VALLEY LAWYER

MAY 2009 • $4

A Publication of the San Fernando Valley Bar Association

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Co-Parenting vs. Parallel Parenting

Children with Special Needs

It Takes a Team

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Independent Judiciary

TAMILA JENSEN
SFVBA President

AMONG THE PURPOSES OF THE SAN Fernando Valley Bar Association are to educate the public concerning the legal and judicial system, to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States and of the State of California, to maintain representative government, and to promote meaningful access to the justice system. (Bylaws of the San Fernando Valley Bar Association, Article II.)

Over the years, the SFVBA has acted in various ways to support an independent judiciary consistent with our stated purpose. One way we do this is to maintain a supportive and respectful relationship with Valley judges. Judges' Night is one of our most well-attended events. The Bench-Bar Committee meets with the local presiding supervising judges bimonthly to discuss issues affecting our courts and Bar. The Foundation is engaged in long-term efforts to bring children's waiting rooms to Van Nuys and San Fernando courthouses. The waiting room in Van Nuys opened this past fall. Historically, the SFVBA was instrumental in bringing the first courthouse to the Valley. More recently, we joined in an amicus brief in *Sturgeon vs. Superior Court* (2009) 167 Cal.App.4th 630, which concerned the issue of judicial compensation.

The SFVBA also has taken public positions when appropriate not only to support the judiciary but also to educate the public about these issues. Recently, the Board of Trustees adopted a resolution supporting an independent judiciary. This arose in the context of the battle over Proposition 8 on the November ballot. On October 5, 2008, the Board of Trustees adopted a resolution urging "All members of the San Fernando Valley Bar Association, within their own communities, to actively support the full realization and exercise of civil rights by all citizens without regard for age, ancestry, color, religious creed, disability, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation." Our position has been disseminated widely to the public.

On March 10, 2009, the Board of Trustees again acted in support of an independent judiciary adopted the following resolution:

"Resolved, that the San Fernando Valley Bar Association calls on all people to respect and encourage the independence and intellectual honesty and integrity of the judicial branches of our governments, federal and state, to recognize and respect that the Justices are

compelled to decide each case based on rules of law, justly applied, and regardless of view on this or any particular subject, to respect and avoid and refrain from improper threats to the Justices and Judges of the courts, and further

Resolved, that the San Fernando Valley Bar Association calls on all people to recognize that whether satisfied or dissatisfied with the ultimate decision of the court, there are peaceful, civil, and democratic ways to support, or to seek to change, the outcome as peoples' morals, values and respect for civil rights and the pursuit of happiness of all people, compel them to do so; and further

Resolved, that the San Fernando valley Bar Association reaffirms our commitment to, and again urges all members of he San Fernando Valley Bar Association, and urges all persons, to actively support the full realization and exercise of civil rights and by all citizens without regard for age, ancestry, color, religious creed, disability, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation."

Last year, the SFVBA adopted a resolution supporting the lawyers in Pakistan in their efforts to preserve and protect an independent judiciary in that country, which was transmitted to the lawyers' groups in Pakistan. As I write this, the chief judge of the Pakistan Superior Court, Judge Iftikhar Mohammed Chaudhry has returned to his post after being removed by the Musharraf regime two years ago for political reasons. Chaudhry and 60 other ousted judges have returned to work thanks in large part to the long efforts of the lawyers in Pakistan.

Efforts of lawyers and others to work toward stable democracy in Pakistan have been fruitful – at least for now. The events in Pakistan are a lesson in the importance of an independent judiciary in a democracy. Two recent governments in Pakistan both tried to manipulate the judicial branch and to remove judges who they thought were going to rule in a way they did not like. As a matter of political expediency, they ousted the judges or did not permit them to return. This was a blatant and heavy handed attempt to manipulate the judiciary. Yet, it is in the extreme case that we see the gravamen of the issue. Foreign potentates understand the crucial role of an independent judiciary and we should not forget it either.

(L-R) ABA President H. Thomas Wells Jr., SFVBA Executive Director Liz Post, SFVBA President-Elect Robert Flagg and ABA Executive Director Henry F. White, Jr. at the ABA's Bar Leadership Institute

From the Editor

For question, comments or candid feedback regarding ***Valley Lawyer*** *or* ***Bar Notes****, please contact Angela at (818) 227-0490, ext. 109 or via email at Angela@sfvba.org.*

ANGELA M. HUTCHINSON
Editor

Spring Greetings!

One of my favorite TV shows growing up was *Family Matters*. The Emmy Award-winning sitcom was an entertaining portrayal of a middle class American family that lived in my hometown of Chicago. Similar to The *Cosby Show, All in the Family* and *Home Improvement, Family Matters* broke ground in its depiction of serious issues such as racism, sexism, drugs, obesity, rape, homosexuality, STDs, cancer, etc. The show also highlighted anniversaries, birthdays, promotions, proms, and other celebrated moments of life.

The ups and downs, emotional highs and lows, joys and sorrows are commonalities among families worldwide. In March, Arthur and I went to Six Flags for our wedding anniversary to celebrate our roller coasters. After 6 years of marriage, we have learned and are still learning to embrace every battle and victory in our lives. Doing so, I believe, allows couples to experience the varied aspects of love on an ongoing basis and helps keep a marriage strong.

When I think of family, the word that first comes to my mind is unity, then love and joy. Family is the basic unit of our society. Traditional or non-traditional, family is family! Therefore, it is important to protect non-traditional family rights and equally as important to preserve traditional family values. For the pending legal issues concerning family, I wish involved parties could settle on a fair resolution acceptable to all… but I guess that's only possible in a perfect world?

The evolution of the family unit, some say is inevitable due to prevalent social and environmental factors. Whether that is the case or not, family matters will always exist because families are made up of humans, and all of us have imperfections with diverse opinions, beliefs and thought processes. However, that should not hinder our universal pursuit of justice for families.

Family matters, indeed! This month's *Valley Lawyer* offers insightful perspectives of family law issues.

Have a united month!

Angela M. Hutchinson

Join the SFVBA Editorial Committee

VALLEY LAWYER

is seeking attorneys who have an interest in writing and are skilled at creating idea topics for special issues of Valley Lawyer.

Committee members must also be resourceful and have a strong knowledge of who's who among legal professionals. The Editorial Committee will meet in person twice a year, but will stay in touch via email throughout the months.

Deadline to join the Editorial Committee is Friday, May 8. If you are interested, please email Angela Hutchinson at angela@sfvba.org or call her at (818) 227-0490, ext. 109.

A New Era, Recession and Divorce

ROSIE SOTO
Director of
Public Services

CENSUS BUREAU FIGURES show that over the past 2½ decades, recessions have had insignificant effects on divorce rates, which have been slowly declining since the divorce rate peaked in 1981, after almost every state adopted no fault divorce laws.

For the ARS 2008 and 2009 fiscal years, family law referrals are down about 20% as compared to the numbers ten years ago. However, an interesting statistic reveals that the number of referrals for litigants of modest income in need of unbundled serviced and reduced fee services has declined and the number of those seeking full representation has increased. There is still a steadiness in the number of inquiries for family law related matters from the modest income earner; the trouble is clients are now completely broke.

The basis for a notable decline in family law referrals depends on who is asked. According to scholars, marriage experts and ARS divorce lawyers, it can be a combination of things: the number of couples who live together without marrying has increased; the marriage rate has dropped nearly 30 percent in the past 25 years; Americans are waiting about five years longer to marry than they did in 1970; and some believe it is an effect of the recession.

A study released by the U.S. Census Bureau on divorce by age showed that of about 23,000 people surveyed over the age of 25, about 50% of the group were now divorced; 35% of the people age 50 and over were divorced, while 62% of the people ages 25 to 29 were divorced.

Several researchers with the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) do not necessarily believe that Americans are making better choices about long-term relationships. NCHS experts say relationships are as unstable as ever and divorces are down primarily because more young people are cohabiting rather than getting married.

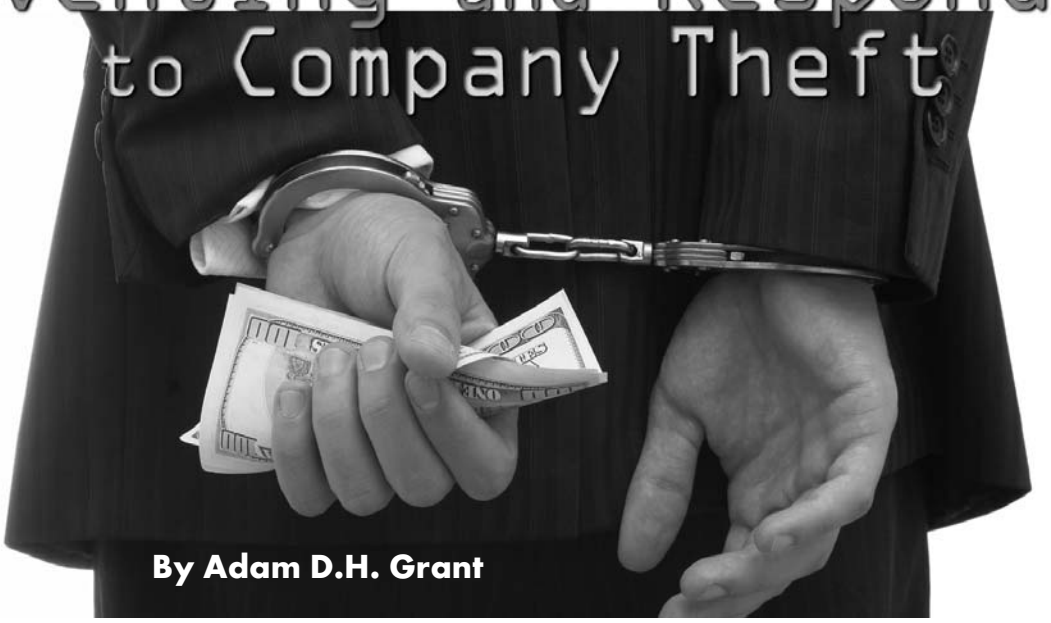
The ARS call volume of inquiries in family law related matters continues to rank in the top three in the poll for number of referrals based on area of practice. Evidence that the recession has impacted litigant is the common question from litigants, "How can I afford an attorney?" Clients are generally aware that failing to seek representation from a competent attorney can be detrimental, so an investment on legal fees to have an experienced attorney was

generally an easy choice after consulting with the ARS. However, people's net worth is significantly less than it was two years ago. Consequently, litigants are pondering the thought longer.

ARS statistics reveal the leading cause for non-retained cases by our panelists were the concerns with legal fees. Second to that were missed appointments by indecisive clients. Surveys also hint that, from the wealthy to those completely broke, couples feel the marital problems are related to the economy. Since these surveys are inconclusive, there is no telling if more spouses will figure out a way to make the marriage work or jump to divorce and negotiate debts instead of assets.

A function of the ARS is to promote meaningful access to legal representation and the justice system for all persons regardless of their economic or social condition. While researchers that study the social life of human groups, as it relates to family law, reveal their findings, the ARS will continue to sample existing clients in efforts to identify the service area needs. Such practices allow the ARS to call on all members to help build on the foundation of family law programs and referrals, such as the ARS Family Law Panel, Family Law Certified Specialists, Family Law Limited Scope Representation, Senior Citizen Legal Program for Family Law matters, Modest Means Referrals in Family Law and the ARS' commitment to helping fund the essential Children's Waiting Room in the San Fernando Courthouse.

Preventing and Responding to Company Theft



By Adam D.H. Grant

THE PRESIDENT OF A company comes to work one morning and listens to his phone messages. One ominous message is from a district attorney about his chief financial officer. Intrigued, he returns the call. The district attorney says the financial officer, who has been employed by the company for two years and has not yet returned from a vacation, has been arrested and has been accused of embezzling from his prior employer.

Being concerned about his company's own finances, the president calls his accountant. It appears the company has been attempting to collect on past due accounts, but customers are claiming payments have been made. The company books do not reflect these payments. There is a problem. What would you do?

It's time to stay calm and make decisions that could affect the severity of the loss and the future health of your business. Here's a step-by-step action plan to find the perpetrator, preserve assets, reduce negative publicity, maintain employee morale, prevent further loss and explore insurance and legal options when a breach occurs.

Information Preservation

In the throes of a crisis, quick action is necessary. Where is the company's most sensitive information? Where are bank statements and loan documents? Identify and locate information that is the most likely to be affected by the breach. For example, offsite copies of bank statements are a low priority; an onsite checkbook could be a high priority.

Regardless of what was stolen – money, products or intellectual property – immediately backup all company data on servers, stand-alone PCs and PDAs. Stop automatic purging of files, e-mails and other data. Strategize with IT personnel to determine any additional ways to safeguard confidential data.

If you later find information has been altered or erased on an electronic device, a forensic information technology expert can evaluate the electronic fingerprints left behind – who accessed data last and what was changed. Even so, preserving data immediately prevents an electronic "paper trail" from being destroyed.

Consider, as a matter of company policy, imaging hard copy documents and store the files offsite. When a crisis hits and hard copy documents are mysteriously missing, the backup could be invaluable in determining the severity of the loss and possibly point to the culprit.

Identify who has access to confidential information. Every business should maintain a list of who has passwords for sensitive information sources – computers, online banking, ATM machines, security systems, safety deposit boxes and investment accounts. While trusted employees are given these passwords, without proper password security, they can easily fall into the wrong hands.

Bottom line: every business should have a data preservation policy in place to protect sensitive information. This policy will not only prevent breaches from occurring, but will make tracking down the guilty party that much easier.

Responding to the Media

Depending on the severity of the breach, the loss may attract media attention. In these cases, the company should first determine the message it wants to present to the public and second, develop a plan to disseminate the message through the media.

The company spokesperson (ideally the company president or CEO) must be well versed in media communications. The spokesperson (and there should be only one) must stay on message in media interviews and through written communication. The message needs to be an honest account of the theft (staying within the guidelines of any criminal investigation) and present a pro-active response of how the company is responding to the loss.

Never hide behind "no comment" or fail to return media telephone calls. These actions allow others to determine the company message, whether accurate or not.

Employee Relations: How to Prevent Rumors and Shore Up Morale

Employees need to be informed about

the breach especially if the loss came from within. Most often, information to employees is delivered through human resources, but if the breach is severe, the company president or another high level executive may be selected to keep employees initially informed.

By dispensing forthright information quickly to employees, the company reduces rumors. The worst move for management is to go behind closed doors for several days while employees hear nothing. Management needs to communicate quickly to employees; otherwise, the rumor mill will create a situation that is far worse than reality. Morale suffers in an information vacuum. By sharing what you know, you create a closer bond with employees who are then more willing to contribute information that could help with the loss investigation.

Cast of Characters

If your inquiry leads you to suspect a specific employee, look at his or her co-workers, vendors and others who could be involved. When the breach is a crime of opportunity (the perpetrator sees the opportunity for quick cash or to steal goods), usually only one person is the culprit. If the crime is more calculated, the theft usually involves two or more people.

Recovering What's Been Lost

If the loss is significant or has taken place over a long period, there is hope that assets can be recovered through an asset check.

In one case, an asset check was conducted on a company CFO. He had embezzled $2.4 million and the investigation found he had invested the money in six pieces of property. He was sued, and a lean was placed on the properties. Eventually, the case was settled and the company took possession of the properties and sold them for a gain. What happened to the CFO? He spent 4½ years in prison. In most cases when a police report is filed, an "order of restitution" is obtained and executed much like a settlement.

Insurance Coverage

"Employee dishonesty" insurance covers company theft. Some coverage limits are as low as $50,000; others are in the millions. How do you determine the coverage limit best for your company? It depends on company size and type. A large manufacturer, for example, may receive sizable payments from customers so a $500,000 or $1 million policy limit may be appropriate. For a small mom and pop retail outlet, a $50,000 policy limit would probably be sufficient. Most theft amounts are under $50,000. The crime is committed by people who need quick cash – maybe for a nefarious drug habit, a medical emergency or to pay bills.

Civil Action: What are Your Options?

If a business has employee dishonesty coverage that does not recover the entire amount stolen, a lawsuit is sometimes necessary to recover the difference. In one case, an employee used an electronic teller to deposit checks into his personal account that were made out to his employer. The bank should have red flagged the fraud but failed to do so. The bank was sued and settled before trial.

Let's assume a company has a $50,000 insurance policy and a $75,000 loss. The $25,000 in uncovered losses is significant but the cost to file and bring the case to trial can easily eat up most of it. Plus, it can be years before trial. Analyze whether going forward with a lawsuit is worth the ultimate payoff.

Be Prepared

Unfortunately, theft will always be a part of the cost of doing business. Companies need safeguards to prevent theft, as well as an action plan if theft occurs in spite of a company's best efforts.

Adam D.H. Grant *is a principal with the Encino law firm of Alpert, Barr & Grant, APLC and is a Trustee for the San Fernando Valley Bar Association. His practice areas include complex business litigation, construction law, real estate and general liability claims. He can be reached at agrant@alpertbarr.com.*

IT TAKES A TEAM

By Heidi Lauer

THE AFRICAN PROVERB PROFESSES IT TAKES a village to raise a child. In family law, it takes a team to resolve marital dissolution actions. The collaborative process is all about a team approach. All of the participants – from the clients to the professionals – have the same goal of working together to resolve family law cases out of court. Ideally, all professionals involved have appropriate training in the collaborative process and have been exposed to a variety of models of collaborative law. This way, everyone is adhering to similar guidelines and practices and has the tools necessary to create feasible and innovative solutions. Further, everyone is familiar with the requirements of full disclosure, confidentiality, and the agreements concerning the process.

One of the key elements in a collaborative case is that the parties sign a document that is filed with the court evidencing their commitment to the collaborative process. This document is a stipulation obligating the parties to terminate the services of all professionals involved in the collaborative process if either party decides to proceed to litigation. If either party resorts to litigation any time after the collaborative process has commenced, then both parties need to start from scratch with new attorneys and professionals. The reason for this is to financially motivate the parties to stay in the collaborative process.

"The collaborative model evolved so that parties could take control of their family law actions and maintain confidentiality during the process."

The other key element in collaborative cases that requires adherence is the obligation of full disclosure. In order for the collaborative process to be successful, both parties, as well as all team members, must be completely honest about all issues in the dissolution process. The parties must be led to and reminded of this goal by the professionals involved. In litigation, although there is also a requirement of full disclosure, the goals are different and the parties may attempt to teeter the line regarding this responsibility, sometimes with the aid of their counsel.

The collaborative process was initially developed for use in states that have jury trials in family law matters. Litigants in those states did not want a jury of their "peers" deciding custody plans and dividing their assets. The collaborative model evolved so that parties could take control of their family law actions and maintain confidentiality during the process.

The collaborative process affords parties the luxury of confidentiality from the outside world. Although full disclosure is required between the participants and the team, no disclosure is permitted to third parties who are not part of the process. The collaborative process keeps financial information from the public eye, which may be why celebrities in particular find this process more appealing than traditional litigation.

In the true collaborative model, each party is represented by an attorney trained in the collaborative process. Then each party has a coach, who is a trained mental health professional, to help guide them through the process on an emotional level. Another team participant is the neutral financial professional who aids in determining income available for support and dividing assets and obligations.

Depending on the circumstances of the particular case, other mental health professionals may become involved to assist with parenting plans or to engage directly in the therapeutic process with a party or a child involved. Sometimes parties have other support people involved, for example a religious leader or a family member, however this may occur only with the consent of the other party. The collaborative team may engage the services of a mediator to aid in reaching agreements as well. In the collaborative process, the parties, with the assistance of their team, can develop creative solutions that will work for their individualized circumstances.

Involving all members of the team may sound like an expensive prospect, and it can be sometimes. However, more often the collaborative process is more cost-effective and less emotionally draining than traditional litigation. Each professional has his or her own task and that frees up the other professionals from spending time on those issues.

There is no hard and fast rule that participation in the collaborative process requires a full team. Parties and their respective attorneys may determine that the financial circumstances of the parties do not warrant the hiring of coaches or a financial professional. This does not mean that these parties cannot have a collaborative divorce, just that they will revise the model to meet their individual needs.

There are also long-term benefits for participants of collaborative law. Participating in the collaborative process helps parties build skills for amicable interaction in the future, when it comes to modifications or new issues that arise, especially when children are involved. Further, studies have shown that people adhere better to agreements that they reach themselves, rather than orders imposed upon them by others. This decreases the need for enforcement or potential future court intervention.

When everyone works together in a confidential, honest, and committed process, the resulting outcome and groundwork for future interaction is tantamount to the diverse and supportive environment of a village raised child. The team approach to marital dissolution actions has the potential of great benefits for all involved.

Heidi Lauer *is a partner of Pines, Laurent & Lauer, LLP, a practice devoted to family law. Ms. Lauer is a mediator and a trained collaborative attorney. She is a member of the Los Angeles Collaborative Family Law Association (LACFLA). Ms. Lauer can be reached at (818) 382-3900 or www.pllfamilylaw.com.*

Children with Special Needs: Family Law Proceedings

By Donna A. Laurent and Cari M. Pines

FAMILY LAW COURTS TODAY are increasingly dealing with issues facing families of children with special needs. Often, the marital and family dysfunction which led to the breakup of the family was compounded by the challenges inherent in caring for a child who has special needs. These children tend to require high maintenance. Ordinary parenting skills are simply insufficient to address the myriad of issues presented. These parents must become mini-experts as to their child's specific needs, and must advocate tirelessly to ensure that the child's necessary medical, educational, developmental and psychological needs are met.

It is critically important for the attorneys, bench officers and professionals involved in these cases to have specialized knowledge of the issues, resources, available special needs systems, as well as the child's specific and individualized needs. The legal and physical custody orders made by family law judicial officers for these families are literally "quality of life" decisions that can drastically effect and/or substantially enhance the special needs child's daily life as well as his/her future.

There are a number of categories of children with special needs. These include those with chronic or life-threatening medical conditions, such as asthma, food allergies, diabetes, developmental disorders, including learning disabilities, ADHD, autism or autism spectrum disorders (Asperger's Syndrome), and psychological or behavioral disorders, such as depression, bipolar or conduct disorders. Each of these diagnoses presents unique challenges for separating or separated parents who are also dealing with the stress, emotions and changes involved in the break up of the family unit.

In custody disputes involving these children, first and foremost, the court must immediately be made aware of the child's individual issues, particular specialized needs, and parameters of required care. Unlike parenting plans and custody orders for "typical" children, those for special needs children must, in many ways, be micro-managed. The family law lawyer must be able to educate the court and provide information needed to ensure that the parenting plan be as detailed and comprehensive as is necessary to ensure the child's best interests are met.

Initially, the court will need to know if the child has been diagnosed. If so, was it self-diagnosis by a parent or by a professional? (Because many disabilities are genetically based, the parents themselves often have histories of dealing with the same or similar issues.) Are there differing opinions by various professionals? Do both parents agree with the diagnosis, or is one parent in denial (which can be critically dangerous in an asthma/allergy situation, in particular). Do the parents differ in their opinions as to treatment? Diet? Medication? Discipline? School selection? It is incumbent that the attorney highlights the extreme dangers and unique risks the child may face if one parent fails to appreciate the seriousness of the child's special needs.

Often the court must consider which parent is better educated and trained in dealing with the child's needs and specialized care and to what degree each parent is involved in the treatment process and treatment options. If the child is on medication, do both parents know which medications, the dosage and times they are to be administered? Can the parent identify specific triggers or unique issues that may provoke an attack or behavioral episode? Do the parents have differing philosophical views on their child's treatment, medication or care giver?

Another critical issue is whether or not the child has or needs an IEP (Individualized Education Plan). Often both parents are not in agreement about this process or one is in denial and/or worried about the child being "labeled." The unfortunate reality is that in Los Angeles County, LAUSD will usually side with the parent who is in denial about the child needing special education services. For this reason, it may be necessary and appropriate for the court to award the other parent sole legal custody as far as educational decisions are concerned.

The same goes for differences of opinion concerning medication. If one parent does not believe in medication and refuses to medicate the child, in spite of the fact that the child's doctors, teachers, and therapist believe medication is helping the child, it may be necessary for the court to award the other parent sole legal custody concerning medication issues. In these instances, that parent may also be awarded physical custody during all school time (since the medication may be required for the child to concentrate).

Several years ago, Heidi Perryman, Ph.D., developed an adaptation of a program used in the juvenile justice system for dealing with children with learning disabilities and other diagnosable disorders. Her IPP or Individualized Parenting Plan model, used in family law proceedings, requires the analysis of specific information about the particular child's functioning in a number of areas, including the child's home environment, education, extra-curricular and social activities, family dynamics, medical and psychological needs, advocacy and financial needs.

The residence of the child who has special needs may require specific structural accommodations, such as wheelchair access or TDD phone service. The child may need his/her own bedroom to allow for a quiet, non-stimulating environment. The child's psychological needs may be such that one primary residence, in which the primary parent has established specific routines and/or other strategies to assist the child in coping are in place. The distance between the parents' residences and the child's school, physicians, and therapists should be considered. Issues for consideration may be how much time the child will spend riding in the car each week and whether the child can tolerate long commutes.

As previously indicated, it is imperative that the child's IEP be considered if one is in place. If neither parent can effectively advocate for the child, minor's counsel, a special master, or a parenting plan coordinator may need to be appointed to make decisions or to help parents make decisions in this area.

Extra-curricular activities for special needs children are often a source of conflict between parents. One parent may feel the child absolutely needs to be involved in one or more activities to develop social skills and self-confidence. This may involve a social skills class, soccer, or dance. The other parent may complain of missed custodial time during "his or her time" or the other parent over-indulging the child who may not be able to handle too much activity. For these reasons, the parenting plan should be specific regarding which activities the child is to be involved in and how each parent is to participate in those activities.

Other family members, and their role in the child's life, must also be considered. The attorney should consider whether the family understands, accepts and appreciates the child's special needs. Is there a step-parent or step-siblings involved in the child's home? Is transitioning between a home in which the child may be the only child and a home in which there are several step-siblings too stressful? Even minor changes to a child's daily routine can be overwhelming for some children with special needs.

Of utmost concern must be the child's medical and psychological needs. If the parents cannot agree on treating physicians, therapists, treatment, medications, the court will have to dictate which parent has decision-making authority or may appoint some other professional to provide the court with information to allow it to make decisions on behalf of the child. The child's psychological age, rather than his/her chronological age must be considered. A ten-year-old child with particular needs may be far more emotionally attached to one parent than a "typical" five-year-old. The court must be presented with proposed orders addressing all areas of concern to ensure the child's best interests are protected.

Children with special needs often create complex financial issues for families which raises issues of child and spousal support as well as areas of reimbursement. While many of the required services may be covered by medical insurance and/or federal and state government or school district programs, that is not always the case. An insurance company may pay for speech, occupational and physical therapy for an autistic child, but may deny coverage for desperately needed behavioral therapy. An IEP may provide for individualized treatment with a resource specialist and other professional services, but the child may additionally need a private tutor and/or group social skills training, in order to meet his/her full potential. It is also possible that a child may never be able to be self-supporting, even after reaching the age of majority, and this may require the court to extend jurisdiction over child support beyond the age of majority.

Families of children with special needs need specialized representation in family law proceedings. Attorneys representing these parents must be familiar with the special needs systems, must be competent to advise on when to seek further resources and assessment options, must be readily familiar with expert professionals for referral purposes and must know precisely what to request of the court to enhance the lives of these children and their families.

Cari M. Pines *and* ***Donna A. Laurent*** *are Certified Family Law Specialists who have recently opened Pines, Laurent and Lauer, a practice devoted to family law. Ms. Laurent and Ms. Pines represent parties in all aspects of family law and have extensive experience representing families with children of special needs. Ms. Laurent and Ms. Pines currently serve as Co-Program Chairs for the SFVBA's Family Law Section. They can be reached at (818) 382-3900 or www.pllfamilylaw.com.*

Co-Parenting vs. Parallel Parenting:

Which Strategy Should Be Implemented in Family Law Custody Disputes?

Co-Parenting

- Communication flow with other parent
- Shared information
- Discussions about child's needs
- Business relationship around child's issues
- Both parents attend child-centered activities

Parallel Parenting

- Minimum contact with other parent
- Communication through brief e-mail
- Lack of family discussions
- Exclusive parent-child relationship
- Parents alternate at child's activities

By Renee Leff, J.D., LMFT

PARENTING PATTERNS DEMONSTRATE THE WAY in which parents relate to one another, and therefore, they hold an important key to how well the children will adjust to the changes that divorce brings. A no-to-low conflict divorce is likely to allow for successful co-parenting. Frequently an easy flow of communication can be established between these individuals: each spouse often has the perception that the other is committed to being a good parent to the children.

Information is usually shared, communications are respectful, and children are kept out of the middle. They are allowed to enjoy their childhood lives, and adult issues, especially divorce-talk and/or disparaging comments about the other parent, do not occur in their children's presence or hearing. Each parent supports the other parent's relationship with the children and encourages the children to feel free to love and be comfortable in both houses. This type of co-parenting relationship can produce resilient and well-adjusted children who are likely to become productive, healthy human beings.

However, not all divorcing parties are capable of successful co-parenting. Frequently, with high conflict couples, there is little or no trust and little to no communication. The spouses appear to be unable and/or unwilling to interact between one another about their children's needs and activities without competition and/or conflict. In such cases, the children suffer, and parallel parenting, rather than co-parenting, may be an option.

Although it is far from ideal, if used correctly, parallel parenting can reduce or eliminate conflict and provide a stable and consistent life style for a child. A parallel parenting plan requires minimum contact between parents. Each parent conducts his own relationship with the child and arranges programs fully and completely on his/her own custodial time with the child. There is no consultation with the other parent. Parents work side-by-side without intruding on the other's time with the children. When the children are young, this is more difficult, but indeed, it is possible. Necessary communication occurs through brief e-mails, and, upon an emergency, telephone contact ensues. Communications, though minimal, always need to be respectful.

Naturally, a detailed parenting plan must be in place, and if it is thorough and both parties follow its recommendations in a business-like fashion, than this type of parenting plan can work. It provides the external controls that divorcing parties often need, especially during the first years of the divorce. A well-crafted parallel parenting plan not only provides limits to the time one parent comes in contact with the other, but it also helps the children to know when exactly each parent will arrive and depart.

An effective parenting plan, whether it be a co-parenting plan or a parallel parenting plan, clarifies many important child issues that the divorcing parties may not foresee. Additionally, it provides for professional assistance when unexpected life circumstances produce change and further re-adjustment in a family is needed. Examples of this may be re-marriage or "moveaway" situations.

It is now well-established that an absence of conflict plus a consistent life style helps a child of divorce to feel safe and contained. Yet, any type of agreement must also contain flexibility to meet the changing needs of children as they grow older. There are times when an expert in the matters of assessing parenting capacities may assist attorneys in the choice, creation and implementation of a parenting plan. A strong plan, appropriate to the emotional capacities of the spouses, can help the children become and remain resilient, adjusted, and productive individuals during and after their parent's divorce.

Renee Leff *is an LMFT with a J.D. She has offices in Woodland Hills and in Brentwood, where she specializes in assisting divorcing families through the process of divorce-related issues: parenting plans, refusal of a child to visit a parent, parent-child re-unification. She can be reached at (818) 734-9602 or lefforensic@yahoo.com. Her website is www.forensictherapy.com.*

MCLE ARTICLE AND SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST

By reading this article and answering the accompanying test questions, you can earn one MCLE credit. To apply for the credit, please follow the instructions on the test answer form on page 23.

10 Common Misconceptions about Family Law

By Michelle S. Robins

IT IS VERY COMMON FOR family law attorneys to hear clients and other attorneys (who don't practice family law) make statements about family law issues that are incorrect or based on outdated laws or laws in other states. This article sets forth some of the most common misconceptions and the current state of the law on those issues.

1. Common Law Marriage

Contrary to the belief of many people, there is no such thing as common law marriage in California. The doctrine of common law marriage was abolished by statute in 1895. However, this does not preclude unmarried cohabitors from attempting to establish a contractual obligation for support and rights to ownership of property. These claims simply cannot be based upon the Family Law Act (i.e., in *Marvin v. Marvin [Marvin I]* (1976) 18 Cal.3d 660, the Court held that the Family Law Act could not be applied to nonmarital relationships). Litigation over these kinds of contractual disputes is heard in civil courtrooms rather than family law courtrooms.

Although a common law marriage cannot be entered into in California, California recognizes the validity of such marriages if they are validly entered into in another state.

California also recognizes domestic partnerships where two adults who have chosen to share one another's lives in an intimate and committed relationship of mutual caring register their relationship with the state. These individuals must live together and be either of the following: (1) both persons are members of the same sex or (2) one or both of the persons meet the eligibility criteria under Title II of the Social Security Act as defined in 42 U.S.C. Section 402(a) for old-age insurance benefits or Title XVI of the Social Security Act as defined in 42 U.S.C. Section 1381 for aged individuals.

2. Dissolution of Marriage versus Legal Separation

The major difference between a Dissolution of Marriage and Legal Separation in California is that a dissolution ends a marriage contract between two individuals and both parties are free to marry again. If the parties are granted a Judgment of Legal Separation, they are only legally separated, their marital status remains intact and they are not free to marry again.

There is no residency requirement for filing a petition for legal separation. There is a residency requirement for filing a petition for dissolution of marriage. Where one of the parties files for legal separation because at the time of commencement of the proceeding neither party has complied with the residence requirements for a dissolution, either party may amend their petition to request a dissolution of marriage However, once a Judgment of Legal Separation is granted, one of the parties has to file a Petition for Dissolution of Marriage in order for the parties to obtain a Judgment of Dissolution of their marriage.

3. No Fault Divorces

There is no need in California to prove specific acts of misconduct by a spouse in order to be divorced. Family Code section 2335 provides that: "Except as otherwise provided by statute, in a

pleading or proceeding for dissolution of marriage or legal separation of the parties, including depositions and discovery proceedings, evidence of specific acts of misconduct is improper and inadmissible" (Fam. Code §2335.).

The most common ground for dissolving a marriage is called "irreconcilable difference". The irreconcilable differences ground is purposely broad and makes questions of fault or misconduct by either party irrelevant. Thus, in California a marriage can be terminated simply because one of the parties decides that he or she no longer wants to be married. This is contrary to other states where misconduct by a party may be punished by a party getting a smaller share of the marital property.

When a party files an action for Annulment rather than Dissolution of Marriage, the specific acts of the parties is admissible, including evidence of bigamy, incest, unsound mind, invalid consent and fraudulent inducement.

4. Standard Used by Courts in Custody Disputes

In California, the court uses a "best interests" standard to determine the custodial arrangement for the children. The court usually considers the parents' wishes, the mental and physical health of the parents and the children, any history of domestic abuse, the child's age and attachment to each parent and with older children, sometimes the child's wishes.

5. Age When Child Can State a Preference in Custody Disputes

Contrary to popular belief, there is no specific age at which a court will consider a child's preference in a custody dispute. Instead, the court applies its discretion and considers the maturity of the child.

Family Code section 3042 provides "(a) If a child is of sufficient age and capacity to reason so as to form an intelligent preference as to custody, the court shall consider and give due weight to the wishes of the child in making an order granting or modifying custody".

Furthermore, some courts will not consider the child's preference irrespective of a child's maturity since giving such power to a child often damages the relationship between the child and the parent not preferred by the child.

6. Joint Physical Custody

The term "joint physical custody" does not mean that the parties have equal custodial time with the child (i.e., 50/50). In California, "joint physical custody" means that each of the parents has significant periods of physical custody with the child and custody is shared by the parents in such a way so as to ensure a child of frequent and continuing contact with both parents.

7. Computation of Child Support

California uses a child support guideline as a basis for determining the amount of child support a party will pay. The guidelines consider the incomes of the parties, the times the parties spend with their children, and a variety of income tax factors.

Courts can adjust the guideline amounts in very limited circumstances. The gender of the party requesting or receiving child support is irrelevant. Computer programs have been created based on these guidelines and the courts use these computer programs to compute child support.

8. Wage Assignments

Even if a party has no history of failing to pay child support, the court is required to issue a wage assignment. *Family Code* §5230 provides that: "When the court orders a party to pay an amount for support or orders a modification of the amount of support to be paid, the court shall include in its order an earnings assignment order for support that orders the employer of the obligor to pay to the obligee that portion of the obligor's earnings due or to become due in the future. . . ." Despite this code section, many parties stipulate that the court may stay the service of the Wage Assignment on the supporting parties' employer.

9. Division of Property

People often ask if the court has to divide community property equally. California law requires that unless the parties agree to an unequal division of property (which for various reasons some people do), or a party has engaged in a specific kind of misconduct (like not disclosing a community asset to the other party), the court must divide community assets and debts equally.

The Family Law Court also has jurisdiction to divide property that was omitted from the original property

division. Family Code §2556 provides that "In a proceeding for dissolution of marriage, for nullity of marriage, or for legal separation of the parties, the court has continuing jurisdiction to award community estate assets or community estate liabilities to the parties that have not been previously adjudicated by a judgment in the proceeding.

A party may file a postjudgment motion or order to show cause in the proceeding in order to obtain adjudication of any community estate asset or liability omitted or not adjudicated by the judgment. In these cases, the court shall equally divide the omitted or unadjudicated community estate asset or liability, unless the court finds upon good cause shown that the interests of justice require an unequal division of the asset or liability."

10. The Cost of Divorces

Divorces do not have to bankrupt the parties. As in other fields of law, there are alternatives to litigation. One of the most popular and cost-effective means of dissolving a marriage in California is mediation where an individual acts as an impartial third party that assists the parties in reaching an amicable agreement regarding all of their disputed issues.

Michelle S. Robins *has been practicing law for almost 20 years, and has devoted her practice almost entirely to family law matters. She can be reached at MRobins@lewitthackman.com.*

MCLE Test No. 11

This self-study activity has been approved for Minimum Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) credit by the San Fernando Valley Bar Association (SFVBA) in the amount of 1 hour. SFVBA certifies that this activity conforms to the standards for approved education activities prescribed by the rules and regulations of the State Bar of California governing minimum continuing legal education.

1. Common law marriage exists in California.
True
False

2. California recognizes the validity of common law marriages which are valid under the law of other state jurisdictions.
True
False

3. You can not marry someone else if you are only legal separated from your spouse.
True
False

4. Once a Judgment of Legal Separation is granted, one of the parties does not have to file a Petition for Dissolution of Marriage in order for the parties to obtain a Judgment of Dissolution of their marriage.
True
False

5. Evidence of specific acts of misconduct is necessary to obtain a divorce.
True
False

6. Irreconcilable differences is a ground for requesting a divorce in California.
True
False

7. The Best Interest Standard is the standard used by courts in Child Custody Disputes.
True
False

8. In determining what is in the best interests of a child, the court usually considers the parents' wishes, the mental and physical health of the parents and the children, any history of domestic abuse, the child's age and attachment to each parent and the child's wishes.
True
False

9. Courts will always listen to the preference of a 14-year-old in a custody dispute.
True
False

10. If a child is of sufficient age and capacity to reason so as to form an intelligent preference as to custody, the court shall consider and give due weight to the wishes of the child in making an order granting or modifying custody.
True
False

11. If the Court awards a party "joint physical custody" that party has the children 50% of the time.
True
False

12. "Joint physical custody" means that each of the parents has significant periods of physical custody with the minor child and custody is shared by the parents in such a way so as to assure frequent and continuing contact with both parents and the child.
True
False

13. Mothers always receive child support.
True
False

14. California does not use a guideline as a basis for the computation of child support.
True
False

15. A court does not have the discretion as to whether or not to issue a wage assignment after making a child support order.
True
False

16. Parties can agree to stay service of a wage assignment.
True
False

17. The court generally divides community property equally between the parties.
True
False

18. Parties cannot agree to an unequal division of community property.
True
False

19. Parties must litigate their dissolution actions in court.
True
False

20. Mediation is a cost-effective alternative to litigating a divorce in court.
True
False

MCLE Answer Sheet No. 11

INSTRUCTIONS:
1. **Accurately complete this form.**
2. **Study the MCLE article in this issue.**
3. **Answer the test questions by marking the appropriate boxes below.**
4. **Mail this form and the $15 testing fee for SFVBA members (or $25 for non-SFVBA members) to:**

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METHOD OF PAYMENT:
❒ Check or money order payable to "SFVBA"
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5. **Make a copy of this completed form for your records.**
6. **Correct answers and a CLE certificate will be mailed to you within 2 weeks. If you have any questions, please contact our office at (818) 227-0490, ext. 105.**

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Email_____
Phone_____
State Bar No._____

ANSWERS:
Mark your answers by checking the appropriate box. Each question only has one answer.

1.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**
2.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**
3.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**
4.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**
5.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**
6.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**
7.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**
8.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**
9.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**
10.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**
11.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**
12.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**
13.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**
14.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**
15.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**
16.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**
17.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**
18.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**
19.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**
20.	❒ **True**	❒ **False**

Intro to California Securities

By Jor Law

IT SEEMS THAT NOT A DAY goes by when the media doesn't report another dismal setback to the economy. Compensation freezes at this company, layoffs at that company; it never seems to end. So what is a person who has been let go supposed to do when no one is hiring? Why not start a business and pursue that long time dream to open up the cozy coffee shop or after-school daycare? Businesses require money, of course, so that is what friend and family are there for, right? Not so fast!

Before anyone asks investors for money, even if they are friends or family, he or she should understand the impact of securities laws on the raising of capital. The subject of securities law is lengthy and complex and may be more effective at inducing a state of drowsiness than any drug ever manufactured, but this article will try to explore some of the basics of California securities laws in an easy-to-understand manner.

Any discussion of securities laws should start with an understanding of what constitutes a "security". The definition is typically extremely broad, and though it varies depending on whether you are looking at the federal laws or the laws of each state governing the securities area (commonly known as blue-sky laws), the basics are usually the same. It has long been understood that stocks or bonds of a company are securities.

What many people don't realize is that a whole myriad of other things could be considered securities. For example, promissory notes or even investments in orange groves and chinchillas have been considered securities. If a person is going around asking for people to invest in his or her new business startup, there is an extremely good chance that he or she is dealing with securities.

Under California laws, certain securities must be qualified (i.e., reviewed and approved) or exempted from qualification by the Department of Corporations before they can be offered or sold in California. Note, in particular, that "offers" of securities may be improper even if no sale is made. That means the simple act of asking someone to buy some shares in a startup company could be illegal even if the potential buyer never ends up

making the purchase or if the seller decides not to sell the shares. Failure to comply with the securities laws can lead to investor suits or fines and even jail sentences. This is true for violations of California laws as well as federal laws and other state blue sky laws.

Qualifying securities in California (or anywhere, for that matter) can be an extremely trying process. As part of the qualification process, the Department of Corporations will review the business and financial aspects of the investment and the backgrounds of the persons making the offering.This can be a time-consuming and arduous process.

Most people opt not to qualify the securities they plan to offer or sell and seek an exemption instead. Common exemptions in California include the ones found in Sections 25102(f), 25102(h), and 25102(n) of the California Corporations Code. By far, the most commonly used exemption in California is the one provided by Section 25102(f) of the California Corporations Code.

Section 25102(f) of the California Corporations Code essentially provides an exemption from qualification of securities with the Department of Corporations where (i) sales of the securities are not made to more than thirty-five persons; (ii) all of the purchasers of the securities have either (a) a pre-existing personal or business relationship with the issuer of the securities (or certain persons affiliated with the issuer) or (b) the ability, through their own business or financial experience or that of their professional advisers, to protect their own interests in connection with the purchase of the securities; (iii) all of the purchasers represent that they are making the purchase of securities for their own account without the view to sell or otherwise distribute the securities; and (iv) no public advertising is published to conduct the offer and sale of the securities.

Unlike many of the other exemptions available, Section 25102(f) of the California Corporations Code does not place a cap on the amount of money that one can raise while still qualifying for the exemption. One could theoretically raise a few thousand dollars or several million dollars under the Section 25102(f) exemption.

Section 25102(f) of the California Corporations Code is the most commonly used exemption in California for good reason. Most people starting businesses and seeking startup capital do not make sales to more than 35 persons. Generally, the investors will have a pre-existing relationship with the seller, even if not a significant one. For the investors that do not have a pre-existing relationship with the seller, they may have the necessary experience to protect their interests in the investments; otherwise, they can easily hire professional advisers who have adequate experience to competently protect their clients. Many times, investors buy for their own account, and not because they plan on disposing of their investment immediately. Also, for most capital raises, it's not necessary to advertise the offering as the entrepreneur selling the

securities often will approach friends and family to make private offers.

As easy as it is to qualify for the exemption made available under Section 25102(f) of the California Corporations Code, however, it is also easy to accidentally disqualify oneself from being able to rely on the exemption. For example, browsing on Craigslist.org, a popular online classifieds website, will reveal masses of people with postings explicitly seeking investors for their businesses. Almost certainly, these postings constitute a publication of an advertisement to offer or sell securities, thereby violating one of the key criteria to qualify for the 25102(f) exemption.

Of course, 25102(f) of the California Corporations Code is only one of the many exemptions available to those seeking exemptions in order to avoid having to qualify securities with the Department of Corporations. However, all of the exemptions have criteria that one must satisfy in order to successfully claim them.

The 25102(f) exemption is among the easiest to claim, so violating the criteria under other exemptions is usually easier to do. Therefore, anyone interested in raising money for his or her business should consult with a qualified securities expert regarding what he or she can or cannot do while raising capital.

If a person accidentally takes actions that disallow him or her to take advantage of all of the exemptions, then he or she will have to qualify the securities with the Department of Corporations. Again, that process will generally be much more painful than simply finding an exemption.

Investors should note that qualification of securities with the Department of Corporations does not mean that the Department of Corporations endorses the securities offering or believes it to be a good investment. In fact, it doesn't even mean that the Department of Corporations assures the accuracy of the material relating to any offer of the securities. Investors need to complete their own diligence and make such determinations for themselves.

So now assume that the entrepreneur believes he or she can either qualify the securities with the Department of Corporations or that he or she will find a suitable exemption under California law, perhaps even under 25102(f) of the California Corporations Code. Is it off to the races? Alas, no. The entrepreneur needs to determine compliance with federal securities laws and possibly the securities laws of other states. Certainly if the sales of securities are being made to residents of several states, federal securities laws and the blue sky laws of those states will apply.

Furthermore, the sale of securities is still subject to anti-fraud provision of the various securities laws. Among other things, it is unlawful for any person to offer or sell a security in California or offer to buy a security in California by means of a communication which includes an untrue statement of material fact or omits to state a material fact in a misleading manner. In other words, neither the person offering or selling securities nor the person offering to buy securities may make a positive statement that is false or otherwise mislead the other by failing to disclose material facts.

California securities laws have many other provisions governing anti-fraud issues related to securities. Similarly, federal securities laws and other states' blue sky laws take anti-fraud issues seriously.

Due the complexity of the area of securities laws and the issues involved, entrepreneurs or attorneys representing entrepreneurs in starting a business should consult with an experienced securities attorney for guidance. In fact, a seasoned attorney in the securities area will usually also have valuable industry experience and contacts to share. In today's environment, one can't get enough help with raising money.

Jor Law *is a business and corporate attorney and a founding shareholder of Homeier & Law, P.C. He serves on the SFVBA Membership and Marketing Committees. Law can be reached at (818) 450-1550 ext. 552 or jor@homeierlaw.com.*

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The following new members joined the SFVBA in March 2009:

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■ United Commercial Bank offers no account maintenance fee on checking accounts with minimum balances; lower fees on credit card merchant services; and Express Deposit Service enabling Members to scan checks at the office and transmit the image to UCB for deposit. Call (818) 988-6668.

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■ Contact the SFVBA office to receive a package of **discount coupons & membership cards** for Southern California's major theme parks and attractions.

■ Now Messenger Service offers members who open new accounts a **5% discount** off their current rates. Call (818) 774-9111.

■ SFVBA members **save $10** on new AAA Membership. Please also ask us about new insurance with many available discounts. Call Hazel Sheldon at (818) 615-2289. Mention campaign code 39727.

■ Receive 10% off Super Value daily and weekly rates and 5% off promotional rates from Avis Rent A Car. To make a reservation, call (800) 331-1212 or visit www.AVIS.com. When reserving a vehicle, provide discount AWD Number G133902.

■ Members save up to 15% off Hertz daily member benefit rates at participating locations in the U.S. and special international discounts are also available. Your SFVBA CDP **#1787254** is the key. Visit hertz.com or call (800) 654-2200.

Calendar

Probate & Estate Planning Section
Domestic Partnerships and Marriage in California

MAY 12
12:00 NOON
MONTEREY AT ENCINO RESTAURANT
ENCINO

Attorneys Wendy Hartmann and Caren Nielsen will clarify the state of domestic partnerships and marriage post Proposition 8 and discuss the relevancy to probate and estate planning matters.

MEMBERS
$35 prepaid
$45 at the door
1 MCLE HOUR

NON-MEMBERS
$45 prepaid
$55 at the door

Small Firm & Sole Practitioner Section and ADR Section
Insurance Insights: How to Settle Your Case When the Adjuster is Calling the Shots

MAY 13
12:00 NOON
SFVBA CONFERENCE ROOM

Mediator Robert J.Vars with 35+ years of law practice handling civil and other matters offers insights every practitioner should know regarding resolving disputes when insurance companies are involved.

MEMBERS
$30 prepaid
$40 at the door
1 MCLE HOUR

NON-MEMBERS
$40 prepaid
$50 at the door

Women Lawyers Section

MAY 14
12:00 NOON
SFVBA CONFERENCE ROOM

Check out www.sfvba.org for program details.

MEMBERS
$30 prepaid
$40 at the door
1 MCLE HOUR

NON-MEMBERS
$40 prepaid
$50 at the door

Business Law, Real Property & Bankruptcy Section
MERS – A Mortgage Industry Standard Built on Sand

MAY 18
12:00 NOON
SFVBA CONFERENCE ROOM

Attorney Lewis Landau will discuss deeds of trust and notes with a focus on MERS.

MEMBERS
$30 prepaid
$40 at the door
1 MCLE HOUR

NON-MEMBERS
$40 prepaid
$50 at the door

Family Law Section
Real Estate Primer for Family Law Attorneys in Today's Market

MAY 18
5:30 PM
MONTEREY AT ENCINO RESTAURANT
ENCINO

Attorney Gary Weyman will moderate a panel discussion with scheduled speakers Commissioner Patricia Ito, CPA Michael Krycler, real estate agent Mickey Kessler and real estate appraiser Larry Sommer. The meeting is one week early due to Memorial Day holiday.

MEMBERS
$45 prepaid
$55 at the door
1 MCLE HOUR

NON-MEMBERS
$55 prepaid
$65 at the door

Criminal Law Section
Cross-Examination Techniques

MAY 19
6:00 PM
UNCLE CHEN RESTAURANT
ENCINO

Dmitry Gorin, a former Senior Deputy District Attorney, will give insight into cross-examination techniques from a prosecutor's perspective.

MEMBERS
$35 prepaid
$45 at the door
1 MCLE HOUR

NON-MEMBERS
$45 prepaid
$55 at the door

Workers' Compensation Section
Determining Orthopedic Permanent Disability Post Almazar/Guzman

MAY 20
12:00 NOON
MONTEREY AT ENCINO RESTAURANT
ENCINO

Dr. Roger Sohn will discuss the changes in determining orthopedic disability subsequent to the Almazar/Guzman case.

MEMBERS
$35 prepaid
$45 at the door
1 MCLE HOUR

NON-MEMBERS
$45 prepaid
$55 at the door

Santa Clarita Valley Bar Association
Latest Technology Available for the Courtroom and Beyond

MAY 21
6:00 PM
TOURNAMENT PLAYERS CLUB
VALENCIA

MEMBERS
$40 prepaid
$50 at the door
1 MCLE HOUR

NON-MEMBERS
$50 at the door

Joint Meeting with CalCPA
The Fallout from Madoff: How to Counsel Your Clients to Avoid Scams

MAY 26
11:30 AM
MONTEREY AT ENCINO RESTAURANT
ENCINO

Attorney James Felton of Greenberg & Bass and Mitchell Freedman, CPA/PFS will address this timely topic. RSVP to delia.rincon@calcpa.org or (818) 546-3509.

MEMBERS
$35 prepaid
$45 at the door
1.5 MCLE HOURS

NON-MEMBERS
$45 prepaid
$55 at the door
1.5 HOURS CPE

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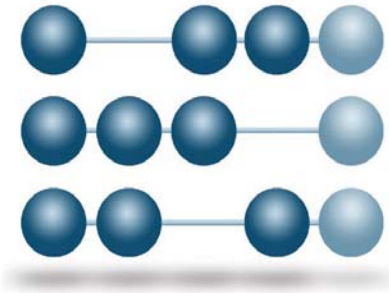

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