



HAWAII WOMEN LAWYERS NEWSLETTER

July 1992

1992 BOARD

PRESIDENT

Trudy M. Burns

VICE PRESIDENT

Sharon Takeuchi

SECRETARY

Ramona Hussey

TREASURER

Judith Sterling

DIRECTOR

Susan Li

DIRECTOR

Rhonda Nishimura

DIRECTOR

Jennifer Schember-Lang

DIRECTOR

Elizabeth Sullivan

DIRECTOR

Laura Thielen

JULY PROGRAM: HWL MID-YEAR PAU HANA

PLACE: MURPHY'S BAR & GRILL
2 Merchant Street, Rear Dining Room

TIME: Friday, July 31, 1992, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.

BRING A NEW MEMBER! The HWL Board of Directors invites YOU and your friends to get together to have some fun after work on Friday, July 31. We'd like to continue the great discussions we enjoyed with many of you in our June phonebank membership outreach. The Board received good, encouraging feedback from our members about HWL, especially about our recent efforts to increase the number of women on our courts and commissions.

PLEASE BE SURE TO COME TO THE HWL MID-YEAR PAU HANA ON FRIDAY, JULY 31, TO SHARE IDEAS FOR NEW HWL PROJECTS AND EVENTS AND TO CATCH UP WITH OTHER HWL MEMBERS - OLD AND NEW! FEEL FREE TO BRING ANYONE WHO MAY BE INTERESTED IN JOINING HWL. SEE YOU THERE!!

NOTE: We have been informed by the HSBA that the workshop we were jointly sponsoring on "Reducing Stress through Effective Communication" has been cancelled due to personal scheduling difficulties of the speaker.

ANNOUNCEMENTS!

Congratulations to HWL Director Rhonda A. Nishimura, who was just made a partner at Libkuman, Ventura, Ayabe, Chong & Nishimoto. Rhonda was also just reappointed to the Board of Directors of the Aloha Tower Development Corporation.

Congratulations also go to HWL member Evelyn J. Black, who was recently appointed to serve on the Board of Governors of the Hawaii Community Foundation.

REMINDER - MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE DUE

For all of you who have not yet paid your 1992-1993 dues, please send them in as soon as possible. Annual dues for regular members are now \$40 per year. Many firms will cover the cost of HWL membership. Have you signed up all potential HWL members in YOUR office? Thanks for your help and continued commitment to HWL.

SPECIAL JOINT MEETING WITH MOMI CAZIMERO

On May 27, Momi Cazimero, former member of the Judicial Selection Commission, met with representatives from Hawaii Women Lawyers and the Hawaii Women's Legal Foundation to share her views on the judicial selection process and our role in that process. Her inspirational and thought-provoking comments generated a lively discussion. Following are excerpts from her remarks.

Let me begin with a disclaimer. I am not here to speak for an organization. I speak only for myself because I represent no one but myself. I speak independently because I have no constituency. This limits my power but it expands my freedom.

This freedom allows me the opportunity to focus on the larger issue — that issue being the Judicial Selection Commission and the importance of its role. I see that body and the process set forth in the Constitution as the best method for selecting our judges. History supports that conclusion. Elections of judges do not render the best results. Outright appointments do not render the best results either. From all indications, the Judicial Selection process has greatly improved the quality of judges throughout the nation.

*Confidentiality is critical to the process and the success of the Judicial Selection Commission and I staunchly support that to this day. * * **

I had many discussions in the wake of the recent appointments. Those discussions were held with a wide range of people—all credible—and all trusting in an important process. The purpose of those discussions was to examine what was perceived as possibly threatening to the Judicial Selection process. I said it then, and I say it now. There is nothing wrong with the process as spelled out in the Constitution. I hope you too will defend the process with equal fervor.

Let's look at the positive results following the recent appointments. It woke everybody up! Public interest

and reaction has had a definite impact on the process and the people in the process.

As women lawyers, you make up a significant number. I urge you to choose your candidate for the Judicial Selection Commission with diligent care. I recommend you conduct a unified effort in supporting equal representation of women on the Commission. Women have been under-represented on the Commission for far too long. In addition, choose carefully who you send to that Commission. And once you select that individual — leave HER alone to do HER job.

The Chief Justice who appointed me as the lone woman on the Commission never once interfered during my term, but he did seek recommendations after I completed my 6 years. In answer to his question about how I felt the Commission could be improved I answered — "It can be improved with balance. I want the same thing on the Commission that you want on the bench — balance."

*The issue of gender representation was of great importance to me and I would like to add that I feel he has been supportive in appointing women. The two women presently on the Commission were appointed by the Chief Justice. The Bar Association, on the other hand, sent two men to the Commission. As women, we must promote and support qualified women in our courts because gender representation is critical to the balanced interpretation of the law. Our bodies, our careers, our lives, our families and vulnerabilities are entitled to a legal interpretation that represents women. Men do not think like women as we witnessed in the Clarence Thomas hearing. * * **

*There is another important point I wish to discuss with you, and that is the role of your Judicial Selection Committee whose name I question. It is too easily confused with the Judicial Selection Commission, and if that association was intended, it makes a questionable presumption. * * **

Any confusion the Judicial Selection Commission suffers through the implied association with the Judicial Selection Commission compromises both organizations. If the impression is that the bodies have related func-

tions, the Committee might be viewed as having pre-screening authority. The Committee has no authority whatsoever, and any confusion it created is a disservice.

I feel there are two views Hawaii Women Lawyers needs to consider with regard to its committee's mission — whether it serves the select few who are endorsed by the Committee; or whether it exists to further the judicial career of women lawyers who are interested in applying to the bench.

Another observation: because the organization is named "Hawaii Women Lawyers," it implies a bias toward women. Therefore, it will likely be perceived as an advocacy group, and any endorsement will be perceived as a biased one.

I have some rhetorical questions. Does this organization (1) believe in promoting only designated women; (2) believe in assisting all interested women lawyers; or (3) believe in seeking quality on the bench through appointments of the most qualified individuals, men or women?

In my opening remarks I said freedom allows me the opportunity to focus on the larger issue — that issue being the Judicial Selection Commission. When I served on the Commission, our mission statement was "To Improve the Quality on the Bench." We identified all the areas we needed to address in order to achieve that mission and dedicated our personal efforts toward that end. That mission raised our consciousness, awareness and performance to a level of excellence that we defended with earnest dedication. That critical mission is ingrained in me and is the incentive that maintains my ardent and continuing support of the Judicial Selection process.

If I were invited to offer the areas I would like to see you focus on, it would be the following:

1. Build and promote strong organizations [HWL and HWLF] with distinctly different missions and members, with quarterly meetings including the officers of both.
2. Define the missions of both.

3. Elect a woman to the Judicial Selection Commission.

4. Help support all women who seek your help. Let the Commission make the final decision. You can always endorse candidates you support individually. You must maintain confidentiality or you will lose all credibility.

5. Communicate openly and in good faith — focusing on the positive aspects that will help build a unity.

6. Respond to a higher calling.

FROM THE HAWAII WOMEN'S LEGAL FOUNDATION:

A CONVERSATION WITH HAWAII'S MAYORS: CHOICES, CHALLENGES AND CHANGES

In a unique gathering of personalities and talent, all four of Hawaii's mayors will be guests of honor and featured speakers at HWLF's dinner and forum on September 10th at the Hawaii Prince Hotel. Honorary co-chairs for this year's gala fundraiser are Robert F. Clarke, President and CEO of Hawaiian Electric Industries, Inc., and Arlene Lum, Publisher of the Honolulu Star Bulletin. By popular demand, David L. Fairbanks of Cronin Fried Sekiya Kekina & Fairbanks will return to emcee the event.

Check your mail in August for invitations. In the meantime, HWLF is taking advance reservations, which can be made by contacting HWLF's vice president, Susan Jaworowski, at 625-1386. Three levels of tables are offered: Honor tables hosting the mayors at \$3,500 each; Patron tables at \$2,000 each and Sponsor tables at \$1,000 each. Individual seats can also be purchased for \$100 each, and of course, donations are always welcome. Honor tables are nearly sold out, due to the generosity of Harriet Bouslog and Stephen Sawyer, Alexander & Baldwin and C. Brewer. Patron and sponsor tables and individual seats are still available.

Join us for a stimulating and fun evening!

HWL MEMBERSHIP

HWL invites you to become a member, or to renew your membership dues, if you have not already done so. (Dues run from July 1 to June 30 of the following year.) Please send the following form to P.O. Box 2072, Honolulu, Hawaii 96805. Dues are as follows:

Regular member \$40 Out-of-state members \$20 Student members \$10
New admittees (within 1 year of Hawaii admission) \$20

HWL President's Circle: \$100 \$500 \$1000 (circle one)

Name _____ Phone (day) _____ (night) _____

Mailing Address _____

Please indicate if you are interested in information about serving on the HWL Board or Committees

Please note any topics or projects in which you would be interested in assisting

Moved? Name change? Receiving duplicates? Please send old mailing label with corrections to HWL, P.O. Box 2072, Honolulu, Hawaii 96805. If you have any announcements you wish to submit for the monthly newsletter, please call Susan Li at 543-4791, Rhonda Nishimura at 537-6119, or Kathy Young at 524-4880, or send a copy to HWL by the end of the month.

HAWAII WOMEN LAWYERS

P.O. Box 2072
Honolulu, Hawaii 96805

<p>BULK RATE U.S. Postage PAID HONOLULU, HAWAII PERMIT NO. 172</p>
--

(6/93)

Trudy M. Burns
700 Bishop Street, Suite 1408
Honolulu, HI 96813
