



October 2012

Firm Seminars:

Lewitt Hackman presents complimentary seminars in our Board Room for clients and friends on a variety of legal topics. **Michael Hackman**, a California State Bar Certified Specialist in Tax Law designated by the Bar's Board of Legal Specialization, **Kira S. Masteller** and **Robert A. Hull**, will present: **2012 Year-End Tax and Estate Planning** in December. A light breakfast will be served, and attorneys may earn one hour of MCLE credit. Further details will be forthcoming.

Recent Professional & Community Accomplishments:

- **David Gurnick** was installed as President of the San Fernando Valley Bar Association for the 2012-2013 term. This will be David's second time serving in that office, the first time any individual has served two terms as President in the 86 year history of the SFVBA. At the same ceremony, **Kira S. Masteller** was sworn in as a Trustee of the Association, and **Stephen T. Holzer** was installed as a Director of the Valley Community Legal Foundation.
- **Sue M. Bendavid**, after several years of contentious and hard fought litigation, obtained final court approval for a wage and hour class action settlement. The claims were valued at close to \$70 million and were resolved for approximately three cents on the dollar. In the court's final approval, the judge granted our client's request that any residual amounts remaining from unclaimed checks be paid to a charity of our client's choice.
- **Andrew L. Shapiro** and **David B. Bobrosky** of our Personal Injury Practice Group recently resolved a matter for a client seriously injured in a car accident. The accident was caused by another driver who, while in the course and scope of his employment, was distracted by his cell phone. Our client's passenger was also injured, and her traumatic brain injury case continues.
- **Nicholas Kanter** and **David Gurnick** assisted a restaurant franchisor in obtaining cooperative termination of a non-compliant franchisee. Nick and David presented the franchisee's lawyer with proposed complaints for eviction from the premises and injunctive relief for trademark infringement. The franchisee agreed to relinquish the premises and transfer the assets to the firm's client; and litigation was avoided.
- **Tal Grinblat** overcame an interesting objection by the Trademark Office to a client's application, which incorporated superimposed flags from several countries on the mark. The examiner objected because the mark contained insignia of the United States or other foreign nations. The Trademark Office does not permit modifications, but Tal convinced the examiner to accept a mark that replaced the flags with continents, claiming the look and feel overall remained unchanged.



- **Paul C. Bauducco** settled a Federal ERISA (Employee Retirement Income Security Act) subrogation case on very favorable terms, allowing our client to remain the sole beneficiary of a monthly annuity necessary for our client's support.
- **Sue M. Bendavid** defended a wage and hour claim before the Labor Commissioner's office. A client's employee claimed she was entitled to overtime and other wages, along with waiting time penalties. Sue persuaded the deputy Labor Commissioner that the former employee was exempt from overtime, and therefore not entitled to any overtime premiums or penalties.
- **Barry T. Harlan** and **Vanessa Soto Nellis** resolved a dispute about which spouse would occupy the former marital home, by working with opposing counsel to reach a compromise and avoid a trial on the issue. The solution resolved both parties' very different goals.
- **Kira S. Masteller** prepared an Irrevocable Life Insurance Trust for a survivorship life insurance policy for a married couple, to provide liquidity for their children to pay estate taxes without having to sell prime commercial real property upon the deaths of both parents.
- **Robert A. Hull** worked with a company that provides staffing services for internet businesses to revise and develop several new standard service agreement forms for use with their clients.
- **Nicole Kamm** obtained a favorable resolution of a Labor Commissioner claim for alleged unpaid severance, accrued vacation, expense reimbursements and overtime wages. In separate, community efforts, Nicole will serve as Chair of the Employment Law Section of the San Fernando Valley Bar Association for the 2012-2013 term.
- **Vanessa Soto Nellis** swiftly resolved a dissolution matter for a couple by working with opposing counsel. Although the issue of spousal support was hotly contested, Vanessa was able to ultimately resolve it in our client's favor by persuading the opposing party that the law was on our client's side. Both parties saved money by engaging in continued negotiations rather than litigating their issues.
- **David Gurnick** assisted in obtaining California franchise registration for a company that offers technology enrichment classes and summer camps for elementary and middle school students.
- **Michelle S. Robins** of our Family Law Practice Group helped moderate a program presented by the Family Law Section of the San Fernando Valley Bar Association entitled, "Conciliation Court for the 21st Century."
- **Stephen T. Holzer, Paul C. Bauducco, Thomas Cecil, Tal Grinblat, David B. Bobrosky, Vanessa Soto Nellis, Robert A. Hull** and Paralegal **Sarah Thrift** attended the *8th Annual Mayor's Luncheon* of the United Chambers of Commerce. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa spoke on various topics affecting business in Los Angeles. Lewitt Hackman helped sponsor the event.
- **Keith T. Zimmet, Andrew L. Shapiro, Stephen T. Holzer, Thomas Cecil, Tal Grinblat, David B. Bobrosky** and **Robert A. Hull** attended the annual *Founders Day Luncheon* at Cal State Northridge, honoring students, faculty and staff who worked at or attended the school when it was San Fernando Valley State College. Dave served on the Founders Day Committee.
- Congratulations to **Elizabeth A. Erickson** of our Family Law Practice Group, **Stephan Mihalovits** of our Litigation Practice Group, and **Nicole Kamm** of Employment Law Practice Group. Elizabeth and Steve each got married this past month, and Nicole and her husband welcomed their second child, Ian, into their family.