

San Mateo County Superior Court COURTNEWS



An online newsletter to the San Mateo County Bar Association

November 7, 2006

Hon. George A. Miram
Presiding Judge

Hon. Robert D. Foiles
Assistant Presiding Judge

Hon. Mark R. Forcum
Chair, Court Community
Outreach Committee

Presiding Judge and Assistant Presiding Judge for 2007-2008

The San Mateo County Superior Court judges have elected Judge Robert D. Foiles to serve as Presiding Judge for 2007-2008. At that same election, Judge Stephen M. Hall was elected to serve as Assistant Presiding Judge.

Judge Foiles was instrumental in creating the Pathways Mental Health Court and served as the Assistant Presiding Judge for 2005-2006. Judge Foiles has served as Supervising Civil Judge, Criminal Presiding Judge, and Family Law Judge. Upon his election, Presiding Judge George A. Miram stated, "Judge Foiles is an outstanding administrator with tremendous vision and common sense. He brings a wealth of experience to a demanding position."

Judge Hall was the Family Law Presiding Judge for 1998-2000 and oversaw the conversion of Family Law calendars to direct calendars. Judge Hall has also served as Criminal Presiding Judge, Supervising Criminal Judge and Supervising Judge of the Commissioners.

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Breakfast Meetings with the Incoming Presiding Judge Foiles

Incoming Presiding Judge Robert D. Foiles has announced plans to hold regular breakfast meetings with the Bar to further collaborate on services to increase access and services for attorneys. These breakfast meetings will be coordinated with lawyers throughout the county and will be held weekly.

These breakfasts build on the lawyer outreach program initiated by Presiding Judge George A. Miram and Judge Mark R. Forcum, which led to a number of helpful services for members of the San Mateo County Bar including Open Access and wireless remote access in our Court facilities.



Community Outreach and the Court's Updated Strategic Plan

The Court is in the process of revising its Strategic Plan. First created in 1999, the Strategic Plan sets forth objectives and initiatives to improve the Court's delivery of services and increase access to the Court. The current plan contains a number of services and programs that have been successfully launched - including improving services for jurors, EZLegalFile, Court in the Schools Day, Community Law Night, Bridges Day Treatment, and the new Juvenile Youth Services Center.

The Court, under the direction of Strategic Planning Chair Judge Mark R. Forcum and committee members Judge Jack L. Grandsaert and Judge Elizabeth Lee, is developing an online service where the public and attorneys can contribute feedback and suggestions through the Court's website, www.sanmateocourt.org/survey starting on December 1, 2006.

The Strategic Planning Committee will be meeting with local lawyers to get your constructive feedback, ideas, and suggestions. The first meeting will be conducted for any interested lawyer on February 7, 2007 at 5:30 pm at 400 County Center in the Board of Supervisors Chambers. During this meeting, San Mateo County Bar members can also provide input over the internet using an innovative chat room format. The Strategic Planning Committee felt that by making this service available, more attorneys would be able to participate in the process.

A second forum for criminal attorneys from the DA's Office and Private Defender Program will be conducted on February 15, 2007 at 5:30 pm. This session will also be at 455 County Center in room 101. If any member of the Bar has any questions about this process, please call Judge Forcum at 650-363-7835 or via email at webmaster@sanmateocourt.org.

The community at large will also be invited to forums that will be held throughout the county. More detailed information on the schedule of forums and community outreach process will be available on the Court's website, www.sanmateocourt.org.

Pathways

After many months of planning, the court implemented a new mental health calendar and program called Pathways, during the week of October 2, 2006. Pathways is a partnership and collaboration between the Superior Court, Probation, District Attorney's Office, Private Defender Program, Sheriff's Office, Correctional Health, and the Mental Health Services Department in San Mateo County. Pathways is an alternative to incarceration for qualified seriously mentally ill and dually diagnosed individuals going through the criminal justice system. Its purpose is to improve the outcomes for these offenders so that they receive the appropriate treatment and services in order to address the underlying behavioral health problems that contribute to their involvement in the criminal justice system and to reduce recidivism. There is a referral and eligibility assessment process that must occur and the treatment program entails intensive probation supervision.

The new calendar is heard Friday mornings at 9:30 a.m. in Judge Mark R. Forcum's department.



Community Law Night in South San Francisco

Community Law Night was held for the first time in our South San Francisco Courthouse on September 14, 2006. The event was a significant success, as it was attended by approximately 140 citizens. Community Law Night is a collaboration of the Court, the San Mateo County Bar Association, the County of San Mateo, and a number of public agencies that provide legal advice and service to San Mateo County residents. The Court is very grateful to the many San Mateo County Bar Association members who provided free legal information in topics ranging from family law to immigration, including:

Tulin Acikalin	Nancy de Ita	Mike Leon-Guerrero	Lillian Smith
Paul Anand	Alex Easterbrook	Cynthia Lemus	Kristi C. Spence
Deborah Appel	Donna Echiveri	Colleen McEvoy	John Til
Haitham E. Ballout	Mara W. Feiger	Sally Mitchell	George Wailes
Deborah Boswell	Sam Ferdows	Chris Morales	Myra Weiher
Jeffery L. Boyarsky	Lauren Greenberg	Joe Nespor	Arden Weinberg
Patricia Bruno-Escobar	Jeffrey B. Hayden	Connie O'Brien	Rand N. White
Raymond A. Buenaventura	Melissa M. Holmes	Niki Okcu	Andre Winghart
Lilian Cheng-Smith	Olivia Horgan	Cathy Rincon	Tim Wright
Christopher E. Cobey	Anand P.S. Judge	Ray Shahani	Ian Yourtz
Paul Constantino	Severa Keith	Iraj Shahrok	Jerry Zanzinger
Peter Daniel	Adam Kent	Peter Shearer	
Jessica Dayton	Vivian L. Kral	Jennifer Sike	

We will continue to hold two events each year to make this valuable program more accessible for the public. More information about the 2007 events will be forthcoming.

Reviewing Court Documents Online and Revised Court Webpage

If attorneys file their documents online using One-Legal's e-filing service, those documents can be viewed online using Open Access. This is a significant enhancement to the Open Access system.

To view e-filed documents, click on Open Access from the Court's homepage and search for the case. Documents with a camera icon on them are electronic files, click on the camera to view the filing.

The Court has also revamped its webpage to continue to provide attorneys with the best possible level of service. The new webpage features an "Attorney Express Line" for areas that attorneys regularly visit, e.g., Tentative Rulings, Open Access, and e-filing.

Conclusion

Presiding Judge George A. Miram has initiated and overseen a number of important and positive changes for our Court the last two years. The new Complex Litigation Department, Pathways Program, expansion and improvement of e-filing and Open Access and the expansion of Community Law Night to South San Francisco are all programs that help our Court better serve you and the community at large.

Our Court values the collaborative help and input that each of you give to us and the positive and helpful leadership of Bar President Adam Kent, Bar Executive Director John Digiacinto and the new Assistant Chief Defender Myra Weiher.

Have a safe and happy holiday season!