

Hon. George A. Miram
Presiding Judge

Hon. Robert D. Foiles
Assistant Presiding Judge

Hon. Mark R. Forcum
Judge, Chair of the Court
Community Outreach
Committee

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Community Law Night May 4th

On May 4th, Community Law Night event will be held for the fourth year in the Redwood City Courthouse. This event is a joint collaborative venture between the Court, county lawyers and the Board of Supervisors. Each year, more than 200 County residents have received relevant, free legal information. This year, there will be two events - one at the Hall of Justice in Redwood City on May 4th from 5:30 - 8:30 pm and one later in the year at the South San Francisco courthouse on September 14th from 5:30 - 8:30 pm. The events include informative lectures on legal topics, free consultations with attorneys, and resource tables where you can learn about the more than two dozen agencies in San Mateo that can help you with legal issues.

We are pleased to be able to offer this event at both locations to better serve the county. Click on Community Law Night on www.sanmateocourt.org for more information and for directions to the Hall of Justice in Redwood City.



More than 80 judges, court staff, attorneys, and community service members volunteer their time during Community Law Night.

Jury Service

Presiding Judge George A. Miram, Assistant Presiding Judge Robert D Foiles and Community Outreach Chair, Judge Mark R. Forcum have asked Court Executive Officer John C. Fitton to look at ways to further improve our delivery of service to you as jurors. Mr. Fitton and our excellent Jury, Outreach and Technology staff have recently begun the process of streamlining the jury summons you receive to make it more user friendly. If you have served as a juror in the past two years, we respectfully ask you to click on the San Mateo County Superior Court Jury Survey link on the Court's website to give us any constructive feedback and thoughts about your jury service, so that we may continue to improve our delivery of service to you.

Thank you again for your service as a juror and for your input and help.





Schools Come to the San Mateo Superior Court

In the last three years, the San Mateo Superior Court has developed an ongoing school-court visitation program where local schools come to the court to sit in on court calendars and meet with judges. This program helps county students better understand the court system and the role of judges. It also gives students a practical perspective on how the courts work to help the community. The program can be arranged for students of any age group. During this calendar year, the court has had students from the following schools come to tour the courthouse:

Judicial Officer	School	City
Judge Robert D. Foiles and Judge George A. Miram	St. Matthews	San Mateo
Judge Robert D. Foiles and Judge Mark R. Forcum	Sacred Heart Prep (2 groups of students)	Atherton
Judge Mark R. Forcum	Burlingame High School Starbridge Academy North Star Academy French exchange students w/ Crystal Springs Upland School	Burlingame San Mateo Redwood City Hillsborough

Visiting students have had the opportunity to watch felony criminal sentencings, criminal hearings, the Bridges drug rehabilitation calendar, and both criminal and civil trials. After the students observe court calendars, they meet with Judges Miram, Foiles, and Forcum to discuss any questions they may have and talk about their observations. If you would like your school to participate in this unique educational program, please email the webmaster at webmaster@sanmateocourt.org. We welcome and encourage your participation.



Domestic Violence Prevention Making a Difference in the Community

The County's first Domestic Violence Clinic, a partnership between the Court, Bay Area Legal Aid and CORA (Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse), has been a tremendous success. From April through December 2005, more than 500 people have been served. This clinic is an excellent example of the court's efforts to help the public and link with the many wonderful, positive agencies in the community. The Clinic offers assistance with restraining orders as well as provides references to other agencies that provide services to the community. The clinic is located at 707 Bradford Street in Redwood City - just a few blocks from the Redwood City Courthouse. For more information, call the clinic at 650-701-0850.

Another excellent example of San Mateo Superior Court's efforts to help the community exists on both the state and county level. Presiding Judge George A. Miram was recently recognized by his appointment to the state Judicial Council Domestic Violence Practice and Procedure Task Force. This group meets regularly to investigate and develop procedures to ensure that the court system is implementing programs, policies and procedures to meet the needs of domestic violence victims.



Complex Civil Litigation Court Opens in San Mateo

One way of enhancing our court's responsiveness to the community in which we work is to tailor our operations to better meet the specific needs of all of the citizens of San Mateo County. Our court sits at the confluence of two major international economic engines, Silicon Valley on the southern half and biotech central on the northern half. Now that our court has achieved full judicial staffing for the first time in years, it is time to devote some of our courts' resources to fulfilling those engines' specific legal needs.

Perhaps the most exciting change in this regard is the dedication of a complex civil litigation science and technology court, effective January 2006, at our San Mateo courthouse, which is centrally located near the airport and with easy access to the south and east bay. By dedicating this facility to the litigation needs of our county, we hope to better serve the industries our county now hosts. The court recognizes the complexities and special challenges such cases hold and is eager to

accommodate them. Complex litigation cases require a fair amount of court resources due to the large number of motions filed, the numbers of parties and attorneys involved in the lawsuit, and the substantial amounts of documentary evidence. By moving these cases to their own court facility, we will be able to manage these cases more effectively and improve court operations at the other court locations. We anticipate that this specialized court will become a model for complex litigation for other mid-sized counties. Two judges with substantial expertise in complex civil litigation, Judges Carol L. Mittlesteadt and Steven L. Dylina, are assigned to this complex litigation court.



Court Hosts International Judges

Recently, a delegation from China met with Presiding Judge George A. Miram to discuss the American criminal justice system. The delegation, which included judges, attorneys and a film crew, were interested in due process, civil rights and court calendaring. The film crew videotaped the master calendar proceedings as well as a criminal trial for use in a documentary about the Court. The film was ultimately shown to three million viewers in the People's Republic of China.

This delegation is just one of many that come to the San Mateo Superior Court to learn about the American criminal justice system as well as innovations and best practices at the San Mateo Superior Court. In the past year alone, judges and lawyers from Russia, Oman, Qatar, Turkey have come to San Mateo and representatives from San Mateo have gone both to Bosnia to talk with members from eight eastern European countries and to India to further discuss San Mateo's innovative programs particularly its Alternative Dispute Resolution and drug treatment programs.

Most recently, Judges George A. Miram and Mark R. Forcum were invited to Russia to continue the exchange of information regarding successful drug and alcohol treatment programs.

Court in the Schools Day

The Court's popular Court in the Schools Day continues to expand. For the past three years, judges have taught government classes using a case study based on an actual criminal case in schools from the Sequoia Union High School District and San Mateo Union High School District along with Junipero Serra High School and Sacred Heart Preparatory. This year, the Court will be expanding the program to include the North County High Schools. Judicial officers who have recently participated in the program include, Presiding Judge George A. Miram, Assistant Presiding Judge Robert D. Foiles, Judge Joseph E. Bergeron, Judge Clifford V. Cretan, Judge Mark R. Forcum, Judge Jack L. Grandsaert, Judge Stephen M. Hall, Judge Lisa A. Novak, Judge John W. Runde and Commissioner Susan Greenberg.

This program has been exceptionally well received by teachers and students alike. Court in the Schools has led to schools such as Burlingame High School and Sacred Heart Preparatory bringing their students to the court to watch actual trials and discuss their observations with Presiding Judge George A. Miram, Assistant Presiding Judge Robert D. Foiles, and Community Outreach Chair Judge Mark R. Forcum, who also developed this educational program.



Calendar Innovations Saving Money and Time

The court regularly looks for ways to save the taxpayers money while making court operations more efficient and user-friendly. Recently, the Superior Court traffic division implemented an innovative calendaring system that streamlines the calendar creation process and makes court time more effective for traffic litigants. These changes have **reduced the time spent waiting in line** and speeds case processing time. In addition to improvements in customer service, the Court will save approximately \$30,000 in staff costs per year. The Court would like to recognize the following staff for creating and implementing this new calendaring system: Eduardo Jaramillo, Marie Nelson, Sean Perdomo, and Delia Van Pelt. Eduardo Jaramillo was recently recognized by the county and was awarded Employee of the Month for his efforts.

Conclusion

The San Mateo County Superior Court continues to be a leader in the state in providing positive, state of the art outreach programs to you - the taxpayers that we serve. Our innovative programs, ranging from our interactive jury survey to sending judges to our local high schools, have one common theme - to help make our local court system user-friendly and responsive to your needs.

As always, we welcome any and all constructive comments and feedback. Please feel free to contact any of us by emailing the court's webmaster at webmaster@sanmateocourt.org.

Many thanks,

Presiding Judge George A. Miram
Assistant Presiding Judge Robert D Foiles
Judge, Chair of the Community Outreach Committee Mark R. Forcum
Court Executive Officer and Jury Commissioner John C. Fitton

