



Vintage Voices

Senior Lawyers Division

Newsletter
October 2021

We asked you for your suggestions on what new activities the Senior Lawyers Division should undertake and what you'd like to know more about. We got those suggestions, and as you'll see, we're starting new things and refining old things, based on what you want. A big thank you to all of you who emailed me with your thoughts. I said when we started this newsletter that this is your Division, and the Executive Council wants to pursue your ideas. Keep them coming.

Here's what the standing work groups are doing.

Mentoring: In November or December, the State Bar's mentoring program for one-on-one mentoring will start its third group of folks who will participate as both mentors and mentees. Each group has about 12-15 people in it, and they are given a virtual introductory session on what's expected of participants on both side of the equation. They make a year's commitment to meet at least once a month, although they can meet more often if they like. CLE credit is given to those who finish the year. Don Powell, from the Executive Committee, will be serving on the panel for the next training. They still need mentors so please consider joining this program for the fourth session.

The Lawyer Down the Hall program in which a lawyer with a specific question about a substantive area hasn't had as much traffic as the one-on-one mentoring program. Carlene Lacy suggested at our EC meeting that we start a program for senior lawyers by senior lawyers within the Lawyer Down Hall program. This program would allow a Senior Division lawyer who is transitioning into a new area of practice to be paired up with a senior lawyer who has worked in the area. All mentors would need to be vetted by the Bar. It's something we'll explore. If you have other ideas on how we can use the collective wisdom and experience of the lawyers in this

Division to help our fellow lawyers, please let me know. In case you don't have it yet, my email is sallybob75@comcast.net.

Transition: This workgroup is planning a series of “drop-in” calls where you can ask any of those “soft” questions about transitioning. It's a chance for you to talk to folks who have fully retired about how they fill their days or to find out how others have cut back or changed to another area of law. It will be an informal session where you'll be able to get some practical tips and ideas for those things that are on your mind as you figure out your next new life. The first session is October 13 from 12-12:30 p.m. You do have to register and the [link to register is here](#). Email any questions you'd like to discuss to walternashlaw@gmail.com

Gary Stuart, an Executive Council member, is a great source of wisdom, particularly with respect to ethics. One thing Gary reminded us (or we learned for the first time) is that even lawyers on inactive or retired status are subject to the Code of Professional Conduct as well as our oath of office and the Professionalism Code. Gary will be at the call-in to answer questions there. If you can't get to the call-in session, Gary also is willing to answer questions if you call him.

Pro Bono: Working with the Pro Bono Network, the Division put together two CLE sessions in September, one on adult guardianship and one on juvenile guardianship. The seminars were free to those participating in pro bono work for one of the many recognized pro bono service providers or those who want to get involved in pro bono work. Dean Christoffel promises that he'll work to put together more seminars on subjects that might help you get into pro bono work so let either him or me know the areas in which you're interested. I was able to get two of you in touch with Dean after September's newsletter which tickled both Dean and me. Dean also reminds the EC members on a regular basis that you get your dues waived if you perform just 25 hours of pro bono work each year. Finally, Dean and his group have some ideas percolating for a Senior Day at the next State Bar Convention, with a breakfast and CLE.

Engaging Senior Lawyers: I gave you several ideas for possible ways to interact with each other in the last newsletter, and I was gratified by the responses. The area which attracted the most interest was books. We're not ready to start a virtual book club yet, but I do have several wonderful suggestions for your reading enjoyment. Here are three:

- a. *The Splendid and the Vile* by Erik Larson. This book is about Churchill and London during the Blitz. The only book by Larson that I've read is *The Devil in the White City* about the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893. I enjoyed

- it, and I will look forward to finding this one at the library or a used bookstore (or maybe even on Amazon).
- b. *Black Sun* by Owen Matthews. This is described as a thriller set in Russia in the early 1960s. It involves a murder, corrupt politicians and the creation of the largest nuclear bomb that had been built. Another book by Matthews is *Red Traitor* set during the Cuban Missile Crisis.
 - c. *Empire of Pain* by Patrick Radden Keefe. This is the story of the Sackler family, who were responsible for making and marketing OxyContin.

I'll be delighted to continue to pass on your ideas about books to read, so keep them coming.

The problems I'm having with getting a virtual book club started require your input. Firstly, what time of day is best for you all? Secondly, who has a Zoom account that they are willing to share and through which they are willing to host a book club? And lastly, how many people do we have in any session of the book club? While I don't expect all 4000 of us to want to participate, we realistically need to limit the number to 20 or 25 at the most if we want to have a good discussion. Again, your thought and suggestions (maybe several book clubs if there's enough interest and enough Zoom hosts?) are welcome. Email address is still sallybob75@comcast.net

I also got two suggestions for shows to watch. The documentary on Mohammed Ali on PBS was recommended highly. In addition, *White Lotus* on HBO received many kudos. If you have a program, movie, or other viewing favorite, let me know and I'll share it next month.

Another possible program mentioned in last month's newsletter that met with approval was a CLE on the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the US Constitution by Bob McWhirter. Thanks to our State Bar staff (and Mr. McWhirter), it's going to happen on October 21. Look for further information in your email or on the Senior Lawyers Digest.

Finally, I had an email from Martin Galbut, suggesting that we share any volunteer activities that might be of interest to other lawyers, whether those activities involve using your legal knowledge or not. I have friends who get a great deal of satisfaction by preparing meals for homeless shelters and packing boxes at the Community Food Bank. Others are docents at desert parks or historical museums. Martin suggested St. Vincent de Paul can always use volunteers. If you are doing community service that you think others might enjoy, please share it.

Oral History: This month's oral history comes from someone who is still practicing but who is always quick to laugh at himself. Jimmie Dee Smith is a former State Bar President (and current Board of Governors member) from Yuma. Glenn Gimbut told it to me, but he heard it from Jimmie Dee, and Jimmie confirmed that it's true.

There was a time that Yuma County did not have a public defenders' office and the court used court appointed private defense counsel to serve indigent defendants. But the County's system of payment for those services did not even come close to covering the overhead of the practitioner so folks dropped out of being willing to be on the list of those who would do this work. The solution for the Bench was to order the entire bar to take these cases. Obviously, some practitioners had never ever done criminal work and panicked. Jim wrote Judge Douglas Keddie asking to be taken off the list since it had been over a decade since his last criminal case, and he did not feel competent to handle such matters. Keddie wrote back with "You have finally said something that I agree with, that you are not competent." Jim responded, "That is correct your Honor, unlike you I don't know everything." Jim stayed on the list.

That's all for this month. Please keep those emails coming.

Sally Simmons
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Senior Lawyers Division Executive Council