



Queen's Bench

Founded 1921

Queen's Bench Bar Association
of the San Francisco Bay Area

NEWSLETTER

January 2008

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Building On Our Strengths

by Kelly Robbins

As Queen's Bench enters its 87th year, I marvel at the elements of our operation which run like clockwork (this newsletter for example) and am energized by observing the advances in methods by which we bring our traditional strengths into the present.



I am particularly struck by aspects of the Queen's Bench family which have been transformed, but yet remain the same. Specifically, when I was speaking with Judge Charlene Padovani Mitchell late last year, she congratulated me on my accession to President, and I asked her if she had suggestions for an incoming president. She pointed out that Queen's Bench has served the same roles for as long as she can remember: providing members an opportunity to socialize and network with other women attorneys, and learning from each other. She explained that, many years ago, the more senior members of Queen's Bench would gather together and select topics of import at the time. They would next assemble their colleagues and the younger members of Queen's Bench who were similarly interested in that topic. The members, old and new, would meet for lunch, or at someone's home or office, and discuss the new developments in that area of law.

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Meet The 2008 Queen's Bench Board Of Directors!

Katherine Burke, Director

Katherine is a sole practitioner handling exclusively family law matters, primarily dissolution of marriage, division of assets and debts, and custody and visitation issues. She also serves as minor's counsel for children in family law custody contests. She has been managing her own practice, Burke Family Law, since June 2006. She received her J.D. from the University of San Francisco School of Law, her Master's in Counseling from Arizona State University, and her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Fairfield University in Connecticut.



practice focuses on intellectual property and complex commercial litigation. Representative clients include Research In Motion Limited, the Regents of the University of California, The Oakland Raiders, Pacific Gas & Electric Company and Smith Barney.

Sarah's pro bono representation spans a variety of Constitutional issues, including representation of the City of San Francisco challenging the constitutionality of California's ban on same-sex marriage, a prisoner rights litigation challenging deliberate indifference to medical needs at Pelican Bay Prison and representation of the Coalition for the Homeless challenging policies of then-Mayor Rudolph Giuliani on free speech grounds. Sarah received her J.D. from Stanford law school and her B.A. (Political Science, Spanish) from Allegheny College.

Sophie Froelich, Director

Sophie is a litigation associate in the San Francisco office of Nossaman, Guthner, Knox & Elliott. Prior to joining Nossaman, Sophie clerked for a federal district court judge, then practiced products liability law for three years. Currently, Sophie's practice focuses on general commercial litigation and water law. She obtained her J.D. from the New York University School of Law in 1999 and her B.A. from Columbia University in 1994.



Hon. Adrienne Jacobs Miller, Director

Adrienne joined QB in 1978, the first year she started practicing law as a solo in San Francisco. She



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Sarah M. King, Director

Sarah is a director with the Howard Rice's Litigation Department and a member of the Intellectual Property Litigation Group. Her



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2008 QB Board

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immediately enjoyed meeting all the members and became active on various committees when Wendy Nelder was President. In 1986 she was Vice President when Charlene Mitchell was President, and together they organized QB's 65th Anniversary, a memorable event. In 1987, she was President with Mary Wiss as Vice President and they had a successful year of programs and growth. In 1992, after 14 years of lawyering, being a San Francisco Rent Board Hearing Officer and a Family Law Settlement Judge, Adrienne was appointed to the Superior Court as a Juvenile Hearing Officer. Throughout her career she has met wonderful colleagues in Queen's Bench and calls many of them close friends. Through QB Adrienne had the honor of meeting Mildred Levin and is proud to work on the Scholarship Committee with the Hon. Ina Gyemant, Anne Gyemant Paris and Rebecca Hooley. As a member of the 2004, 2005, and 2006 QB Board she has enjoyed renewing her friendship with Catherine Duggan and all the great new young leaders of QB.

Anne Gyemant Paris, Director

Anne is the Legal Services Coordinator at La Casa de las Madres, which provides shelter, advocacy and support to battered women and their children. She graduated from Hastings College of the Law, part of three generations of women lawyers in her family. After law school, she was appointed to a federal government position as a Presidential Management Intern, a fellowship program designed to create leaders in public service. Most recently, Anne was San Francisco director of Break the Cycle. She lives in San Francisco with her husband Michael and her daughter Sophia, and she has been involved with Queen's Bench for as long as she can remember.



Hon. Anne Beytin Torkington, Director

Anne has been an administrative law judge at the United States Department of Labor for the past eight years, hearing cases (as well as mediating them), in the areas of workers' compensation (under the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act), and federal whistleblower (environmental, airline and commercial truck safety and Sarbanes-Oxley), as well as areas covered by approximately 60 other statutes. Before joining the Department of Labor she was an ALJ for the Social Security Administration and an administrative judge for the Equal Opportunity Commission. She got her J.D. from UCLA School of Law, and her B.A. from U. C. Berkeley. She also obtained an M.S.W. from U. C. Berkeley. She has two grown children, a daughter who lives with her husband in Japan, and a son who teaches yoga in Thailand.



She enjoys hiking, reading, cooking, music, and movies in her spare time. She joined Queen's Bench shortly after moving to the Bay Area in December 1997.

Kelly Robbins, President

Kelly moved to San Francisco from a suburb of Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1979, when she was 17. She took her last year of high school at J. Eugene McAteer High School and went to San Francisco State University to major in Political Science. After working her way through college, she began law school at the University of San Francisco in 1988. Kelly credits her externship for Judge Paul Alvarado during her third year of law school as providing invaluable insight into the view from the other side of the bench. Following graduation in 1991 Kelly worked in a variety of civil litigation roles in order to gain experience inside a courtroom. In 1996 Kelly was asked to help out in a family law case. Initially reluctant, Kelly found that family law was the right practice area for her strengths and skills. In the role of detective to determine the facts, following the many facets of law involved in family matters (real estate, tax, contracts, sometimes some fraud), Kelly relishes in helping people with the most important elements of their life. She enjoys the fast pace of family law, the ability to take a matter to the judge for resolution when needed, and getting her clients out of the legal system with the least amount of trauma.



Kelly completed the requirements to become a California State Bar Certified Family Law Specialist in 2005 and simultaneously opened her own law practice known as Robbins Family Law. Kelly has since graded the certification exams for other family law practitioners seeking State Bar Certification. Kelly began active participation with Queen's Bench in 1998 as a co-chair of the Business Development Committee. Three years later Kelly joined the board of directors and later served as secretary, treasurer, second vice president and most recently as first vice president. Kelly maintains her membership in the Lawyers' Club of San Francisco Inn of Court, as she has since 2002. Kelly and her husband have happily been together for 22 years. Outside of the business world, Kelly enjoys time with her husband and their 7 year old daughter. She also enjoys hiking, gardening, horseback riding and reading legal mysteries.

Barbara Harris Chiang, First Vice President

Barb is a litigator whose practice focuses on sex, age, race and disability discrimination cases, sexual harassment, and wrongful discharge/breach of contract claims. She practices at the law firm of Dillingham & Murphy, LLP. Barb gradu-



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ated from Southwest Missouri State University (now Missouri State University) and obtained her J.D. from the University of Missouri-Kansas City, School of Law in 1997. Barb enjoys spending free time with her husband Bill, her daughter Mia and her son, Carson.

Amee A. Mikachich, Second Vice President

Amee is a partner at the firm of Filice Brown Eassa & McLeod, LLP in Oakland, California. Her practice includes general litigation and trial work, with emphasis in the areas of product and premises liability, toxic tort, employment law, and public entity defense. Amee has been a member of Queen's Bench since 1997 and is serving in her third year as a member of the Board of Directors.



Patricia Bovan-Campbell, Treasurer

Patricia will co-chair the Juvenile Hall Project for the 4th year in a row. Her work earned her the QB Annual Merit Award for 2007 and was instrumental in securing the 2007 National Conference of Women's Bar Associations Annual Public Service Award. She is also a Director of the Queen's Bench Foundation.



Patricia has extensive U.S. and international corporate and transactional legal and business experience. She has worked with Fortune 100 companies including Hitachi, Kellogg, SRI, Sun and Symantec, as well as smaller, entrepreneurial companies. Throughout her career she has had primary responsibility for structuring and negotiating technology licenses, business alliances, strategic investment, M&A and joint ventures.

Patricia graduated from Cornell University (Government, Chinese Studies). She was commissioned through the Cornell Army ROTC program. One of her assignments was with the 101st Air Assault/Airborne Division. She received her J.D. at Case Western Reserve.

Rebecca Hooley, Secretary

Rebecca is a Deputy County Counsel for Contra Costa County. She handles matters related to land use, low-income housing and property assessment. Prior to joining the County Counsel's Office, she was a litigation associate at the firm of Bingham McCutchen. Rebecca received a J.D. from Columbia Law School in 2000 and a B.A. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology from U.C. Santa Cruz in 1993. Rebecca joined



Queen's Bench in 2004 and has been active as Co-Chair of the Scholarship Committee.

Lisa A. Freitas, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer

Lisa is an associate in Morgan Lewis' litigation practice, which provides services in a wide range of areas including business and corporate disputes, corporate investigations and criminal defense, environmental, international arbitration, patent and trademark, securities, toxic tort and product liability. Prior to joining Morgan Lewis, she was an associate at a leading California technology firm and focused on intellectual property litigation. She earned her J.D. from the University of California, Hastings College of Law and her B.A. in psychology from the University of California, Los Angeles. She is proficient in both Spanish and Portuguese.



Felicia Vallera, Immediate Past President

Felicia Vallera is the Immediate Past President of Queen's Bench. She earned her J.D. from Hastings in 1998, her M.B.A. in Strategic Planning from the USC Marshall School of Business in 1991, and her B.A. in Economics with honors from the University of California in 1978. Her thirty year career includes seven years with Peat Marwick Mitchell & Co. (now KPMG), where she earned her CPA certificate and was voted into the Management Group at age 26, seven years with First Interstate Bancorp, where she was appointed Vice President and Manager in the Finance division at age 28, and several years on the turnaround team for McDonnell Douglas Corporation, where she became a division director and one of only two female executive officers in the corporation at age 34. She returned to law school following her successful role as a negotiating team leader in the ground-breaking \$2.2 billion outsourcing of the Information Systems Group of McDonnell Douglas to IBM, and was admitted to the California bar at age 42. Following an internship with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission and three years as an associate with Lillick & Charles LLP, she opened The Law Office of Felicia Vallera in 2001 to serve the business and commercial transactional needs of entrepreneurs and privately-held businesses. Felicia is 2008 Vice Chair of the Business Law Section of BASF, was President of Queen's Bench in 2007, President of the Barristers Club in 2005, an ex officio member of the Board of Directors of BASF in 2004-2005, and has served as an officer/director of several other nonprofits. She continues her community service work through various organizations that assist low-income women entrepreneurs in launching microbusiness startups.



President's Message

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This format sounds exactly like the "Young Family Law Group" I was fortunate to have been invited to join a decade ago. I was always happy that the discussion of a new aspect of family law would invariably also lead to discussion of the new judge or clerk in department whatever, as well as sharing theories about how to "read" the signals indicating that the judge does or does not appear to agree with your legal theory. Of course, simply trading 'war stories' is a benefit in knowing that you are not alone and you too will survive the practice of law. The benefits of this type of gathering are immeasurable, but as I look back on my years spent with the so-called Young Family Law Attorneys, the most important benefit was the development of relationships with others in the group, such that I don't hesitate to call one of them when a quirky issue presents itself.

Having 'graduated' from that group and having long ago settled into the Queen's Bench family, I relish the participation and benefits of membership. Queen's Bench has acquired an MCLE provider certificate so our beloved and important traditions continue, but with even more benefit. For example, on January 9, 2008 some of Queen's Bench's esteemed senior members enlightened the 'sold out' crowd by providing seasoned guidance on specifics to start and maintain good client relations. It was fantastic to meet and chat with the panel members and moderator before and after the event, and the camaraderie among those in the room was a welcome respite from our often overstressed lives. But to leave with a certificate of MCLE attendance, well, you just can't beat that!

So, Queen's Bench maintains its traditional roles at the same time as it charges into the future: Our newsletter and notice of our events go out on email and by links to our website and Queen's Bench now has an interactive website to advance and provide information about the important Employment/Work-Life Balance issues.

Therefore, it is with a sense of excitement and awe that I start my year as President of this great organization. Please join in and make an impact!! We are planning an exciting year, and hope that each member will find a place within the group to lead, teach, learn, find comrades in the field, innovate and help us move into the future even better able to serve our members. New traditions are welcome too!!

Queen's Bench Reproductive Rights Program, January 23

On April 18, 2007 the U.S. Supreme Court decided *Gonzales v. Carhart* which upheld the Partial Birth Abortion Act. While the decision did not overturn *Roe v. Wade*, it does restrict options available to obtain an abortion and has a chilling effect on physicians who provide abortion services. On Wednesday, January 23rd Queen's Bench Bar Association, in collaboration with California Women Lawyers and NARAL Pro-Choice California Foundation, celebrates the 35th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* by presenting "Abortion Access in the Wake of *Gonzales*" a panel discussion about the impact on abortion access after the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to uphold the federal ban on "partial birth" abortions. The program will feature speakers Beth H. Parker, Esq., Bingham McCutchen, LLP, who argued the case on behalf of plaintiff, Planned Parenthood, and Eleanor Drey, M.D., EdM, Director, Women's Options Center, San Francisco General Hospital, who testified as a medical expert in the case. The program also includes a "choice" film festival in the Dolby Laboratories screening room featuring *The Power of Choice* by Dorothy Fadiman and *Life, Liberty & the Pursuit of Happiness* by Tiffany Shlain.

Net proceeds will benefit the Women's Community Clinic in San Francisco. The event will be held at Dolby Laboratories, Inc., 100 Potrero Avenue, San Francisco, and will begin at 6 p.m. with a reception, followed by the program from 6:30-8p.m. The cost is \$30 with pre-registration or \$35 at the door. Seating is limited so pre-registration is highly recommended. Pre-register by mailing a check made to the Women's Community Clinic and mailing to Queen's Bench, Inc., 816 E. 4th Avenue, San Mateo, CA 94401-3317. For information call Elizabeth Saviano 415-955-2676.

Sharing the Holidays With Queen's Bench

by Patricia M. Bovan-Campbell, Esq., Co-chair, Juvenile Hall Project

The girls at the San Francisco Juvenile Hall received a special Thanksgiving treat. Amy X Neuburg, a Bay Area performer of avant-garde, electronic cabaret music, put on her one-woman show in the Girls Unit. Amy created remarkable, original compositions including looping and layering her voice and adding various sound effects.

The juvenile girls were raptly attentive and asked many questions. One of Amy's songs dealt with a woman keeping herself so busy that she finally forgot someone. One of the girls asked whether it worked, and whether you could actually forget someone that way. Another girl asked Amy how she remembers the words to her music and if she forgets any words whether she makes up something. Another girl asked whether Amy, who is classically trained, would sing some opera. In response, Amy sang an encore showcasing her multi-range voice.

After Amy's performance, the girls used Amy's microphone and experimented with the computerized drum pads and voice layering techniques and sound effects. The *San Francisco Chronicle* included a mention about our program at www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2007/11/28/DDF8TJ7JS.DTL&hw=leah+garchik&sn=001&sc=1000.

Then in December, the incarcerated girls had an unforgettable Holiday Party due to several community outreach groups working with the Queen's Bench Juvenile Hall Project. Different departments at Macy's provided gift bags filled with presents ranging from jewelry to pajamas under Macy's Adopt a Family Program. Queen's Bench Foundation supplied t-shirts, hoodies, and lip gloss for each girl. In furtherance of our literacy-support efforts, we also handed out notebooks, stationery, file folders, activity books and bookmarks. Eileen Manning-Villar and her husband conducted a trivia contest where the girls competed to answer questions about Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, Christmas and holiday traditions. Everyone's hand shot up when Eileen asked questions about the Grinch Who

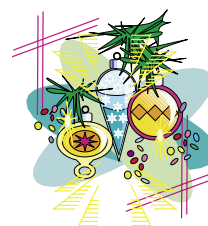


Left to right, Rivera Anderson, Amy X Neuburg, Patricia Bovan, Victoria Reierstad and Eileen Manning-Villar

Stole Christmas. Victoria Reierstad brought her friend Ernestine who explained the traditions of Kwanzaa to the girls. We handed out bags of cookies baked and donated by Soroptomist International of San Francisco, courtesy of Victoria. Kate assembled gifts for trivia contest winners. And Gabrielle and Nancy won the heart of a girl who had been emancipated. She had no place to go, and no family, and hoped one of us might adopt her.

At the end of the evening, the girls sang holiday songs. They gave us cards with very touching sentiments. One girl's note said "Thank you so much for the Christmas gifts. You've made me gain my hope back... Happy Holidays!"

And my profound thanks to the Queen's Bench leadership and volunteers for making the Juvenile Hall Project a success in 2007. We look forward to continued growth and the opportunity to expand our enrichment programs for the children in lock up in 2008.



ANNOUNCEMENTS ...

Congratulations to **Kristen Pezone, Michelle Mandel and the 2007 Queen's Bench Education Committee** on the success of the third program in their Women Rainmakers series, which took place on January 9, 2008. The Committee pulled together an esteemed panel of seasoned attorneys who provided excellent practical, creative tips for the sold out audience of QB members and guests in attendance. Along with the excellent content of the program itself and the lively conversations in the room before and after the event, Sonnenschein, Nath & Rosenthal provided an elegant setting including fantastic food and drinks.



Kelly Francis is opening her own firm, Ethos Bay Area, Legal Recruiting & Career Coaching, effective January 21, 2008 (kellyfrancis@ethosbayarea.com).

Queen's Bench New Members

Please welcome the following new members who joined between November 29, 2007 and January 17, 2008:

- Jennifer Addams
Office of the Attorney General
- Diane M. Barker
Bingham McCutchen
- Tiffani Brownley-Meijer
- Jayme Burns
- Kimberly Chew
- Linn E. Gillen
- Meredith Gittings
Brent Coon & Associates
- Jessica L. Grant
Taylor & Company Law Offices, Inc.
- Tara Kim
Filice, Brown, Eassa & McLeod LLP
- Carolyn Lee
Benjamin, Weill & Mazer
- Kathy Loo
- Juliana Pisani
Gaw Van Male
- Trisha T. Pritikin
P.A.I.
- Myrrhia Resneck
Michael Padway & Associates
- Erin Cassard Schultz
University of California, San Francisco
- Michel C. Schumacher
Winston & Strawn
- Lori Wallerstein
The Wallerstein Group
- Natausha Wilson
O'Melveny & Myers LLP
- Anna Zichterman
Howard Rice Nemerovski Canady Falk & Rabkin



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NEWSLETTER EDITOR: BX Long

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE:

816 E. Fourth Avenue

San Mateo, CA 94401-3317

Telephone: 415-249-9280

Facsimile: 650-344-1588

E-mail: QueensBench@rcn.com

Internet: www.queensbench.org

ADMINISTRATOR: Maurine Killough

2008 OFFICERS

KELLY ROBBINS President
 BARBARA L. HARRIS CHIANG. First Vice President
 AMEE A. MIKACICH Second Vice President
 REBECCA HOOLEY..... Secretary
 PATRICIA BOVAN-CAMPBELL.....Treasurer
 LISA FREITAS Asst. Secretary/Treasurer
 FELICIA VALLERA..... Immediate Past President

2008 DIRECTORS

KATHERINE BURKE
 SOPHIE N. FROELICH
 SARAH M. KING
 HON. ADRIENNE JACOBS MILLER
 ANNE GYEMANT PARIS
 HON. ANNE BEYTIN TORKINGTON

2008 COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS

Amicus Briefs

To be determined

Awards

Hon. Ina Levin Gyemant
3701 Sacramento Street, #333
San Francisco, CA 94941

Lisa Klotchman Rauch
Thomas Whitelaw & Tyler LLP
3 Embarcadero Center, 13th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94111-4003
415-820-0400 (T) / 415-820-0405 (F)
lrauch@twtlaw.com

Business Development

Sophie N. Froelich
Nossaman, Guthner, Knox & Elliott
50 California Street, 34th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94111-4707
(415) 438-7293 (T) / (415) 398-2438 (F)
sfroelich@nossaman.com

Annie O'Donnell
Hedani, Choy, Spalding & Salvagione, LLP
595 Market Street, Suite 1100
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 778-0800
aodonnell@hedanichoy.com

Conference of Delegates

Andrea Carlise
Patton Wolan Carlise, LLP
1814 Franklin Suite 501
Oakland, CA 94612-3744
(415) 987-7500 (T)
acarlise@pwc-law.com

CWL Liaison

To be confirmed

Domestic Violence

To be determined

Education

Michelle Mandel
1390 Market Street, Suite 310
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 626-5400 (T) / (415) 626-5420 (F)
mjmandel@yahoo.com

Natasha Baker
Curiale Dellaverson Hirschfeld & Kraemer
727 Sansome
San Francisco, CA 94111
(415) 835-9004 (T)
nbaker@cdhklaw.com

Maria Schopp
Law Offices of Maria Schopp
1390 Market Street, Suite 818
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 861-1019 (T)
Maria_Schopp@yahoo.com

Endowment

To be determined

Executive Committee

Kelly Robbins
Robbins Family Law
601 California Street, 18th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94108
(415) 788-5400 (T) / (415) 788-5455 (F)
kelly@robbinsfamilylaw.com

Historian

Sheila A. Dolan
77 Harper Street
San Francisco, CA 94131
(415) 642-5097 (T) / (415) 642-5099 (F)
sdolan@pipeline.com

Judicial Appointments

To be determined

Juvenile Hall Project

Patricia Bovan-Campbell
Symantec Corporation
228 Marinda Drive
Fairfax, CA 94930
(415) 785-7660 (T)
patricia_bovan@symantec.com

Kate Kalstein
California Judges Association
88 Kearny Street, Suite 1850
San Francisco, CA 94108
(415) 263-4604
kkalstein@caljudges.org

Legislative Issues & Reproductive Rights

To be determined

Marketing & Communications

Amea A. Mikacich
Filice, Brown, Eassa & McLeod, LLP
Lake Merritt Plaza
1999 Harrison Street, 18th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-3541
(510) 444-3131 (T) / (510) 839-7940 (F)
aam@filicebrown.com

Ellen Brodbine
1906 Lyon Street #4
San Francisco, CA 94115-2059
(415) 775-8599 (T)

Felicia Vallera
The Law Office of Felicia Vallera
214 Grant Avenue, Suite 301
San Francisco, CA 94108
(415) 309-4999 (T) / (415) 480-1651 (F)
felicia@valleralaw.org

Membership

Amea A. Mikacich
Filice, Brown, Eassa & McLeod, LLP
Lake Merritt Plaza
1999 Harrison Street, 18th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-3541
(510) 444-3131 (T) / (510) 839-7940 (F)
aam@filicebrown.com

Mentorship

Alison Crane
Bledsoe Cathcart, Diestel
& Pedersen, LLP
601 California Street, 16th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94108
(415) 981-5411 (T) / (415) 981-0352 (F)
acrane@bledsoelaw.com

Joanna Frazier
Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP
4 Embarcadero Center, 17th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94111
(415) 434-9100 (T)
jfrazier@sheppardmullin.com

Newsletter Editor

Lisa Freitas
Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP
One Market Street, Spear Street Tower
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 442-1173 (T) / (415) 442-1001 (F)
lffreitas@morganlewis.com

Programs

Barbara L. Harris Chiang
Dillingham & Murphy, LLP
225 Bush Street, 6th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94104
(415) 397-2700 (T) / (415) 397-3300 (F)
bhc@dillinghammurphy.com

Scholarships

Rebecca Hooley
Contra Costa County Counsel's Office
651 Pine Street, 9th Floor
Martinez, CA 94553
(925) 335-1854 (T)
rhooley@cc.cccounty.us

Hon. Adrienne Jacobs Miller
San Francisco Superior Court
400 McAllister Street, Room 517
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 551-4093 (T) / (415) 551-5782 (F)
amiller@SFTC.org

Hon. Anne Beytin Torkington
OALJ-U.S. Dept. of Labor
50 Fremont Street, Suite 2100
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 744-6577 (T) / (415) 744-6569 (F)
torkington.anne@dol.gov

Work-Life Balance

Mary L. Topliff
Law Offices of Mary L. Topliff
One Embarcadero Center, Suite 2300
San Francisco, CA 94111
(415) 398-9597 (T) / (415) 398-9599 (F)
topliff@joblaw.com

Leslie Horn
Career Coach for Lawyers
(415) 568-8608 (T)

Contact Your President...

Kelly Robbins
Robbins Family Law
601 California Street, 18th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94108
Tel: (415) 788-5400
Fax: (415) 788-5455
kelly@robbinsfamilylaw.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January

- 23** **Queen's Bench Reproductive Rights Film Festival**
6:00 to 8:30 p.m.
Dolby Laboratories
100 Portero Avenue, San Francisco
See flyer on website.

February

- 2** **Board of Directors Retreat**
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
(A regular Board meeting will be conducted during the retreat). At Adrienne Miller's home.
- 6** **Juvenile Hall Project**
7:00 p.m.

- 7** **QB Business Development Committee**
6:00 p.m.
at Nossaman, 50 California Street, 34th Floor
San Francisco

- 20** **Juvenile Hall Project**
7:00 p.m.

March

- 4** **QB Board Meeting**
6:00 pm
At Nossman



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816 E. Fourth Avenue

San Mateo, CA 94401-3317

Queen's Bench Newsletter

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