

Kudos and Thanks

by L. Tracee Lorens

*Tracee Lorens is CASD's President for 2003. Ms. Lorens attended San Diego State University and Western State College of Law (now Thomas Jefferson) obtaining her J.D., B.S.L. in 1990 and was admitted to the California State Bar that same year. She has been a member of Consumer Attorneys of San Diego for nine years and was either a Director or Officer of CASD for the past seven years. She practices primarily in the area of employment law, focusing currently on wage and hour class actions, as well as complex personal injury and insurance bad faith claims. Ms. Lorens is the mother of a beautiful 12-year-old daughter, Alexandra Rose Lorens, and the "significant other" and partner of Wayne A. Hughes. She may be reached by e-mail at **CASDPres@aol.com** or by calling 619-239-1233.*

At a recent CASD seminar one of the attendees expressed the opinion that the panel members might be "paid" for their services. No such benefits exist. When you see work being performed by members of our association, you are seeing volunteers who are contributing their services, time and resources. I wanted to use this month's column to offer our appreciation to many of the people who make this organization a success.

We have two paid staff members whose contributions should not be overlooked: "SJ" **Kalian**, our Executive Director, and **Chris Van Orshoven**, Associate Director. Part of SJ's difficult job is to provide coordination among the many committees and volunteers. She attends most of the committee meetings -- as many as 6 or more a week. She provides continuity and calendar control as well as being the organization's memory. She and Chris deal with requests from Officers, members and others. They arrange and set up most of our educational events and make sure necessary materials are prepared. S.J. provides a conduit to other state and national organizations on our behalf and helps maintain continuity between years and presidential terms.

Chris Van Orshoven keeps track of membership and our members' needs. She has been

extremely valuable this year in helping me to add to our member benefits and make this truly “The Year Of The Member”.

Next, I would next like to talk about what is frequently referred to as CASD’s “leadership”. “Leadership” is a misleading term. I prefer thinking of them as our “Volunteership”. I am proud to say that merit and hard work are regarded as the main criteria when choosing our Board of Directors and Officers (who form the Executive Committee). Each year our Board of Directors’ membership is reviewed and the Board Members decide if they have adequate time for the demands of Board membership. Those who resign are replaced with members who have worked hard for the organization either through our numerous committees or by participating or assisting with events and seminars. We strive to keep membership on the Board open to those who produce.

The names of our Board Members and Officers are listed on the inside cover of the ***Trial Bar News***. [Speaking of the ***Trial Bar News***, just wait. We are in the process of re-designing it and, by this fall, I believe you will be “shocked and awed” by the newer, snazzier, more user friendly version.] Each of our 24 Board Members (which includes the Officers) is expected to actively work on at least one of our 14 committees; some work on several committees. Most committees meet at least once a month. Board Members receive each month a packet of materials put together by S.J. and the Executive Committee. Monthly meetings are true working sessions. In addition, Board Members conduct the work of recruiting new members, creating and speaking at seminars, assisting with or contributing to the ***Trial Bar News***, social functions, ListServe and . . . yes . . . raising money. In order to function, our organization has a yearly budget of approximately \$330,000. In addition to this budget, we also raise money for the student essay contests and our CASD Foundation. Our Foundation contributes money to such

activities as the Vietnam Veterans of San Diego “Stand Down” program, teen reading, San Diego Volunteer Lawyers, and the San Diego Law Library.

Why do people volunteer to do all this work? I doubt if there is any one answer to this question. Some of the answers would include: to pay back others who helped us in the past; to build a network for assistance and referrals; for the fun of it; to accomplish something positive; to help improve the public perception of what trial lawyers do . . . and the list goes on.

Let me thank some of those who have made outstanding contributions already this year. Please take the time to read about these contributions, as these people are the ones who make it all happen for us.

Kerry Hoxie and the TBN Team

Kerry Hoxie’s middle name is TBN. For 15 years, Kerry has been the ***Trial Bar News***. Her title is Editor-in-Chief which is certainly not an all inclusive title. What she does is the equivalent of herding cats. She gets us all to produce by the deadline, deals with the advertisers, edits, and works closely with our valued desktop publisher **Al Cosgrove**. . . and then some more. [By the way, Al has been our desktop publisher forever... I think about 15 years.] She recruits, praises, and is as loyal as a mother bear to her editors: **Nelson P. Brav**, **Theresa Brehl**, **Richard Huver**, **James Lance**, **Scott Levine**, **Stephen Love**, **Monty McIntyre**, **Dick Semerdjian**, **Elizabeth Schulman**, and **Jon R. Williams**. And, oh yes, in her spare time, Kerry (along with **Andy Albert**, **Jon Williams**, and yours truly) is primarily responsible for the re-design of TBN.

Joel Bryant and the Golf Tournament

Last year, **Steve Boudreau** presented to us an idea which I frankly thought would not work: a golf tournament. Steve’s idea turned out to be an absolute ball . . . and it raised over

\$10,000 for the association. This year, **Joel Bryant** put together the tournament with his typical quiet, effective, pay-attention-to-details-and-get-the-job-done style. This year's tournament was on May 15, 2003 at Riverwalk Golf course.

Rebecca Lack-Mowbray, ListServe Parties and Mixers

Rebecca Lack-Mowbray did such a good job in organizing the first ListServe party that we put her on the Board and gave her a title and *more work*. Rebecca is pivotal in organizing our affordable social functions. She was the chairperson behind the ListServe pot luck party at **Thor and Tracy Emblem's** home in Escondido. We owe our thanks to the Emblem tribe for opening their home and sharing their great view with us. In her spare time, Rebecca helps our members set up low cost focus groups [see her Article in *Trial Bar News*, April 2003].

Jon Williams and Andy Albert

Andy Albert and Kerry Hoxie are the chairs of the Communications Committee, but Jon Williams is the most active and hardest working member of that committee. He has been working for at least five years to re-design our webpage and implement one of my dreams for "The Year Of The Member", i.e., an on-line brief bank. It is a **huge** project! I think Jon now has four or five full binders of information, ideas, revisions to ideas, and input from our Board and members. Jon and I both have set a goal for ourselves this year. It is to improve our website, develop a brief bank accessible through our website, and make it possible for CASD members to go to our website for all of their needs. Without Jon's help, I am not sure I would be able to accomplish this task for you this year.

Ken Sigelman

Ken Sigelman is both a doctor and a lawyer. He lobbies effectively at the state and national level for us, serves on the Board and as an Officer. Yet, Ken finds time to also chair the

Membership Committee which is the most difficult and time consuming committee we have. It used to be that we forced all Board Members to serve on the Membership Committee. Without you, our members, we cannot survive and we cannot pay our bills. Give Ken a little help this year by encouraging at least one or two people to become new members of CASD. In five years, Ken will be president of the organization. He is an exceptional person. Ken is married to **Susan Handel** whom many of you know as a bright and beautiful attorney and member of our local community.

Catherine Richardson, Doc Anderson, Lisa Stepp, and the Education Committee

Catherine Richardson, the chair of our Education Committee, is another of our Board Members who quietly works hard and gets the job done. **Doc Anderson** and **Lisa Stepp** chair our Roundtable Committee. The only difference between these two committees is that the Roundtable Committee puts on a lunch hour seminar once a month in the Courthouse. The rest of the Education Committee organizes our big general seminars, our labs (led by the awesome team of **Wayne Hughes**, **Joel Selik**, and **John Rice**), and our other educational functions. Providing education and assistance to our members is the heart of this organization. The following is a list of some of the larger general seminars which are upcoming:

“Trial Advocacy: Successful Trial Tactics & Tools for the Plaintiff Practice”.

Dwight Ritter, two time winner of “Trial Lawyer of the Year” award, put together this seminar which features two of the best attorneys to have ever walked in a courtroom in this country – **Ned Good** and **Tom Vesper**. The seminar will be on June 7, 2003, and absolutely should not be missed.

“Colossus in San Diego: We Shall Overcome” is being brought to us on June 21, 2003 through the hard work of **Joel Selik**. This seminar will feature a former insurance claims

adjuster and supervisor for Allstate and State Farm and an attorney from Washington (Karen Koehler) who practices plaintiff personal injury and insurance bad faith, and has authored a book “Litigating ‘Minor Impact Soft Tissue’ Cases”. They will tell us how to deal with the “colossus” computer system for best results for your clients.

David Ball will be back in town and lecturing on September 13, 2003.

In November, we will be presenting the incredible creativity of **Joshua Karton** (a frequent speaker at Jerry Spence’s Trial Lawyer College).

Tuesday Night at the Lab

As part of their work on the Education Committee, John Rice, Joel Selik and Wayne Hughes have launched the very successful “Tuesday Night at the Lab” seminars. This series of 10 seminars a year, 2 MCLE credits each, is designed for the less experienced attorneys at the very low cost of \$15 for attorneys with four or less years in practice. It is \$25 for all others. Non-members are even welcome. Each seminar involves materials, one hour of lecture and one hour of hypothetical questions and group discussion. Wayne proposed this idea and has taken the responsibility of finding underwriters for the bulk of the cost.

Richard Huver and the Awards Committee

When a member receives an award from CASD, it is first investigated by this committee. Most investigations involve 40 to 60 hours of work. **Richard Huver** has done a fantastic job in seeing that the important work of this committee gets done on time.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

The above list is by no means complete. If I have forgotten someone, please accept my apologies now. It is a team effort and I have been blessed in the support I have received so far this year.

I'd also like to take the time to give special recognition to some people who have been special to my own development as a lawyer and a person.

Karl Bloomfield

When I first began practicing law, I was a single mother with a six-month-old baby. Karl was the trial attorney who taught me to be fearless and not to be afraid to take on any cause. I learned from Karl that hard work and dedication, along with a few good facts, can beat any defense attorney no matter how well financed or experienced they may prove to be. I will always consider Karl to be one of my most important mentors as well as one of my dearest friends.

Deborah Wolfe And Wayne Hughes

Deborah Wolfe will always be "Mama Wolfe" to me. She brought me up through this organization and she helped me build a practice, as a woman in business in our community. These seem like small statements but believe me, to make it as a woman in business in any community is difficult and to make it as a woman trial lawyer is even harder. Thank you, Deborah.

Likewise, **Wayne Hughes** taught me everything I needed to know about being a bulldog. I cannot think of a smarter or more competent trial lawyer than Wayne. In fact, at times I get discouraged because I know I will never be the trial lawyer that he is. Of course, as most of you know, he is now also my "significant other". We are partners in everything and I would not be the lawyer that I am today or be able to preside over this association this year without all of his assistance and love.

Dennis Schoville

Whenever I get into a situation in which I sense I am losing my temper and am tempted

to strike fast, hard, but maybe a little too low, I immediately resort to what I call the Schoville Test. In those moments, I try to always stop myself and think, “What would Denny Schoville do in this situation?” Believe me, if you ask yourself that question, and then take the high road which Denny Schoville consistently follows, you will always be making the right decision when it comes to professionalism, integrity, and civility. I thank Denny for (without probably even knowing it) keeping me out of trouble. I also thank him for always taking my calls as well as the calls of all members of this organization when we need guidance, moral support, or just have a silly little question that we are afraid to ask of other prestigious and distinguished, top-flight trial lawyers.

Why don't you consider calling your mentors and telling them what their support has meant to you. We don't have to wait until November to be thankful. Please join me in taking the time to say “thank you” now.