



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

An Exciting Year to Come

by Anee A. Mikacich

The year is young and already we have many exciting programs on tap for 2010.

This month, Queen's Bench co-sponsored the screening of "Crime After Crime", a documentary film by Mr. Yoav Potash. The film chronicled the story of Debra Peagler, who was arrested, convicted and incarcerated for the murder of her husband in Los Angeles. Peagler spent nearly 25 years in jail until her case caught the attention of two lawyers from San Francisco. The film highlighted the lengthy legal battle to win Peagler's freedom based upon a relatively new legal defense. Our thanks to former Queen's Bench board member, the Honorable Anne Beytin-Torkington, who met and introduced us to the film's originator, making it possible for Queen's Bench to be involved in the worthwhile program. The near capacity audience at the beautiful Delancey Street Screening Room not only enjoyed a tremendous film but also got to meet the filmmaker, the legal team, and Debra Peagler. The tenacious work of Peagler's legal team is truly inspirational.

Onward and upward! We have a whole host of both traditional and new programs planned for the year. On March 25, 2010, we will hold the annual Induction Ceremony and Champagne Reception for new admittees to the California State Bar at



"Crime After Crime" Screening a Big Success!

By Anne Beytin Torkington

About 150 people gathered for the screening of "Crime After Crime," a documentary film in-the-making, about the battle to free Deborah Peagler, a victim of domestic violence, incarcerated for murder, before there was a "battered woman" defense. The screening was held at the Delancey Street Screening Room, a state-of-the-art film theatre, which is the Director's Guild venue. The film ran about 67 minutes, and was captivating. Yoav Potash, the filmmaker, was our host.



Deborah Peagler, now out of prison on parole, attended. She is charming and strong, an example to anyone of what courage means. She answered questions and gave her profuse thanks to all of the people who have helped her. Deborah's daughter and mother also attended.

Both of Deborah's pro bono lawyers, Joshua Safran and Nadia Costa, land-use attorneys by day, were there to answer questions and receive awards for their work. The Domestic Violence Practicum, the California Coalition for Women Prisoners, and the California Habeas Project

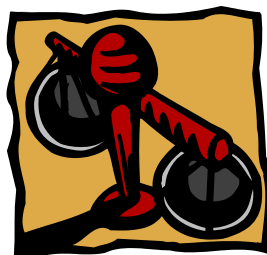
awarded Safran and Costa jointly the 2010 Domestic Violence Pro Bono Lawyer Award. In addition, Bobby Buechler, the private investigator on Debbie's case, received

an award for outstanding investigative work. Sadly, he passed away a few days before the screening. His widow, Gay Falk, accepted the award on his behalf.

Refreshments and cocktails were provided in Bobby Buechler's memory by his friend, Cal Peternell, a chef at Chez Panisse Café.

Queens' Bench, with many of our members as well as our President, Anee Mikacich, in attendance, was amply recognized for its sponsorship of the event as was Bledsoe, Cathcart, Diestel, Pedersen and Treppa, LLP, the law firm that paid for the venue.

If you missed this screening and would like to attend one in the future, check the film's website: www.crime-aftercrime.com For more information about Deborah Peagler's case, take a look at this: www.freedebbie.org.



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ANNOUNCEMENTS ...

March 25, 2010

Induction Ceremony and Champagne Reception

On Thursday, March 25, 2010 from 5:30-7:30 p.m., Queen's Bench will host the 2010 Induction Ceremony and Champagne Reception at the Civic Center Courthouse, 4th Floor Rotunda, located at 400 McAllister Street in San Francisco, California. This exciting event honors the incoming Queen's Bench officers and directors and welcomes the new California State Bar Admittees. All judges of the Bay Area Courts and new admittees to the California Bar are the complimentary guests of Queen's Bench. Admission for the general membership is \$25 per person. We are thrilled to announce that California Supreme Court Associate Justice Kathryn M. Werdegar will preside over the Induction Ceremony. Champagne and hors d'oeuvres will be served. Please save the date and plan to join us! (Click to see flyer.)



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Upcoming Events from the Work-Life Balance Committee

By Tammy Dawson, Co-chair, Work-Life Balance Committee

Queen's Bench is partnering with the Project for Attorney Retention and the Bar Association of San Francisco to bring you information about the following two conferences:

Annual PAR Conference on March 18, Special Rate for Queen's Bench members!

The Project for Attorney Retention will be holding its Third Annual Conference on March 18: "Diversity and Flexibility for the Next-Generation Law Firm." Speakers will report on PAR's recent work, including strategies for ensuring the success of part-time partners and the impact of compensation systems on women. There will also be roundtable discussions on strategies for eliminating bias. PAR is extending its PAR Member discount rate to QB members, \$149 if you register by March 11, \$199 for registration through the day of the event (when checking out, indicate "Queen's Bench" in the comments section). Attendees will receive 4.5 hours of MCLE credit, including 2 hours of elimination of bias credit. For more information, including a list of speakers, go to www.pardc.org/Conf2010.

BASF No Glass Ceiling Task Force Conference on March 25

On March 25, BASF will be sponsoring the first conference in their "Pathways to Power" series, intended to increase the pipeline of skilled women attorneys ready for partnership and leadership. This first conference: "Crossing the Finish Line: Getting to 30% by 2015," will focus on senior associates, junior partners, and in house counsel. There will be presentations on rainmaking and on leadership positions that matter, a panel on personal stories of successful leadership, and opportunities for networking. Cost is \$40, \$50 if registering after March 18, and includes breakfast and lunch. For more information, go to www.sfbay.org/calendar/eventdetail.aspx?id=D107401/D107401. Future conferences for mid-level and for entry level associates are planned for later in 2010.

Queen's Bench New Members

Please welcome the following new members who joined between January 27 and February 23, 2010:

- Beth Hodess
- Jennifer Schaller



Spotlight on Queen's Bench Committee Chairs

Business Development Committee Co-Chairs: Jaime Touchstone and Michelle Seifert



Many Queen's Bench members volunteer their time to lead our many different committees. They dedicate their precious time, talent and resources to serve our members and our community. In the next several months, we will be featuring various committees and their co-chairs.

Jaime Touchstone and Michelle Seifert are co-chairs of the Queen's Bench Business Development Committee. In addition to the Cocktails and Couture event generally scheduled in the spring, the Business Development Committee provides a fun and collegial environment in which women attorneys can build networks of professional contacts and develop law practice marketing skills. The Annual L.E.A.A.D.D. (Lawyers, Engineers, Architects, Accountants, Doctors and Dentists) Dinner provides an opportunity for women in various professions to meet and hear speakers of common interest.



Jaime Touchstone



Michelle Seifert

Outside of Queen's Bench, Jaime works as an associate with the San Francisco firm of Futterman Dupree Dodd Croley Maier, LLP. Jaime focuses her practice on general civil, complex commercial and employment litigation. She represents privately and publicly held businesses, partnerships, sole proprietorships, public entities, receivers and individuals in state and federal courts. Actively involved in the legal community, Jaime belongs to the American Bar Association, the State Bar of California and the Bar Association of San Francisco. She is a member of the San Francisco Barristers Club, which comprises Bar Association members in their first 10 years of practice. She currently chairs the Barristers' Pro Bono Issues and Community Service Committee and was named 2009 Barrister of the Year. Jaime graduated from the University of Colorado with a degree both in international affairs and political science. She earned her J.D. from the University of San Francisco School of Law in 2004.

Outside of Queen's Bench, Michelle Seifert is an attorney and legal staffing professional employed with The Mergis Group. Michelle began working in staffing in 2007 with a Fortune Five Hundred staffing agency and moved to The Mergis Group in December of 2009 to help grow its Bay Area presence. She is expert at staffing large projects, small projects, and individuals on a contract and direct hire basis. Prior to her career in legal staffing, she practiced with at a boutique civil litigation firm in the East Bay for 5 years. Michelle earned her JD from the University of San Francisco School of Law in 2002. Prior

to law school, she earned an MA in Philosophy at San Francisco State University.

The next Queen's Bench Business Development Committee meeting will take place on Tuesday, March 30th at 6:00 p.m. at the Mergis Group located at 475 Sansome Street, Suite 520. Interested members should plan to attend this meeting and/or contact Jaime (jtouchstone@fddcm.com) or Michelle (MichelleSeifert@mergisgroup.com) with questions.

President's Message

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the Civic Center Courthouse in San Francisco. Please join us for a fun and informal reception to meet new officers, directors, and admittees to the Bar. Members of the judiciary will be our invited guests. As we close out winter and welcome spring, watch for upcoming announcements for the annual Judges Dinner, Member's Meeting, and low cost MCLE opportunities.

As always, we appreciate your ongoing support of these worthwhile programs and encourage everyone to renew your membership!!!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March

- 2** **Board of Directors Meeting**
6:00 p.m.
Dillingham & Murphy, LLP
- 3** **Juvenile Hall Project**
7:00 p.m.
Youth Guidance Center
375 Woodside Avenue, San Francisco
- 17** **Juvenile Hall Project**
7:00 p.m.
Youth Guidance Center
- 25** **Annual Induction Ceremony**
5:30 p.m.
Civic Center Courthouse, 4th Floor Rotunda
400 McAllister Street, San Francisco
See flyer.
- 30** **Business Development Committee Meeting**
6:00 p.m.
Mergis Group, 475 Sansome Street, Ste. 520
San Francisco



April

- 6** **Board of Directors Meeting**
6:00 p.m.
Dillingham & Murphy, LLP
- 7** **Juvenile Hall Project**
7:00 p.m.
Youth Guidance Center
- 21** **Juvenile Hall Project**
7:00 p.m.
Youth Guidance Center
- 27** **Business Development Committee Meeting**
6:00 p.m.
Mergis Group, 475 Sansome Street, Ste. 520



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Queen's Bench Newsletter

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