

Judicial Vignettes: San Bernardino County's Newest Superior Court Judges

by Ed Butler

When new judges are appointed, our field reporter, Ed Butler, Esq. interviews them and submits for your information, a "Judicial Vignette." These vignettes are added to our online collection of Benchmarks, a monthly feature in the Bar Bulletin.

Judge J. David Mazurek

Judge J. David Mazurek followed his father's footsteps both into athletics and the law.

Appointed to the local Superior Court by Gov. Schwarzenegger Sept. 1, Judge Mazurek has begun a preliminary hearing and sentencing calendar assignment at Victorville District.

The judge's new career turn follows a 10-year stint as prosecutor for the San Bernardino County district attorney. His career there was recently capped by winning a jury's death penalty recommendation for serial killer Wayne Adam Ford. As a member of the district attorney's major crimes unit, Judge Mazurek previously helped send two other killers to death row.

The new judge says judging attracted him as a way to expand his jurisprudence to a larger number of cases, to play a bigger role in seeing that justice is obtained. He says that a combination of things that motivated him included having met his goals as a prosecutor and wanting to set his sights on a different kind of challenge.

Judge Mazurek was born in Pittsburgh, Pa. and lived in Virginia and the Detroit area as the son of Fred Mazurek, kick returner and wide receiver for the Washington Redskins and Detroit Lions. When a medical condition forced the judge's father to retire from football, he went to law school and practiced corporate tax law in Chicago and later Southern California, where the judge completed high school as a resident of Claremont. His mother worked as a nurse for a time.

The judge indicates he has a passion for sports himself, having gone out in school for interscholastic football, basketball, baseball, swimming, track and golf. His favorite pastimes these days include golf and skiing.

He played football as a student at Cornell University until injury sidelined him. He re-enrolled at San Francisco State University as a journalism major and received his bachelor's degree there. After a break he earned his juris doctor degree at

the University of La Verne College of Law.

Armed with his law degree and license to practice, Judge Mazurek began in civil practice locally with the Zumbrunn Law Corporation in 1993. There for about a year and as a sole practitioner for a couple of years, he worked chiefly in the family, business and personal injury areas.

Judge Mazurek says a desire for courtroom and trial work led to his joining the local district attorney's office in the fall of 1996.

A single Republican residing in Upland, Judge Mazurek fills the office vacated by the retirement of former Presiding Judge Peter Norell.

Judge Harold T. Wilson

Raised in San Bernardino, Judge Harold T. Wilson brings varied public service experience to his new role as Superior Court judge.

That experience includes 17 years as a deputy district attorney of San Bernardino County, most recently assigned to testify against granting parole for life prison inmates from the county. His long career in the office covered a wide spectrum of crime prosecution, ranging from petty thefts to murder with special circumstances.

Appointed by the governor Sept. 1, his first judicial assignment allows him to apply his criminal adjudication experience. He sits at Victorville District handling a calendar including arraignments, pre-preliminary hearings and preliminary hearings.

Judge Wilson says the public service aspect is what attracted him to judging. While he served as advocate for a long time, "As a judge you get to serve all, and that was appealing," he says.

Both of his parents, now retired, were in serving professions, his mother as a teacher and father as a dentist.

The new judge attended Aquinas High School in San Bernardino, enjoying sports including interscholastic competition in track and wrestling.

Before becoming an attorney in his late 20s, he spent some time working as a swamper/apprentice engineer for the U.S. Forest Service in this region. He partook of this work between school sessions and part-time, while earning his bachelor's degree in international relations at the University of San Diego.


He earned his law degree at the University of Notre Dame, after which he spent some time as special agent for the federal Immigration and Naturalization Service. He joined the local district attorney's office in 1989.

A Democrat residing in Redlands, Judge Wilson has a daughter, Katie, 9, and son, Jacob, 7. His wife works at UC Riverside.

The judge says his spare time interests are varied, but his chief enjoyments include expeditions to the beach and working out at the gym.

He fills the judicial office that was vacated by Judge Patrick Morris upon his becoming mayor of San Bernardino.

You're invited!



Habitat for Humanity®
San Bernardino Area, Inc. presents

A Home for the Holidays

A Wine and Cheese Fundraising Party

• raffle prizes • local celebrities • live entertainment •

ESRI Café
380 New York St.
Redlands
6 p.m. to 9 p.m.
December 11, 2006

• silent auction • Markas Hills wines • door prize •

Tickets \$50

Proceeds from this event benefit our next two building projects for two deserving families. One house will be in San Bernardino and one in Redlands. Help us get building again!

Ways to help:

- buy a ticket (or two!)
- donate an item to our raffle
- help sponsor the fundraiser
- help sponsor one of the houses

*All donations are tax deductible
Tickets may be purchased at the Habitat office
or from any Board member*