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*by Cheryl A. De Bari, Esq.*

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## PARTING WORDS FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

by Erik B. Feingold

When I took on the task of being the 2017 president of the Ventura County Bar Association, I admit I was a bit overwhelmed. How was I supposed to continue delivering exemplary services to my clients, meet my law partners' expectations for the year, be a good (e.g., non-grumpy) father and husband, contribute to my philanthropic commitments, and keep myself in physical shape and healthy, all the while leading the bar association and keeping Steve Henderson in line ;-)? Quite frankly, I started the year kind of depressed when I considered the weight of it all.

But I managed. I managed to deliver some great results for my clients this year and not drive the bar association into the ground. I managed to not be disbarred or expelled from my partnership, to not have my wife leave me (nor my kids resent me), and I can still keep up with my friends on my weekly mountain bike rides. How? Following the lead of mentors in my life and my career and making it a priority to keep myself in shape.

Throughout the year I looked around me and saw people in my professional circles who were way busier than I was, had been for years, and managed to keep it all together. Consistently. Take **Wendy Lascher** for example. In addition to being one of the top "go to" appellate lawyers in the state, she manages to be a great partner, grandmother, aspiring pilot and, for the past 15+ years, the editor of this publication on her second tour in that role (although rumor has it Wendy will soon pass the reins as editor-in-chief of this publication to **Cari Potts**, who will do a phenomenal job as well). Wendy does it all with grace and style, timely delivers Citations each month without fail, and I've yet to see her stressed out in the years I have known her.

Wendy is but a single example of the many people I have had the good fortune of interacting with over the past year who have successfully achieved an enviable work-life balance, while maintaining their sanity.

The other thing that got me through this past year was working some form of exercise into my daily routine. It was not until I started law school that I began working out regularly, and I soon realized its tremendous benefits on my stress levels. I thought, however, that once I got past the studying and competition of law school and the bar examination, the stressors in my life as a lawyer would pale in comparison. Wrong.

Little did I know that, as a litigator, the endless deadlines, anger control against adversaries (both real and perceived) and the ever-present possibility of rejection all add up and are what contributes to lawyers being so stressed out as a whole. Stress is a killer, and is the reason why lawyers have

a depression rate of 3.6 times that of any other profession. It's true.

Sure, there are other things you can do besides exercise to combat stress, such as meditate, avoid caffeine and alcohol, and turn off your smartphone. And doing those things definitely helps. But from my perspective, working exercise into my schedule – and regarding it as a daily requirement of my job, even if I need to work it in at the crack of dawn or after hours – helps the most with my stress levels. I look forward to seeing several regular lawyers and judges around town at my gym, and unless they are faking it, they really seem to be a calm, relaxed group as a whole.

*continued on page 5*

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### PARTING WORDS FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

*continued from page 3*

I strongly suggest that we all look around us and listen and learn from those whom we consider to be professional mentors. One of my mentors early in my career once told me that the practice of law is not a sprint but a marathon. It was good advice at the time, but unfortunately I really didn't realize what he meant until I was well into my career. Now it is my professional mantra, and I truly believe that by surrounding ourselves with good advisers, following their lead, and keeping ourselves balanced in mind and body we can all be better counselors to our clients, partners and bosses to our co-workers, and contributing members of both our families and society.

*Erik B. Feingold is a litigator with Myers, Widders, Gibson, Jones & Feingold in Ventura.*

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## A UNIQUE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY WITHIN THE COURT SYSTEM AND A DESIGNATED RECIPIENT OF *CY PRES* FUNDS

by Cheryl A. De Bari, Esq.

### What Is CASA Of Ventura County?

Court Appointed Special Advocates (“CASA”) of Ventura County recruits, screens, trains and supports community volunteers who become court-appointed advocates for children who have been removed from their homes due to abuse, neglect or abandonment. These children are victims of crime. (Pen. Code, § 272, subd. (a).) The CASA program is defined in the Welfare and Institutions Code, and CASA of Ventura County is under the jurisdiction of the Ventura County Superior Court. ([www.ventura.courts.ca.gov/volunteer](http://www.ventura.courts.ca.gov/volunteer).)

Trained volunteer advocates work one-on-one with foster children as they move through the Dependency Court system. Approximately twice a year, the advocate provides a report to the court with information critical to the child’s well-being and to protecting the child’s rights. Our advocates come from all professions and are provided 30 hours of training, but those in the legal profession come with specialized skills and knowledge and make great advocates!

### Designate CASA For *Cy Pres* Funds

Code of Civil Procedure section 384, subdivision (b) specifically identifies “child advocacy programs” as proper recipients of residual class action funds. CASA of Ventura County is a child advocacy program. Our advocates stand up for abused and neglected children in court and in our community.

The purpose of California’s *cy pres* statute is “to promote justice for all Californians.” (Code Civ. Proc., § 384, subd. (a).) By choosing CASA of Ventura County, class action parties are ensuring justice for our most vulnerable population: abused and neglected children. *Cy pres* monies will help provide a volunteer advocate for every child in Dependency Court here in our county.

### CASA Is Ventura County’s Primary Child Advocacy Program For Foster Children.

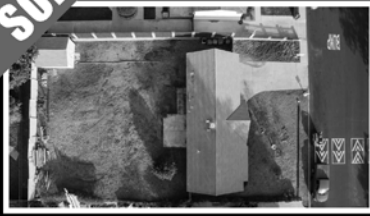
CASA is the only non-profit organization of its kind in Ventura County focused on child advocacy. CASA of Ventura County:

- Has been in Ventura County since 1985 and has served over 2,000 children;
- Has collaborated with the District Attorney’s Office on a successful Victims of Crime Act (“VOCA”) grant;
- Is participating in the creation of a proposed Ventura County Family Justice Center;
- Is working with the Delinquency Court and Public Defender’s Office to allow foster youth who move from Dependency to Delinquency to keep their advocate, continuing their needed support;
- Partners closely with the Human Services Agency to establish better service for the children and to work together to prepare for the new California Continuum of Care Reform; and
- Has created a CASA of Ventura County Child Sex Trafficking Program.

*continued on page 9*

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*continued from page 10*

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*Cheryl A. De Bari, Esq., is Board Chair of CASA of Ventura County.*

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# STANDING IN THE BACKGROUND — ATTORNEY COACHES FOR VENTURA COUNTY FOR HIGH SCHOOL MOCK TRIAL TEAMS

by Joseph O'Neill

For several nights every February, the courthouse shakes with the energy and excitement generated by hundreds of high school students participating in the Ventura County Mock Trial Competition. More than 35 schools are now involved and each has a Mock Trial team with a Faculty Advisor and over 25 students. High school students portray the difficult roles of prosecution, defense and pretrial attorneys as well as witnesses and court staff. Each team has four attorneys for prosecution and defense units, with several witnesses for each side that present an entire felony trial beginning with pretrial motions and ending with the verdict. This year it is a first degree murder case with a pretrial argument involving the Fourth Amendment.

The Mock Trial competition requires students to develop the courage, confidence and ability to perform at their highest level **while standing before an audience**. It also provides an introduction to the legal profession by volunteer attorney coaches who share their time and expertise with the entire team and offer the attention needed to encourage each individual student to achieve their absolute best. It's not an easy task for a volunteer, but it provides more satisfaction than ever expected. Several of these remarkable coaches took the time to share their experiences, ideas and suggestions.

(Full Disclosure: This author is proud to be a coach at Pacifica HS in Oxnard. My complimentary words and high praise are intended only for my associate coaches, and definitely not myself.)

Senior Deputy Public Defender **Donna Forry** has been the Mock Trial coach for several years at Ventura High School; she began when her daughter was a student. "The best experience is to watch the kids perform to their best ability and watch their confidence grow," says Forry. "I'm a coach because it's a good way to pay back the community; and I want to keep the program growing." Forry devotes a great deal of time to her Ventura HS team and shares her experience of many years as a trial attorney in serious felony

cases. These students are very fortunate to have Forry and her superb knowledge of criminal law setting an example as a confident and prepared trial attorney.

At Oxnard High School, the volunteer coach is attorney **Matt Bromund** of Ventura who proudly brags that over 110 students on past Mock Trial teams were encouraged by their personal experiences and legal training to continue further education with college or professional training. Bromund also remarks that "my own skill as a criminal defense, family law and immigration attorney has been helped tremendously by coaching these students as I have been challenged to find new and clearer ways to explain evidence issues and storytelling techniques." Bromund always points out that he is inspired to work with "sharp minds and raw talent." He is a great role model for his students.

When speaking of role models, there is nobody as impressive as the Mock Trial coach at Newbury Park High School, **Ayala Benefraim**, Senior Deputy Public Defender. Benefraim's team performs at a very high level because of her attention to important details like issue spotting, questioning styles and courtroom strategies. "I love working with the kids. Their energy and enthusiasm is contagious. They also help me in my own practice of law by forcing me to bring things back to basics. I am very proud of the work the Mock Trial team does. The students are committed, the teachers are amazing and the entire program is stellar," says Benefraim. Of importance to her students, Benefraim shows by her example that is possible to be a strong professional, and also conduct yourself with personality and confidence.

Everyone is impressed with **David Shaneyfelt** of the Alvarez Firm in Camarillo. Armed with an expertise in insurance coverage litigation, Shaneyfelt steps into the criminal arena and every year becomes the volunteer and only coach for St. Augustine Academy of Ventura. As a result, this quality team has a reputation for high performance and always produces at least one award winner. Shaneyfelt says, "I love watching

a shy, insecure teen become confident, articulate and passionate. Most students go through the same process and they achieve something that they never thought they were capable of achieving. They gain critical skills for life, whether they go into law or not." He adds that his highest compliment is when parents say to him, "I can't believe what you've done to my kid."

You can't help but be astonished by the performance record of the many students and teams that had the good fortune to have **Ron Bamieh** of the Law Offices of Bamieh & Erickson in Ventura as their Mock Trial coach. Since 1993, Bamieh has coached both the Buena High School and La Reina Mock Trial teams to a championship level. He now uses Skype and a monthly trip to be the coach of the Stanford University Mock Trial team.

Some of Bamieh's favorite memories as a Mock Trial coach include winning the World Championship in New York with La Reina in 2011, winning three consecutive California State high school championship titles, and making the final four in the Ventura Competition in his second year at Buena. But Bamieh identifies the greatest reward: "I've been coaching Mock Trial 20 years and have coached over 500 kids. It is a fact that 87 kids are now lawyers and another 30 or so are in law school. One of my former students is a lawyer in my firm and is a great lawyer. It makes me proud to think that her legal career started when she showed up to a meeting in her sophomore year." Without any doubt, the Ventura County Mock Trial MVP is Coach Bamieh.

My personal experience as the Pacifica HS Mock Trial coach has provided me insight into the diversity of Oxnard. Members of my team come from backgrounds and families much different than mine. A favorite coaching reward is discovering that a student gains the confidence to set and achieve new goals. Most of the Pacifica team continues on to college or professional training, but the most impressive are those students who work to be the first in the family to graduate high school and go to college. Being a

volunteer Mock Trial coach is the best thing I do because we make the leaders of tomorrow.

All teams and attorney coaches appreciate beyond words the professional help and time from our attorney friends who serve as volunteer judges for scrimmages as we prepare for the competition. They spend the time and effort to study the fact pattern, witness statements and legal authorities before a long evening of trial. They provide the necessary opportunity for all students to gain the experience and courage to be their absolute best in the competition. Our “Thank You” for their valuable help to **Kevin McVerry**, **William Haney**, Senior Deputy District Attorney **John Barrick**, **Paul Blatz**, Chief Deputy Public Defender **Rod Kodman**, Senior Deputy Public Defender **Randy Tucker**, Senior Deputy Public Defender **William Lenehan** and **Victor Salas**. (Only a partial list).

### *Final Requests from Attorney Coaches*

We ask everyone to join our “Give Us One Night” effort and volunteer to be a scorer at the competition. You know that legal knowledge, trial performance and sincere efforts are always more important than a verdict. The number of attorney scorers is unfortunately low. Just one night, please!


A friendly audience is always a bonus for our teams. If your group has an evening or weekend meeting and would be interested in watching our students perform the pretrial Fourth Amendment motion and a short intra-team scrimmage, contact the Bar office for information. (Important to note that school schedules will always control).

Every school in Ventura County could use **another** attorney coach. Most of

us did not volunteer; we were asked to participate and we did. For four months, the involvement requires personal time, weekend and evening practices and attention to all details, but the experience for the attorney coach is rewarding beyond description. You will personally understand why the future is so very bright when you work with such talented young adults.




*Joseph O'Neill practices criminal law in Oxnard.*



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*Editor's note: This is the second of a two-part article on the Cuban legal system, written by students from the Santa Barbara and Ventura Colleges of Law who traveled to Cuba during the summer of 2017. Part One of the article appeared in the November 2017 issue of CITATIONS.*

## GAY RIGHTS IN CUBA

*by Ambrosio Bigornia, Jr.*

Article 42 of the Cuban Constitution prohibits and punishes any form of discrimination that is harmful to human dignity. In 1948 Cuba was among the first countries to sign the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, declaring that every individual has the right to freedom of expression. Cuban legal professionals believe these constitutional guarantees are robust and secure for all Cubans. But I quickly learned what the Cuban gay community has known for a long time: Cuba does not really extend these rights to them.

Gays have had a long history of discrimination by the Cuban government. Fidel Castro viewed homosexuality as counterrevolutionary. In a 1965 interview, Castro said, "We would never come to believe that a homosexual could embody the condition and requirements of conduct that would enable us to consider him a true revolutionary, a true communist militant." In other words, a revolutionary man could not be gay.

Beginning in 1965, gays and other "undesirables" were placed into concentration camps known as Military Units to Aid Production (UMAPs). Forced labor was used to "reeducate" gays and signs at these camps read, "Work will make you men." After international criticism and protests of the UMAPs, the Cuban government closed them down.

Castro eventually accepted responsibility for the mistreatment of gays. In a 2010 interview, he acknowledged that past transgressions against gays while he was in power were a great injustice. But the damage had already been done. To this day, Cuba remains under the influence of, what one professor called, the "machismo of Latin America." Societal discrimination based on sexual orientation persists.

The 33rd Annual Report on Human Rights to Congress reported that Cuban police routinely sweep gay areas in Cuba and harass gay men by fining them or threatening them with prosecution for "social dangerousness." We spoke with a young Cuban gay man who gave us personal accounts of how the gay community is harassed by the police and how their public conduct is restricted. "We don't hold hands in front of the police," he told us. "They give us tickets and the fines are expensive."

Despite the history of oppression and restrictions on expression, the fight for gay rights seems to be headed in the right direction. Although societal discrimination persists, the law prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation in employment, housing, or access to education or health care. Mariela Castro Espín, President Raúl Castro's daughter, is an outspoken advocate for gay rights. She currently heads the National Center for Sexual Education and has called on the Communist Party to eliminate any discrimination that remains.

## CUBAN RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY LAW

*by Rogelio Tuazon*

Residential real estate in Cuba is in a state of rapid transition. The Urban Reform Law of 1960, created by the revolutionary government of Fidel Castro, ended the sale of residences and private rental housing. Cubans leaving the country automatically forfeited their homes to the state. In 2011, Raúl Castro published Law 288, aimed to expand the private sector, to cut government size and to reform agricultural and state enterprises. One of its provisions allows Cubans and legal residents to freely buy and sell homes subject to these conditions: 1) limits ownership to one residence and one vacation home; 2) legalizes housing swaps, if properly declared; 3) cash is the only acceptable method of payment; 4) the payment of asset transfer tax by buyer, and lump sum income tax by seller; and 5) includes a mechanism to update property titles by allowing people to register their homes in the municipal property registry, a pre-condition of transferring ownership.

The 2011 law relaxed excessive prohibitions affecting the personal lives of Cubans. The reform is a human rights advancement, as it expands economic freedom. It provides Cuban people a sense of pride through property ownership. However, the law is far from perfect. Foreign nationals are prohibited from owning real estate in Cuba. Cuban nationals and legal residents cannot own more than two residences.





Loans are only available for home repair and remodeling. The system has already been subject to fraud and exploitation. Buyers and sellers underreport the purchase price to drastically reduce taxes. Market knowledge is in its infancy. Home sales vary from one transaction to another due to lack of a real estate database, along with government's failure to make municipal records of home sales transactions public. The law needs amendments to establish accurate and predictive market values and behavior.

The idea of a freehold estate does not conform well within the political, economic and social context of a political culture based on Marxist notions of communal and state-owned property. The new law legalizing the sale and purchase of residential properties is a positive step towards democratic reform; but the law continues to lack policies allowing expansion of new real estate developments. The lack of mortgage financing severely impedes ownership expansion. Government red tape dampens speedy procedures for remodeling, rehabilitating and construction. Cuba must learn to integrate measures to stimulate and advance property ownership by establishing a hybrid economy, combining centralized politics with market-based economic policies.

## LAW OFFICE COLLECTIVES

*by Viktoria Morgan*

Before the revolution, the legal profession was highly regarded and well paid. After the revolution, the profession was deemed unnecessary for a few years, but later, recognizing their mistake, the Ministry of Justice established an avenue for legal representation for all. In 1965, the Bufetes Colectivos (Law Office Collectives) were formed.

Cuban attorneys are not allowed to practice law independently. All attorneys are required to be members of a collective or they work directly for the state. Several collectives are located throughout the country in all provinces and most municipalities; all are overseen by the National Organization of Collective Law Offices, or Organización Nacional de Bufetes Colectivos (ONBC). Each municipality's Bufete has one to 1000 members, based on population. Habana, for example, has more than 1000 attorney members.

These collectives are middlemen between clients and attorneys and are required to "coordinate" and "collaborate" with a counterpart state entity." Clients select an attorney from the Bufete in their community. People cannot represent themselves. "The network of collective law offices provides legal representation in all matters of law to natural and legal persons, foreigners and Cuban citizens residing abroad." The fee structure is on a sliding scale. If one cannot afford an attorney, even at the lowest fee schedule, then one is appointed at no cost. The cost paid by the client is not the pay received by the attorney.

Using the rare example of murder because it is the most expensive to defend, if a person is arrested and detained, family members contact their local Bufete and select an attorney or the Bufete Director assigns one to the case. Unless there is a conflict of interest, such as family relationship, the attorney cannot decline to take the case. The client's family pays the fee of 450 Cuban pesos to the collective. Upon completion, the attorney is paid 100 Cuban pesos. The better the attorney is, the more cases she or he is assigned. Attorneys have demanding caseloads and it is not uncommon for each attorney to manage 50 active cases at once.

The Cuban peso is currently worth about \$0.0037 US. So, for about \$17.00, a Cuban

citizen can hire an attorney for a murder defense. The attorney, however, is paid approximately 100 Cuban Pesos, or \$3.75 US. This is in addition to their minimum monthly stipend paid by the government to every citizen.

One of the perks of membership is the Lawyer's House outside of Habana. This educational training facility also serves as a resort with accommodations, pool and bar. Members bring their families for vacation one to two weeks per year - free of charge. The ONBC provides ongoing legal education and holds an annual conference that most of the attorneys attend.

## MUJERES CUBANAS

*by Joan Vignocchi*

Americans have a picture of the Cuban Revolution of Fidel Castro and his band of bearded men. This picture leaves out the women who made the Cuban Revolution possible. One of these women was Vilma Espín, a pivotal figure who convinced the CIA to support the revolution (at first). Vilma was married to Raúl Castro until her death in 2007. She is famous for starting the Federation of Cuban Women, an organization still working for gender equality today. Cubans are proud to tell you that Mariela Castro Espín, her daughter, inherited her activism for gay and transgender rights from her mother who fought for women's rights and gender equality.

Cuba leads the world in the number of women in government. Women serve in 49 percent of elected seats in the Cuban legislature, the National Assembly of People's Power (NAPP). Eighty percent of judges are women. Habana's ONBC Director, a woman, noted that 75 percent of the lawyers

*continued on page 18*

*continued from page 18*

in the Habana region are women, as are most of the law students at the University of Habana. Cuba is also the first country to elect a transgender woman.

Knowing these statistics was augmented by experiencing a culture that celebrates strong women. We met a panel of judges who serve in the Economic Crimes courtroom in the Habana Municipal and Provincial courts. They were all women, as were most of their staff. Two-thirds of judgeships are elected positions, so not only are women working in high-status careers, they are also elected by their neighbors to do it.

One of the judges we met was visibly pregnant. She will receive her full salary during her maternity leave for six weeks before birth and for twelve weeks after. Then, either the mother or the father is entitled to 60 percent of their salary for up to 40 more weeks. All education in Cuba is free, including preschool, so both parents can work.

Before the revolution, maternal deaths were mostly due to illegal abortions. In 1965,

when Cuba implemented free national health care, contraception and abortion became legal and free. Back alley abortions are still illegal. Women may only obtain abortions for free at the hospital. Cuban maternal mortality rates are impressively low for an impoverished country. Contraception is promoted via the National Center for Sex Education (CENESEX). Its primary goal is to reduce teen pregnancy, STIs and HIV transmission, and to promote “the development of a culture of sexuality that is full, pleasurable and responsible, as well as to promote the full exercise of sexual rights.” It also is the world’s pioneer in gender reassignment surgery, which is free under the national health care system for people who qualify.

Before the revolution, there was a very low literacy rate among the entire Cuban population and especially among women. After the revolution, Vilma Espín was a leader in getting women into the workplace, setting up child care centers, and spreading literacy. Within a few years, Cuba’s literacy rate jumped to 99 percent, where it has remained.

The top jobs in government and scientific institutions still mostly go to men, and the machismo element of the culture is still evident in the expectations that women hold down jobs and do the cooking and housework. Cubans we met were shocked to learn that American women on average earn less than men. All crime, including rape, is very low. Domestic violence is still an issue, as it is everywhere in the world. Domestic violence in Cuba is categorized along with any other assault or physical violence as a crime. There is no special legislation like the Violence Against Women Act, nor is there an attitude that the victim is to blame. Any offensive contact is treated the same no matter who the perpetrator is. Cuba is changing economically, but women’s rights and gender equality are so ingrained in Cuban society that the status of women will keep improving. Even machismo culture celebrates women for their hard work and contributions to the family and society, not just for their looks.

*Rogelio Tuazon earned his B.S. at the University of Santo Tomas, Philippines, and an M.B.A. at Regis University.*

*Ambrosio Bigornia, Jr. holds a B.S. degree from UCLA.*

*Viktoria Morgan was awarded B.A. degree from Cal. State Long Beach.*

*Joan Vignocchi earned her B.A. at UC Santa Barbara. All are 2018 JD candidates from the Santa Barbara and Ventura Colleges of Law.*

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## FROM THE PROBATE SECTION: GIVING NOTICE OF A CONSERVATEE'S DEATH

by Amber Rodriguez

Earlier this year, I shared the new Notice of Death of Conservatee (GC-399). This mandatory Judicial Council form became available for use this year. The simple form really only asks for the date of death. The problem is the conflict that has arisen with our Local Rules regarding a Notice of Death.

The Local Rules require that a certified death certificate be filed; the new mandatory form does not satisfy local reporting requirements. The Judicial Council form technically does not allow for any attachments. While this may seem to be a minor issue, it has already, in fact, caused confusion at the clerk's office and with parties trying to meet both requirements.

I spoke with Richard Padilla, the Court Program Supervisor for Oxnard. He has graciously agreed to the following solution: simply attach the certified Death Certificate to the mandatory Judicial Council form. Our office also adds to the form, under the section requesting the date of death, "A certified copy of the conservatee's death certificate is attached."

One of the best parts of working in Ventura County is how we work together toward resolutions that allow us to do a better job for our clients. Resolving this issue is an example of how our section actively works with the courts and the clerk's office in an effort to make the probate process smoother for all involved. If you have a concern or issue that you would like to have addressed, please let me know.



*Amber Rodriguez is the Chair of the Executive Committee for the Estate Planning and Probate section of the VCBA. Her practice focuses on probate and trust litigation and administration, estate planning and conservatorships. She can be reached at arodriguez@estateattorneycalifornia.com, or you can visit her website at estateattorneycalifornia.com.*

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## Barristers Corner

by *Rabiah A. Rahman and Brian Israel*

### Nominations for Board Positions for 2018 Are Still Open!

Are you or someone you know looking for a really cool way to get more involved with the Ventura County Bar Association? Consider joining the Board of the Ventura County Barristers!

A "Barrister" is any member in good standing of the Ventura County Bar Association who, on Jan. 1 of a given year, meets at least one of the following requirements: (i) is under the age 36 years; (ii) has been admitted to practice law in any jurisdiction for a period of seven years or fewer; **or** (iii) has been in practice in any jurisdiction for a total of seven years or fewer. Active law students who are members of the VCBA are considered "Student Barristers" and may serve on the Board as a Member at Large.

Do you know someone who would be a great addition to the Barristers Board? Would you like to be a member? Nominations are open for next year's Barristers Board, for the following positions: Member at Large, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice President and President. Nominations may be emailed to **Rabiah Rahman** at [Rabiah@strauslawyers.com](mailto:Rabiah@strauslawyers.com) (subject line: Barristers Nomination) and must be received by 11:59 p.m. on Dec. 31. In addition to

the name and contact information of the nominee, please also provide information showing the individual meets the Barristers' requirements. Nominees will be confirmed for eligibility.

The current slate for the 2018 Barristers Board of Directors is as follows:

President: **Lauren Sims**  
 Vice President: **Robyn Weiss**  
 Secretary: **Brian Israel**  
 Treasurer: **Rick Seigenfeld**  
 Immediate Past President:  
**Joshua Hopstone**

Member-at-Large:  
**Elyse Scofield**  
**Brier Miron Setlur**  
**Renee Dehesa**  
**Katie Becker**  
**Kevin Heimberg**

If there are no additional nominations, the Board as listed above will be seated on Jan. 1, 2018. Any questions, comments or requests for more information about the requirements to serve on the Barristers' Board, the time commitment and/or expectations, may be sent to Rabiah Rahman, [Rabiah@strauslawyers.com](mailto:Rabiah@strauslawyers.com).

## Classifieds

Edsall Law, a small, established Ventura County law firm is **seeking a midlevel associate** (minimum 3 years' experience) and a part time associate (20 hours per week). The candidates should have experience in estate planning, trust administration, trust litigation and general business for its growing practice. The firm is looking for candidates who can interact with clients and staff, perform top quality work and attend court hearings and mediation. The firm offers challenging work and an opportunity for career growth. Please send resumes to [Becky@EdsallLaw.com](mailto:Becky@EdsallLaw.com)

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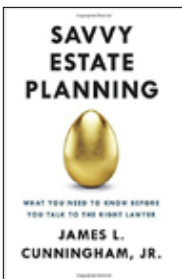
by Steve Henderson, M.A., CAE



**Paul W. Baelly** has been appointed as the new Ventura Superior Court Commissioner, announced Nov. 20. Paul has been with our local Public Defender's Office since 2006 and replaces Hon. **JoAnn Johnson**, who was elevated to the bench in November. Commissioner Baelly is the first Korean-American to serve on the bench. Prior to his stint in our PD's office,



he served in the Kern County PD's office. Undergrad of Cal and earned his law degree from the University of San Diego School of Law...



**Jim Cunningham** has authored a new book, "Savvy Estate Planning: What You Need to Know Before You Talk to the Right Lawyer." You may locate it on Amazon for \$0.99 on Kindle or \$24.99 hardcover. You can write a review,

too...The *Los Angeles Times* is presenting ONE DAY UNIVERSITY, The Supreme Court – What's Next? An Insider's View. Scheduled for Dec. 7 beginning at 7:00 p.m. inside the Wilshire Ebell Theatre in downtown LA. Law Professor Jeffrey Rosen is the keynote speaker and you may register at [onedayu.com](http://onedayu.com) or call 800.300.3438...



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You've probably all heard this anecdote before, but it is worth telling again. Scott E. Entsminger of Mansfield, Ohio, died in 2013. A lifelong Cleveland Browns fan and season ticket holder, he respectfully asked for six Cleveland Browns pall bearers so they could let him down one more time... Assistant Public Defender **Claudia Bautista** is circulating information and job descriptions for Deputy Public Defender I/II/III openings with a very short time frame to respond. [Claudia.bautista@ventura.org](mailto:Claudia.bautista@ventura.org).

**YEAR-END KUDOS** - To **Sandra Rubio**, **Rosie Cisneros** and **Cesar Libanati** for having me look efficient and inspiring. To the VCBA Executive Committee (**Feingold**, **Kirwin**, **Goldwater** and

**Buehner**) for keeping me out of hot water. To **Wendy Lascher**, **Cari Ann Potts** and the Editorial Board for sharing their talents by making CITATIONS the award winning periodical it has become. To our Barristers Section (**Hopstone**, **Rahman**, **Sims** and **Israel**) for being rowdy and innovative. To **Amber Rodriguez** and the Estate Planning and Probate Section Board for being our busiest and most attended luncheons. To the Ventura County Legal Aid, Inc. Board of Directors for continuing to promote "The Best Thing We Do." To **David Shain**, **Bart Bleuel**, **Kendall VanConas**, **Laura Bartels**, **Joe Strohman**, **Dennis LaRochelle** and **Kevin Staker** for counseling services. To **Amy Kiesewetter** for single-handedly raising \$11,000. To my new bosses, **Katie Clunen**, **Darren Goodman**, **Louis Kreuzer**, **Bert Partida** and **Kymberley Peck**. To Justices and Judges **Tangeman**, **Gilbert**, **Back**, **Borrell**, **Bysse**, **Cody**, **Kellegrew**, **McGee**, **Murphy**, **Reiser**, **Smiley**, **Walsh**, **Wright**, **Young**, **Johnson** and **Castillo** for sharing a meal with me and being involved with our association and affiliated organizations.

*Steve Henderson has been the executive director and chief executive officer of the bar association and its affiliated organizations since Nov. 1990. He will be spending the holidays overseas, including Corsica and Madrid attempting to bring soccer to these fine countries. Henderson may be reached at [steve@vcba.org](mailto:steve@vcba.org), FB, LinkedIn, Twitter at [steve\\_hendo](https://twitter.com/steve_hendo), or better yet, 650.7599.*

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