

WOMEN IN THE LAW: Martha S. Chase

By Marie Martinez



Santa Cruz County Attorney Martha S. Chase

I recently had an opportunity to sit down with Santa Cruz County Attorney **Martha S. Chase**. Martha, or Marti as she likes to be called, is one of only a handful of women who have won election as a county attorney in Arizona. Others include Barbara LaWall in Pima County, Patricia Orozco in Yuma County, Daisy Flores in Gila County and Sheila Sullivan Polk in Yavapai County.

Marti received her undergraduate degree from Arizona State University. In her previous life, she was a teacher at Patagonia Elementary School, in Patagonia, for eight years before going to law school at the U of A.

After graduation in 1988, Marti began her career at the Santa Cruz County Attorney's office. She handled juvenile, misdemeanor, and felony prosecutions under her-then boss, Court of Appeals **Judge Jan Florez**. Marti was elected Santa Cruz County Attorney in 1996. Some of the questions I asked, and Marti's answers, follow:

MM: Why did you seek a career in law?

MC: *I thought about going to law school for many years. I'm not sure why it attracted me, other than the fact I love to argue. There finally came a point in my life where I could financially afford it. I was out of college and working for twenty years before I was able to attend law school.*

MM: What do you think your most important job is as County Attorney?

MC: *Doing justice—prosecutors exercise a great deal of power and we must always do that with great care, being careful to promote justice. The goal is not winning, but rather promoting the ends of justice.*

MM: As a woman attorney, what would you say has been your greatest challenge?

MC: *Getting elected in Santa Cruz County. The county is 80% Hispanic and 70% Democrat. I am a female, non-Hispanic, Republican.*

MM: Since you work so close to the Nogales Mexico Border, what impact do border issues have on your office?

MC: *The border has a major impact on this office. There are less than 40,000 people in this county, yet there are over 350,000 people Nogales Sonora, Mexico. In 2002, 10.7 million people crossed into the United States through Nogales. This area is a major drug corridor.*

MM: What challenges do you face as County Attorney in a small county?

MC: *One of the greatest challenges is dealing with crime victims who are illegal aliens. They are usually deported prior to any court proceedings, so we have to work with the Mexican Consulate and U.S. Immigration to bring them here to participate in the proceedings. We have been very successful in doing that. Aside from border issues, recruiting qualified people for both attorney and non-attorney positions. Small counties can't compete with the salaries the bigger counties offer.*

MM: What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages to small town practice as opposed to places like Tucson or Phoenix?

MC: *This is the only office in which I have practiced, so I can't make a comparison. In my office, I speak with every employee every day. I am able to talk to each attorney about their cases, and I speak with the support staff daily about how they are doing. New procedures are often enacted around the coffee pot. We are very supportive of one another, in our professional and personal lives.*

MM: What is it about your job that you enjoy the most?

MC: *Being the elected official, I set the standards for the office. Our job is to do justice and engage in fair play. I take great pride in setting high standards with which we operate. I am most pleased about the frequent compliments I receive about the staff and attorneys from the defense bar. It means that we are doing the job the way we are supposed to do it.*

MM: How has AWLA impacted your career?

MC: *AWLA provides the opportunity to connect with other women in the legal profession.*

MM: Is there anything that you have accomplished or do in your personal time that people would be surprised to learn about you?

MC: *I was Mayor of Patagonia back in the 1980's. In the 70's, I owned and lived on a Chinese Junk off the coast of Los Angeles. In the 60's, I worked for the Maricopa County of Public Welfare (DES predecessor). My caseload included just about every type of welfare client, including residents in many of the seedier hotels in downtown Phoenix. I would just walk right in and do my interviews. I wouldn't do that today.*

SEPTEMBER LUNCHEON

DATE: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2003
TIME: 12:00 o'clock, Noon
PLACE: The Arizona Inn, 2200 East Elm Street (The Tucson Room)
COST: \$15 Members
\$20 Non-Members
\$8 Students

RSVP: Call **Julia Connors** at 740-2726 no later than 4:00 p.m., **Thursday, September 11**, or e-mail by the same deadline to azawla@yahoo.com. Please indicate your menu choice:

- Parmesan and Herb Encrusted Chicken with basil cream sauce
- OR-
- Grilled Portobello Mushroom with Sun-dried Tomato and Basil Risotto, Grilled Sweet Onion and Summer Squash served on Red and Yellow Pepper Coulis

SPEAKER: SHANNON CAIN

At last month's luncheon, "Wellness" was addressed by **Nate Summers**. Summers, a licensed acupuncturist with a practice at Bodyworks Studio, talked about the use of Ancient Chinese medical practices such as acupuncture to alleviate stress, treat various maladies and maximize "wellness." He discussed "wellness plans" that include exercise, nutrition, massage and acupuncture to alleviate stress and maximize mental and physical health. Summers reminded us of the importance of preventative measures to ensure well-being.

This month, **Shannon Cain** of Philanthropic Consulting for Social Change will be making a presentation about strategic philanthropy. Cain works with individuals who strive to maximize the impact of giving money to effectuate social change. Ms. Cain herself is a social activist and major donor. Please remember to RSVP. ☺

CANCELLATION POLICY

Luncheon costs have risen significantly since AWLA began meeting regularly at the Arizona Inn. Overall, our members have responded favorably to the higher quality of service and food the Arizona Inn provides. However, because of the increased luncheon costs, we must once again enforce our cancellation policy. All reservations must be made or cancelled no later than the Thursday prior to the luncheon. If you make a reservation and are unable to attend, AWLA is still billed for your meal and therefore expects payment for the cost of the luncheon if the reservation is not timely cancelled. If you must cancel at the last moment, please try to make arrangements for someone to take your seat to avoid being billed for the cost of the lunch. Thank you for your cooperation with this policy.

LETTERS

Dear Members,

Below is a reprint of a letter written by Georgia Staton, Co-Chair of the Arizona Women Lawyers Association's Judicial Selection Committee, and addressed to Chief Justice Charles Jones, Chair of the Commission on Appellate Court Appointments. The letter articulates AWLA's advocacy for and support of the women candidates seeking appointment to a vacancy on Division One of the Arizona Court of Appeals.

We are pleased to report that the Commission's nomination list to the Governor includes four women. The nominees are: David R. Cole, 51, Independent, of Peoria, a judge of the Maricopa County Superior Court; Diane M. Johnsen, 49, Democrat, of Scottsdale, a shareholder in the Osborn Maledon law firm; Patricia K. Norris, 51, Democrat, of Phoenix, a shareholder in the Lewis and Roca law firm; Christina Urias, 51, Democrat, of Phoenix, a shareholder in the DeConcini McDonald Yetwin & Lacy law firm; and Eileen S. Willett, 42, Republican, of Phoenix, a judge of the Maricopa County Superior Court.



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August 21, 2003

Chief Justice Charles Jones
 1501 West Washington
 Fourth Floor
 Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Re: Division One Appellate Court Appointment

Dear Justice Jones:

As you know, the Arizona Women Lawyer's Association, the largest speciality Bar Association in the state, is keenly interested in the judicial selection process generally and in the coming appointment to Division One of the Arizona Court of Appeals, in particular. Women have made great strides within the profession. One need merely look at the path Sandra Day O'Connor has forged – from being offered only a secretarial position upon graduation from law school to Justice of the United States Supreme Court. We now have two women Justices on the Arizona Supreme Court – a few short years ago only a dream. However, we have not been able to achieve our ultimate goal where selection of a woman to fill a judicial position is no more noteworthy than selection of a man.

We are certain that the Commission understands its Constitutional mandate. From time to time it is helpful to be reminded it is the Commission's **duty** to "consider the diversity of the state's population" when it makes its recommendations for appointments. See Article 6, Section 36,

Arizona Constitution. In short, our Superior Court and Appellate Court appointments must reflect the diversity of the citizens of this state – half of whom are women.

To be sure, merit is the primary consideration which must be the basis for any recommendation. Fortunately, the Commission has been given an abundance of female applicants who more than meet the test of merit. In the group of women who will come before you are:

- Magna Cum Laude graduates of law school
- Partners in major law firms
- Chief Counsel for important state agencies
- Trial attorneys who have been lead counsel in complex lawsuits
- Appellate lawyers
- Teachers of the law
- Women who are invested in their community through school, religious and charitable organizations
- Women who have a breadth of life experience outside the law

The Commission will interview women attorneys who are Democrats, Republicans, Caucasian or of Hispanic or Asian ancestry. In short, the Arizona Women Lawyer's Association has succeeded in its goal to provide the Commission with a well qualified and diverse group of women. We have every reason to expect the Commission to meet its Constitutional duty to recommend to the Governor candidates whose selection will reflect the diversity of this state. In meeting that duty, it would be wholly appropriate to forward the names of three female candidates to the Governor. It would be a clear and unmistakable sign that the Commission recognizes the merit of the women who have applied and a clear and unmistakable sign to the Governor that more women are needed on the Appellate Court bench.

We wish for each member of the Commission to understand that this letter has been written only after a lengthy review of the judicial applications filed by the women whom you will soon meet. Our Governing Board is made up of senior partners from major law firms, members of public agencies, judges from the Superior and Appellate Courts of this state. Unanimously, our Board decided that the best course of action was this one – making it clear to everyone concerned that the women applicants you will meet more than meet the professional and academic test for merit selection. We await, with great interest, the results of the coming interviews.

Sincerely,



Georgia A. Staton
Co-Chair Judicial Selection Committee
Arizona Women Lawyer's Association

Dear Members,

*I am the current chair of the ABA Law Practice Management Section. Our fall meeting is in Tucson in October. I wanted to let you know that Women Rainmakers will be meeting in Tucson at the fall meeting and also will be sponsoring a networking reception on **Friday, October 17** after the CLE program (which is going to be excellent as well). The Women Rainmaker's group is a dynamic group and we would be delighted if AWLA members would join us in Tucson. Heather Jefferson is the current chair of Women Rainmakers and I know would be happy to talk to you or any of your members about the Committee. I wanted to personally contact you and let you know about the meeting in Tucson and encourage AWLA members to attend. If you have any questions, just let me know. More information about the ABA Law Practice Management Section meeting is available at <http://www.abanet.org/lpm/programs/tucson/home.shtml>.*

*Susan G. Boswell
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Cell: 520-349-6644
Email: sboswell@quarles.com*

HEAR YE ...HEAR YE



Do you like what you see? If so, **BECOME A PART OF IT!**
If not, **HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO CHANGE IT!**

The Southern Arizona chapter is seeking a new Managing Editor for the Newsletter. We are looking for one or more persons to take over, beginning no later than with the January 2004 issue. This position requires creativity, patience and attention to detail, but is extremely rewarding and gets easier with every issue (really, it does). You wouldn't have to write the articles yourself, just spend a little time soliciting them and developing a network of writers and contributors. You'd get to meet and work with interesting people from a variety of disciplines, while capturing and conveying the activity, diversity and spirit of the AWLA Southern Arizona chapter to hundreds of readers. **INTERESTED?** Contact Kristine Fox at 205-4263 or kristine_fox@azd.uscourts.gov.

MENTORS NEEDED

The University of Arizona James E. Rogers College is seeking attorney volunteers to mentor first-year law students. The mentor's role is to share information about the legal profession and practicing law, and to offer support and encouragement during the course of the year. Mentors do not provide job placement assistance. The time commitment is not substantial, unless you wish to devote more time. Generally, mentors meet with their students three to four times over the course of the year, at least once or twice in person and then also by telephone. Many friendships have developed through the program. If you are willing to mentor a student this year, please fill out the volunteer form below as soon as possible and fax it to Paula Nailon at 621-9140.

**You CAN make a difference
in the legal profession . . .**

**to a first- year law student at the University of Arizona
James E. Rogers College of Law.**

If you're willing to help make a difference, fill in the information requested below and send it to:

**Paula Nailon
University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law
P. O. Box 210176
Tucson, AZ 85721-0176
or FAX to 621-9140**

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Firm/Agency: _____ FAX: _____

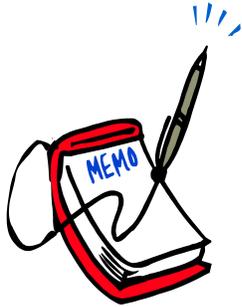
Please check the appropriate boxes:

- I am:
- a sole practitioner
 - w/a large firm
 - w/a small firm
 - a public lawyer
 - on the bench
 - in-house counsel

- My practice is:
- criminal
 - civil
 - prosecution
 - defense
 - transactional
 - other: _____

Special interests (children, non-traditional student, sports, etc.)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS



What: AWLA's Annual Convention
When: Saturday, November 8, 2003
Time: 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Topic: "Success in the New Millenium"
Place: Phoenix (meeting place TBA)

Watch for more information!

2003 SOUTHERN ARIZONA AWLA OFFICERS

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AWLA

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