

Merced County Bar Association



Volume 3, Issue 1

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January 2019

President's Column

Thomas Min
MCBA President

Thank you all for attending our January luncheon. We had great attendance. Special thanks to Judge Proietti.

Our next luncheon will be on February 7th at the Branding Iron. Attorney Mandy Jeffcoach will be our speaker: New Rules of Professional Conduct. Hope to see all of you there. Also, bring a friend.

Bar dues this year are reduced to \$90. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please feel free to contact any one of the officers of the MCBA - our emails are listed below. Thank you and on behalf of the MCBA: We wish you a prosperous 2019.

2019 MCBA OFFICERS

THOMAS MIN – PRESIDENT
TMIN1216@GMAIL.COM

GEORGE LEAVELL – VICE PRESIDENT
GEORGE@GEORGELEAVELL.COM

SKYE EMERY – SECRETARY
SKYE@MERCEDDIVORCE.COM

SARA ROSENTHAL – TREASURER
ROSENTHALSR@GMAIL.COM

A New Year's Resolution for Valley Lawyers (First published in the Fresno Bee, 12-29-2018)

Last summer, a Fresno family repeatedly asked their landlord to repair a faulty electrical system in their home. The landlord ignored their pleas, the power went out, and the family went without electricity for almost a month. The landlord then tried to evict them, and they came to Central California Legal Services (CCLS) for legal assistance. We helped this family win their case and stay in their home, which the landlord was ordered to repair. The landlord later attempted another unlawful eviction, and CCLS again assisted the family. We ultimately obtained \$7,000 in relocation funds and time for the family to find a new home, where they will not have to fight for basic services like reliable access to electricity.

Most tenants facing this type of situation (or this type of landlord) are not so lucky, because almost no tenant is lucky enough to have a lawyer on their side. CCLS provides free civil legal assistance to low-income residents of six counties in the Valley, and we defend more eviction cases annually than any other type of case. Many tenants come to CCLS completely unaware of basic legal protections, including the right to withhold rent when a landlord illegally fails to repair holes in the roof, or ensure there's hot water. Each year, we help thousands of families through this stressful process, providing critical legal information, and representation in court.

Eviction cases inundate our Valley court systems. Landlords usually have lawyers in these cases, while tenants almost never do. Not surprisingly, eviction outcomes tend to favor those with lawyers.

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Calendar of Events 2019

January 3 – MCBA Lunch, Branding Iron – Judge Proietti’s update on civil Practice (1 MCLE credit).

January 14 – MCBA and Greater Merced Chamber of Commerce Lunch, Fresno Pacific University, 3379 G Street, Bldg P Merced – Faith Driscoll, Barsamian & Moody on Employment Law Updates (1 MCLE credit).

February 7 – MCBA lunch, Branding Iron – Mandy Jeffcoach on New Rules of Professional Conduct (1 MCLE credit).

March 7 – MCBA lunch, Branding Iron - Judge Bacciarini’s discussion of Small Claims (1 MCLE credit).

April 4 – MCBA lunch, Branding Iron – Carlos Fuentes discussion on Immigration Law (1 MCLE credit).

May 2 - MCBA Law Day, Italo-American Lodge – 9:30AM – 1PM 9:30 Speaker TBD, 10:45 Judge McCabe on Ethics, Noon Speaker TBD (3 MCLE credits).



June 6 - MCBA Lunch, Branding Iron – Walter Wall, Mariposa County District Attorney subject TBA (1 MCLE credit).

July 4 – Enjoy Independence Day. No July meeting!

August 1 – MCBA Lunch, Branding Iron – Lindsay Nako and David Nahmias on Legal Developments in LGBTQ Employment Discrimination (1 MCLE credit Elimination of Bias *REQUIRED SUBJECT*).

September 5 - MCBA Lunch, Branding Iron – Speaker and Subject TBA (1 MCLE credit).

October 3 at 6 p.m. - Westside Dinner and at Wool Growers, 609 H Street, Los Banos.

November 7 - MCBA Lunch, Branding Iron - Annual Membership meeting and board elections.

December 5 at 6 p.m.- Holiday Party and Judges’ Night at the Branding Iron in Merced.

A New Year’s Resolution for Valley Lawyers, continued from page 1.

Landlords want speedy evictions, but tenants need a fair chance to present legitimate defenses. Here in the Valley, poor families are sleeping in their cars because they have lost the opportunity to make their case in court.

CCLS’s high volume of eviction cases is a symptom of a much deeper issue in our community. An April 2018 California Housing Partnership report found that 75% of the poorest renters in Fresno County spend 50% or more of their income on rent. The same report found that Fresno County lacks 41,000 affordable rental homes. The Valley simply does not have enough housing for low-income families. Many Valley residents live paycheck-to-paycheck, paying high rents on low-quality housing because there are too few affordably priced units. California’s statewide housing crunch means that middle and working class families from the Coast who can no longer afford the rents in cities like San Francisco and Los Angeles move here in search of an affordable place to live, making our local market even tighter.

This perfect storm encourages some landlords to do little or nothing to keep up their properties, because there will always be another low-income tenant desperate to get a roof over their head. Such landlords violate tenant rights and then abuse the eviction process because, at the end of the day, it’s a seller’s market. For these landlords, doing business means filing evictions whether or not they have a legal basis for kicking the tenants out. The abuses by such landlords would go virtually unchecked without CCLS’s advocacy.

Our Housing Team works tirelessly to bring balance to the eviction process, but we know that for every tenant we can represent, dozens of other tenants must experience this frightening process alone. CCLS invites local attorneys to consider volunteering *pro bono* to assist Valley renters to obtain justice in eviction cases in 2019. We provide training, professional liability insurance, and a chance to keep families safe and stable in their homes. (Continued on page 3)

A New Year's Resolution for Valley Lawyers, continued from page 2.

Legal representation for tenants in eviction proceedings promotes housing stability and prevents homelessness in the Valley—two goals our entire community can agree on.

Emilia P. E. Morris, *Legal Director*

Marcos Segura, *Housing Team Attorney*

Central California Legal Services
Legal Advice Line (800) 675-8001

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The Federal Government shutdown is having many impacts that are felt right here in our community.

The federal employees and correctional officers at the federal prison are not getting paid and are running short on food.

A food pantry/food drive is being organized to collect and distribute food to the federal prison employees.

If you would like to donate non-perishable food or money, please contact Weldon Mattos (Buzz) at wjm@mattoslawoffice.com

Buzz will coordinate the pickup of food items and where to send monetary contributions.

2019 MCBA Officers The new MCBA officers for 2019 were elected at the November 2018 lunch and announced at the December 6 Holiday dinner:

President Thomas Min

Tom grew up in Los Angeles County. He graduated from University of California, Irvine for undergrad and William Mitchell College of Law. Tom has been at the Merced District Attorney's Office for the past 11 years. He served as 2017 MCBA Secretary and 2018 MCBA Vice President.

Vice President George Leavell

George is a USAF veteran with undergrad degrees in electrical engineering and management and earned his JD from Western State University College of Law in 1995. He has practiced intellectual property law for over twenty years. George operates his own IP firm Law Office of George B. Leavell, in Merced. He served as 2017 MCBA Treasurer and 2018 MCBA Secretary.

Secretary Skye Emery

Skye earned her Juris Doctor from San Joaquin College of Law. She clerked at the Merced County District Attorney's Office for two years before serving as a Deputy District Attorney in misdemeanors. In 2017, Skye joined the Law Office of Casey Aitchison. In 2018, Casey and Skye formed the new law firm of Aitchison & Emery, in Merced. She served as 2018 MCBA Treasurer.

Treasurer Sara Rosenthal

Sara graduated from The University of California, Berkeley with an undergraduate degree in Sociology, and continued on to the University of California, Davis, College of Law, graduating in 2012. Sara has been at the Merced District Attorney's Office since 2013.

Thank you for your 2018 MCBA Membership. It's time to register for 2019!

Please invite a non-MCBA member to the next luncheon!

2018 Members listed below:

Casey Aitchison	Maile C. Dunlap	David D. Haycraft	Michael W. Murphy
Tabasum Akbari	Thomas E. Ebersole	Sean Howard	Michael Noguera
Edward M. Amaral	Skye Emery	Bruce J. Hendricks	James P. Padron
Jenna M. Anderson	James N. Fincher	Raymond J. Isleib	Lauri Partin
Vincent Andrade	Kelly C. Fincher	J. Scott Jordan	Deanne Peterson
Eric S. Beiswanger	Michael Fitzgerald	Jeffrey S. Kaufman	Diane Van Atta Rathmann
Deborah Bennett	Kimberly G. Flores	Kevin F. Kelley	Katharine Reed
Mason L. Brawley	David A. Foster	Cyril L. Lawrence	Leanna Rhodes
Geraldine Brown (Honorary)	Douglas Foster	George B. Leavell	Kenneth M. Robbins
Marvin J. Brown	Arthur F. Godwin	Kenneth R. Mackie	Sara Rosenthal
Corbett J. Browning	Christopher Goodness	Richard T. Marchini	Monika Saini
Aaron N. Castleton	Jeff B. Grant	Weldon J. Mattos, Jr.	Lisete M. Silva
Jeffrey C. Castleton	Anthony Green	Roger S. Matzkind	Shane G. Smith
Julie Collura	Janinda Gunawardene	C. Logan McKechnie	Bruce B. Sousa
Beau C. Correia	Melbourne Gwin	Sean McLeod	Stuart B. Spencer
Thomas Curry	Emily J. Haden	Phillip McMurray	Karen R. Spinardi
Betty L. Dawson (Honorary)	Robert T. Haden	Derek Meyer	James E. Stone
Anthony De Jager	Kyle Hampton	Rachel Miller	Ralph S. Temple, Jr.
Gabriel A. Delgado	Forrest W. Hansen	Thomas Min	Jennifer Tran
Scott Drexel	Ann M. Hanson	Paul Carter Mullen	Rickey D. Wallace
			Alfred L. Whitehurst
			Darryl Young

If you haven't already paid your 2019 dues, please bring your dues payment to the next luncheon, or mail it in to MCBA, PO Box 2982, Merced, CA 95344. Download a Member Application on the member's resources page of our website: www.mercedbar.org/member-resources/

Merced County Bar Association
P.O. Box 2982
Merced, California 95344



MERCED COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION – 2019

Annual Dues
Active: **\$90**
Retired: Honorary

Please mail the completed the application and dues payable to:
MCBA
P.O. Box No. 2982
Merced, CA 95344

The following data will be used for your Member Information of the MCBA records and MCBA website member directory page: <http://mercedbar.org/members/>

Please **DO NOT** include a website entry on <http://mercedbar.org/members/> for me.

Name: _____

Bar#: _____

Firm Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

Website: _____

Areas Of Practice: _____

Law School: _____

Languages: _____

Dues Enclosed: _____

