

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN  
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*WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT?*

By  
Gayle M. Blatt

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It is with great pride and appreciation that I take over the presidency of this wonderful organization. As many of you may know, I have spent my entire legal career with my law firm. In fact, I had the tremendous opportunity to begin my career at Casey Gerry while David S. Casey was still spending time at the office, imparting his wisdom and his love for advocacy to those of us at the firm he founded in 1947.

Dave Casey was also the founder of what is now CASD. In 1960, there was an organized group of defense lawyers in town who would get together to share information, strategies and socialize. There was no cohesive organization through which the plaintiff lawyers could do the same. Dave Casey saw the benefit of plaintiff lawyers sharing their knowledge, love for their craft, friendship, and banding together to pursue their common goal: **justice for all**. And so, the San Diego Trial Lawyers Association was created.

It was truly the passion for fairness and the love of the human spirit that started our organization. It is also the love of learning and the desire to be the best trial lawyers we can be that has propelled this organization into greatness. Over the years, the quality of CASD's educational programs has continued to increase. The **Education Committee** continues to raise its own bar and the best is yet to come. Our **seminars** are among the best being offered by any organization in the country. Our **labs** provide a lower cost opportunity for our members to gain practical experience, thereby increasing their abilities to successfully represent their clients. Our **Brief and Motion Bank** on our website provides each member the opportunity to benefit from the battles already fought by others before them. Thank you to all of our contributors! Let's keep your submissions coming. Additionally, our alliance with TrialSmith provides the opportunity to view and obtain **depositions of experts** we would otherwise spend hours, days or even weeks tracking down. Our Website ([www.casd.org](http://www.casd.org)) is a beautiful expression of our organization's mission, and the information available to the public to assist in improving the image of the legal profession is expertly displayed.

The annual Golf Tournament gets better and more successful every year. The **mixers and list serve parties** provide the opportunity for CASD members to meet and network with other members and to socialize with one another. These events promote comradery among our members and facilitate the development of lasting and true friendships which make our busy days more enjoyable. Our annual **Trial Stars Dinner** is an awe inspiring tribute to our members and their clients for specific

achievements throughout the year. We want to hear from more of you! These amazing successes are not judged by the size of awards, but by the contributions our members make to righting a wrong or making someone in need, whole again. The Trial Stars Dinner is always a tribute to the love our members feel for their clients and the pursuit of justice-- a love seemingly always returned.

And there is so much more, like the List Serve. The energy on the List Serve is incredible. Watching the outpouring of support our members offer one another is so gratifying. It is joyful to see the selflessness of so many who graciously give so much of their time to help their fellow trial lawyers. It is equally as special to see the way CASD members celebrate each other's victories as if they were their own. At the same time, our members mourn each other's losses, as only those who know the pain of such loss can understand.

Then, of course, there is the ***Trial Bar News***. Our monthly magazine contains articles of the highest caliber, produced by volunteer column editors and lovingly put together each month by our Editor-in-Chief, Kerry Hoxie. One of our goals this year is to begin to offer you the ***Trial Bar News*** electronically. We hope that this will be a welcome improvement in our service to our membership. We welcome your feedback! These are only some of our member benefits; there are so many more.

All of this began with one man's vision. A true leader, Dave Casey did not wait for others to carry his share of the load. He was a leader who inspired the rest of us to get involved; a leader who loved his work, his clients, and the pursuit of justice. Because of his legacy, I have had the privilege of being part of a firm whose culture includes commitment to service to the legal community. Three of my four partners (David S. Casey, Jr., Fred Schenk and Robert Francavilla) have served as CASD president. Our other partner, Tom Penfield, is an active member of CASD and is on the Executive Board of the North County Bar Association. One of our wonderful associates, Wendy Behan, is active member of CASD and is active in the Lawyers Club. Jeremy Robinson of our firm is a valued contributor to the ***Trial Bar News*** and a regular attendee at our dinners. Tom Luneau, too, has brought us a seminar and also regularly attends our functions. One thing we all agree upon is that if we truly love the law and the system we are sworn to protect, then we ought to have an equal commitment to preserving it for the future population. ***And it doesn't take much if we all contribute something.***

As you know, CASD is run in its entirety by a 2.5 person staff and a wholly volunteer board of directors, its past presidents and our committee members. Our board and committee members work solely for the reward of keeping the organization strong. A strong CASD helps us help our clients that much more. A strong CASD helps preserve our justice system. A strong CASD insures that the knowledge and the skills we have devoted our entire careers to acquiring will be passed to the next generation of plaintiff lawyers. A strong CASD will make it possible for those coming after us to carry on our crusade for the powerless and injured. And if you share with us a love and commitment to justice for all, lend us a hand. Join a committee, bring in new members, help put on an event, and give SJ, Chris and Julie a big thank you, because they are the ones without whom none of what we do would be possible. ***Whether you give us an hour a week or an hour a month, I can virtually guarantee that you will get back more than you have given.***

I have always had great love for this organization. As president of CASD, it is my responsibility to carry us to even greater heights in 2007. I cannot do it without your help though. Our member

benefits surely are *part* of what makes CASD great, but they are only part of the whole. ***The remainder is you***; the spirit of each of our more than 700 members. I love your passion, your quest for learning, your desire to be the best trial lawyers you can be, your friendship and support for the organization, and your support for each other. I need your energy and enthusiasm. **Please get involved and do something to help CASD grow stronger.** You have the chance to be a part of something larger than yourself. Don't wait to be asked, just give me a call. You won't regret it.

After all, what's love got to do with it? Everything.