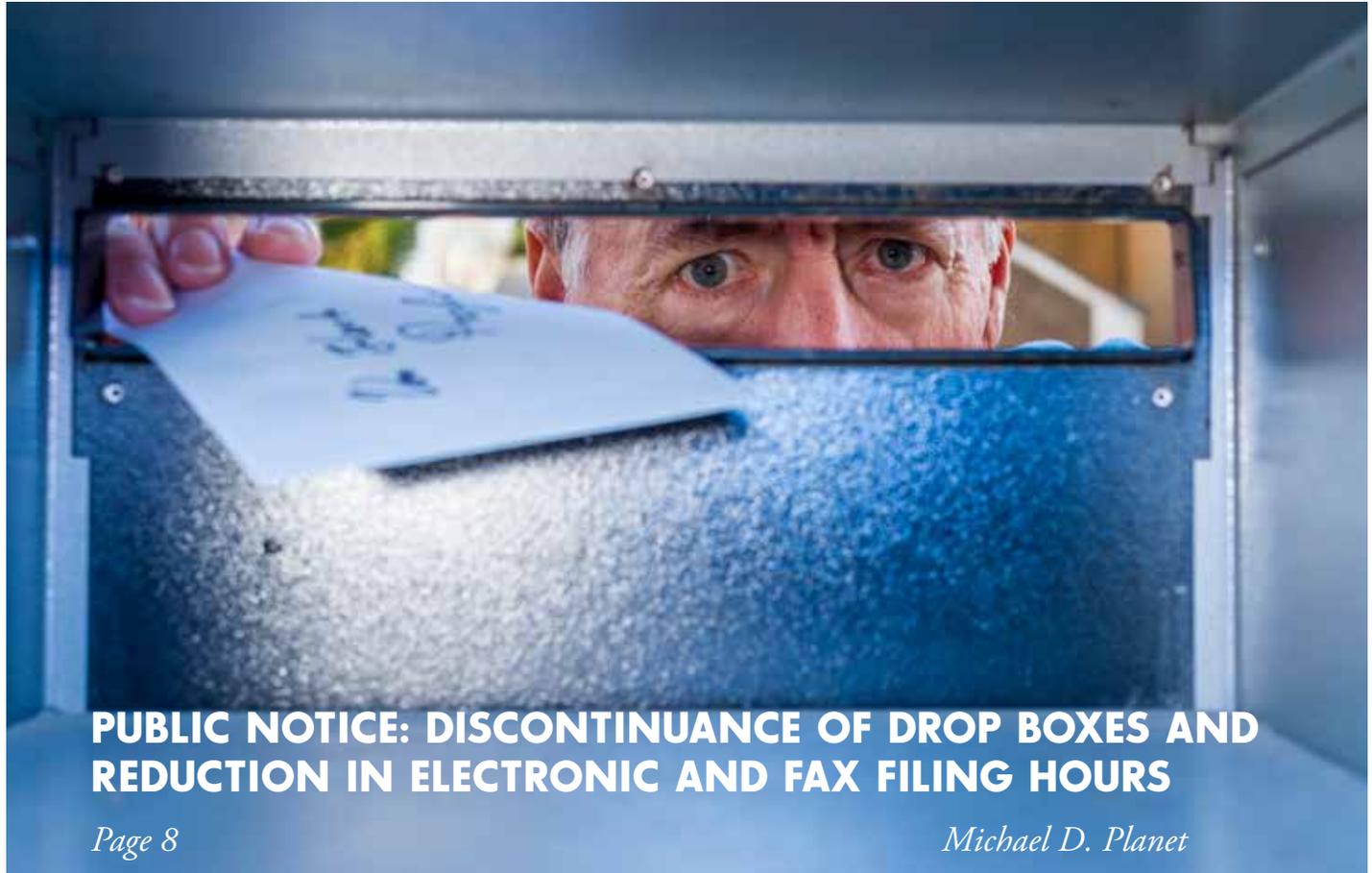




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## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

## VETTING FOR GOLD: THE GOOD WORK OF THE JUDICIAL EVALUATIONS COMMITTEE

by Charmaine H. Buehner

On Aug. 5, approximately three billion people will tune in to watch the opening ceremonies of the Games of the XXXI Summer Olympiad in Rio de Janeiro – 10,500 athletes from 205 countries will compete in 42 events. In a world of increasing unrest, the Olympics represent an opportunity to focus on and celebrate the friendly competition and cooperation among nations as we all watch a skilled few achieve their lifelong goal of getting the gold. In Ventura County, our own microcosm of cooperation among a diverse group of lawyers plays out continually, though generally in much less dramatic fashion, as the group does their part to vet a select few lawyers who seek to achieve a pinnacle of our profession: that of a judicial officer. I write, of course, about one of the hardest working VCBA contingents: the Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC).

The JEC's mission is to "assist the Governor and the electorate in the judicial selection process and thereby promote a California judiciary of quality and integrity by providing independent, comprehensive, accurate and fair evaluations of candidates for judicial appointment and election." (Rules of the JEC, available at <http://www.vcba.org/wpcontent/uploads/2011/11/VCBA-JEC-Adopted-Rules-Sept.-2011.pdf>) For the last six years, the JEC has been ably chaired by my colleague, Senior Assistant



County Counsel **Linda Ash** (pictured). During Ash's tenure, the JEC has reviewed over 30 candidates. The committee comprises lawyers from the superior court, district

attorney's office, county counsel's office, solo practice, and mid- and large-size firms, and from locations all over the county. In addition to the varied professional experiences of JEC members, their work is enhanced by JEC members' diverse backgrounds. The JEC currently includes five women and six men with varied

experience levels and representing diverse ethnicities, cultures and sexual orientation. Deputy District Attorney **Richard Simons**, a four-year JEC member, praised the JEC's diversity, commenting that JEC members' varied backgrounds increases the sensitivity and effectiveness of the JEC as a whole.

The work of the JEC begins at the Governor's request, or when there is a contested judicial election. The JEC conducts its evaluation concurrently with the State Bar of California's Judicial Nominees Evaluation Commission ("JNE"). Both the JEC and JNE rely on a wealth of information, including the Personal Data Questionnaire ("PDQ") submitted by each candidate (available at [https://www.gov.ca.gov/s\\_judicialappointments.php](https://www.gov.ca.gov/s_judicialappointments.php)). Ash told me the JEC focuses on the candidate's qualifications and importantly, how the candidate is viewed locally. The JNE's evaluation, on the other hand, focuses more on the candidates' technical experience and background. Seven-year JEC member and former VCBA President **David Shain** explained that the work of the JEC is critical to ensure the Governor is "aware of the candidate's standing in the community where he/she is best known." When I asked **Kata Kim**, JEC member since 2012, what VCBA members should know about the JEC, Kim advised that lawyers' and judges' "participation and responses to the comment forms... is invaluable to th[e] process." For this reason, the JEC urges attorneys to respond to both the JNE's and JEC's requests for information.

The JEC has 90 days to conduct its investigation and provide a rating of the candidate, described in more detail in JEC Rule 1.5: 1) Exceptionally Well Qualified, 2) Well Qualified, 3) Qualified or 4) Not Qualified. Except in the case of elections, the JEC's ratings of candidates are completely confidential and made known only to the Governor's office. At the outset of the JEC's investigation, the Chair assigns a three-JEC-member team and designates

one person to be team leader. The JEC Chair also advises the judicial candidate of the process and requests that the candidate provide a writing sample and the names of 50 to 75 lawyers and judges who have a basis to evaluate the candidate's legal skills and knowledge.

The team leader elicits information from each of the candidate's references in a "Confidential Comment Form." The information sought relates to a range of categories: 1) Professional Ability; 2) Professional Experience; 3) Judicial Temperament; 4) Professional Reputation; and 5) Work Ethic/Resource Management. Several JEC members agreed that of these categories, judicial temperament ranks high in importance, and often is a major factor in the overall rating. The team works diligently to follow up where needed to obtain clarifying information, resolve conflicting information and in the case of non-responses, calls to obtain responses.

When the follow-up investigation is complete, the team leader summarizes the information and circulates the summary to the rest of the JEC. To the extent the JEC receives one or more substantial negative comments about any candidate, the substance of the comment is conveyed to the candidate in a "negative comment letter" in accordance with JEC Rules. Importantly, candidates are only provided the substance of the negative comments and not the identity of the person reporting the information. If requested, the reporter's identity will also be held in confidence by the team leader from other members of the JEC. While the team leader absolutely honors such requests, Simons explained that keeping the reporter's identity from the JEC can make it challenging to weigh the information's credibility.

Next, the JEC interviews the candidate, at which time the candidate can respond to any negative comments. Once the interview

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*Continued from page 3*

is complete, the JEC discusses the candidate and each committee member provides a rating. The Chair then assigns an overall candidate rating based on the individual JEC-member ratings and conveys the information to the Governor via a letter after the committee approves the content. All JEC members with whom I spoke regard their fellow committee members highly and expressed a deep appreciation for the effort and pains each committee member takes to maintain the quality and integrity of the JEC's work. Kim observed that while the work of the committee is demanding and time intensive during evaluation periods, she finds "serving on the committee not only very rewarding work, but really an honor to be able to contribute to its overall purpose."

Currently, there are two vacancies on the JEC. If you are interested in filling a vacancy, please email me at *charmaine.buebner@ventura.org*, along with a brief statement of why you would like to serve.



*Charmaine Buebner is a Senior Assistant County Counsel for the County of Ventura. To this day, one of her best summers was spent on a Cal24 off the coast of Catalina*

*Island camping, swimming, hiking, snorkeling, and gathering around the 3-inch black and white screen below deck to watch Mary Lou Retton score perfect 10s. The Olympics will be on in her house 24/7.*

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The Ventura Superior Court intends to discontinue the use of drop boxes as a method for delivering documents for filing, and to reduce the hours during which electronic or fax filing may be used to deliver documents for filing.

Effective July 11, the court has extended its clerk's office's regular business hours. The office and filing counters will be open to the public from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Effective Sept. 1, the court will **discontinue the use of all drop boxes** as a method for delivering documents for filing. **Electronic and fax filing will be available only until 4:00 p.m.**

All documents received for filing before 4:00 p.m., regardless of the method of delivery, will be deemed filed that same court day, subject to the document's compliance with applicable standards. All documents received for filing after 4:00 p.m., regardless of the method of delivery, will be deemed filed the next court day, again subject to the document's compliance with applicable standards.

Providing the same filing hours, regardless of the method of delivery, will eliminate confusion and promote consistency. These changes comply with California Rules of Court, rules 2.210 and 2.250(b)(10).

Anyone wishing to comment on this proposed plan may do so, either by regular mail or e-mail, by Aug. 26. Please direct your response to:

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## COLLABORATIVE DIVORCE: A WIN-WIN APPROACH

by Alice P. Arnold and Lisa R. Zonder

As attorneys we are bound to act diligently on behalf of our clients. This means educating clients sufficiently to ensure informed decision making about divorce process options. There are several alternative dispute resolution options. One is collaborative divorce, which is authorized by Family Code section 2013. There are circumstances when any form of consensual dispute resolution may be inappropriate, such as a history of domestic violence, but most of the time, the best practice for a family law attorney is to explore consensual processes first.

Collaborative divorce is client-centered and nonadversarial. It uses an interdisciplinary team of professionals, and fully supports the couple to resolve the issues. The couple signs a formal pledge not to go to court unless the collaborative process breaks down. Clients have a right to stay out of court and transition through divorce with a focus on their family's priorities, guided by civility and respect. The collaborative divorce process is comprehensive and provides the tools to resolve parenting, property, and financial matters. And because it is a consensual process, the likelihood of post-dissolution conflicts arising is minimized.

The team consists of a divorce coach and financial professional, perhaps a child specialist, and any other necessary expert. By hiring the right professional for the job, the team addresses all three dimensions of divorce: legal, emotional and financial.

The divorce coach is a particularly helpful member of the team.

Each party has a divorce coach who assists to:

- identify the client's goals;
- support the client emotionally and mentally;
- help frame the big picture;
- help the client have a voice in the process;
- avoid self-sabotaging behaviors; and
- help manage the stress and emotions of divorce.

The financial specialist can:

- assist the parties to prepare required financial disclosures;
- organize and produce relevant documents; and
- prepare a financial report with future projections.

It is valuable for the couple to have a realistic view of future cost of living, property values, and income so that they can leave the marriage and remain financially stable.

The child specialist can:

- assist in evaluating parenting schedules, and
- guide the clients in creating a healthy and functional post-divorce parenting relationship.

The team philosophy encourages both parties to approach parenting issues from a positive, loving, and caring position. This is immensely beneficial for the children.

There are numerous advantages to a collaborative divorce. The team approach empowers clients to develop thoughtful solutions to their custody, support, and property matters. The client then has the tools he or she needs to evaluate settlement options and reach agreements that are not only in his or her best interests, but best for the family as a whole. Because the parties have agreed not to litigate, they both have a vested interest in reaching settlement together.

If the clients decide that the collaborative divorce process is not working for them, they can withdraw and try another process such as mediation or court. If they make this choice, each spouse's respective collaborative legal professional must withdraw from representation. Further, no members of the team (child specialist, financial professional or coach) may be involved in the litigation. In addition, no file records or documentation drafted during the collaborative divorce meetings can be used in litigation.

Opponents of collaborative divorce criticize the need for the team to be disqualified since such disqualification requires the client to start all over again with a new team. The flip side of this coin is that parties have an incentive to settle to avoid starting over. If enough is at stake it may be necessary for a client to end the collaborative process, but that would occur after consultation with the team. Given the traditional culture of threats to go to court, collaborative lawyers have to shift their paradigm and be more creative around settlement and surfacing clients' true needs. Despite some criticism of

the collaborative process, cases can be settled with less expense and time than traditional litigation. This is a win-win for the family as a whole, which is the best outcome we can provide for our clients.

For training opportunities and further resources see [www.cpcal.org](http://www.cpcal.org).



*Alice P. Arnold is new to Ventura County, but she practiced both law and psychotherapy in Colorado for many years. Her practice focuses on mediation, family law, and divorce coaching.*

*She can be reached at [alice@alicearnold.com](mailto:alice@alicearnold.com) or (805)910-8861.*



*Lisa R. Zonder of Zonder Family Law in Westlake Village is a 24-year veteran attorney and a Certified Family Law Specialist (State Bar of California, Board of Legal Specialization)*

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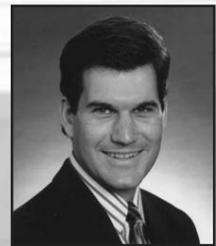
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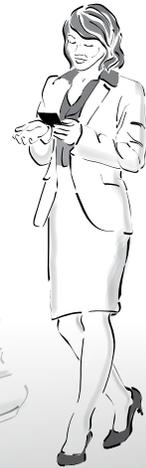
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## THE SANTA BARBARA & VENTURA COLLEGES OF LAW NAMES NEW DEAN



The Santa Barbara & Ventura Colleges of Law (COL) announces the appointment of **Jackie Gardina** as its new Dean and Chief Academic Officer. Gardina was selected after an extensive national search and assumed her post on July 1. She succeeds **Heather Georgakis**, who served COL for three decades, including fifteen years as Dean.

Gardina's extensive experience in higher education includes both academic and administrative positions. She arrives at COL after thirteen years of service at Vermont Law School, where as chief academic officer, she oversaw graduate and professional programs of over 600 students across six degrees, while also teaching courses such as civil procedure, administrative law and bankruptcy. Gardina has been a visiting professor of law at Santa Clara University School of Law, University of Denver Sturm College of Law, and University of Oregon School of Law.

"To have someone of Jackie's caliber and breadth of experience join the Colleges of Law is a testament to our standing in the legal community," said Dr. Matthew Nehmer, COL's Executive Director. "We had candidates from across the country seek the opportunity to serve as our next Dean. In the end, it was Jackie's passion for providing people from all backgrounds access to an outstanding legal education that made her stand out. Since our founding in 1969, COL has worked diligently to build a reputation for excellence; with Jackie's leadership we stand poised to build on this foundation toward an even more successful future."

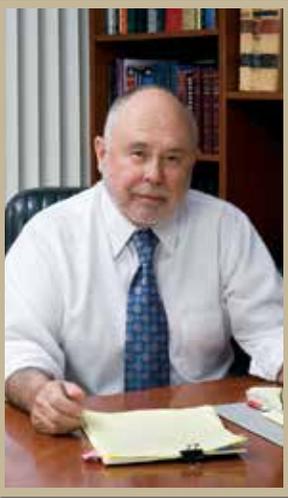
Gardina is a member and former co-president (2012-2014) of the Society of American Law Teachers (SALT) and a former governing board member of Service Members Legal Defense Network (LDN). More recently, Gardina founded and chaired the Association of American Law Schools Section for Associate Deans for Academics and Research and chaired the Associate Dean Conference Committee for the American Bar Association's Section on Legal Education.

"I am excited to join an institution that is dedicated to providing access to an excellent, affordable legal education and a pathway to the legal profession for adults from all backgrounds," said Gardina about her appointment. "I was drawn to the school because of this mission and look forward to working with the Colleges of Law team to take it even further."

Gardina's higher education journey began at the University of Iowa where she

completed a B.A. in Political Science before earning a Masters in Social Work (M.S.W.) from Boston University. Gardina worked as an outpatient clinical social worker prior to enrolling at Boston College Law School, where she graduated magna cum laude. She clerked for Chief Judge William Young of the United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts, as well as for the Honorable Levin H. Campbell of the First Circuit Court of Appeals. In addition, she was an associate at the Boston firm Choate, Hall and Stewart.

The COL community gathered for alumni/student Midsummer Celebrations on July 15 in Santa Barbara and July 22 in Ventura to say farewell to Dean Georgakis as she begins a third career in legal education consulting. "I am delighted to pass the baton to Dean Gardina, because under her academic leadership I feel certain that our students' best interests will remain the law school's primary focus."



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## An Interview with Retired Judge David Long

by Lauren Wood

*For this month's Barrister's Corner, I have chosen to interview someone who is not only one of Ventura's most esteemed individuals from the bench but also someone whom I can confidently say is one of the most interesting people I know. Retired Judge **David Long**, a former eight-year U. S. Marine and seventeen-year insurance claims adjuster, was an extremely effective MSC judge with a reputation for getting things done. While I did not have the pleasure of having a case in front of Judge Long while he was on the bench, I have heard countless stories of how he managed to settle cases successfully through the use of what were sometimes considered creative means. I wanted to know more about his personal life and some of the exciting stories he has to share.*

**First and foremost, I'll selfishly start with my favorite topic: travel. It seems like you travel a lot. Have you taken any fun vacations lately?**

None recently, although back in February, we enjoyed another two weeks on the Big Island with plenty of golf and other exciting adventures. A number of years ago, we did a week-long Windstar cruise in Tahiti, from Pape'ete to the islands of Riatia, Huahini, Bora Bora, Moorea and back to Pape'ete. Probably the best vacation we've ever had... golf clubs left at home!

**What is your favorite place to travel to?**

I love Jamaica, where we've been sixteen or seventeen times since 1985. There used to be direct flights from LAX to MJB (Montego Bay) on Air Jamaica but no longer. Many wonderful vacations – which included both golfing and just relaxing – at most of the Sandals and several of the “Super Clubs” in Jamaica, all of which are “All-Inclusive.” Most recently (and probably again later this fall, after hurricane season) we plan to head back to Sandals Emerald Bay on Great Exuma Island in the southern Bahamas, where there is a Greg Norman-designed golf course right on the property, and green fees are part of the “All-Inclusive” package.

**You obviously play a lot of golf (as do I). Other than Saticoy CC of course, what is your favorite course that you've ever played?**

Shirley's favorite is Big Island Country Club, on the Big Island of Hawaii. My favorite? Probably the Rancho Bernardo Resort course in San Diego, where I shot my only low 80s golf round (39 on the front and 41 on the back).

**Any courses on your “bucket list” that you'd like to play?**

Torrey Pines, St. Andrews and any of the PGA tour stops in Monterey.

**What is one interesting thing that most people don't know about you?**

When I was twelve years old, my dearest friend in the world (still), who is 364 days older than I am, decided that we needed a summer adventure. So we decided we were going to ride our bicycles from Tulsa, Oklahoma to Denver, Colorado. We debated whether we should ask our parents' permission but both realized they would say “no,” and we were going to do it anyway. So we decided it would be better to ask for forgiveness than for permission. The Oklahoma Highway Patrol caught up with us just as we were about to get to the Panhandle and brought us back, for reasons known only to the OHP, to Pawnee. Ron and I spent two and a half days and two nights in the Pawnee jail. (Either Pawnee County didn't have a Juvenile Hall in 1953 or it was full...) We were fingerprinted, had booking photos taken and our parents were smart enough not to come get us for those two-plus days. And I should note that I still ended up a Superior Court Judge. Ron ended up Chief of the San Clemente Fire Department, Chief of the Fullerton Fire Department and retired after eight years as the Fire Marshall of the State of California. As he said, over some very good scotch and cigars the evening of my enrobing, “*Not half bad for a couple of teenage Oklahoma jailbirds!*”

**What is the strangest thing you saw while you were on the bench?**

In a small claims case in Simi, shortly after I was first appointed in 1993, the plaintiff was an ob-gyn seeking the balance

of an account not paid by insurance for a conization procedure that had been done on the defendant patient almost a year before. The defendant said that her defense was that she now had polyps on her uterus and asked me, “*Your Honor, would you like to see photos of my uterus?*” I looked over at my then bailiff, Deputy Mark Briggs, who was sitting at his desk and vigorously shaking his head in the negative! The three intra-vaginal Polaroid photos of her uterus were introduced into evidence... Defendant lost to the tune of about \$750!

**Can you tell me about your time spent serving in the Marines?**

As an infantryman in a Special Infantry Company, I didn't have any significant events. Lots of training, field problems, etc. However, one of two of the most significant people to ever cross my path was the late **Jim McGahan** — a Major in my Marine Corps and an aviator and partner at Benton, Orr, Duval & Buckingham. The other was the Senior Drill Instructor (DI) who took me through boot camp at MCRD (Marine Corps Recruit Depot) San Diego in 1959. His name was S/Sgt. M. C. Short. Hands down, he was the most charismatic leader I have ever met: a tough, sometimes mean, demanding personage who would not accept anything but the very best from the members of his platoon. Discipline, teamwork, self-pride, commitment to our country, our Corps and to our fellow Marines was his mantra. I can't count the number of times he bellowed at us: “*There is nothing Marines can't accomplish, people, if it doesn't matter who gets the credit!*” That is a philosophical foundation that has guided my life and career since then. What's the objective? How can the “team” accomplish it? I would not be where I am today without the lessons learned there from him and with the stability that Shirley Critchfield brought to my life in 1979. She has saved me all too many times from my worst demons.

**What is your fondest memory of being on the bench in Ventura?**

Getting to come to work every day to a “team” of Robin Adams, my courtroom Judicial Assistant (whom I've known since she and my daughter were pals in high

*Continued on page 15*

# HAPPY VALLEY

by Bill Paterson

As of late, I haven't been able to develop much enthusiasm for recent theatrical releases. But thankfully there is an entertainment medium that provides a cornucopia of riches. Once maligned as the "vast wasteland," television has been reborn, thanks to original programming by Netflix, Amazon, HBO and their brethren. This brings me to "Happy Valley," one of the most compelling police procedurals I have seen in some time.

"Happy Valley" is anything but an earthly Eden. A fading town in Northern England, part Rust Belt and part Appalachia, the opening theme song says it all – "the only thing that's happy is the thought of getting out." But given its population of assorted wrongdoers, from junkies, human traffickers, and strung out prostitutes, to the occasional murderer, there is no lack of work for Sgt. Catherine Cawood (Sarah Lancashire).

Forty-seven years old, divorced and raising her young grandson, Cawood's life has been stalked by tragedy. Her daughter was raped and later committed suicide, and the perpetrator never answered for his crime. Haunted by her daughter's death, Cawood clings to the hope that that someday justice will catch up with Tommy Lee Royce (James Norton), the man she believes was the rapist. But while her personal life may be in turmoil, it never detracts from her work. When she dons her uniform, she is the consummate professional.

The crime that jumpstarts the twelve-part series begins when a timid accountant is told by his boss that he will not get a raise. Simmering with resentment, he hatches a plan to get back at the boss. But once the accountant puts his scheme into action he finds himself on a runaway train. Part of him wants to pull back, but he is paralyzed by greed and moral cowardice. Then, just when he thinks he is in the clear, something happens which neither he (nor we) anticipated. It is a supremely ironic twist that would warm the heart of Alfred Hitchcock. And episode after episode, the surprises keep on coming.

What made "Happy Valley" so addictive for me was the casting, the inventiveness of the story lines, the dialogue and its dead-on sense of place. The casting, from the leads to the secondary characters, is letter perfect, or as our English brethren would say, "spot on." As a case hardened streetwise cop, Lancashire has created an indelible character. Crossing her is a big mistake. When a young lowlife mocks the death of one of her comrades by singing "Another One Bites the Dust," he is soon singing another tune. While her administration of street justice would not pass scrutiny in the body camera era, it is a perfect "Dirty Harry" moment. By contrast, her interview of a terror-stricken teenage prostitute who has survived a vicious assault is a model of enlightened and compassionate policing. The other centerpiece of the series is Norton's Tommy Lee Royce as a cruel and manipulative psychopath. He is a repellently fascinating character who makes your skin crawl. You long to see him squashed like a bug.

A stellar cast deserves an equally stellar screenplay, and "Happy Valley" does not fail to deliver. The interweaving story lines, the backstories of the various characters, the tension you can sometimes cut with a knife and the snappy and inventive dialogue

make for compelling viewing. Some notable (spoiler-free) examples:

A blackmail plot by a jilted mistress who dreams up a fiendishly inventive electronic trap that insures the money keeps rolling in.

The slow tightening of the net around a killer as unexpected developments ever so slowly unravel his "perfect crime."

Cawood's dressing down of a young officer that will have unforeseen consequences.

The pale and mousy woman who falls under the Svengali spell of Tommy Lee Royce and mindlessly does his bidding.

No endless car chases, explosions, shootouts or false heroics burden "Happy Valley." It depends on old-fashioned story telling in the best sense of the word. Now streaming on Netflix, which mercifully has a closed caption option. English may be our mother tongue, but you will be hard pressed to cut through the regional dialect without captions.

*Bill Paterson is a retired attorney. He formerly practiced at Ferguson Case Orr Paterson, LLP.*

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*Continued from page 13*

school), my two primary bailiffs during my almost eighteen years on the bench, Deputy Donita Williamson (who saved my life in 2000 when I had a heart attack), Deputy (Sergeant Major) Al Longobardi, my secretary in Department 22, Sherry Jacoby, and my last Judicial Secretary, one of the deepest, kindest and most dedicated to service people I've ever known in my life, Lori Jacques. I miss all of them every day but still have the pleasure of lunch almost monthly with Robin and Lori, a highlight of each month. Damn, we had fun together while working hard to do the best work we possibly could for the people we served.



*Lauren Wood is a partner at the Law Offices of Schurmer and Wood, specializing in personal injury and wrongful death matters. She is a Ventura Barristers board member and secretary and is also involved in the J.H.B. American Inns of Court, Ventura Chapter.*

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## WLVC TENTH ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP DINNER

by *Kymerley Peck*

On September 19, Women Lawyers of Ventura County will commemorate a decade of empowering women in law and society by honoring two extraordinary members of Ventura County's legal community at the Tenth Annual Scholarship Dinner.

**Jill Friedman** of Myers, Widders, Gibson, Jones & Feingold, L.L.P. receives the Legacy Award, and **Charmaine Buehner** with County Counsel's Office at County of Ventura, receives the Holly Spevak Award for outstanding public service.

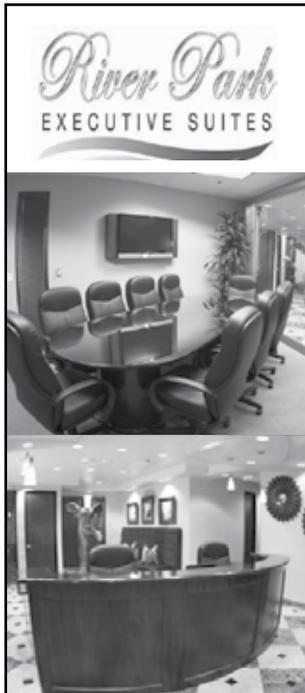
Friedman began her legal career in 1989 as a visiting attorney with the Ventura County District Attorney's Office. She has since served as a judge pro tem in Ventura County and Santa Barbara County courts, and was elected to the American Board of Trial Advocates, California Coast Chapter, in 2011. Over the past 27 years she has earned great respect from colleagues, and was named partner at Myers, Widders, Gibson, Jones & Feingold, L.L.P. in February of this year.

Buehner is a Senior Assistant County Counsel and is the current President of the Ventura County Bar Association. She has been an incredible force in growing Ventura County Legal Aid, an organization that works to ensure access to justice for community members who might not otherwise obtain it, by connecting volunteer attorneys with clients in need. Buehner's devotion to public service continuously inspires others.

Both Friedman and Buehner are past presidents of WLVC, making the Tenth Annual Scholarship Dinner a particularly proud celebration for WLVC.



*Kymerley Peck is an associate at Ferguson Case Orr Paterson, LLP in Ventura, where she handles estate planning, probate, and family law matters.*



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

by Steve Henderson, Executive Director, M.A., CAE



year term on the Board of Trustees of CBLS beginning October 2 after paying his dues for five years on the Estate Planning Law Advisory Commission...

Look at the cool new shirt I scored at the Law Day 5K managed and directed by **Joe Strohm** for the 33rd year. Joe was very capably assisted by **Bret Anderson, Steve Blum, Sasha Collins, John Cross, Alice Duran, Barbara Gutierrez, Tim Hughes, Heather Lindquist, Olivia Newton, Erin Schaden, Laura Viets, Kathi Whalen** and **Joe Wells**. Additionally the race was co-sponsored by our Port-a-Pottie Patrons)...



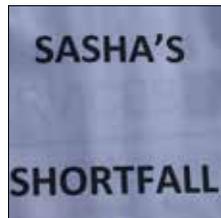
By now most of you have learned we have a new judge in our midst. That would be the **Hon. Michele Castillo**. She will remain assigned to Courtroom #34.

There is a terrific profile on her, penned by **Panda Kroll**, in the September 2014 issue of CITATIONS. [www.vcba.org](http://www.vcba.org). Judge Castillo is also a Master in the **Jerome H. Berenson** Inn of Court...

A Pennsylvania woman who was a law firm partner despite having no law license was sentenced to prison July 19. Kimberly Kitchen, a former estate-planning partner at BMZ Law, was given a two-to-five year term. She had practiced law at BMZ for ten years and was a former president of the Huntingdon County Bar Association. Her lawyer argued she provided good legal work and her clients were happy. The judge said, "Not only did she pretend to be a lawyer but she pretended to be the best and biggest around."... **James Jones** and



**Mark Lester** of Jones and Lester celebrated their fifteenth anniversary as a partnership on July 1. In addition, **Paul Huff** started with Jones & Lester on July 11. And lastly, Mark received notice from the California Board of Legal Specialization that he has been appointed to for a four-



The top-paid general counsel in the United States works for the Walt Disney Co. and made about \$7 million in total cash compensation last year. The lawyer is Alan Braverman. This story brought to you by ALM Legal Intelligence. #2 is Thomas Mason of Energy Transfer Equity (\$6.8), #3 is Gerson Zweifach of 21st Century Fox (\$6.3), #4 is Lauren Seeger of American Express (\$5.2) and #5 is Bruce Sewell of Apple, coming in at \$5,000,000... Schneiders & Associates, L.L.P. welcomes attorney **Georgianna Pennington Regnier** to the firm. She will join **Kathleen Smith** in the firm's litigation practice. Welcome her at 764.6370 or [grenier@rtslegal.com](mailto:grenier@rtslegal.com)...



The United States District Court, Central District of California is seeking representation on their Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference Lawyer Representatives. [CACD@cacd.uscourts.gov](mailto:CACD@cacd.uscourts.gov) and [natalie.longoria@cacd.uscourts.gov](mailto:natalie.longoria@cacd.uscourts.gov)...

Fine and compelling article about the current crisis at the State Bar in Dan Walter's piece in the Sacramento Bee entitled, "California State Bar overhaul caught up in cross-Capitol conflict." [www.sacbee.com](http://www.sacbee.com) for deets... Old friend and good guy **Rob Sawyer** is letting us know that of Aug. 1, he shall be happily retired. Rob spent many years with Norman Dowler, before embarking on a



career in Sacramento. He was an active member of our Mandatory Fee Arbitration Committee and a frequent patron of the bar association. He may now be reached at [sawyer.rob@icloud.com](mailto:sawyer.rob@icloud.com) or simply

(916) 402.6938...

On Thursday, September 15, the Women Lawyers of Ventura County will be hosting their 10th Annual Scholarship Dinner. The event will honor **Jill Friedman** with the Legacy Award Recipient and **Charmaine Buehner** with the **Holly Spevak** Award. Questions at [katie@venturaestatelegal.com](mailto:katie@venturaestatelegal.com) or 525.7104. That would be **Katie Becker**... Check-out the flyer enclosed...

*Steve Henderson has been the executive director and chief executive officer of the bar association and its affiliated organizations since Nov. 1990. Always an admirer of Sen. Ted Cruz, he may just stay home on Election Day, November 8. Finally, Bryce Harper and Noah Syndergaard will be grilling steaks at the Henderson household August 20. Steve may be reached at [steve@vcba.org](mailto:steve@vcba.org), FB, Twitter at [steve\\_hendo1](https://twitter.com/steve_hendo1), Instagram at [steve\\_hendo](https://www.instagram.com/steve_hendo), LinkedIn, or better yet, 650.7599.*

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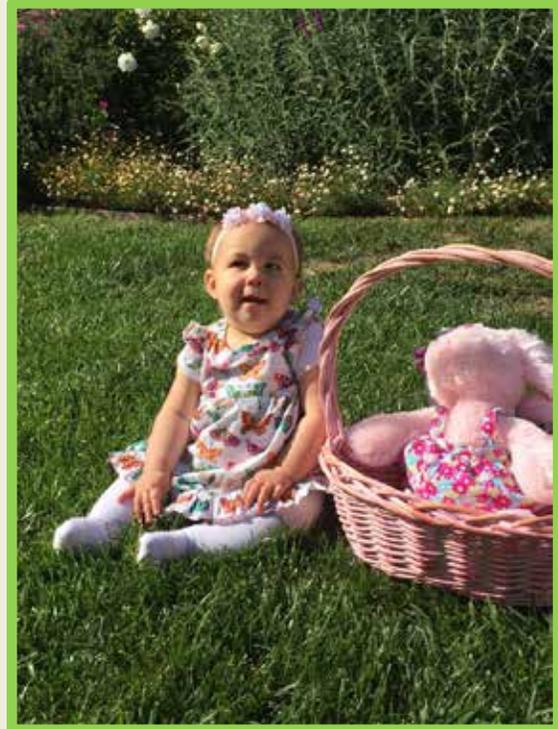
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