

# CYLA News

## California Young Lawyers Association The State Bar of California

Representing and advocating the interests and needs of the young and new lawyer members of The State Bar of California.



NOVEMBER 20, 2006

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 3

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

**2006**

#### NOVEMBER

22<sup>nd</sup> - [Thanksgiving Eve Cocktail Sip, Black Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles](#)

#### DECEMBER

New Admittee Swearing-in Ceremonies

1<sup>st</sup> - [San Diego County Bar Association, Stepping Up to the Bar Holiday Gala, San Diego](#)

6<sup>th</sup> - [Beverly Hills Bar Association 75th Anniversary Celebration](#)

8<sup>th</sup> - [Mexican American Bar Association Annual Christmas Celebration, A Black Tie Gala, Los Angeles](#)

12<sup>th</sup> - [LCBA 2006 New Admittee Reception, Los Angeles](#)

13<sup>th</sup> - [Santa Clara County Bar Association - Minority Bar Holiday Mixer](#)

14<sup>th</sup> - [East \(Ventura\) County Bar Association Holiday Mixer](#)

14<sup>th</sup> - Orange County Bar Association YLD Holiday Party, Club 33, Disneyland

14<sup>th</sup> - San Joaquin County Barrister's Membership Appreciation Mixer 5:30 p.m., Michael's Pizza, Stockton

**2007**

#### JANUARY

25<sup>th</sup> - Orange County YLD Annual Business Meeting

#### FEBRUARY

8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> - [ABA-YLD Midyear Meeting, Miami, Florida](#)

#### MAY

3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> - ABA-YLD Spring

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## 'Tis the Season to be Cautious: Office Holiday Parties

*San Diego County Bar Association  
San Diego Lawyer, November/December 2006  
by Michael Fuller*

The holiday party season is almost here, and many of you are planning to attend your firm's annual holiday party. Unlike some of the more lean years, many firms are pulling out all the stops this year to have a party that shows their attorneys and staff a great time and thanks them for a solid year of hard work.



Although many of the larger law firms have moved to the UTC/Carmel Valley areas, several are holding their events downtown in the up-and-coming East Village. "Although in the past we held our holiday party at the Torrey Pines Hilton, this year we moved it to the Solamar downtown," says Brian Behan of the Carmel Valley office of Morrison & Forester. According to Behan, they wanted to have a more sophisticated and upscale event and so chose the more hip Solamar in place of the more corporate Torrey Pines Hilton. "The holiday party lets us all see the more personal side of the people we work with," says Behan.

According to Cindy Vargas from the San Diego office of Baker and McKenzie, they are holding their annual party at the San Diego Yacht Club. "We had our party last year at the House of Blues downtown but moved to the Yacht Club for the first time this year," she says. Unlike the parties at some of the other firms, the Baker and McKenzie party is designed for an abundance of mixing between the attorneys. Instead of a formal sit-down affair, they stick to heavy appetizers and informal seating so that attendees from both San Diego offices mix together during the party.

Other firms are not only celebrating downtown, but they are also bringing attorneys from other offices to San Diego. Robert Bell, managing partner of Luce Forward, notes, "We invite attorneys from all of our offices to San Diego for our holiday party. This year we chose to hold it at the Omni Hotel near the ballpark, which is a great venue."

Conference, Montreal, Quebec

## **JUNE**

New Admittee Swearing-in Ceremonies

## **AUGUST**

9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> - ABA-YLD Annual Meeting, San Francisco, California

## **SEPTEMBER**

27<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> - State Bar Annual Meeting Anaheim, California

## **DECEMBER**

New Admittee Swearing-in Ceremonies

[Submit Your Calendar Item](#)



## **CLE CALENDARS:**

- ▶ State Bar of California
- ▶ Bar Association of San Francisco
- ▶ Orange County Bar Association
- ▶ Los Angeles County Bar Association
- ▶ San Diego County Bar Association

[Submit Your CLE Calendar Link](#)



## **USEFUL LINKS:**

- ABA-Young Lawyers Division
- California Barrister Organizations
- Ethics Hotline
- Lawyer Assistance Program
- Legal Research
- MCLE Compliance Information
- Member Service Center



## **2006-07 CYLA BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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In response to questions about attorney behavior at these parties, one emerging theme is that the new crop of lawyers are behaving much better nowadays than in past years. "Associates are smarter these days," says Bell. "We really don't have problems at our holiday parties, and, of course, we offer taxi vouchers or hotel rooms to anyone who has had too much to drink."

Behan concurs. "We have a pretty mellow office here and haven't really experienced trouble at our parties."

Of course, we have all heard of or witnessed partygoers who, after several cocktails, made poor career choices by thinking that the holiday party was the perfect time to impress that senior partner they wanted to meet all year. I dare say that some of us have even been that partygoer. While an impression was almost certainly made, it probably wasn't the desired one.

And staying out of trouble at the firm holiday party is highly recommended. Remember, this is a work function quietly masquerading as a holiday party. Your boss is there. Your boss' spouse is there. So this is not really the right time to show off your new break-dancing skills. The last thing you want to see in your inbox on Monday morning is a camera phone picture of you in mid-head spin on the dance floor.

You can now count on the fact that every single person at the party, from the bartender to the named partner, will have a camera phone. Thus, every possible embarrassing activity you choose to participate in is guaranteed to be captured for all to see and enjoy at a later time. Spilling your beer on the managing partner's spouse: click. Slow dancing with the new paralegal from the tenth floor: click. Curling up to take a little nap in the corner near the stage after your fourth kamikaze shot: priceless click.

And don't think for a minute that your so-called friends will save you from yourself. They won't. Besides, they aren't your friends, they are your coworkers, and they will be the first ones with their cell phone out, poised to capture your holiday party antics as you blithely saunter into the hotel fountain. You can be their fodder for an entire year of picture-posting fun, right until the next year's party when with any luck you convince them to have the first of the kamikaze shots.

*Michael Fuller is a partner of Knobbe Martens Olson & Bear in San Diego*

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## **Standards of Decency: Dress Codes in the Professional World**

*San Diego County Bar Association*

*San Diego Lawyer, November/December 2006*

*by Candace Carroll*

When I'm in court or at gatherings with other women attorneys, I often see women attorneys who simply are not dressed professionally. This is not really surprising. All our lives we've been bombarded with the message that what makes a woman valuable is being beautiful and sexy. As a result, most of us have spent our lives attempting to look beautiful and sexy. The chances are, even in law school nobody told us anything different. Certainly, the last time I judged moot court at a local law school, some of the female participants were dressed as though they were about to go clubbing.

If you think about the rationale behind professional garb—whether it's judges' robes, clerical collars or business suits—the point of it is to diminish your individuality and make you look only like an instrument of the profession you serve. That's why the height of professional dress for lawyers is a dark business suit: it makes us look neat, tailored and serious—important not because of how beautiful we are but because of our professional status.

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**[State Bar District Map](#)**

While I'm not suggesting that women attorneys wear dark suits all the time, there are nevertheless standards for professional dress, which our colleagues, our courts and our clients expect us to follow. Also, a lot of us remember those not-so-long-ago days when male lawyers didn't take us seriously, hit on us continually, and refused to hire us because their wives "wouldn't put up with it." We who spent so many years overcoming that sex-object stereotype are put off by women attorneys who dress in a way that seems to validate that stereotype.

So here are my ten tips—all based on actual observation—for achieving a professional look:

1. Do not wear anything (except pantyhose) that is skintight. Remember, the point is NOT to look sexy, but to look businesslike. I recently saw a young woman wearing a dark pantsuit in court which looked completely professional until she turned around, whereupon her pants were revealed to be so tight in the rear that nothing – no wrinkle, no cleft, no dimple – was left to the imagination. This, believe me, is not a professional look, and I'll bet the judge and the jury didn't think so either.
2. Do not wear extremely short skirts. Knee length is short enough. Otherwise, too much is revealed when you bend or sit.
3. Do not wear extremely low-cut blouses. A professional look never includes cleavage.
4. Do not wear a camisole under a jacket, pretending that it's a blouse. Camisoles are cut much lower than blouses, and everyone can tell it's a camisole even if you've kept your jacket on. This is not a professional look.
5. Avoid sexy hairdos. Very long, thick, wavy hair falling below your shoulders does not look professional. Put it up or pull it back. Shorter or jaw-length hair is safer, and makes you look more groomed. This is not to say that you cannot look feminine. Fluffy, wavy or curly hair is fine, as long as there isn't too much of it, it doesn't fall over your eyes, and you don't look as if you've just gotten out of bed.
6. Most see-through clothing is not professional. I have occasionally seen somewhat sheer blouses over opaque camisoles which pass muster, but in general, revealing clothes are not professional. (I once saw a woman wearing a largely transparent blouse present oral argument in a federal Court of Appeals. The judges, all male, appeared so alarmed and distracted that I don't think they heard a word she said).
7. Bizarrely painted nails are a no-no. Forget the polka dots, patterns, and two-tone jobs. Attractively shaped nails in a reasonably neutral color are best.
8. Unusually high heels (more than 2 inches), platform shoes, and other unusual footwear that calls attention to itself (for example, straps that wind halfway up the leg) do not look professional.
9. Heavy, musky perfume is not professional.
10. Do not wear anything – even on casual day – that looks like underwear; that involves extra straps or layers of apparent underwear peeking out at the neckline or below the hem of your blouse; or that exposes, or threatens to expose, a rift of skin at the waist or hip. It may be the current fashion, but it's not a professional look.

And a final word: in my experience, you'd be wise to remember these rules for all events connected to your profession, including the office picnic and the Christmas party. Obviously, a black-tie Christmas party permits you to wear a spaghetti-strap dress and/or a lower neckline than you'd wear to the office, but you should still use

good judgment. If your professional colleagues see you dressed like Madonna in concert, you may permanently change your image in their minds, and the image they remember won't be professional, no matter how you look on Monday morning.

*Candace Carroll is an appellate attorney with Sullivan, Hill, Lewin, Rez & Engel in San Diego.*

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## Holiday Food Drive



The "[Food From the Bar](#)" is back! The Barrister's Committee of the Santa Clara County Bar Association, in conjunction with Second Harvest Food Bank, will be coordinating a food drive this holiday season. You can request free posters, donation bags, and other supplies as well as learn more about the food drive process by contacting [Second Harvest](#). If you have any general questions about "FOOD FROM THE BAR," please contact Irene Cortez at the Santa Clara County Bar Association, [irene@sccbba.com](mailto:irene@sccbba.com); (408) 975-2114.

## Tell the bar if you move

Lawyers who change their address are required by the [Business & Professions Code](#) to notify the bar within 30 days. Because the deadline for payment of the annual membership fee will be strictly enforced this year, it is important that members keep their address up-to-date in order to receive both the fee statement and mailings about the upcoming changes.

Complete information about changing an address can be found on the bar's Web site, [calbar.ca.gov](http://calbar.ca.gov). Click on [Member Services](#) in the left-hand menu and log on to *My State Bar Profile*. If you are a first-time user and do not have an access code or have questions, call the Member Services Center at **1-888-800-3400**.

## Meet the CYLA Board of Directors

*by Joel Villaseñor, District 6 Representative*

### Matthew B. Butler *Board of Governors Representative*



An embarrassingly large number of people became lawyers because they couldn't think of anything else to do, with indecision and lassitude too often producing indifferent lawyers. This is not the case with Matt Butler, CYLA representative for District 9, covering San Diego and Imperial counties, and CYLA representative to the State Bar's Board of Governors. Matt became a lawyer because it was what he passionately wanted to do and what he believed in.

Like a quantity of young lawyers, Matt decided to become an attorney after reading *The Firm* by John Grisham and watching the Rob Reiner movie "A Few Good Men."

(Whatever their artistic crimes, having inspired Matt to become a lawyer will no doubt go on the credit side of Grisham's and Reiner's karmic bank accounts.) As Matt puts it, "Both of them romanticized the practice of law. I thought being a lawyer would be exciting. I thought it would be all about investigations and strategizing to win, with an ancillary benefit of helping people. Becoming a lawyer was a dream for me."

Matt was raised by a single mother who was a clerk for the State of Illinois, and money was scarce while he was growing up. He can remember at least one occasion as a kid when he and his mother stood in a bread line to get food. As Matt recalls with classic Midwestern understatement, "It was a struggle. Then I was forced to leave home when I was 17 years old and a junior in high school. I got my own apartment, enrolled in the work program at my high school, and worked three jobs to support myself. I was completely independent from then on. I supported myself through college and law school. Law was my way out. It was my 'American Dream.'"

In making his way out, Matt had a lot of diverse jobs, ranging from a file clerk at the State of Illinois Department of Insurance to a construction worker. But his oddest job was undoubtedly his stint as a salesman of women's shoes at Nordstrom.

Matt's hard work at the construction sites and the shoe department paid off. He graduated from the University of Illinois and received his J.D. from the University of San Diego School of Law. He was admitted to practice in California in 1999, and now has his own firm, Nicholas & Butler LLP, where he is a litigator specializing in business litigation, construction law, and personal injury. He is also a member of the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division Council, as a District Representative for Southern California. He values community service as well, as he is a Big Brother with the Big Brothers/Big Sisters of San Diego. But his idea of perfect happiness is to travel with his wife and 11-month-old son. "Maybe add a great resort to put it over the top," he says.

If you should ever find yourself in San Diego for a court appearance, Matt recommends a favorite haunt near the courthouse, Karl Strauss Brewing Company. In Matt's opinion, "it has great seared ahi, meatloaf, and you can grab a good beer while you are at it (that is, if you do not have to go back to work.) It's also a good place to catch the Padres or Chargers."

If you have questions about CYLA, or want Matt to take an issue to the Board of Governors, or are in the market for more dining suggestions after you discover you have a deposition in San Diego, you can reach him at [mbutler@nblaw.org](mailto:mbutler@nblaw.org).

## **Feb Roman Cabrasawan** ***First Vice President & District 3 Representative***



Going Whole Hog with Roamin' Roman

"En boca cerrada no entran moscas," goes a famous Spanish proverb. A closed mouth gathers no flies. It's a sentiment that CYLA First Vice President Feb Roman Cabrasawan knows all too well, though not in the way you'd think, as an admonition against talking too much. (A puckish prankster, Feb himself would tell you he's the farthest thing from reticent). Rather, it's a crucial piece of advice in Feb's other life as "Roamin' Roman," when he does what he loves best, riding his motorcycle (always within the speed limit, of course).

By day, Feb practices as an in-house Intellectual Property attorney in Silicon Valley. He attended Santa Clara University School of Law and was admitted to practice in California in 2004. Prior to attending law school, he worked for RCM Capital Management, Dow Jones & Co., and Lockheed Martin in San Francisco and New York City. It was during his stint at SCU that Feb became Roamin' Roman and picked up his roaming ways, and now he devotes his leisure time to, as he puts it, "keeping the rubber side down on Skyline Blvd., Mines Road or PCH."

Of course, leisure time is not as easy to come by as Roamin' Roman would like. In addition to his job, Feb, after all, is married, has two children, and is also active in civic and volunteer organizations, including the Filipino Bar Association of Northern California. And as part of his duties for CYLA, he serves not only as the First Vice President, but also as a District 3 representative for Santa Clara, Alameda, and Contra Costa counties in the Bay Area.

But what he really loves to do is ride. His favorite journey is riding up and down California on his motorcycle, relishing the "amazing sunsets and vistas." There is a downside, though, to all this roaming on a motorized steed: "bug juice on your face." For Feb, though, it seems a small price to pay, and he leaves us with a piece of advice that is applicable to both young lawyers and bikers of all stripes, "Keep your mouth shut while riding."

When it comes time to open his mouth, Feb's favorite eatery in his district is SINO on San Jose's Santana Row, so be sure to look for him there, or you can contact him at [Feb.Cabrasawan@netapp.com](mailto:Feb.Cabrasawan@netapp.com).

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