



PRESIDENT'S PAGE

THOMAS H. BIENERT, JR.

A Little Help From Our Friends

No lawyer functions in a vacuum. From solo practitioner to large firm name-partner, we all rely on the help of others for success. We are routinely aided by other attorneys, paralegals, IT professionals, secretaries, receptionists, and administrative professionals, to name a few. In my office, trial typically is an all-hands affair, with many working both day and night to prepare the trial lawyer and paralegal for the next day. Most judges are no different, relying on law clerks, court clerks, bailiffs, and administrative staff to assist them in doing their jobs presiding over matters and making decisions.

The quotes of two famous reformers come to mind. Helen Keller noted that, "the world is moved along, not only by the mighty shoves of [those who get the credit], but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker." And Florence Nightingale observed that, "the greatest heroes are those who do their duty in the daily grind of domestic affairs whilst the world whirls as a maddening [top]." We survive professionally due to unsung heroes who work tirelessly behind the scenes to keep lawyers, judges, and the legal system running. We are lucky to be surrounded by smart, highly capable individuals who are very good at getting things done.

Like our law firms and our courts, the OCBA functions so well because of its unsung heroes, nearly thirty of them, who perform the daily grind for us.

The real leader of the OCBA is its Executive Director, Trudy Levindofske. Throughout my year as President, Trudy has guided me through meetings, events, upcoming issues, and pretty well everything necessary for my position. From the expected weekly update conferences, monthly Executive Committee and Board meetings, and bar events, to the unexpected initiatives and issues, Trudy has never failed to keep me on pace and prepared. Perhaps most valuable is her unflappable composure when dealing with difficult issues or decisions. Trudy attends all of the substantive meetings and discussions of our Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and meetings with section leaders and the like. With a room full of attorneys debating issues, there can be as many thoughts on the way to proceed as attorneys in the room. Trudy is the omnipresent voice of reason and practicality who patiently listens to all and then offers careful observations and input that calm the storm and often carry the day.

Trudy works with almost thirty staff members of the OCBA, all of whom echo her temperament and work ethic. The OCBA's supervisors are all simply terrific at what they do. Among the Bar's most significant functions is serving people in Orange County who need legal services. None of that would be accomplished without the efforts of Public Services Administrator Kameron Riley and her group, who run the OCBA's fee arbitration service, *pro bono* activities, and LRIS.

Carole Martinez, our Assistant Executive Director, helps Trudy run the many aspects of the OCBA, meaning she handles almost any role within the OCBA, while also acting as the Assistant Executive Director of the Charitable Fund; not surprisingly, she's helped me

tremendously this year. Shannon Pearsall, OCBA Controller, has repeatedly provided our Executive Committee and our Board of Directors with well-researched and thought-out information and options for bar leadership to make important financial decisions for our continued fiscal soundness. And since Dennis Slaughter joined OCBA as Director of Information Technology, OCBA has been at the forefront of technology. His revamping of our website, integration of social media, and implementation of online voting have been tremendous upgrades.

On the event side, Education Administrator Leanne Cazares has arranged for me up to attend many of our terrific sectional and educational events, updating me about the people and subject matter involved in each of them. And Event Manager Grace Epperson has perfected the art of putting on meaningful events; defying the stereotype of boring professional events, Grace manages to blend fun, appreciation, education, and charity into OCBA events.

As you may expect, the monthly publication of our magazine, *Orange County Lawyer*, is a significant endeavor. Editor-in-Chief Gialisa Gaffaney and OCBA Graphic Designer Andrew Hart do an incredible job of editing and laying out the magazine. They also demonstrate exemplary professionalism in working with those who contribute articles to the magazine and, with some like me, limitless patience in making presentable too-late and too-inarticulate thoughts.

The folks I mention here are only a representative sample of the terrific OCBA staff members I've been able to work with this year; all have been a pleasure. Philosopher Alfred North Whitehead said, "No one who achieves success does so without acknowledging the help of others. The wise and confident acknowledge this help with gratitude." I'm not that wise or confident, but am just enough so to express true gratitude. As I end all too quickly my year as OCBA President, I hope all at the OCBA know how much I appreciate all they've done for me and the Bar. This year has flown by, all of it a true pleasure, largely because of our OCBA staff. Next time you see them, please take a moment to personally thank them for their contributions.



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1. Angela Bienert, Isabella Bienert, Charlie Bienert, OCBA President Thomas Bienert, Jr., John Bienert, and Max Bienert 2. OCBA President Thomas Bienert, Jr. and Hon. David Carter at 2014 Judges' Night and Annual Meeting 3. Outgoing OCBA Young Lawyers Division Chair Michelle Tran, OCBA President Thomas Bienert, Jr., 2014 OCBA Young Lawyers Division Chair Sarah Nowels, and Chair-Elect Jesse Bolling at the OCBA Young Lawyers Division Open House and Annual Business Meeting 4. California State Bar President Luis Rodriguez and OCBA President Thomas Bienert, Jr. at the OCBA State Bar President Reception 5. OCBA President Thomas Bienert, Jr., Angela Bienert, and OCBA Board Member Edward Schlatter at the OCBA Intellectual Property & Technology and Entertainment, Sports, & Marketing Law Joint Section Summer Mixer 6. OCBA Executive Director Trudy Levindofske and OCBA President Thomas Bienert, Jr. at the Annual Volunteer Recognition Reception

