases," McNamara said. "I had two trials in recent months before her in which my clients were very difficult, prone to outbursts and hurling insults at the Judge. She handled it with a great amount of grace and dignity."

**Monica Cummins**, Deputy Public Defender, echoes that sentiment.

"She has great judicial temperament," Cummins said. "Her neutrality and her knowledge of the law also impress me. I think she is one of the best on the bench."

**Paul Drevenstedt**, also a DPD, offered the observation that during a fraud case Judge Murphy called him on something questionable he did during voir dire, and he was concerned it would affect how she treated the defense during trial. He was impressed that she did not show any such bias throughout the balance of the proceedings, essentially giving him the benefit of the doubt and wiping the slate clean.

A common theme from people interviewed for this article is Judge Murphy's professionalism. Deputy DA **Gilbert Romero** gave one

such account. "One time she ruled against me, then in a later session reversed herself, having come back with a case she had found that was right on point and which I had not cited," Romero said. "She's extremely thorough." Fellow Deputy DA **Tate McAllister** adds: "[Judge Murphy] has all the attributes of a great judge. She is even-keeled, even when things get rough."

Private attorney **John J. Stanley** had a months-long trial in front of Judge Murphy early this year, *People vs. Landeros*. Stanley represented a defendant in the double-homicide case, essentially arguing that his client did not know his passenger had a shotgun. In addition to credibility issues, the case involved gruesome photographs and tremendously emotional testimony, the victims having been shot at a family party hosted by the mother of a victim. After the verdict, Judge Murphy made clear her disgust with the gruesomeness of the crime. What impressed Stanley was that notwithstanding that Judge Murphy had clearly been touched emotionally by the case, throughout the trial she was caring and appreciative of the difficulty faced by both sides.

"I have never experienced a jurist who so successfully set aside her feelings under such trying circumstances while being absolutely fair to both sides," Stanley said.

When asked what her favorite assignment is, Judge Murphy's immediate response was that she loves trials and, while her professional experience as a prosecutor and now as a judge has thus far, mainly been confined to the criminal arena, she confides that "There is no assignment I would not consider."

"I enjoy negotiating settlements" Murphy said. No longer junior-most on the Ventura bench, she enjoys the camaraderie and mutual respect shared with her fellow judges, and would gladly pitch in wherever and however she was needed.

While Judge Murphy is a very private person, she made it clear that the one thing more important to her than her career is her family. But when pried as to her outside passions and interests, the most she would yield was that she and her husband and son enjoy all manner of outdoor activities and are avid hikers. She and her husband Rick scaled Mt. Whitney a couple of years ago and are looking forward to their next adventure.



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## FAT, TIRED AND LISTLESS: WHAT'S A LAWYER TO DO?

By Jill A. Singer

clinical professor of medicine at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. According to Dr. Peeke, after a stressful situation, your body assumes you have just physically exerted yourself (for example, running from a lion), and now your need to restock your reserves by eating a lot of carbohydrates or fatty food that can easily be stored as fat. In reality, you are probably still sitting in your car or at your desk, still fuming and stressed out about what just took place.

"In today's modern world, this elegant survival mechanism may be an anachronism that causes the body to refuel when it doesn't need to," Dr. Peeke writes. "Sustained stress keeps up cortisol, that cursed hunger promoter, elevated and that keeps appetite up, too."

Enter the quick donut fix in place of a skipped breakfast, three cups of coffee, a handful of M&Ms from the receptionist's perpetual "goody bowl," another donut, a fast-food lunch, and now you have a serious, growing problem – which is probably growing around your midsection as well.

Experts believe that enduring a constant stream of stressful events day after day can lead to weight gain, as your appetite and insulin levels are continuously increased.

"If stress and cortisol levels stay high, so will insulin levels," says Robert M. Sapolsky, Ph.D., a professor of biological sciences and neuroscience at Stanford University. Continual stress leads to a constant state of excess cortisol production, which stimulates glucose production. Typically, this excess glucose is then converted into fat, ending up as stored fat. "The net effect of this will be increased fat deposition in a certain part of the body," Dr. Sapolsky says.

To add insult to injury, Shawn Talbott, Ph.D., FACSM, author of *The Cortisol Connection* (2007, Hunter House) says stress and the resulting chronic overload of cortisol make you feel tired and listless. The excess cortisol produced causes you to seek out high carbohydrate and fatty foods to renew your energy. The excess glucose produced means the food you eat is converted into fat, which then ends up around your midsection.

### So What Is a Fat, Tired and Listless Lawyer to Do?

Most experts agree that a low to moderate amount of regular exercise can ease personal tension and stress. However, a study by researchers at the University of Missouri, Columbia shows that a relatively high-intensity exercise is superior in reducing stress and anxiety. Moreover, the researchers found that high-intensity exercise especially benefits women.

"Conventional wisdom says that exercising for 30 minutes at a moderate exercise intensity is more effective in reducing anxiety than either a low or high intensity dose," says Richard Cox, the study's leader and a professor of educational and counseling psychology. "This conclusion, however, is deceptively simple because reductions in anxiety are not always observed immediately following a high intensity bout of exercise."

In the study, female participants, ages 18 to 20 and 35 to 45, completed three experimental sessions. Each session started with a test to determine the anxiety level of the participant. Following the test, the women either did not exercise (control condition) or exercised at a moderate or high-intensity level for 33 minutes.



"Where the mind goes, the body follows..." Sometimes we lawyers (who use our minds for a living) tend to forget how true the ancient proverb can be. Think about it: we use our minds all day thinking, acting and reacting about the issues in the cases we are working on. Our bodies follow right along.

Some of us downplay how stressful our jobs are, but the fact is the constant stress we endure day after day affects our bodies in the most egregious way, no matter how well our minds cope with it.

### Stress Makes Lawyers Fat!

According to the American Heart Association, in addition to the emotional discomfort we feel when faced with a stressful situation, our bodies react by releasing stress hormones (adrenaline and cortisol) into the blood. These hormones prepare the body for the "fight or flight response" by making the heart beat faster and constricting blood vessels to get more blood to the core of the body instead of the extremities. Constricted blood vessels and an increased heart rate raise blood pressure, but only temporarily; when the stress reaction goes away, blood pressure returns to its pre-stress level. This is called situational stress, and its effects are generally short-lived and disappear when the stressful event is over.

But what else happens to our bodies when the stress event is over? When the immediate stress is over, the adrenaline dissipates, but the cortisol lingers to help bring the body back into balance. One of the ways the cortisol brings things back to normal is by stimulating our appetites so we can replace the carbohydrate and fat we should have burned while fleeing or fighting.

Pamela Peeke, M.D., is the author of *Fight Fat After Forty* (2000, Viking Press) and an assistant



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After the session, Cox measured anxiety levels at five, 30, 60 and 90 minutes post-exercise.

All three groups, including the control group, showed a decline in anxiety over time, but Cox found the high-intensity level experienced the sharpest decline. Cox said the intensity of exercise conditions did not differ in anxiety levels at baseline or immediately after exercise, but a difference favoring the high intensity level emerged at 30, 60 and 90 minutes post-exercise.

Results also showed that when the iron status of the women was taken into consideration, the beneficial effect of high-intensity exercise was greater for the older women.

Engaging in regular exercise is one way lawyers can reduce their daily stress (and growing mid-sections) and high intensity exercise appears to be more beneficial than low intensity. Running and bicycling are examples of high intensity exercise, but there are many gyms in the county that offer a variety of exercise classes that can fun and challenging. Of course, always consult your physician first before engaging in any new activity if you are not used to regular exercise, and always start out with low intensity exercise until you are ready to "kick it into high gear."

*Jill A. Singer practices workers compensation law and social security disability appeals at the Law Offices of Deirdre Frank in Ventura.*

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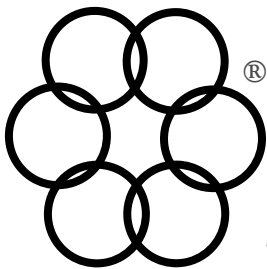
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**M E R R I L L   C O R P O R A T I O N**



It seems appropriate that in May, the month of Mothers' Day, I should be thinking about the two women who introduced me to and then raised me in the law. I have often jokingly referred to them as my "Mothers in the Law." Upon reflection I realize it isn't a joke: These women truly birthed me into this legal community.

I met **Patricia Lamas** and **Donna Santo** when I needed an attorney to represent me in a post-judgment custody dispute trailing across three states due to my nomadic military background. I met Donna first, and she scared me. But of course that was what I wanted: a sharp, assertive attorney. Then I met Pat, and she was also what I wanted: an attorney who was absolutely, one-hundred-percent in my corner. Pat became the attorney with whom I communicated on a day-to-day basis, and to whom I grew closest.

The onset of that custodial dispute marks the most horrible period in my life. Fortunately, Donna and Pat were my guides as well as my advocates. I was so intimidated by the power of the legal system that whenever I went to their office I suffered a terrible case of cotton-mouth. I could barely speak when meeting with either of them.

Pat and Donna obtained a good result for me, for which I am ever grateful. But they also gave me a dream-now-come-true. I once mentioned to Pat that, before I joined the Marine Corps and had children, I dreamed of becoming an attorney. Pat asked why I didn't pursue it, and I replied that I couldn't afford to stop working to go to school. And then Pat changed my life: She told me she worked while she went to law school at night, at Ventura College of Law, and that I should check it out. I did. Pat wrote my letter of

## MY MOTHERS IN LAW

By *Carla Hartley*

recommendation. The following semester I was a law student.

Shortly after I started law school, I submitted my résumé to Donna. Though I am generally quite self-confident, I was appalled to discover that, upon arriving at Donna's office for my interview, my mouth went just as dry as dust. Cottonmouth struck again. For the first two weeks of my employment there, cottonmouth persisted: I could barely speak a complete sentence. I wanted so badly to keep the opportunity Donna and Pat had given to me; thankfully, I was unable to say anything that might mess it up.

I worked for Donna and Pat throughout law school. Each of these remarkable women gave me gifts for which there is no possible price tag. Donna was immeasurably generous with her time and her knowledge. In retrospect I can see that she was teaching me to be a diligent, conscientious, ethical, and legally savvy attorney. She gave me these lessons on a day-in, day-out basis for four years. The more I progressed, the harder she pushed me. I don't think I ever thanked her.

Pat taught me attorney skills as well, but she also taught me something I never imagined I needed to know. She taught me to be kind. In fact, that is an understatement. Pat Lamas taught me to actively exercise kindness on a day-to-day basis, first with co-workers, then with clients, and then with everyone in my life. My own mother taught me to fight, but Pat taught me to be kind. I don't think I ever thanked her, either.

Both women taught me not to quit. As I was working for them, and attending night school, I was also dealing with my marriage and two teenage children. Funny to realize that they both had active careers and raised teenage children while going to law school in their "spare" time, an entire generation before I did. Donna spoke of studying regularly at 4:00 a.m. at the ice rink while her daughter had skating class, and then going to work "later" that morning. Pat spoke of twelve years of night school to get first her bachelor's, then her juris doctorate degrees. Whenever I thought I was attempting the impossible, these women

reminded me that they had done it before me. Pat and Donna had already paved the path on which I was walking.

The longer I am away from Donna and Pat, the more I realize the value of the gifts they lavished on me. Donna gave me the courage to start up my own business; Pat taught me that clients really do appreciate it if you truly care about them. Both taught me about client control – first while I was their client, then while I was their clerk. I learned the law, learned how to apply the law, learned how a successful practice is organized, learned to respect the courts and to deal respectfully with other attorneys, learned to honor my profession, care for my clients, love the people around me. I learned these things from Patricia Lamas and Donna Santo.

Shortly after I left The Law Offices of Donna C. Santo, I saw Donna speaking with another attorney at the courthouse. Donna introduced me to the other attorney, saying that I had left her to go to another firm. This other attorney said, "Well, that's going from the fat into the fire," and I said "No, it's more like going from the womb into the world." Then Donna paid me a tremendous compliment: she said I "came out of the womb running." I hope she realizes that said more about her than it did about me.

I have enjoyed many privileges in my life. I find that it is a singularly great privilege to meet Pat and Donna in the halls of the Ventura County Courthouse, as their colleague and, occasionally, as opposing counsel. Truly, these women are my "Mothers in the Law." I earnestly hope that, someday, I can pass to the next generation of women lawyers the same gifts, grace, and generosity, that Donna and Pat bestowed upon me.

*Carla Hartley practices family law in Ventura.*

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By *Alejandra Varela-Guerra*

The Ventura County Bar Association offers a Mandatory Fee Arbitration Program which is designed to resolve fee disputes between clients and attorneys. This program relies on volunteer arbitrators.

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If you are interested in becoming an attorney arbitrator or a lay arbitrator please contact Alex at (805) 650-7599 ext. 15 or email alex@vcba.org.

*Alejandra Varela-Guerra is the Client Relations Manager at the Ventura County Bar Association.*

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# CONTESTED JUDICIAL ELECTIONS

## Ryan Wright



I am running for Superior Court because I believe I have the experience and the temperament to be an effective judge.

My life's work has been protecting the public and seeking justice. I have twice been named Ventura County's Outstanding Prosecutor of the Year. I've also been recognized for exceptional service by the U.S. Attorney's Office, California Narcotics Officers Association and U.S. Department of Justice.

I have earned a reputation for hard work, integrity and fairness – not only from prosecutors, but from opposing attorneys and judges who have watched my work. That is why outstanding judges – including former California Supreme Court Justice Armand Arabian – are supporting me.

I also have the unanimous endorsement of the Ventura County Law Enforcement Coordinating Committee – which includes the District Attorney, Sheriff, and every local police chief. Other supporters include: Ventura County's prosecutors, probation officers and deputy sheriffs, as well as dozens of mayors and local officials.

I attended UCI before entering Pepperdine Law School. At Pepperdine I worked both in and out of the classroom to prepare for a legal career. I served as a Reserve Probation Officer for L.A. County and volunteered in the University's Success Academy. Our mission was to mentor youthful offenders, assisting them with their educational and professional development. I spent hundreds of hours in lockdown facilities encouraging young gang members to take the steps that could turn their lives around. Years later, I'm still in touch with some of those who succeeded.

In 1996 I was hired as a Deputy D.A. by then Ventura County D.A. **Mike Bradbury**. Over the next decade I prosecuted a variety of cases involving sexual abuse of children, drug trafficking, rape, and manslaughter. I also served as Community Prosecutor for the City of Thousand Oaks.

In 2007, District Attorney **Greg Totten** promoted me to Senior Deputy District Attorney.

In recent years I have spent substantial time on major narcotics investigations, including



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the recently announced “King of Heroin” case, resulting in the arrest of one of Mexico’s most notorious importers of drugs across the U.S. border.

Having developed an expertise in the areas of search and seizure, search warrants and wiretaps, I’ve often been asked to train attorneys, police officers and deputy sheriffs. I have been an instructor at the Ventura County Sheriff’s Academy and conducted trainings at nearly every police station in the County.

My roots in this community are deep. My parents still live in the house where I was born in Camarillo. My wife, Christine, and I live nearby with our three children who keep us actively engaged in youth sports, PTA, and Cub Scouts. I respect our community’s values and I understand a judge’s responsibility for protecting the innocent – and for helping keep our neighborhoods safe.

If I am elected to the Superior Court, I will work tirelessly to be fair and to secure the rights of every person seeking justice in my courtroom. I would be honored to earn your vote.

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# CONTESTED JUDICIAL ELECTIONS



## LELA HENKE-DOBROTH

I have dedicated my career to the cause of justice. My reputation is one of hard work, commitment to public safety, integrity and courage. I have reviewed, analyzed and made critical decisions in thousands of cases.

To be a good judge, experience matters. I am the only candidate with that experience. For 29 years I have been privileged to serve the community as criminal prosecutor, supervisor and manager for the District Attorney & since 2004 I have been in private practice.

I believe in an effective and efficient justice system. I pledge to respect and protect the rights of all who seek justice in my courtroom.

My family settled in Ventura County in 1928. I was born and raised in this community as were my children. I received my JD from Ventura College of Law in 1981.

### 29 years of legal experience:

- 1975-1981 District Attorney's Family Support Division-Legal secretary, family support officer, family support consultant, law clerk, deputy district attorney

### 23 year career as a prosecutor with the Ventura County District Attorney

- Deputy District Attorney - Child Support Div., Misdemeanor Div. Sr. Deputy District Attorney and supervising attorney - career criminals, gangs, sexual assault, child abuse, domestic violence, elder abuse, major crimes and homicides.

- 9 years as Chief Deputy District Attorney to District Attorney **Michael D. Bradbury**

Management: Family Protection Unit (Child abuse, sexual assault, domestic violence, elder abuse, special needs victims), misdemeanor and juvenile units, Ellie Liston Crime Victim Assistance Program.

- Twice recipient District Attorney's Attorney of the Year Award
- California Lawyer Magazine recognition as one of top attorneys in state
- Successfully prosecuted first spousal rape case to jury trial in California (*People v. Wojkowski*)
- High profile homicides including *People v. Diana Haun* and *Michael Dally* (Kidnap & brutal murder of Sheri Dally) & *People v. Vincent Sanchez* ("The Simi Valley Rapist").
- 6 years experience private practice: Civil, family law, pro bono assistance

### Organizations and committees

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**Richard M. Norman**

- Chair, Ventura County Safe Harbor Multidisciplinary Interview Center Founding Committee
- D.A.'s representative, founding committee Partners For Safe Families
- Membership: Ventura County Child Abuse Council, Elder Abuse Council, Gang Task Force
- Chair: Ventura County Sexual Assault Committee, Domestic Violence Task Force, Child Death Review Committee
- District Attorney's representative to First Five Commission

### Non-profit organizations

- Child Development Resources of Ventura County
- Head Start Board of Directors; past board chair
- Nan Tolbert Nurturing Center - Ojai Valley Resource and Family Support - pro bono assistance to initiating board
- Ventura County Social Justice Foundation

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- Investigation Protocols for: Child Abuse and Domestic Violence
- Contributor, California District Attorneys Assoc. domestic violence publication
- Domestic Violence Reporting Laws for medical providers
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# CONTESTED JUDICIAL ELECTIONS

## Gay Conroy



In August, 2009, **Douglas Goldwater** wrote a biographical article about me for *Citations*. The article was light and was intended to show

that judges have a life outside of the court. I do, and my life has been pretty wonderful. Since you are reading this I presume you read that article so I need not bore you with more about my childhood and my travels.

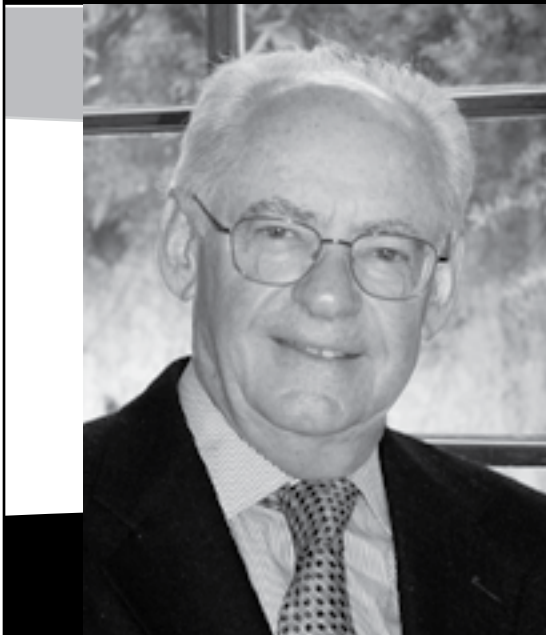
California law requires an appointed judge to run in the next general election after appointment and every six years thereafter. On June 8, 2010 the citizens of Ventura County will have the rare opportunity to select the best candidate for superior court judge, Office #10. So what characteristics should be evaluated to determine the best choice? The application for judicial appointment asks about one's experience in law and in the courtroom. It inquires into service as a judge pro tem, mediator and arbitrator. It asks about experience in writing and in teaching law. In order to sit as a temporary judge the applicant must take a course in substantive law in the areas in which they wish to serve. They are also required to take classes in judicial ethics, judicial demeanor and in dealing with self-represented litigants.

When casting your vote on June 8, 2010 I hope you will consider my 28 years of legal

experience, as a Superior Court Judge, Superior Court Commissioner, Family Law Facilitator, mediator and as an attorney. Consider my four plus years on the bench, handling heavy calendars in family law, misdemeanor arraignments, traffic trials, small claims, unlawful detainers, domestic violence and civil harassment restraining orders. Consider that I help train attorneys who wish to sit as pro-tem judges and that as an attorney I sat as a temporary judge numerous times. Consider my judicial demeanor. If you have not appeared in front of me, ask those who have. Ask attorneys, court staff, judicial assistants, bailiffs, court interpreters, court reporters and court clerks. Ask if I treat litigants and attorneys with respect and dignity and rule with impartiality. Consider that I was an adjunct professor at Ventura College of Law. Consider that prior to working for the courts I had 15 years of experience in private practice in Ventura County where I regularly sat as a temporary judge.

I hope that you will decide not only on my legal experience but also on the other qualities necessary to being a good jurist. Your vote will allow me to continue doing the work I love.

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# CONTESTED JUDICIAL ELECTIONS

## ROBERT TAYLOR



It is rare that an incumbent judge is forced to run in a contested election in this county. Can anyone recall the last time that happened? I am proud to be a part of something different. Now, instead of just one name on the ballot,

voters will have a choice for judge for Office 10. And I should be their choice.

Everyone asks me two things: Why are you running for judge? And why did you select **Judge Conroy** to challenge? The answers are honest and simple.

***Why run for judge?*** I want to give people a choice. What's the point of having an election if only one name is on the ballot? In the future, it's my hope that other attorneys in this county throw their names in the ring and run for judicial office. Otherwise, we might as well call a judicial appointment what it really is – a *de facto* lifetime appointment, the same as what we have in the federal judiciary. I seek to be elected by the people instead of being appointed.

***Why run against Judge Conroy specifically?*** An important factor in my deciding to run for the seat currently held by Judge Conroy was an article that appeared in the August 2009

edition of *Citations* where the Judge described her appointment to the bench. I encourage everyone to read that article, as I think it will be clear about why I decided to run for that particular seat.

I am a native of Ventura County, and a proud product of our state's public education system. I graduated from Rio Mesa High School. I continued my education at California State University, Fresno, where I graduated *summa cum laude* in Economics. I received my law degree from the University of California, Davis.

I know what it is like to work hard and build a business from scratch, in this case a law practice. I have represented both plaintiffs and defendants in state and federal courts, throughout California and elsewhere. I have represented, sued and defended just about every type of person or entity. I have been in courts in counties from San Diego to San Francisco, from San Luis Obispo to the Sierras, and it seems like just about every courthouse in between.

I don't want to be given any office; I want to be elected by the people. Please visit my website at [www.taylor4judge.com](http://www.taylor4judge.com) to learn more about who I am, why I am qualified, and why I wish to serve Ventura County.

Thank you for your consideration.

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# 2010 JUDGES' NIGHT

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**Office Space Available** - Across from Government Center. Quiet office, conference room, copier/fax, DSL, and other amenities available. Contact Lynn at (805) 650-1197.

**Professional Office for Rent** - County Square Professional Offices Bldg. Lots of windows & parking, garden view. Approximately 150 sq. ft. at \$450 per month. Walk to court with clients via unique underpass access to courthouse and law library. Furnished or unfurnished, DSL, credit card equipment, and utilities included. Please call (805) 642-2025.

## OTHER

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On a March Madness Thursday eve, 25 brave Barristers (and **Judge Glen Reiser**) withstood the throngs of regulars at the Benchwarmer in Ventura to participate in the annual Barristers' Dart Night. Kudos to **DDA Taylor Waters** and **Melissa Waters** for coordinating the affair, including the food fest. **Jack Seal** placed first, Taylor placed second, and **John Fukasawa** placed third. **Christina Stokholm** won the raffle and took home the dart board... Jay C. Gandhi was sworn in as a Magistrate Judge April 14 and will sit in LA. He will preside over matters arising from all three Divisions of the court. The Central District of California is the largest district in the nation and is comprised of the seven counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura. Judge Gandhi will be the first Indian-American federal judge in the Central District and only the second Indian American federal judge in the history of the United States. Judge Gandhi is 38... Nearly 50 lawyers and a smattering of judges attended the Women Lawyers of Ventura County Judicial Candidates Forum 4.9 at the bar offices. **Judge Gay Conroy**, **DDA Ryan Wright**, **Lela Henke-Dobroth**, and **Robert Taylor** all participated. Hats off to President **Jodi Prior** for arranging the gig...

After 20-plus years, **Noel Klebaum** announced his retirement from the County Counsel's office April 6. Noel joined the County Counsel in 1989 after 10 years as a shareholder in the firm of Ferguson Regnier Paterson. Noel replaced **Frank Sieh** in April 2004 as the Head Honcho... And you think you're old Department – Attorney Joe Aidlin, practicing in downtown LA, turned 100 in April and recently completed his 77th year of practice. Dude graduated from Boalt in '33. "When I got out of law school I realized I wouldn't be attractive to the established big firms' because I was Jewish." His State Bar #: 13923. Oldest active attorney in California. Take that, **Eugene Radding**, SB#21593... **David Shain** and **Katie Pietrolungo** attended Opening Day at Chavez Ravine (not together, mind you)

## Exec's Dot...Dot...Dot...

By *Steve Henderson, Executive Director, M.A., CAE*

and viewed the Blue smack 4... Did I neglect to inform you all who the new officers and board of VCTLA are? **Jim Prosser**, President; **Deirdre Frank**, VP; **Brook Carroll**, Treasurer; and **Susan McCarthy**, Secretary. The board includes **Allen Ball**, **Jack Futoran**, **Bill Grewe**, **Greg Johnson**, **Dennis Jones**, **Matt LaVere**, **Becky McCarthy**, **David Shain**, and **Alan Templeman** – [www.vctla.org](http://www.vctla.org) – and they continue to meet the 4th Tuesday of the month...

On April 6, **Brian Vogel** was certified by the State Bar of California Board of Legal Specialization as specialist in Criminal Law... Meet Tasha Cantrell. The 19-year-old Floridian (of course) *was riding in a car* when the vehicle's driver was pulled over and arrested for DUI. As a tow truck arrived to remove her friend's car, a stranded Cantrell asked Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office Deputy Mitchell Landis for a ride home. Landis agreed, but only after checking Cantrell's purse for any contraband. While chauffeuring Cantrell, Landis heard the teenager open "a can of some sort" in the back of the cruiser. Landis stopped his car and, upon further investigation, determined that Cantrell had popped open a can of Steel Reserve, a malt liquor known for its high alcohol content. She was arrested for underage drinking... Farley & Cassey, A Law Partnership, has merged with Schwartz & Powell, A Law Partnership, as of April 1, to become **Farley Cassy Schwartz & Powell**. They are located at 1280 S. Victoria, Suite 125, and the phone # is 642.0392...

On March 23, **David Cunningham** attended the Porsche Driving School in Birmingham, Alabama. The select class spent a full day driving new Porsches on various auto cross courses, a skid pad, and ultimately on the 2.8 miles racetrack itself. They drove Carrera S 911 vehicles and followed the ever-increasing pace of the Instructor. Got to drive the new four door Panamera too... The State Bar is seeking active members of the State Bar, former members of the judiciary, and members of the public who are interested in volunteering to serve on the 2011 Commission on Judicial Nominees Evaluation (JNE Commission). Information on the commission, time commitment and the application are available from [www.calbar.ca.gov](http://www.calbar.ca.gov) or from the the State Bar's Appointments Office: 415.538.2318. Application is due June 1... On May 2, **Al Vargas** completed his 11th musical production run in 30 months with *The World Goes Round* at Ventura College. This is the same guy who completed 10 marathons in 12 months in '06-'07... New Zealand? **Fred Tschopp** at [bigbearsix@aol.com](mailto:bigbearsix@aol.com)...

Got Hoops? **Mike Velthoen**, **Dan Palay**, **Stuart Nielson**, **Ari Karakalos**, **Doug Goldwater**, **Matt LaVere**, and **Paul Huff** play at VHS on Sunday mornings around 10ish. [mvelthoen@fcoplaw.com](mailto:mvelthoen@fcoplaw.com)... An Arkadelphia mother is charged with harassment for making entries on her son's Facebook page. Denise New's 16 year-old son filed charges against her in March after he claims she posted slanderous entries about him on the social networking site. New says she was just trying to monitor what he was posting. Mom remains in shock after her son slapped her with the charge of harassment. In a document from the Clark County prosecutor, he alleges she hacked his account, changed his password and posted things that involved slander about his personal life. New's son lives with his grandmother who has custodial rights (go figure). Next court date is May 12... **Georgianna Pennington-Regnier** started a business with her daughter called "the pure pantry" selling gluten free food. [www.thepurepantry.com](http://www.thepurepantry.com)...

**Susan McCarthy** rode the Solvang Half-Century while **Erik Feingold** and **Commissioner Mark Borrell** biked the Century March 13. The ride is sponsored by SCOR, an incorporated non-profit recreational bicycling club. SCOR stands for Specialized Coronary Outpatient Rehabilitation. SCOR members promote safe cycling and emphasize the health benefits of cycling. More info? (562) 690.9693 or [www.bikescor.com](http://www.bikescor.com)... Try this! **Ben Schuck** donated \$25 to the *vcba/vlsp*, inc. in honor of President **Kendall VanConas**' BD last month... Remember last month when I opined on Sheriff Baca letting inmates out early while lawyer Richard Fine remained in jail because of contempt of court charges. What I did not research well was the fact that the Court's attorney on the case is our very own **Kevin McCormick**... **Duane Dammeyer** retired on March 26 and the Supes replaced him by appointing **Steve Lipson** effective April 13. Duane has been The Man since March '08 and was the assistant for 18 years. Steve started in '86. BTW – **Ken Clayman** has taken the Interim PD gig in Solano County 'til August give-or-take. (707) 784.6724 or [kiclayman@solanocounty.com](mailto:kiclayman@solanocounty.com)...

*Steve Henderson has been the executive director and chief executive officer of the bar association and its affiliated organization since November 1990. Henderson likes the Yankees' chances again this year and dreads his Dodger season tix. He may be contacted at [steve@vcba.org](mailto:steve@vcba.org), Twitter at [stevehendo1](https://twitter.com/stevehendo1), LinkedIn, or Facebook. Preferably, however, 650.7599.*



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*Mr. Nielsen grew up in Thousand Oaks, and graduated from Westlake High School. He received his Bachelor of Arts from the University of California at Santa Barbara, and his Juris Doctorate from the Santa Barbara College of Law. He received the Witkin Award for Academic Excellence and the CALI Excellence for the Future Award in Remedies, and Academic Achievement Awards for the Highest Grade in Contracts, Legal Writing, Torts and Remedies. As an attorney, Mr. Nielsen worked in Construction Litigation and as a Ventura County Deputy District Attorney, where he received 24 hours of P.O.S.T. Certified Standardized Field Sobriety Test Instruction. Mr. Nielsen is now using his experience to help clients facing DUI charges.*

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