



Newsletter

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Justice Pauline Hanson Dinner By M. Prudence Hutton

The 22nd annual Pauline Davis Hanson Dinner was held on October 17, 2011 at Fort Washington Country Club in conjunction with the Fresno County Bar Association. The Hanson Dinner is held annually to honor the legacy of Justice Pauline Hanson who was the first woman to serve on the 5th District Court of Appeals. Howard K. Watkins presented a slideshow presentation of photographic memories and commentary from his Photographic Archive Project.

The Annual Hanson Scholarship Award recipient was Candice Campo, a third-year student from San Joaquin School of Law. The Justice Pauline Davis Hanson Award was presented to Kathleen A. Meehan, Fresno County Superior Court Commissioner.

The keynote speaker was the Honorable Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of California. The Chief Justice addressed the challenges facing the California Judicial system in light of extreme fiscal cutbacks gutting the court system, while reflecting on the leadership and wisdom of Justice Hanson and the late Fresno Attorney Judy Soley.

The sold out event was an opportunity for members of the Bar to meet California's new Chief Justice. Many members of the judiciary attended including Associate California Supreme Court Justice Marvin Baxter and his wife Jane.

Project First Step Training

January 27, 2012

11:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

@ McCormick, Barstow, Sheppard, Wayte & Carruth, LLP.

Project First Step is a coordinated effort in Fresno County to recruit an increased number of volunteer attorneys to represent victims of domestic violence. Past FCWL President Deborah Coe led the FCWL in initiating this program along with the Pro Bono Section, Voluntary Legal Services Program of Central California Legal Services and the Marjaree Mason Center. Volunteers represent the client at a single temporary restraining order hearing, or they may choose to represent the client at additional hearings. An attorney's present in the courtroom will allow a victim to feel secure in facing their abuser and lessen the chance the victim will bow to intimidation and pressure and return to the abusive relationship. By representing victims of domestic violence, you are sending a resounding message that families in our community, particularly children, deserve to live in homes free of abuse and the control of the abuser.

You do not need to have any experience in Family law to be a volunteer. There will be MCLE available and the training is free with the requirement that the attorney accept at least one Project First Step client within 12 months of the training.

Please contact Jamie Xiong-Vang at 559-570-1238 for more information. All who are interested should register by January 20, 2011 due to limited seating.

Pro Bono Challenge

FCWL encourages members to sign up for the Central Valley Pro Bono Challenge.

Please sign up at

www.centralvalleyprobono.org

Hanson Dinner

****photos courtesy of Howard K. Watkins****



Judicial Reception

By: M. Prudence Hutton

FCWL honored four new women judicial officers appointed within the last year at the ninth Judicial Reception on June 30, 2011. The event was graciously hosted by the law firm of Baker, Manock & Jensen each year.

The judicial officers honored included the Honorable Jennifer R.S. Detjen, California Court of Appeals, Fifth District, the Honorable Rosemary McGuire, Fresno County Superior Court, the Honorable Kathleen A. Meehan, Fresno County Superior Court Commissioner, the Honorable Valli Israels, Stanislaus County Superior Court, and the Honorable Ann Q. Ameral, Stanislaus County Superior Court Commissioner.

The Honorable Jennifer Detjen was elevated to the 5th District Court of Appeals in 2010 after serving as a trial judge in Madera Superior Court for nine years, including two years as presiding judge. She had been a Deputy District Attorney in Fresno and Madera Counties and a certified criminal law specialist. Detjen graduated in 1981 from the University of San Diego School of Law.

The Honorable Rosemary McGuire was appointed to the Fresno County Superior Court. She had been a partner in the firm of Weakley, Ratliff, Arendt, and McGuire since 2001. "Rosie" had been active in local Bar Associations, volunteered as a pro tem judge for nine years, and served on the Ninth Circuit Judicial Advisory Committee. She graduated from San Joaquin School of Law 1994.

The Honorable Kathleen A. Meehan was appointed as a Fresno County Superior Court Commissioner in 2010. Meehan attended the UC Davis Law School and became an attorney in 1985. She worked at the LA law firms of Strook, Strook & Lavan; Freshman, Marantz, Orlanski, Cooper and Klein; and Bachalter, Nemer, Fields & Younger before returning to her hometown of Fresno in 1994 where she was a shareholder of Baker, Manock and Jensen. In 1998, she became a Deputy Attorney General prior to her appointment as Fresno County Court Commissioner. She has been active in local and state bar organizations and a past president of Fresno County Women Lawyers.

The Honorable Valli Israels Stanislaus County Superior Court is an experienced prosecutor since 1995, active in local Bar Association leadership and lecturer. She is a graduate of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law.

The Honorable Ann Q. Ameral, Stanislaus County Superior Court worked in family law as a sole practitioner for over 26 years in Modesto, CA and a graduate of Hastings School of Law.

All of the new judicial officers were appointed by former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2010.

Fresno County Women Lawyers holds this event to welcome women judicial officers to the bench, many who have received the support of FCWL and California Women Lawyers during their law practice, the judicial selection process, and their elevation to the bench. Women judicial officers throughout the California Women Lawyers' Fifth District are honored and recognized for their accomplishments.

The event was sponsored by: Baker, Manock & Jensen, PC, Weakley & Arendt LLP, and the law firms of Zeppy Attashian, Katherine Donovan, Lenore Schreiber, Susan Medina, and Karen L. Lynch, and attorneys Margaret Fainer-Towne and Scott Van Wagenen.

FCWL congratulates Justice Detjen and Judges McGuire, Meehan, Israels, and Ameral and wishes each a fulfilling and successful judicial career.

FCWL Holiday Party

****photos courtesy of Howard K. Watkins****



FCWL would like to thank Judge Whitehead and her husband, Steven Whitehead, for graciously hosting our holiday party held at their beautiful home.

Hall of Fame

By Rebecca M. Medina & Magi Fainer-Towne

On September 29, 2011, the FCWL hosted a reception with other women's groups to raise funds to support of the Women's Hall of Fame. This early autumn event featured a harpist, wine tasting, appetizers, silent auction, artists exhibit and sale with over 200 people attending. The event was held at the beautiful home of Peggy Stefanopoulos on the Bluffs overlooking the San Joaquin River. The honorees inducted into the Hall of Fame this year are Rosellen Kershaw, Edna Garabedian, and the late Judith Leslie Soley. Kopi Sortiropulos was the Master of Ceremonies with the assistance of attorney Melissa White.

The Women's Hall of Fame was the brain child of local attorney, Karen L. Lynch. In 1998, Ms. Lynch observed that many members of our community were unaware or failed to remember that until recently, there were no women in the California State Senate or sitting on the Fresno County bench. Ms. Lynch decided that it was time to recognize the women who have made important contributions to the betterment of our community and who paved the way for future women leaders. With the encouragement and tireless efforts of Ms. Lynch, in 2006, the Fresno County Women Lawyers (FCWL) dedicated an area on the sixth floor of the Fresno County Superior Courthouse for the Women's Hall of Fame. The vision the Hall of Fame is to honor outstanding women who have made a substantial contribution to Fresno County *and* to educate the public about the good works and leadership of these important women in one or more of the following areas: Agriculture, Athletics, Art, Business, Culture, Charity, Education, Entertainment, Environment, Law, Medicine, and Politics.

With the approval of the Superior Court, the Fresno County Courthouse was selected as the venue to recognize these women's accomplishments. Many people visit the Courthouse daily, whether as jurors, litigants, employees, or participants in the mock trial program for county high school students. The Courthouse has an impact not only within the legal community, but as a place, where issues important to our community are decided.

Ms. Lynch envisioned the Women's Hall of Fame and put her vision into action by reaching out to a number of community groups. Thus, the project and creation of the artistic biographical displays became a collaborative process, taking the combined efforts of several women-based groups. The original, 2006 honorees are: Frances Goodwin (Education), Judge Annette LaRue (Law), Margie Wright (Athletics), Coke Hallowell (Environment), Margaret Hudson (Art), Betty Rodriguez (Charity), Senator Rose Ann Vuich (Politics), and Cynthia Curry, M.D. (Medicine).

The three women honored in 2011 have made important contributions to our community. Local attorney, William H. Leifer, paid tribute to Judith Leslie Soley, who as we know, was an outstanding lawyer and also committed to her community. Ms. Soley was active in California Women Lawyers and Fresno County Women Lawyers, a recipient of the FCWL Pauline Davis Hanson Award and the Fresno County Bar Association's Bernie E. Witkin Lifetime Achievement Award. A trailblazer, she was the first female president of the Fresno County Bar Association..

Jane Worsely spoke about Rosellen Kershaw. Ms. Kershaw was recognized for her work in the League of Women Voters, for which she served as president. She also held a leadership role in several other local organizations, including the San Joaquin Town Hall and Friends of the Fresno County Library. Many people credit Ms. Kershaw for the broad reach of the Fresno County Library.

Constantine Pappas, son of James and Donna Pappas, and a student of Edna Garabedian and sung a cappella with a female classmate to honor Edna Garabedian after a brief introduction by his mother. Ms. Garabedian is an international opera star who has sung for the New York Opera and throughout Europe and Asia. She founder the Fresno Grand Opera and continues to perform and teach and was recognized for using opera to bridge the gap between Fresno and other cultures to enrich the lives of people throughout the world.

FCWL would like to thank all of the co-sponsors for the event: Fresno County Bar Association, Zeppy Attashian, Myrna Axt, Baradat & Paboojian, Inc., California Bank and Trust, Central Valley Networks, Inc., Castle Rock Tax & Financial Services, Dowling Aaron and Keeler, Law Offices of Katherine E. Donovan, Linda K. Durost, Inc., Magi Fainer and Robert E. Towne, Gilmore Wood Vennard and Magness, P.C., Law Office of Sara Hedspeth-Harris, Eichard Heath, Judith L. Lund, Edward W. Lynch, "Chef Ed," Karen L. Lynch, Inc., Michael W. Lynch, M.D., on behalf of the Central California School of Pharmacy, Law Offices of Nuttall Coleman & Wilson, Quinlan Kershaw & Fanucchi, LLP., Lenore Schreiber, Esq., Team Legal, Inc., Howard and Chris Watkins and Wright & Johnson. Photographs of the event are available for free viewing and downloading at www.watkinsphotoarchive.com.

Hall of Fame

****photos courtesy of Howard K. Watkins****



Announcements

Congratulations to Irene Ramirez and Erica Gonzalez who won the Central California Legal Services (CCLS) Champions of Justice Award!

Irene won the 2011 volunteer attorney award. For the past several years, Irene has been a volunteer attorney with Project First Step and has volunteered her time to help women who need a temporary restraining order and/or representation at a court hearing. Irene has a passion for assisting those in need who find themselves without access or knowledge of the legal system. Irene has also participated in several of Central California Legal Services' Guardianship Clinics. Since 2008, Irene has been a part of the La Raza Lawyers Association including holding the positions of secretary and president. She is also currently a board member of the California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc. (CRLA). CRLA offers a variety of services and programs to California's low-income communities. Irene volunteers her time to fight for justice for farm workers and migrants.

Erica won the 2011 special projects award. Erica is a 2008 graduate of UC Davis Law School and was previously an associate at Lang, Richert & Patch. While working at Lang, Richert & Patch, Erica became involved in Project First Step and represented many women who needed restraining orders and representation at a court hearings. After volunteering her time with Project First Step, she became dedicated to ensuring that all persons have equal and meaningful access to justice, so she took a position at the Marjaree Mason Center to devote all of her time to help victims of domestic violence. Erica now provides legal assistance to women by explaining legal options, the restraining order process, among many other things.

From the Newsroom Selected Articles and Events:

The Value of Incorporating Pro Bono Into Your Practice

http://www.americanbar.org/publications/young_lawyer/201011/september_2011/value_incorporating_pro_bono.html.

Plugging the "Leaky Pipeline" of Women Attorney Attrition

http://www.americanbar.org/publications/young_lawyer/201011/july_august_2011/plugging_leaky_pipeline_of_women_attorney_attrition.html.

FCWL

**Please see the attached FCWL
Application for 2012 and complete your
application.**

Please e-mail any updated contact information to fcwlinfo@gmail.com to ensure you receive FCWL news and information.

We welcome your comments and suggestions for the FCWL newsletter and thank you all for your continued support and wish you all a Happy New Year!

2012 FCWL BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINATIONS

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Please vote by e-mail to fcwlinfo@gmail.com indicating "In Favor" or "Opposed." All votes must be received no later than Monday, January 9, 2012.