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SEPTEMBER - TWO THOUSAND NINETEEN

A portrait of Justice John Paul Stevens, an elderly man with white hair, wearing a dark blue judicial robe and a patterned bow tie. He is seated in a dark leather chair in a courtroom setting with wood paneling and a potted plant in the background.

## JUSTICE JOHN PAUL STEVENS AND BABE RUTH

4/20/1920 – 7/16/2019

*by William Grewe*

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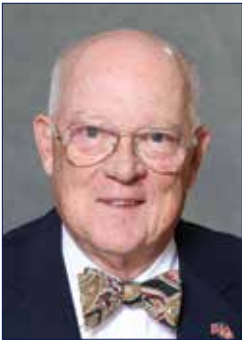


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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Douglas K. Goldwater

Admittedly, when I was originally presented with the opportunity to serve as Ventura County Bar Association's president, I had only one reservation. Over the span of my career, I picked up *CITATIONS* every month and marveled at how the president was able to come up with material to fill a page of each issue. This, certainly, was not something that I could do. So, on that fateful day when **Erik Feingold** casually inquired about whether I wanted to serve on the Executive Committee and, in 2019, as president, the first thought that crossed my mind was – will I have to write those monthly articles for *CITATIONS*?

Having now written eight President's Messages, I can honestly say that it was more daunting of a task in concept than it has turned out to be in reality. I was able to churn out those first eight articles with relative ease. After completing the last article, however, I began experiencing something of a "writer's block." In an effort to fight through the block, I began asking some prior VCBA presidents for suggestions on future topics about which I could write.

While some gave me legal-related topics that I could tackle, one former president provided some interesting advice. "Believe it or not," he said, "You should write about yourself, like you did in your first article." Write about *me*? How would that be interesting to anybody? I am still not quite sure, but, heck, I'll give it a shot. If there are letters to the editor in future issues grumbling about how dull or self-absorbed this month's message is, then we can all just blame the advice-giver.

Fittingly, however, the advice was given to me in advance of the drafting of the President's Message for September – my birthday month. This year's birthday is one of those milestone birthdays. While it is certainly a birthday that I will celebrate, it is also one that will be somewhat bittersweet. This particular milestone birthday was the

final milestone birthday that my father got to experience. Following this milestone birthday, he only got to celebrate three more birthdays. To some extent, I believe that it is natural for individuals to use their parents' lifespans as something of a gauge. With that in mind, I have been thinking – what should I do differently if, like my father, I only have three more birthdays after this year?

Although this has been on my mind more recently because of the impending milestone birthday, candidly, it's a nagging thought that has been with me for several years now. For example, many of you who know me witnessed a physical transformation a few years back. While I wish I could say that the transformation was the sudden growth of a full head of hair, I am referring to my loss of approximately 35 pounds. I was never a runner in my youth unless I was chasing a soccer ball in short bursts. Realizing that I had gotten quite out of shape, and with the thought of my father's lifespan in the back of mind, I started getting on the treadmill each morning. I started with just trying to run a mile at a reasonable pace, then built on that to two miles. That progressed

until I broke my treadmill and figured that I should start running outside. Feeling healthier became addictive and I just kept adding miles to the run and, soon, other activities to the regimen.

As attorneys, we endure tremendous stress and devote so much of our time and ourselves to our clients and career. As a result, we tend to neglect ourselves by not focusing on our own health and not spending enough time with our loved ones. While consistently being successful is, indeed, something to strive for, we are not promised tomorrow. When faced with the question "What if I only have three more birthdays left?" I plan to spend more time with my family and close friends, and to continue to exercise regularly (in hopes of extending well beyond those three birthdays). What will you do to get the fullest out of your life?

*Douglas K. Goldwater is a partner at Ferguson Case Orr Paterson, LLP. His practice focuses on family law. He can be reached at (805) 659-6800 or at [dgoldwater@fscoplau.com](mailto:dgoldwater@fscoplau.com).*

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# THINKING THINGS OVER - GREAT TRIAL MOMENTS

by Lindsay F. Nielson

After 45 years of doing lawyer stuff, there are certain moments that stand out in such a long career here in Ventura County. Some things in all of the confusion and flow of a trial have stuck in my mind (at least what is left of it). The following scenarios actually happened and are worthy of repeating, I hope.

## Trial Scene #1: “Bob, how’s Mary?”

When I started practice in 1975, we had Municipal Courts. These courts were located throughout the County. My first trial ever was in the Camarillo Municipal court and involved a contract dispute. I was a freshly-minted young lawyer. I wrote an eight-page trial brief. I was pumped and primed even though I had no idea where to sit. The kindly judge took the bench and said, “Counsel, let’s go into chambers to discuss this matter.” I had no idea what was to come. I just knew I was going to be the next Clarence Darrow.

When we got into chambers, I was nervous. Then it happened. The judge turned to my worthy opponent and said “Bob, how’s Mary doing?” Holy cow! The judge knew my opponent personally and had no idea who the heck I was. I was crushed and can’t remember much of anything after that. Heck, I don’t even remember if I won the case. But it taught me a valuable lesson. Judges are humans too.

## Trial Scene #2: “I want that bitch back.”

Judge **Harry Walsh** appointed me as a receiver to sell a dog breeding business. The partners couldn’t get along. The puppies were white Golden Retrievers and sold for \$2,500 each! One partner bought out the other one in a private auction that I conducted. We made a list of assets to be transferred. One valuable breeding dog was Lulu Belle. When the sale was concluded, the selling partner failed to turn Lulu Belle over to the buyer. This was brought to the attention of Judge Walsh with the seller in the court on a Monday. The judge indicated that Lulu Belle was to be turned over to me to be delivered to the buyer by Friday. He also suggested the selling partner bring his toothbrush with him on Friday, just in case. When Friday arrived, Judge Walsh asked me what I had to report. Well, I had not

seen hide nor hair of Lulu Belle. I reported, “Your Honor, I have waited 35 years to say this. I want that bitch back!” It turns out that the seller had given Lulu Belle to his daughter in San Francisco. The seller spent that weekend as a guest of the County and agreed to pay \$5,000 for Lulu Belle. I doubt those words have ever been spoken in court since, at least not in that context.

## Trial Scene #3: “I know where the suppository was located.”

I was defending the seller of a home in Fillmore against a fraud claim. The buyer testified that he was unaware there had been a small oil refinery behind the property’s backyard fence near Pole Creek even though it had been designated an EPA cleanup site and was well publicized in all of the newspapers. The EPA filed all of its investigations and reports at the Fillmore City Hall.

During examination, I asked the buyer, “Were you aware that Fillmore City Hall was the repository for all of the reports on the cleanup?” The witness said, “I was aware that the suppository was at the city hall...”

The proceeding came to halt as the court reporter burst out laughing. I told the witness that while I realize that many people feel that they get a suppository at city hall, I think the word he was looking for was “repository.” I can’t remember how it came out in the end.

## Trial Scene #4: “Please pick up your teeth and put them back in your mouth.”

It was a typical Wednesday in Judge **Roger Lund**’s conservatorship calendar. There were dozens of lawyers and many conservatees present. One of the cases involved the Public Defender’s office and attorneys for the family. The conservatee sat quietly at the counsel table while everyone was making their case. When the attorneys finally went quiet, Judge Lund asked the conservatee how things were going. She told the judge they were going pretty well. She had gone to the eye doctor and she had gone to a dentist who gave her new dentures, which she promptly removed from her mouth to proudly display for the judge’s admiration. He commented they looked very nice while she put them on the counsel table. After making his ruling, the judge told the conservatee, “Mrs. Smith, I am glad things are going well for you. Please remember to pick up your teeth and put them back in your mouth.”

Never a dull day in Department J-6.



*Lindsay F. Nielson is a lawyer and receiver. You can contact him at [nielsonlaw@aol.com](mailto:nielsonlaw@aol.com)*

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# JUSTICE JOHN PAUL STEVENS AND BABE RUTH

4/20/1920 – 7/16/2019

by William Grewe

## October 1, 1932, Wrigley Field, Chicago, Illinois. World Series. Game 3. Yankees v. Cubs.

Chief Justice of the United States Charles Evans Hughes was not in attendance. Civil War veteran and newly-retired Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., was absent. It mattered not. On this autumn Saturday afternoon, a crowd of over 49,000 amateur judges including eleven-year-old John Paul Stevens were on hand to watch the Cubs and Yankees square off.

A clever presidential candidate finagled the honor of throwing out the first ball, but the crowd, including young Stevens, paid him little mind. Some 90 years later, Stevens would not recall that FDR had made the honorary toss. This was no time for politics. Stevens and the rest of the overflow crowd had come to see someone who mattered. *The Babe*. Babe Ruth.

Stevens, seated behind the third base home dugout with a bag of peanuts in hand, took it all in. Already the possessor of a sharp and critical mind – *Stevens, as a child, with the barrel of an intruder's gun pointed at him, was the only one in his family calm enough to recall and turn the combination to his father's safe* – he soaked up information, listened intently and could recall what you had said even when you could not.

Stevens was rooting for his hometown Cubs but, like the others, he had come to see The Babe. No television. No inter-league play. No matter. This was the World Series and the greatest ballplayer who ever lived was in Chicago.

As Stevens watched, The Babe was greeted with a shower of lemons as he walked along the foul line toward the visitors' dugout. The Babe slapped them away like pesky flies. This was Chicago, no honor given and no offense taken. But The Babe had something on his mind. While Hughes and Holmes and others like them knew of justice recorded in big books, Ruth knew of another kind. The kind learned in orphanages: the first watched out for

the last; and the oldest looked after the youngest.

Like the biggest kid among many, The Babe had taken up the cause of Cubs shortstop Mark Koenig. Koenig, after playing on the great Yankees teams of the 1920s, was, in 1932, playing independent league ball on the West Coast when, unexpectedly, the Cubs starting shortstop was shot through the hand by a showgirl. His season over, the Cubs were desperate. A traveler said he had seen Koenig and thought he might have some hits left in his bat. He did.

Koenig took a train to Chicago and came out swinging. He hit .360 over the last quarter of the season, lifting the Cubs over the hump and into the World Series.

Despite saving their season, the Cubs voted Koenig only a half-share of the World Series bonus money.

Stevens recalled that, between innings, The Babe was jawing with Cubs players, questioning their character in short-changing Koenig. Koenig and others recalled it, too. In some ways, it was surprising. It was unexpected advocacy at its best. Ruth and Koenig were not friends. They had played one entire season as teammates without ever speaking. Their lockers were purposely on opposite ends of the room. Koenig and Ruth had come to blows when The Babe questioned Koenig's play. No matter. The Babe stood for him. He was a Yankee regardless of his uniform.

Stevens, in 2019, recalled the left-handed Ruth stepping to the plate in the fifth inning. Someone shouted something from the Cubs dugout which Stevens could not make out but assumed regarded the Koenig matter. Ruth stared back. Silently, Ruth raised his bat and pointed it at the centerfield scoreboard, Stevens recalled. The first pitch was delivered. Ruth swung. The ball flew deep toward centerfield, coming to rest beyond the scoreboard.

At a conference in Ohio, when asked to tell the story of that day, Stevens recited it

as told in this article. A bankruptcy judge, perhaps gently letting Justice Stevens know that his memory might have waned with age, approached Stevens after his talk and said that his grandfather was at that game, too. While seated in the left field bleachers, the homerun ball had landed near his grandfather. Stevens did not argue with the bankruptcy judge, nor did he include his name in his autobiography.

When Stevens returned to Washington, just to make sure, he checked the framed box score hanging on his wall. Yes, it confirmed that his memory was as sharp as ever. The Babe had homered twice in Game 3, once to center and once to left.

Two and a half years after the "called shot," The Babe's career was finished. On the road, between innings, knowing that he was but a shadow of his old self, rather than return to the visiting dugout after the third out, The Babe quietly disappeared through an opening in the centerfield fence never to take the field again.

Stevens would go on to academic success, memorable service in World War II, an appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court by President Gerald R. Ford in 1975, and an active life after leaving the bench in June 2010. He died this summer at age 99, after serving on the Supreme Court longer than any other Justice. He was the last World War II veteran to wear the robe at 1 First Street NE.

Koenig, who lived into the 1990s, was the last surviving member of the '27 Yankees, thought by many to be the greatest team of all time. To the end, like Stevens, Koenig was clear-headed and blessed with great recall. He was a touchstone. A keeper of Yankees history and the greatness of The Babe.



*William Grewe is an attorney with Rose, Klein & Marias.*



# DO BILLABLE HOURS HURT?

by Wendy C. Lascher

In a letter to *Law.com* published July 31, Denton's partner Jana Barbe argues that the mental health crisis in the legal profession is caused by "our business models, our compensation systems and the almighty billable hour." She wonders, "What would happen if we de-emphasized the billable hour or did away with it completely, sizing our fees to projects undertaken and rewarding efficiency in performance? What would happen if we fostered a culture where vacations were mandatory and professionals were instructed not to check email while out of the office?"

Fortunately, not all law firms "cling to" hourly billing and time sheets to the extent of "to work seven days a week, to miss family events, to forgo vacations, to miss needed doctor's appointments," and "feel[ing] guilty taking a Saturday or Sunday off," let alone a vacation. Certainly my firm (22 partners, seven associates, four retired partners of counsel) does not. The parking lot is usually close to empty on weekends, people leave early to coach youth sports and watch school performances, they go to medical appointments, and they go home at night. We have comfortable facilities and we don't take ourselves too seriously.

To the extent that billable hours pressure lawyers, it may be because lawyers become slaves to overhead and competition. I have no way to prove it, but sheer law firm size may be partly at fault; certainly size can breed excessive infrastructure. Social competitiveness likely maximizes overhead: is our building grand enough, our lobby elegant enough, our computers the latest and greatest, our associates the highest-paid, our website the coolest? Do I make as much money as my partners?

What about the work itself? At some point, people burn out because they get tired of putting in so much effort to protect the wealth of a few. If the work itself is not meaningful, the number of hours one devotes to it likely will seem excessive regardless of the billing model. Even when the subject matter is meaningful, or perhaps

especially when it's important, litigation in particular is stressful because the outcome is so often beyond the lawyer's control: witnesses, opposing parties and counsel, judges, and even one's own client, can be unpredictable.

And there is also the type-A lawyer personality. Many in the profession are competitive by nature. They fought their way to the top of the high school class, to the best college, to the top ten law schools, to a clerkship, because they did not know that B students could have meaningful lives. The bigger and higher-powered the law firm, the more such people are clumped together with other likewise-competitive souls. It's hard to see what's missing from your life until it's too late if your compatriots are missing out on the same things.

My partner John Hribar (who worked as an engineer for a defense contractor for several years between graduate school and law school) notes that an unwavering path to the top of the legal heap eliminates the perspective one gains from working at another job before becoming a lawyer. The grass outside the legal profession may seem a lot greener if you haven't previously

supported yourself by mowing lawns or selling fertilizer. I did not have a job outside the profession before I began practicing law, but I gained my own understanding that there's more to life than billable hours by raising children in and around the office.

There are times I've regretted not being at the top of the class, not even knowing when I was in law school that it could have been valuable to be on law review or try for a clerkship. I might have tried for one or both if anyone had told me in 1970-1973 (the years I was in law school) of the advantages. I might have found a job in a big city rather than with an eccentric appellate lawyer in a small town. Now, however, I see the benefits of not having had access to the big firm path. That is what I think allowed me to have a life as well as a profession.



*Wendy Lascher is a partner at Ferguson Case Orr Paterson, LLP in Ventura, and a California State Bar certified specialist in appellate law. She is co-editor of CITATIONS.*



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## Legacy Museum and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice Opens in Alabama

by David L. Shain



*The Lynching Memorial*

My wife, Paula, and I recently returned from a memorable trip to the South, concluding in Alabama. As a child witnessing the horrors associated with the civil rights movement, I never expected to set foot in that state, the location of some of the worst atrocities. However, friends suggested that we meet up in Montgomery, the location of the new Legacy Museum and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, aka the “lynching memorial.”

Both Museums were opened in 2018 by the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) and its widely acclaimed founder and executive director, attorney Bryan Stevenson. Over the past 30 years, the EJI has won major legal challenges eliminating excessive and unfair sentencing, exonerating innocent death row prisoners,

confronting abuse of the incarcerated and mentally ill and aiding children prosecuted as adults. Stevenson has argued numerous cases before the U.S. Supreme Court. His work with the EJI is set forth movingly in his best-selling book, “Just Mercy.”

The Legacy Museum is aptly named given its thesis that the reverberations of slavery continue to this day. The Museum is located on the site of a warehouse where African Americans were enslaved, a block from the train station and the Alabama River, both of which served to transport human beings to be sold as property. Quite simply, the Museum is devastating in its impact. Using interactive media and creative exhibits, the horrors of the slave trade and all its ramifications are depicted in detail. Of particular impact is the

presentation of enslaved persons awaiting sale in dungeons, cells and warehouses, with full knowledge that they would be soon be permanently separated from family and loved ones. As mere property, they were subject to whippings and mutilation, deprivation and sexual abuse, all at the whim of their masters. Slavery was defended by legal, political, religious and scientific theories contrived to define black people as less human than whites, thus, according to its proponents, rendering the institution permissible and necessary.

The Museum also traces the post-slavery era, beginning with Reconstruction, when newly freed African Americans hoped for political and economic recovery. This hope was abruptly brought to conclusion by end of Reconstruction in 1877, which returned control of state governments to former Confederates. The narrative of racial inferiority was restored, ushering in an era of racial terror. While the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and the Fourteenth Amendment theoretically provided African Americans full citizenship and equal rights, the federal government gave lip service to enforcement and ultimately withdrew federal troops from the South. Blacks in the South were forced into sharecropping on white-owned land, trapped into a cycle of debt and poverty that lasted for generations.

In the eight decades between the end of the Civil War and the end of World War II, thousands of blacks were lynched, primarily in the South but also in every state in the Union. Lynching is unimaginable – horrifyingly depicted both in the Museum and the National Memorial. (The National Memorial contains hanging stones with known victims’ names and places of the murders.) More than 4,000 men, women and children were killed by white mobs in public acts of violence meant to terrorize black communities. Almost any action, such as speaking to a white woman or failing to step onto the curb when a white person passed, could result in death.

One haunting episode in particular remains with me. John Hartfield was lynched in Mississippi on June 26, 1919. He was hanged from a tree, his body riddled with

bullets, and burned. 10,000 white men, women and children traveled to witness the spectacle and postcards of the event were sold to memorialize the event. Almost incredibly, the morning newspaper noted that “officers have agreed to turn him over to the people at 4 o’clock this afternoon when it is expected he will be burned.” Mississippi’s white supremacist governor, Theodore G. Bilbo, declared himself powerless to prevent the inevitable lynching. I do not consider myself to be a naïve person, but I must say that, as an attorney and believer in the rule of law, I found this to be startling. This was a planned event, not a spontaneous mob. The chief executive of the state seemed not the least bit troubled by this extra-judicial murder.

Those African Americans lucky to survive were subject to Jim Crow laws, a racial caste system that restricted rights, movement and opportunity, manifesting itself in separate but *unequal* facilities, in all facets of life. *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 outlawed public school segregation but resulted in a major backlash. The Ku Klux Klan terrorized many, and committed numerous acts of violence. Many southern localities passed laws to evade federal orders to integrate. For example, in Montgomery,

blacks and whites were prohibited from playing cards together. In Birmingham, white nurses were prohibited from treating black male patients. There were separate water fountains and restrooms; black people could not sit with whites in movie theaters; and most hotels and restaurants were off limits. The civil rights movement spawned legal victories for desegregation, many of which were met with corresponding violent opposition.

Museum exhibits demonstrate that, while the civil rights movement addressed discrimination in voting, education, employment, housing, and public accommodation, the area of criminal justice was largely untouched. In the late ‘60s, politicians seized on “law and order” as a winning campaign, using thinly veiled racial appeals to win elections. President Nixon’s war on drugs in 1971 has resulted in exponential growth of America’s prison population. Most imprisoned persons are black and the impact of race on the likelihood of receiving the death penalty is well-documented. A vicious cycle is perpetuated. A quote in the Museum from John Erlichman, assistant to President

Nixon, following his release from prison for Watergate convictions, is telling:

We knew we couldn’t make it illegal to be either against the (Vietnam) war or black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities. We could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings, and vilify them night after night on the evening news. Did we know we were lying about the drugs? Of course we did.

We came away from this visit with a deep and visceral appreciation of the horrors of enslavement, and a renewed understanding of its present-day reverberations. A visit to the Museums, though painful, is important. Read “Just Mercy.” It will stay with you.



*David L. Shain is of counsel to Ferguson Case Orr Paterson, LLP. He is a past editor of CITATIONS.*

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Ferguson Case Orr Paterson, LLP's newest associate is **Nazanin Mani**. Mani practices primarily in family law. She received her J.D. from Loyola Law School in 2015. During law school, Mani worked as an extern at the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of California, Criminal Division. She is a member of the volunteer panel at the Harriet Buhai Center for Family Law, where she takes on pro bono family law cases.



### Lascher Tracker:

The following automatic reply was recently sent from **Wendy Lascher's** email account:

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I will be traveling in the Midwest July 17-25 or 26. I will check emails and respond as soon as feasible. Tail number is N8626U if anyone wants to track us on FlightAware.com or FlightRadar24.com

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# HONORING THE ORIGIN

by Panda Kroll

Ventura County's chapter of the American Inns of Court celebrates its Silver Anniversary this year. Its creation was marked by Georgetown Professor Sherman Cohn's May 24, 1994 presentation for the Ventura County Trial Lawyers Association, "How to Create an American Inn of Court."

**Georgianna Regnier** partnered with then-Presiding Ventura Superior Court Judge **Richard Aldrich** and the project took off. The Judge was elected as the chapter's first president, with **Robert Harris** as Counselor and Georgianna Regnier as Secretary-Treasurer. The membership was divided into "pupillage teams" whose members were called Masters, Barristers and Pupils, depending on experience. Each team was tasked with conducting one program for the Inn each year.

But Judge Aldrich was elevated to the Court of Appeal before his term began. The lacuna was adroitly filled by Judge **Edwin Osborn**, who was succeeded as president the following year by Judge **Charles Campbell**, and then by **Dick Regnier**.

Long-time member **Jim Armstrong's** pupillage team presented the first program, featuring Judge **Thomas Hutchins**, **Ben Engle**, future Judge **Fred Bysshe**, **Michael Morrow**, **Tina Rasnow**, **Kenneth Henjum**, **Brian O'Connor**, **Clifton Reed**, and **Glenn Kelble**. It covered the cross-examination of a defendant's medical expert. Armstrong commented that "... *the spirit of the American Inns of Court mandates that all of us become 'blood brothers and sisters.'* ... *'The Inns of Court is primarily set up in order that attorneys, whether experienced or inexperienced, young or old, male or female, plaintiffs or defendant's attorneys, all get together, bury any hatchets, and essentially 'show and tell.'* We are now all assembled so we can benefit from one another's accomplishments or errors. The idea is that we all learn and become better professionals and attorneys."



In June of 1994, Armstrong had traveled to D.C., to represent Ventura County at the Inns annual meeting. The late former U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno handed Armstrong the Ventura chapter's charter (pictured, with Professor Cohn). Armstrong has since attended about a dozen of the annual meetings at various U.S. cities.

Another long-time member, Judge **David Long**, recalls that the IOC board of directors "agreed that we would all be on a first name basis for the purposes of the IOC. This was to promote collegiality as the board believed that within the Inn, we were all colleagues. It worked and we were successful."

A few years later, at **Roger Myers'** suggestion, Judge Long took the chapter's helm, hand-picking a board that included Myers, Dick Regnier, **Tom Hinkle** and **Jim McGahan**. After McGahan passed away in 2001, the Masters established the James F. McGahan Memorial Excellence Award. Names of the winning team members are engraved on a perpetual plaque that is displayed in Judge **Harry Walsh's** chambers.

On the decision to name the chapter after Judge **Jerome H. Berenson**, Judge Long reflected, "Judge Berenson served as a Ventura County Superior Court judge for over two decades, and as the court's presiding judge for fourteen consecutive years, leading to him being referred to, in social settings, even where he was present, as 'King Jerome the First.' He was charmingly amused by that. He was a legendary jurist in the community. If Hollywood wanted to cast a judge in a film, he had the look, the bearing, the voice, and was the epitome of what our profession strives to be." Judge Berenson was a past member of the California Judicial Council, a recipient of the **Ben Nordman** Award for community service, a former city attorney for Port Hueneme, and former president of the VCBA. The board believed that his endorsement would appeal to a cross-section of attorneys who would serve as mentors to those newer to the profession.

Memorable skits over the years reflected Judge Long's and Dick Regnier's fondness for costumes and historical reenactment of famous trials. Judge Walsh described a particularly haunting scene: A soldier was portrayed writing a letter in his jail cell by candlelight, in a presentation on the Boston

Massacre trials. Dick played the forlorn Brit's counsel, John Adams.

Recent IOC presentations tend to be lighter in tone, but they still provide continuing legal education credit in ethics, bias and competence, such as presentations on the regulation of drones (with an actual drone flight!), ethics of a lawyer's cannabis use (with an actual hookah!), and minefields in responding to negative Yelp reviews (with an actual Internet troll!). At the coming meeting on Sept. 12 (spoiler alert), you'll learn about how self-defense arguments are likely to play out in the wake of the alleged "violent brawl at Toontown" that took place in Disneyland just this past July.



Dear CITATIONS,

The American Inns of Court program is very dear to my heart. I became inspired to start the Ventura chapter when I visited two Inns of Court in London during a trip several years ago. I spent the morning at the Royal Courts of Justice (which are England's appellate courts) and at lunchtime my wife and I had lunch at Gray's Inn. We then were invited to dinner at Lincoln's Inn, the oldest Inn of Court in the world. I was so inspired that I contacted Professor Sherman Cohn of the Georgetown University Law Center for his ideas. Professor Cohn was very involved in forming new chapters nationwide. I then took his ideas and used them as a road map to found the Ventura Inn of Court. Contrary to popular opinion, the Inns of Court are not just for lawyers but also for judges and law students. It serves as a mentoring program for law students who think they may want a career in court. The founding principles of the Ventura Inn of Court were to promote professionalism, improve skills and to stress legal ethics and civility between and among lawyers and between lawyers and judges. The original concept was to include



members of the Ventura bench in the Inn. I am very proud that an idea that came to me in London so many years ago has blossomed into a successful and long-lasting Inn of Court in Ventura. Please extend my best regards to the members of the Ventura Inn.



With Warm Regards,  
Justice Richard D.  
Aldrich (Ret.)

Dear *CITATIONS*,

The inspiration for a Ventura Chapter of the Inns of Court was providential. It was the summer of 1992. I signed up to join other members of the California bar in an exchange with our UK colleagues, the English Barristers, called “A Week in Legal London.” We interacted with Queen’s Counsel and members of the British Courts at exceptional historic destinations, attended sessions in the Supreme Court, the Royal Courts of Justice and Old Bailey and dined in the famed Inns of Court – it was a highly impressive whirlwind of a week so memorable I returned in 1994. (The program continues today in its 31st year). Before I left London, I was determined to bring a similar concept to California.



When I returned to the states, I learned that Chief Justice Warren Burger had a major role in founding the American Inns of Court back in the mid-80s and the organization was rapidly growing nationwide. As president of the Ventura County Trial Lawyers at the time, I presented the idea of starting a Ventura chapter of IOC to our board of directors and it was greeted with support and enthusiasm. I then met with Judge Richard Aldrich,

who had been similarly impressed with the Inns of Court he had visited in London. We set things in motion by inviting Professor Sherman Cohn of Georgetown University, who had been very involved in forming new chapters, to meet with our core group and give us the guiding principles to become the IOC we are today: a chapter with the vision of inspiring professionalism, ethics, civility, and excellence in the practice of law.



Georgianna Regnier  
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Dear *CITATIONS*,

I was a member the first year and served as president in the early years. I recall that each team had ten members and there was a waiting list to join. The programs were generally quite good. One year all programs were based on aspects of the book *A Civil Action* by Jonathan Harr. The book is about a hazardous waste case that resulted in many illnesses and deaths, kind of like the Erin Brockovich case. The book was later adapted into a movie starring John Travolta. The book covered most of the elements of the litigation from investigation to trial. Each group was assigned one segment of the case for its program.

Another program I remember was when **Chuck Samonsky’s** team presented concerning the use of computers and other technology in a jury trial. Chuck was an early advocate of the use of technology. This is commonplace now, but was innovative 25 years ago.

I am glad the Inns of Court is still strong.



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## WELCOME INN

by Panda Kroll

It was tough to leave Boston to come to Ventura County. I loved so many things about Beantown, especially the Boston Athenæum, one of the oldest and most distinguished libraries and cultural institutions in the US.

After I graduated from law school in 2000, I served a one-year clerkship with the Appeals Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. As a former student of literature and art, I enjoyed the abstractions of legal research and writing, but wasn’t confident I would find a place in the hard-knocks profession of law. I asked my judge, the Hon. Mel Greenberg, if I could stay on as a staff clerk. “No,” he responded. “You need to get out in front. Don’t stand in my or anyone else’s shadow.” He made an introduction to a former colleague’s litigation boutique, I landed the job, and as my clerkship drew to a close, I steeled myself for life in the Boston trenches, knowing I could lean on my fellow clerks and law school alumni for comfort and support.

Just as I was about to enter the profession, however, two events turned my life upside down. First, after two decades of a bohemian and child-free life together, my husband and I learned we would be starting a family. Second, my husband essentially won the lottery when he was picked to be one of the thirteen founding faculty members of Ventura County’s first four-year public university, California State University, Channel Islands. Happy as I was for him, I was upended: The move from Boston to sleepy Ventura County meant that I would start my new career pregnant, jobless and friendless!

Happily, I had a soft landing. The founding CSUCI president, now-President Emeritus Handel Evans, directed me to **Carmen Ramirez**, Oxnard’s future Mayor *pro tem*, who directed me to then-VCBA executive director **Steve Henderson**, who in turn directed me to *CITATIONS*’ longtime editor **Wendy Lascher**. All three were wonderfully supportive and offered the same advice: “Join Inns of Court.”

The advice bore fruit. At the Inns of Court monthly meetings, I found a community

*Continued on page 19*



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WELCOME INN  
*Continued from page 17*

of like-minded individuals who knew how to put on a good show month after month. And, on my very first Inns team, I met my future employer, **Dick Norman**, founding partner of Norman Dowler, LLP. Norman had served as president of VCBA, VCTLA, and the California Coast Chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocators (ABOTA). I would only later fully absorb the gravity of these various distinctions. At the time, I was content to be welcomed as a first-year associate into a firm of patient mentors, including future Judge **Matt Guasco** and future Chief Assistant County Counsel for the County of Ventura **Michael Walker**.

As this year's president-elect of our local chapter of the Inns, I look forward to welcoming lawyers who are new to the profession, or just new in town. We have some exciting plans for our 25th anniversary. Our membership presently stands at 52, which includes four members of the bench and many VCBA leaders. We have room for more! I encourage anyone who is curious about joining to let our executive director, **Sandra Rubio** ([sandra@vcba.org](mailto:sandra@vcba.org)), know that you'd like to test the waters by attending our first meeting on Sept. 12 at the Saticoy Country Club. Who knows what doors will open for you?



**Panda Kröll** is a member of the CITATIONS editorial board. She owns a law firm with a practice that focuses on federal court matters and currently serves as cumis counsel in cases pending in Nevada, Florida and California.

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