Alumni Newsletter

Volume 16, Issue 3

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Inside this issue:
- Annual Meeting 2
- Election Results 2
- End of Summer Bash 2
- Membership Form 2
- Linda Zichittella 3
- Dean Yamashiro 3
- Class of ’82 Scholarship Drive 3
- Golf Tournament 4
- Alumni Tidbits 5

William S. Richardson School of Law Alumni Association
All-Class Reunion 2004

On Friday, June 4, 2004, with surfers catching the day’s last waves at Canoes and the sun setting to the west, the William S. Richardson School of Law Alumni Association celebrated its first Annual All-Class Reunion on the beachside lawn of the gorgeous Sheraton Moana Surfrider Hotel.

With over 140 alumni and guests in attendance, members of the Classes of 1976 through 2004 enjoyed the evening’s festivities, which included onolicious food, music by John Cruz, and a short awards ceremony. The awards presented included:

- The 2004 Deans’ Award for Outstanding Service to the Law School Community: This award was presented by Dean Aviam Soifer to Ming Chi ’05 Student Bar Association President
- Alumni Appreciation Award: This award was presented to Jim Williston ’78 by Dean Soifer and the WSRSLAA Board for Jim’s outstanding service and commitment to the Alumni Association; and
- UH Law Golf Tournament presentation: On behalf of the UH Law Golf Committee, Colin Kurata ’78 and Jim Williston ’78, presented a $6,000 check to Dean Soifer. These funds represent monies raised by the annual UH Law Golf Tournament.

After catching up with old and new friends, alumni and guests were treated to fireworks over Waikiki Beach - the perfect beginning to a new tradition! Thanks to event coordinators Della Au Belatti ’03 and Norm Cheng ’03, to the event committee and to the class coordinators for their help in making the memorable event possible.

Ete Bowl Practices Begin in September, Call if You’d Like to Play or Coach.

If you are a recent graduate (or even a long-time graduate) with an itch to play or coach women’s flag football, please call Sharon Nishi ’87 (529-7300) or Kapua Sproat ’98 (599-2436 x16) or send an e-mail to lawalum@hawaii.edu.

Practices will be starting in September.

Alumni Membership SNAFU--Ooops.

The mailing labels for the Alumni Association’s first two newsletters of 2004 (Feb. and April) inadvertantly included a “Y” indicating 2004 membership for a number of alums who had not paid their 2004 dues. This occurred because the “Y” symbols indicating Association membership for the prior year (2003) had not been deleted, as they should have been. The SNAFU has been corrected, and your mailing label for this newsletter will indicate whether you are (“Y”) or are not (“N”) a 2004 member. (If you paid very recently, you can double-check your membership status on our Website.) December 2003 and July 2004 graduates are automatically 2004 members.
Annual Meeting at Murphy’s
Associate Dean Lee Reports
on the State of the Law School.

The Association held its annual meeting on Friday, June 25th at Murphy’s Downtown. John Egan presented the annual President’s Report, highlighting the activities of the Association over the past year.

As Dean Soifer was out of town, Associate Dean Carol Mon Lee presented a report on Law School recent activities. The ABA has reaccredited the Law School, thanks in large part to the hard work of former Dean Larry Foster and the faculty.

Dean Lee noted that Dean Soifer has been very “hands on” since becoming Dean last year. He has established strong ties with the legal community, the faculty and alumni. The Law School’s 2004 Jurist-in-Residence Program has been extremely successful, with U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg enjoying her visit.

Dean Lee added that over 700 alumni and friends of the Law School attended the 30th Anniversary Dinner held last September, raising over $50,000 for a scholarship in Larry Foster’s name. The Law School, under Dean Soifer, has sponsored a number of important programs, including a symposium on Practical Pluralism; a series of lectures by Georgetown Prof. Charles Lawrence on Race and the Law; and a Barbecue, Beach and Volleyball event featuring a lecture by Prof. Hazel Beh and U.H. Wahine Volleyball match. The University of Hawaii recognized Professor Danielle Conway-Jones as one of its outstanding faculty members this past year, and that steps have been taken toward establishing a Hawaii Procurement Institute at the Law School.

Our thanks to Elbridge Smith for making the arrangements for the meeting with Murphy’s—excellent pupus!—and to the over 35 alumni and law students who attended.

New & Returning
WSRSLAA Officers and Directors

The following will continue as the Association’s officers for the up-coming term (July 2004 – June 2005): John Egan ’00, President; Stacey Aluag ’00, Vice President; Judy Sterling ’80, Treasurer; and Jim Williston, Secretary.

The Association’s new directors for the coming two-year term (July 2004 – June 2006) will be: Representing the classes before 1989 – Robyn Au ’80, Rosemary Fazio ’78, and Diane Hastert ’78; and representing the classes from 1989 to present – Steve Duck ’02, Lori Hiraoka ’00, and Kaleen Miyasato ’00. Joining the Board from the Class of 2004 will be Jill Hasegawa and Scott Suzuki. Returning directors who were not up for reelection in 2004 are Della Au Belatti ’03, Haunani Burns ’80, Alexa Fujise ’80, Stuart Kaneko ’77, Patrick Kelly ’99, Garrick Lau ’01 and Barbara Wong ’03.

Our best wishes and thanks to retiring directors Norman Cheng ’03, Abby Dunn ’03, Garrick Goo ’96, and Dan Mueller ’98 for their service.

Summer Ends With a Bash

The Student Bar Association’s 3rd Annual “End of the Summer Bash” was just that, a Bash, with over 100 law students and alumni (about equal numbers of each) gathering for an evening of fun at Restaurant Row’s Ocean Club. The entire makalani lanai was devoted to the Bashers. Alumni from nearly every graduating class enjoyed the convivial atmosphere, libations and great pupus. Thanks to the SBA for inviting alumni to kick off the new semester and welcome the incoming Class of 2007 to the Law School community. In the event’s very short program, the SBA recognized alumnus Jim Williston ’78 as its Distinguished Alum of the Year. Thanks to all alumni who came out and livened the party.

WSRSLAA MEMBERSHIP AND ADDRESS UP-DATE FORM - 2004
(SEND TO P.O. BOX 952 HONOLULU HI 96808)

NAME: _____________________________________________ GRADUATING CLASS ________

ADDRESS: __________________________________________ PH. ________________________

_____________________________________________________________________ FAX ________________________

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____________________________________________

PLEASE SEND THIS FORM IN WITH YOUR 2004 DUES OF $20
EVEN IF YOU DON’T WANT TO JOIN WSRSLAA THIS YEAR, PLEASE SEND THE FORM ANYWAY IF
YOU HAVE A NEW E-MAIL OR MAILING ADDRESS
THE CLASS OF 1982 ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP

The Class of 1982 will commence a drive to raise $35,000 to establish an endowment scholarship at the William S. Richardson School of Law. The mailout campaign began the second week of September with telephone calls to follow immediately. The primary purpose of the scholarship is to honor the memory of three classmates who have passed away: Kevin Lee, Linda Zichitta Leong, and Dean Yamashiro. The fundraising committee includes Nadine Ando, Debbie Lee, Greg Lui-Kwan, and Calvin Young. This committee aims to raise the $35,000 by June 2007 when the Class of 1982 celebrates its 25th Anniversary.

Each classmate will be asked to pledge $1,000 over a three-year period. Payments can be made in annual or semi-annual installments. Please kokua when you receive either a letter in the mail from the UH Foundation or a telephone call from Greg and Debbie. All donations are welcomed and are fully tax deductible. Please make checks out to the University of Hawaii Foundation—Law School and write on the bottom left corner “for the Class of 1982 Scholarship.”

Feel free to call Greg at 539-9822 or Debbie at 739-5385 should you have any questions or suggestions.

Linda Zichitta Leong ('82)
Passes Away on May 16th

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Linda Zichitta Leong, Class of 1982, on May 16, 2004, in Honolulu. Linda lost her brave battle against the complications of the diabetes she had had since a teenager. She passed away peacefully in the arms of her husband, Kimo, surrounded by the family she loved.

Linda was recognized as one of the pre-eminent workers’ compensation defense attorneys in the State. A partner at Goodsill Anderson Quinn & Stifel for many years, Linda left the firm in 1998 to form Leong Kunihiro & Leong (aka Leong Kunihiro Leong & Lezy). Linda worked hard to help make the new firm a success.

Linda was born and raised in Kent, Washington. As a freshman at the University of Washington in 1968, Linda came to Hawaii for vacation. Instead of returning, she called her parents, asked them to ship over her new Mustang, enrolled at the University of Hawaii, and never looked back. Linda earned a bachelor’s, a master’s, and a J.D. degree from the U.H.

Linda often recalled fondly her law school days, in particular her 3L year when she, Sabrina McKenna, and Dale Yamada lived together in the infamous “Doll House”, just off campus in Manoa. Law school was where Linda met Kimo (Class of 1981) – “Mo”, the love of her life. Married shortly after they both graduated, July 22nd of this year marked their 20th anniversary.

A memorial service was held at Hawaii Memorial Park, attended by Linda’s family, friends, and colleagues. In addition to Kimo, Linda is survived by her brother, Terry Hurley, of Kent, Washington, and the many nieces and nephews that she loved so much. Our thanks to Linda’s law partner, Chip Lezy ’94 for providing this story.

Dean Yamashiro ('82)
Chief Deputy Public Defender
Passes Away at Age 52 on May 15th.
(The following are excerpts from remarks prepared for Dean’s memorial service by Dean’s long-time colleague Jack Tonaki.)

Dean had a profound sense of compassion for the needy and neglected, which he carried with him throughout his life, including his 7 years as a Honolulu Police Officer, his law school days and his many years with the Office of the Public Defender. As a Deputy Public Defender, Dean quickly realized there was a segment of the public that truly needed his help, and he delivered that help in a sensitive, caring way. He applied himself to developing his trial skills, being an advocate for clients in their moments of need, treating his clients like they were long-time friends. He would routinely call them to simply ask how they were doing, and there were even times when he put a little of his own money into an inmate’s prison account so the inmate could buy cigarettes or candy from the prison store. Finally, he brought compassion with him to the position of Chief Deputy Public Defender. He weekly fielded dozens of phone calls and assisted scores of people, ranging from desperate parents wondering what they could do about a substance-addicted child to mainlanders wanting to clear up charges pending in Hawaii. Dean always knew exactly how to advise and comfort them.

Simply put, Dean’s legal career was stellar. As a trial lawyer in the PD’s office he excelled, trying murder and attempted murder cases. He was a pretrial motions expert, having honed his skills in the PD’s Motions Division. As Chief Deputy Public Defender, he sat on an impressive array of committees such as Penal Procedure and Equality in the Courts and boards, such as the Bar Examiners. He was also advisor to many private lawyers who would call for guidance. Corrections administrators looked to him for suggestions. Even judges and other judiciary personnel counted on his input regarding court procedures. Dean always handled these demands on his time with grace and calm efficiency.

But Dean was much more to the PD’s than a colleague, officemate or boss. Some talk about benevolence, kindness and generosity – Dean Yamashiro lived them. He always made time to listen to deputies, as busy as he was, and he always made clear that he cared about their problems and would always be there for support. Though Dean didn’t have children of his own, parents turned to him often for parenting advice. Dean’s legacy of compassion, thoughtfulness and generosity will endure.

Dean is survived by his father, Harold; brothers Harold, Jr., Robert and Robin; sister Susan Poole; and longtime girlfriend, Elizabeth Zack.
18th Annual Alumni & Friends Golf Tournament

Approximately 150 golfers played in the 18th Annual Law School Alumni & Friends Golf Tournament on Friday, May 21st at Ewa’s scenic Hawaii Prince Golf Club. The tournament committee presented Dean Soifer with a check for $6,000 ($3,000 for scholarships, $2,000 for the UH Elder Law Program and $1,000 for the Law Annual Fund).

The winners of the various tournament trophies follow:
- The Wm. S. Richardson Trophy (best mixed alumni/friend team) – Phil Miyoshi ’00, Shaun Mukai ’98 and Eric Yamamoto (net 78).
- The Dean’s Trophy (best all friend team) – Eric Inouye, Kendall Quon & Butch Humalon (net 74).
- Nick Garcia Trophy (fewest team putts) – Chuck Narikyo ’88, Frank Kanemitsu ’88 & Cathy Takase ’89 (36 putts).
- Brian Brinkopf Trophy (most accurate drives) – Men: Everett Cuskaden and Women: Connie Bache.

Thanks to our generous Tournament Sponsors for their contributions, which made this year’s tournament a financial success:

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(Continued on page 5)
ALUMNI TIDBITS

(Continued from page 4)

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Special thanks to our hard-working Tournament Committee, including co-chairs Colin Kurata ’78 and Jim Stone ’76, and members Stuart Kaneko ’77, Harlan Kimura ’82, Kaleen Miyasato ’00, Phil Miyoshi ’00, Sesnita Moepono ’86, Carter Siu ’99, Keoni Shultz ’00, Jim Williston ’78, and Barbara Wong ’03, and to our Class Coordinators. Mahalos as well to the SBA, the Law School Administration and the Hawaiian Islanders Arena2 Football Team for providing volunteers on the day of the tournament.

1976 & 1982 – Mary Blaine (“Mimi”) Johnston and Ruby Hamili have been reappointed as per diem district family judges for the Second Circuit.

1978 – Greg K. Nakamura was recently retained for a second 10-year term as Circuit Court Judge for the Third Circuit. Congratulations Greg.

1980 – Our best wishes to Alexa D.M. Fujise who was sworn in as Associate Judge of the Intermediate Court of Appeals on June 10, 2004. Alexa, who has served on the Association’s Board since 1980, was previously the chief attorney in the Appellate Division of the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney for Honolulu. Alexa is the first alum appointed to serve on a Hawai’i appellate court.

1982 -- First Circuit Court Judge Dexter Del Rosario has also been retained for a second 10-year term. Our best to Dexter.

1989 - Congratulations to Curtis B.K. Yuen who was recently elected a fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel.

1991 -- Our heartiest congratulations to Linda C.J. Lee (“Young” in Law School), who was recently appointed by Washington State Governor Gary Locke to the Superior Court bench for Pierce County (which includes Tacoma). Prior to her appointment, Linda had been practicing in the areas of insurance, complex litigation and health care with the firm of Gordon Thomas Honeywell Malanca Peterson & Daheim in Tacoma and had served as president of Washington’s Asian Bar Association. We believe Linda is the first alumna appointed to a nonadministrative judgeship in a mainland jurisdiction.