

Inter Alia

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The Newsletter of
San Joaquin
College of Law

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SJCL Celebrates 24th Graduating Class On May 30

The twenty-fourth graduating class of San Joaquin College of Law recently reached the end of four years of hard work and study as they participated in the May 30 commencement ceremonies at the Fresno Convention Center Exhibit Hall. More than 600 relatives, friends and co-workers of the graduates turned out to wish them well.

Congratulations go out to JonPaul Avent; Ardemis Assadourian; Mark Bacciarini; Melissa Barrios; Greg Blevins; Kerri Couillard; Margaret Deming; Larry DeWitt; Monica Diaz; Brian Duncan; Marissa Facciani; Jay Felkins; Brian Gupton; Cathryn Hicks; Yoriko Ishikawa; Jean Iv; Teresa

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Also celebrating were Marie-Helene Hoffman and Lynda Searcy, who earned their Master of Science in Taxation degrees.

Although May 30 marked the official end of law school for the students, they still face two grueling months of study and review as they prepare to take the July, 1998, California State Bar examination.

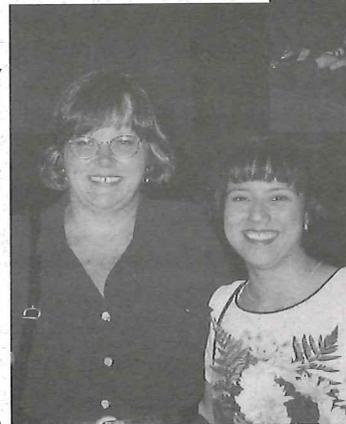
Great Internet Deal will benefit Users AND SJCL!

In partnership with School Reach, an education-based Internet Service Provider (ISP), SJCL is offering its alumni, faculty, staff and students full access to all features of the Internet for just \$21.95/month. At the same time, SJCL will earn technology points which are redeemable for new COMPUTERS with every subscription purchased! (Did we mention that we are in DIRE NEED of NEW COMPUTERS?)

Your School Reach Internet Service also includes: *Free Surfwatch Software* - The #1 Internet filter (a \$49.00 value!) and *Eudora Lite* - e-mail software rated "Best" by PC Magazine (plus one free e-mail account). Complete tutorials for World Wide Web beginners are also available.



Photos by Joyce Morodomi



Above: The Class of 1998 listens attentively to Commencement Speaker Marvin R. Baxter, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of California. Baxter told the class to always follow the high ethical standards they learned at SJCL and to make a difference by becoming involved in their communities. Right: Teresa Juarez and Melissa Barrios share relaxed smiles at the Graduation Reception.

Law Alumni Profiles

The Class of 1978

This year is the TWENTIETH Anniversary of the graduation of the Class of 1978. This graduating class is unique because it included SJCL's one full-time, day-only class. Of the 48 graduates of the Class of 1978, half began in Fall of 1974 in the night program and half began in Fall of 1975 in the day program. Throughout 1998, in no particular order (well, actually, the order in which I was able to reach them), *Inter Alia* will highlight the lives of the graduates of 1978. I look forward to talking with each of you soon.---Dean Jan.

MICHELE BELANGER-McNAIR

Michelle became a litigator almost before she became a law student. She began clerking with the District Attorney's office at the end of her second year of law school. In January of 1977, she became part of the Sexual Assault Team, working with and learning from another SJCL graduate, Lee Sterling. By the time Michele graduated from law school, she had already handled 13 jury trials. In her fourth year, Michele handled Juvenile Court cases under Judge Creede's watchful eye. She was a veteran of the courtroom when she graduated.

After graduation, Michele immediately joined the D.A.'s offices as a Deputy D.A. She worked for the D.A. for 10 years, three with the Sexual Assault Team, and was the first woman to achieve Senior Deputy status. In January of 1987, Michele left to open a private practice. Her prac-

tice emphasizes plaintiff's personal injury litigation. A recent highlight was obtaining a judgment of \$847,000 for a client in a P.I. case.

Michele is involved with Fresno

of the Year by the Fresno County Legal Secretaries' Association.

Michele has two step children - a daughter, Heather, who is a marketing executive for Gottschalks, and a son, Corey, who is an engineer for Cummins Diesel and father of Michele's only grandchild, Zach. She loves golf - currently carrying an 11 handicap - as well as skiing, scuba diving, and travel.

Michele remembers starting law school at the Fresno Pacific facility. She was a young married woman who had never had to study to do well in school. The first night 70 people attended John Loomis's Contracts class; only 45 were left the next night in Judge Eyemann's Torts class. She says in 1974 when her class was admitted,

everyone wanted to go to law school, so admission was very competitive. She devoted a minimum of 40 hours per week to studying, but eventually (obviously!) got the hang of it.

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The Class of 1978 stands proudly following their graduation. This style of a "group class shot" was common in the early years of SJCL graduation photos.

County Women Lawyers, and has volunteered with Fresno Unified School District's Mock Trial and the Cerebral Palsy Association's VIP Program. She serves as President of Opportunities Plus. In 1992, she was named the Boss

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ROBERT BROUGHTON

Bob worked with the Tulare County Public Defender and then the Contra Costa County Public Defender after graduation. In 1986, he was appointed Court Commissioner for the Contra Costa County Courts in Richmond, California. He serves on the New Judge Education Governing Committee for the State of California. At the State Judicial College he teaches Small Claims and Unlawful Detainer procedures and how to work with *Pro Per* litigants. He also teaches ethics, evidence, and trial procedures at the New Judges' Orientation. In fact, in April, one of his students at the New Judges' Orientation was classmate Steve Sefton, a newly-appointed Commissioner.

Given his teaching load, Bob has little free time. What is available is spent enjoying movies and San Francisco theater. Bob's clearest memory of law school is "It took forever!"

I am pleased to say, however, that he also remembers that he once was a law clerk for Dean Pearson at Fresno County Legal Services.

JAMES DONABED

Upon graduation, Jim work with the Fresno County District Attorney's Office for two years and then associated with Charles R. Perry from 1981-1986. Since 1986, Jim has been a sole practitioner, specializing in family law and criminal defense. Jim is an active member of the State Bar Association's Lawyers With Disabilities Committee. He has also served as a Judge Pro Tem and on the Board of Directors for the Alternative Sentencing Program.

Jim is a Fresno native who worked as a radio announcer in a previous life. Jim is married to Linda, whom he describes as a wonderful woman. She also is his office

manager. They have one son attending Fresno City College. Jim describes himself as a computer fanatic. He also has a unique hobby - collecting mechanical wrist watches.

Jim's most amusing recollection of law school has a familiar ring to it. He recalls that after his first year mid-terms, John Loomis called him in and advised him to search for another profession. This served as a pretty strong motivator, Jim says, for a litigator type like himself.

MARVIN HELON

Immediately upon graduating from law school, Marvin joined the firm of Helon & Manfredo. His practice emphasizes estate planning, trusts, guardianships, conservatorships and transactional business work. He served on the Fresno County Bar Board of Directors from 1984 to 1987, having been shanghaied as a write-in on the ballot by fellow SJCL alumni. He currently serves as Chairman of the Fresno County Bar Association's Estate Planning section. He remembers the days when local Bar events could get pretty wild.

Marvin and his wife, Leslie have two children, Matt, a volleyball fanatic, and Megan, who is into softball. What does he do in his free time? "Mostly haul kids around." He also serves on the St. Agnes Foundation Board and as a Director of the Bullard Boosters Club.

Marv is rather blunt about his

law school experience: "Law school sucked. I did not enjoy it." Marv describes it as the first time he actually had to study in school; he says he felt nauseated when he returned to register for the second year.

DON FORBES

Don worked as a Research Attorney for the Fresno Superior Court from law school graduation through May of 1981. He then joined the firm of Helon & Manfredo. His practice in general civil litigation has taken him throughout the United States and even to Germany.

In 1983, Don married Nancy I. Smith, Class of 1980. They are very proud grandparents of Jordan, who was one year old in April. Don is active in events for the Sierra Club and the San Joaquin River Parkway. His free time is devoted to golf, aerobics, and gardening.

Don says law school was challenging, he's glad he survived, and he'd trade practice for law school any day, although taking the bar again didn't sound like much fun. The people were good, older, responsible with families and jobs. His frustration is that practice is now much more like a business, not a profession. Even so, Don considers himself very fortunate to have learned the practice of law from some fine lawyers, judges, and clients.

JUDY LUND

Judy opened her own practice in January of 1979, immediately after passing the bar. She

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'The first night 70 people attended Contracts class; only 45 were left the next night.'

--Michele Belanger-McNair

'It's frustrating that the practice of law is now much more like a business, not a profession.'

--Don Forbes

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worked out of Dominic Mushines' storage room on a card table until June of 1979 when she moved to Merced & L Streets downtown. She became a Certified Family Law Specialist in 1986 and now practices exclusively in the family law area. Given that is her field, she says that her greatest accomplishment has been not being shot. Her practice includes family mediation. She has received extensive training at the Center for Mediation and Law in Marin County and the Center for Dispute Resolution in Boulder, Colorado. She has been a member of CAL - California Alternatives to Litigation - since its inception.

Judy has served as a Judge Pro Tem since 1986. She also served on the Board of the California School for Professional Psychology for many years.

Judy is married to Jim Bell.

Between them, they have four children - two hers and two his. Aside from family, their first love is flying. They fly everywhere. In 1987, they flew a single-engine Cessna 210 in the Paris to Beijing, China and back race. In 1992, a twin-engine Cessna 421C carried them through the Around The World Air Race.

For Judy, law school is a blur. She was working 30 hours a week, a single mother raising two children. She sold her house to pay for her law school tuition. She does remember some late night study sessions at The Outpost. She also remembers studying for finals of either her first or second year with Kay Tuttle and Patty Noyes at Judge Best's cabin at Shaver Lake. They isolated themselves and played "Hey, Jude!" a lot on the jukebox.



Kathi Kesselman ('78) and Georgia York ('78) visit with Dean Jan Pearson during a November 1991 donor reception for SJCL.

STEPHEN SEFTON

Upon graduation from law school and passing the bar, Steve went to work for a local land developer. He worked in that position until the business closed in 1980. At that point, Steve returned to his home town of Paso Robles and opened his own practice. His practice focused on real property transactions and unlawful detainers. As of March 2, 1998, Steve assumed the position of Small Claims/Traffic Referee for San Luis Obispo County. Steve says he will miss the

personal relationships with his clients that made his practice rewarding.

Steve has been married for 28 years to Anne Sefton and has one daughter who works for a San Francisco advertising firm. Steve is President of the Food Bank Coalition for San Luis

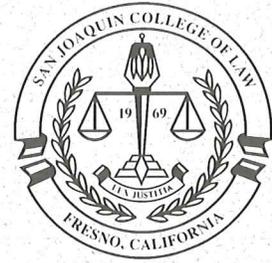
Obispo County. He is general counsel for the Paso Robles Historical Society and active in the St. James Episcopal Church. For fun, golf, gardening, and visiting the family cabin at Huntington Lake are priorities.

Steve states that law school was the greatest experience of his life. He remembers studying in the Fresno County Courthouse on New Year's Eve. The camaraderie of his class in general and his study group - Cline, Hinkley, Hunter, Magill, and Suhr - in particular, was wonderful.

JAMES WEAKLEY

While a law student, Jim clerked for Peter Eldridge. Upon

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Law Alumni Profiles

The Class of 1988

This year is the TENTH Anniversary of the graduation of the Class of 1988. Throughout 1998, in no particular order, Inter Alia will highlight the accomplishments and lives of the graduates of 1988.

GREG BACCHETTI

After graduating from law school, Greg practiced law for two years, first with Chinello, Chinello & Auchard, and then with Loomis, Sanoian & Garland. Then Greg returned to his first love - music. He enrolled in the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and taught music in the Fresno Unified School District. He also painted, displaying many of his oil paintings in local shows. Slowly, Greg worked back into the construction industry. Currently, Greg is working towards his Contractor's License and supervising - from bid to build - a hospital construction project in Madera.

Greg is married and lives with his wife and two golden retrievers in Fresno. He reads extensively, paints, and plays the piano. A cruise to



Ron Calhoun, Bethany Baker and Greg Bachetti take a reflective moment during their graduation ceremonies in May, 1988.

Glacier Bay in Alaska, with its vast and overwhelming beauty, was a recent highlight in his life.

As a law student, Greg remembers the class feeling like castaways on a ship who had to work together to survive. He found the study of law far more interesting than the practice, until it got to the point that he resented the time law practice took away from his painting and music. However, Greg says he would never have gotten the construction management jobs he now gets if he did not have his law degree. The degree makes him stand out as well as giving him special skills to deal with the problems that arise.

BETHANY BAKER

Bethany has worked as a research attorney at the Fifth District Court of Appeal in Fresno since her graduation. She is currently a Senior Attorney, working on both civil and criminal appeals. Bethany worked for Justice Marvin Baxter, and currently works for Justice Thomas Harris. She enjoys the challenge of her work for the court, and feels she is returning something to the community.

Bethany has assisted in the Fresno Unified School District's Mock Trial Program, and in numerous fundraising efforts for the law school. Bethany was one of the pioneers working on an

early SJCL WASC Self Study when the law school was first trying to attain candidacy status. She has also repeatedly served as a Moot Court judge. Bethany is an avid San Francisco Giants fan, who also enjoys swimming, walking, and music.

Bethany remembers feeling honored to be class valedictorian and to represent SJCL in the statewide Traynor Moot Court Competition. She also remembers her pleasure when her class voted her Student of the Year each of her four years in law school. But Judge Caeton provided the most amusing moment of her four year stint. One evening, Judge Caeton was holding forth dramatically about the Fourth Amendment and pounding on the blackboard. Suddenly, the blackboard screws came loose and the blackboard began to fall on his head. Judge Caeton calmly kept lecturing, while holding the blackboard up with one hand, until the class came to his rescue. Bethany says she has always considered that incident symbolic of the condition of the Shields building. She thinks of Judge Caeton whenever she works on a Fourth Amendment issue!

PETER COWPER

Upon graduating from law school and passing the July 1988 bar

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exam, Pete spent six months traveling through 14 countries in Europe, visiting many of the halls of justice. In September of 1989 he became a Deputy District Attorney for Tulare County working one year in the Juvenile Division and one year in the Adult Division. In 1991-92, he worked with the Ledford Law Corporation. In July of 1993, Pete joined the firm of McKinney, Wainwright & Saul-Olson where he focuses on civil litigation. His practice emphasizes personal injury and general business work, with lesser time spent in criminal and dissolution cases. In December of 1996, he argued a real property easement case involving civil procedure issues before the Fifth District Court of Appeal. Pete has served as a Judge Pro Tem over the past three years in the Tulare County Traffic and Small Claims Courts.

Pete is an active member of the Lawyer-Pilot's Bar Association. He obtained his private pilot's license in 1994 and his instrument rating in January of 1998. He is a Past President of the Valley Oak Region, Porsche Club of America, and still drives and shows his 1960 Austin-Healey 3000.

Pete's clearest memory of law school is that all members of the class were good friends and have remained so. In spite of the wide range of ages and interests, everyone got along and worked together in the common quest to succeed.

ELLEN JAHN

Ellen clerked for McMurchie, Brandenburger, Weill, Lenaham, &

Lee while awaiting bar results and then joined the firm of Lozano, Smith, Smith, Woliver & Behrens. She is currently a Co-Managing Shareholder of the Monterey office where she moved in July of 1996. Her practice centers on issues of Education and Labor Law. She has argued before the Fifth and Sixth District Courts of



Ellen Jahn chats with friends at the graduation of the Class of 1986. Two years later, she joined the ranks of SJCL alumni herself as a member of the Class of 1988.

Appeal and the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals (See *Spencer v. Merced County Office of Education* (1997) 59 Cal.App.4th 1429; *Belanger v. Madera School*

District (9th Cir.1992) 963 F.2d 248.) She is Chair of the firm's in-house Training and Professional Development Committee.

Ellen and her partner, Susan, have two sons, Gregory (7 1/2) and Benjamin (9). Susan is a licensed clinical social worker and a Board-certified diplomat. Ellen enjoys aerobics as well as hiking, in-line skating, and bike riding with the kids. They bought a house in Monterey in April of 1997. Ellen has always been involved in church activities and the community. Currently, she is a member of the Monterey County Women Lawyers and a volunteer attorney for the National Center for Lesbian Rights. She has been a youth soccer coach and assisted with Cub Scout events.

Ellen had three immediate memories of law school. First, she was astonished when she opened the textbook for her first year classes and discovered it was just a bunch of cases. Second, she was so fascinated by the law, she just wanted to quit working

and sit in the library and read all day. Third, she was similarly astonished and thrilled when she learned she ranked first in the class at the end of the first year.

K. DIANE LUSHBOUGH

Diane has had an extremely diverse legal career. She practiced municipal law with Jackson, Hargrove, et. al., the County Counsel's office, Burke, Williams & Sorensen, and Hargrove & Costanza. She did personal injury work with Erikson, Arbuthnot, et.al. and workers' compensation insurance defense cases with Joseph A. Igoa and Igoa & Alabart. For the last three years, Diane has been a sole proprietor working principally under a contract with the Board of Prison Terms to provide legal representation to inmates in administrative hearings on parole suitability and parole revocation. Diane travels extensively around the state to appear at these hearings. Diane states that she really enjoys this unique niche of law practice she has carved out.

Diane has two daughters, one attending the University of Kansas in Wichita and another working in Fresno, and a son who lives in Sacramento. Her grandsons currently provide her with great fun. Diane also is "mom" to four permanent and many indigent cats. Other excitement comes in the form of riding her Harley - often with Renee Dawson Logoluso. Diane and her husband plan to ride their "Hogs" cross-country this summer. She also has worked for years with Volunteers in Parole.

As to law school, Diane remembers a whole lot of good friends and long hours, but no social life. For some time after the bar was over, when someone would propose a social outing, her reaction would still be "No, sorry, I gotta study."

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passing the bar, Mr. Eldridge hired him as an associate. By the time Mr. Eldridge died in 1985, Jim was a shareholder and the firm became Eldridge, Anderson & Weakley. On January 1, 1997, Jim opened a new firm with another SJCL graduate, Ben Ratliff - hence, Weakley & Ratliff. Jim's practice focuses on defending public agencies in civil litigation. Currently, all of the lawyers and clerks working at Weakley & Ratliff are SJCL graduates or students.

While working with Peter Eldridge, Jim had the opportunity to participate in many complex civil defense cases against outstanding plaintiff's counsel. When Eldridge died, Jim had to step in and handle his first complex case. The case was a 3 - 4 week wrongful death action asserting negligent road design where plaintiff was represented by Bob Sears. Jim feels his success in that case started his career as a public entity defense lawyer.

Jim is involved in a number of business-related organizations. In

1997, he helped found the Central Valley Chapter of PARMA, the Public Agency Risk Management Association. He has served on the Board of Directors of the Association of Defense Counsel of Northern California. He is also a member of the American Board of Trial Advocates.

Jim has two sons. Chris just graduated from the University of California at Santa Barbara and is working in political campaigns for Davies Communications. Clint is studying at California State University, Humboldt, with his eye on a forestry major. Jim enjoys wakeboarding, scuba diving, and snow and water skiing. He is currently learning to barefoot ski.

Jim remembers the camaraderie of his class. He laments that once they started practicing they took off in different directions and rarely see each other.

GEORGIA YORK

Georgia worked for the Fresno County Public Defender's Office for one year after graduation, then spent

eleven years with the Fresno County Counsel's Office specializing in education and land use law. She then spent two years as a Research Attorney for the Fifth District Court of Appeal. Six years ago, Georgia was appointed an Administrative Law Judge for the California Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board. She hears appeals involving unemployment, state disability, and employer tax matters. She says her job exposes her to "a real slice of everyday life."

Georgia has one daughter, Erin Henderson. She has had a long-term relationship with fellow-attorney, Tom Riggs. She enjoys snow skiing, wakeboarding, running, and gardening. She volunteers at her daughter's school and in church activities. She is also a member of the Foothill Conservancy Group and the Sierra Club.

Georgia says that she absolutely loved law school. She called it a "life-changing" experience because it convinced her that she could do things she never dreamt she could do. In addition, law school brought her life-long friendships.

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