

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN
December 2006

My Final Thoughts -- Finally

by Richard A. Huver

Richard A. Huver is CASD's President for 2006. He is a partner with the law firm of Levine, Steinberg, Miller & Huver, where he represents plaintiffs in the areas of insurance bad faith, products liability and personal injury litigation. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of San Diego in 1982 and his Juris Doctor from Southwestern University School of Law in 1987. He may be reached by email at: rhuver@levinelaw.com.

I have now gone through eleven versions of what I want to say in this, my final column as your President. None of the earlier versions were good and all have been tossed. With each new version, I find myself reflecting back over the past twelve years since I moved to San Diego and the eight years I have been on this Board. I have thought about all that has happened to me personally and professionally, and in the world in general, and tried to put it into words. But I cannot find the right words. Imagine that -- Richard Huver at a loss for words.

So, on this my twelfth and final version, I have decided on this: I have worked as hard as I could while a Board member and an Officer of this organization. I hope I leave the Presidency a better place than it was when I took the helm this past January. While I achieved some of the goals I set last year, I wish I could have done more. Looking back, twelve months was not as long as it seemed it would be when I was looking forward. Although I know I will miss many aspects of being President, I am excited about my life without the "extra-curricular" activities that come with volunteering to serve CASD. One upside is that I will have more time with my kids now, who are getting older and moving closer to going away to college.

For me, being a trial lawyer has always been about helping people in need. I wish we could convince society as a whole that what we do is good and right, that the civil justice system is an important cornerstone of our democratic society and that, by and large, we are honest, hard-working civil servants. I wish I could combat the ever-present negative image of trial lawyers on a bigger scale, but realize most convincing will probably happen one person at a time. I know our profession will continue to face challenges and we need to always be prepared to answer the call.

Our organization too will face its own challenges in the future. As you probably know, we have been searching for a new Executive Director since October. It is impossible to recognize all that SJ Kalian has done over these past nine years, and I cannot adequately express the appreciation and gratitude I and our Board feel for the hard work, devotion and service she has given our organization. Suffice it to say, she will be missed. But with change comes opportunity and I know CASD will move ahead in a positive direction.

As we continue to evolve as an organization, I believe it is vital to always remember the Mission Statement upon which our organization proudly stands. Particularly important in my mind are these two tenets: “Uphold the honor and dignity of the legal profession and the highest standards of ethical conduct and integrity” and “Educate the public concerning the United States’ justice system, the rights of the individual within the system and the legal profession.”

I appreciate all the support, cards and letters, and kind words I received throughout the year. I turn the reins of the organization over to Gayle Blatt, who has been on the Board since 1996. I know Gayle will do a terrific job and she is excited to begin her presidency.

With that, I leave you with a quote from Aristotle: “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.” My hope is that as a profession, we continue to do what is good, do what is right and always strive for excellence. Thank you.