



## PRESIDENT'S PAGE ASHLEIGH E. AITKEN

# FORE!

Watch (Out?) as This President Takes to the Links



Orange County Bar Association  
Charitable Fund

**A**s I have not received even one letter directed to my newly-hatched "Ask Ashleigh" column, I assume that the Orange County Bar Association membership is completely happy, both personally and professionally. I am proud that I could accomplish that in my first month. The other explanation—that no one trusts my advice—is too demoralizing.

One of my favorite motivational posters states, "You'll always miss 100% of the shots you don't take, and statistically, 99% of the ones you do." This summarizes my golf game quite accurately. I have little natural talent, even less assumed skills, and no time to practice and do anything about it. The only facet of the game I seem to have mastered is wardrobe accumulation, for I sometimes fall victim to the pro shop play that I would have never missed that putt if my socks had those cutesie balls on the back of them. And when said socks are on sale . . .

This month I have the opportunity to show my fellow attorneys that I know how to dress like a serious golfer. On March 31, the Orange County Bar Association Charitable Fund (OCBACF) is hosting its 31st Annual Judge Kenneth Lae Charity Golf Tournament. It is a crowd favorite for its beautiful setting, on the coast at Pelican Hill

Golf Club, and the recently added costume contest. I am growing accustomed to losing at both, but it is still one of my favorite bar events of the year.

### Thanks to Mary, Queen of Scots and Judge Kenneth Lae

The history of golf is a bit unclear, but most golf historians<sup>1</sup> trace the modern eighteen-hole game back to Scotland, when Mary, Queen of Scots brought her passion for maile back from France. She was an avid player, and is thought to have invented the term "caddie," after the French army cadets that traditionally carried the clubs of the French aristocracy. She was vilified for playing at St. Andrew's days after her husband's death, but I question what else a girl is to do after you have your Earl lover plant explosives in the church and smother your husband in its garden.

The real reason we gather this month is to honor the memory of Judge Kenneth Lae (1925-1987). In 1994, the OCBA held its first charity golf tournament to encourage camaraderie among the members, raise funds for legal programs, and enjoy the game of golf that was so dear to Judge Lae's heart. The tournament has grown into a yearly sell-out, and last year featured 144 golfers.





My father, Wylie Aitken, and I at the 2014 OCBACF golf tournament in our "Team Trout" gear. Unlike the real Mike Trout, we received no accolades for athletic prowess. Golf course photo courtesy of Pelican Hill.

*A few facts you may not know:*

- Judge Lae was first appointed to the Municipal Court in 1968, and was elevated to the Superior Court in 1971 by Governor Ronald Reagan.
- He attended both UCLA, for his undergraduate degree, and USC, for law school.
- He was a World War II veteran. He served in the United States Navy as a Lieutenant Junior Grade aboard the USS Salt Lake City. He was also a President of American Legion's Anaheim Chapter.
- He was born in Trinidad, West Indies.
- His favorite meal was a New York Steak from the Plank House.
- Judge Lae has three daughters who continue to participate in and support the OCBACF golf tournament with their spouses and children.
- He won the Franklin G. West Award, the

OCBA's highest honor, in 1983.

- His local golf course was Fallbrook Country Club. He would leave Orange County at 6:30 a.m. every Sunday to play. His favorite shot was the drive.

Judge Lae was also a devoted Rams fan, some may say rabid fan. So much so that Judge Ronald Kreber recalls a favorite memory involving a golf outing on a court holiday. "It was a beautiful day, and we had a limo pick Kenny up. What he did not know was that the limo was filled with Rams cheerleaders. I rode along just to make sure Kenny would not be harmed by the cheerleaders." Apparently, when the limo showed up at the course and the group got out, all the golfers cleared the driving range and came over to welcome Kenny (or the cheerleaders, but I will give Judge Lae the benefit of the doubt).

The golf tournament remains a popular event, and it is equally important to keep the memory of Judge Lae at its forefront. He is described by friends as courageous, smiling, and very popular. His lifetime of dedication to our local community, both as an attorney and as a judge, makes him a deserving honoree at our yearly event.

### The OCBA's Charitable Fund Helps How Many Organizations?

The Charitable Fund is the philanthropic arm of the OCBA, and provides resources to local law-related organizations and

programs. Its two major events are the golf tournament and the fall wine tasting. The OCBA Charitable Fund has awarded over \$1,000,000 in grants over the last decade, and last month presented \$140,000 in grants to ten different law-related programs. The recipients are carefully selected by a grant review committee, and focus on Orange County programs that enhance access to justice and promote equality.

The 2015 recipients include:

- *Bette and Wylie Aitken Family Violence Clinic at Chapman University Fowler School of Law.* The clinic provides free legal advice and representation to low-income victims of family violence in protection orders, victim-related immigration matters, trafficking and other forms of abuse and violence. **Yes, I abstained from this vote.**
- *Constitutional Rights Foundation, Orange County, Constitutional Futures Project: Empowering OC Youth.* CRF provides a series of five complimentary, civic and law-related education programs made available to all high school students in Orange County at no cost to participating youth including Mock Trial, Peer Court, Constitution Day, Law Day, and the Orange County Career Forum.
- *Human Options, Inc., Legal Advocacy Project.* Provides victims of domestic violence and late life family violence with education on legal rights, court accompaniment and support, direct assistance, and resources and referrals—mainly, filing



## OCBAF Judge Kenneth Lae CHARITY GOLF SPONSORS

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Temporary Restraining Orders and Elder Abuse Restraining orders, as well as filing Victim Witness Compensation applications, Safe at Home applications, and U-Visa and VAWA applications.

- *Laura's House, Legal Advocacy Services for Victims of Domestic Violence.* Laura's House is South Orange County's only state-approved comprehensive domestic violence agency. Provides victims of domestic violence with a wide range of services and support to assist them in understanding and securing their legal rights so they can lead safe, violence-free lives.
- *Legal Aid Society of Orange County, Lawyer Entrepreneur Assistance Program (LEAP).* Seeks to significantly increase *pro bono* representation in Orange and Los Angeles Counties by creating an Incubator Hub for area law schools.
- *Orange County Bar Foundation, Project SELF (Summer Employment in Law Firms).* Provides low-income and at-risk high school students with hands-on internships in the legal field.
- *Public Law Center, Courthouse-Based Clinics Project.* Courthouse-based clinics for low-income residents conducted by Public Law Center, Orange County's *pro bono* law firm committed to providing access to justice, which include Chapter 7 Bankruptcy Clinic, a Bankruptcy Reaffirmation Clinic, and a Guardianship Clinic.
- *University of California, Irvine, Pre-Law Outreach Program.* Assists undergraduate students from disadvantaged backgrounds in preparing for the law school application and admissions process and to understand the unique demands of legal education.
- *University of California, Irvine, Saturday Academy of Law.* A series of weekend classes to help ninth-grade students in the Santa Ana Unified School District develop the skills they need to pursue higher education and a potential career in the law.
- *Veterans Legal Institute, Veterans Administration Long Beach (VALB) Hospital Free Legal Clinic, Saddleback College Student Veteran Free Legal Clinic.* Provides *pro bono* legal assistance to homeless, disabled, at-risk, and low-income veterans and service members so as to eradicate barriers to housing, education, employment, and health-care, and to foster self-sufficiency.

### What Happened to the Veterans and Military Task Force?

Last month we held our first meeting of the new Veterans and Military Task Force. The task force is made up of representatives

from the public interest sector, the veteran services community, law school student veterans, and the government attorneys who work in the Superior Court's Veteran Court. I am excited to have such a diverse group of people willing to serve and tackle this important issue. Our first order of business was to discuss what each faction of the community needs, and how the OCBA can fashion a permanent committee to address the ever-growing, and ever-changing, needs of our veterans. It is an exciting time for the task force, and I look forward to updating the membership as we receive input on how the OCBA can be most effective.

### Níl Gaeilge mhaith agam

March is not only the month of the Charitable Fund golf tournament, but also our Spring Member Mixer and the Hispanic Bar Association's Annual Scholarship Fundraiser. The member mixers are networking and social events for OCBA members to increase connections and relax in some of Orange County's hippest restaurants. They always sell out, so please reserve your spot today. The HBA scholarship dinner is another must-attend, and honors the attorneys, judges, and community leaders who promote justice. This year's honorees include Senator Ricardo Lara, our own M.C. Sungaila, and CNN Hero Bruno Serato.

I couldn't end my March column without a slight nod to the Roman Catholic feast day of everyone's favorite non-Irish saint . . . St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. So, if you are not at Muldoon's to share a pint with me, I will give you a blessing in advance:

*May your neighbors respect you,  
Troubles neglect you,  
The angels protect you,  
And Heaven accept you.  
Slán.*

### ENDNOTE

(1) I wish I had been a fly on the wall when that child told his parents that the \$100,000+ in yearly college tuition was paying for History of Golf classes. Art History majors are now off the hook.



*Ashleigh E. Aitken is Of Counsel at Aitken\*Aitken\*Cohn, a position she obtained neither through nepotism nor duress. She is a plaintiff-only civil litigation attorney specializing in wrongful death, personal injury, business torts, and class actions. She can be reached at [ashleigh@aitkenlaw.com](mailto:ashleigh@aitkenlaw.com).*





Orange County Bar Association  
**Charitable Fund**

# 31<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL JUDGE KENNETH LAE **CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT**

Orange County Bar Association Charitable Fund

**Tuesday, March 31, 2015**

State Court Holiday

## **PELICAN HILL GOLF CLUB**

The Resort at Pelican Hill - Ocean North Course

22800 Pelican Hill Road South

Newport Coast, California 92657

For player and sponsorship information, visit **[ocbacf.org](http://ocbacf.org)**  
or call 949.440.6700, ext. 127.

Proceeds benefit the OCBA Charitable Fund, the philanthropic arm of the OCBA, which provides funding and resources to organizations and programs that enhance the system of justice and promote equal justice for all.

The OCBA Charitable Fund is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Tax I.D. 33-0690752.