

Vintage Voices

Senior Lawyers Division

President's Parlance March 2025

By Denise Blommel

Hello Friends!

Your **Executive Council** has been busy since the December 2024 *Vintage Voices*.

Our Division's goal to **secure a seat on the State Bar's Board of Governors** is in its last stage. Thanks to the tireless efforts of Sally Simmons and her Working Group, the Board of Governors gave us the green light at their December meeting and in January the State Bar filed the petition to change Rule 32(e) of the Arizona Rules of the Supreme Court. Now it is up to the Court.

Please see the article below on how to post your comment in support of the Rule change so that the Division President will be a voting member of the Board of Governors. Due to the timing of this process, if the Court approves the Rule change, our Division President-Elect, Mary Helen Maley Maynard, will be our representative on the Board of Governors.

2025 Directions for Posting Comments Online about Rule 32 (e) of the Rules of the Supreme
Court

Comments due May 1, 2025

Draft your comment ahead of time so you can cut and paste it into the comment box.

Go to <https://www.azcourts.gov/rules-forum>

Read <https://www.azcourts.gov/rules/Forum-FAQ>

Register if you are a first-time user.

If this is not your first time **Login and skip to * below**

If this is your first time, please read below which is from the FAQs

To register, click on "Register" button on the right-hand side below the Court Rules Forum banner photo.

You will be required to choose a username and a password, which you will need to log in. You will also be required to enter a "Display Name" (e.g., your first name, last name, or any other identifier you choose) and a valid e-mail address. After submitting your registration request, you

will be instructed to verify your registration by following a link that will be sent to your e-mail address. You must verify your registration before logging in for the first time.

Remember that although you provide your name and contact information during registration, you must still provide that information, including your e-mail address, in the “Message” field when you file a petition or comment.

If the petition or comment does not provide the applicable information, then the Court Rules Forum Moderator will reject the petition or comment.

If you do not receive your verification e-mail within 24 hours, then contact the Support Center.

- • From the Phoenix Local dialing area: 602-452-3900
- • Outside Phoenix Local dialing area: 1-855-229-3900

For first timers, **after you get your verification email, return to** <https://www.azcourts.gov/Rules-Forum> and **Login**

***Scroll down** to Forums and then to *Rules of the Supreme Court*

Click on *Rules of the Supreme Court*

Scroll down to R-25-0017 Petition to Amend Rule 32(e), Ariz. R. Sup. Ct. and click on it.

Check the first box to subscribe

Complete the quick reply (use your draft) and be sure to supply your name, address, telephone, and email address at the end of your reply.

Click Submit and **check the second box** to subscribe for email notifications and watch your email box for updates.

Save The Date!

The Senior Lawyer Breakfast will be on Wednesday, June 25, at the State Bar Convention. Details coming soon in the State Bar Convention brochure.

Here’s what else has been going on:

The **Drop-In Working Group** (Chair John Messing) produced a great session on December 10, 2024 about Artificial Intelligence with Mitch Johnson. Mark your calendars for March 31 when you will hear from Amanda Rutherford, Staff Attorney for Step Up To Justice, to learn more about this active group and Pro Bono opportunities; and May 23 when you will learn more about How Artificial Intelligence is Changing Our World from Tina Miller, Executive Director of Creative x Communications at ASU Enterprise Technology.

The **Pretrial Justice Working Group** (Co-Chairs Mary Helen Maley Maynard and Dave Stoller) are continuing to work with the Arizona Supreme Court’s Task Force to address the pretrial issue of representation for defendants at their initial appearance. Mary Helen and Dave still need your help, especially your contacts with decisionmakers in the 12 counties other than Pima, Pinal, and Coconino, to ensure that defendants’ Sixth and Fourteenth Amendment rights are protected.

The **Dean Christoffel Pro Bono Working Group** under David Vasquez's leadership has been busy identifying Pro Bono opportunities and will host our March 31 Drop-In.

Past-President Don Powell leads the **Mentorship Working Group**, which has provided opportunities for Division members to interact with law students at the University of Arizona. Don has secured a formal partnership between our Division and the Young Lawyers Division, and we are now awaiting the State Bar's mentorship coordinator to be hired to be our liaison. Stay tuned here for more information.

The **Creative Writers Listserv**, under Gary Stuart's leadership, contains useful information for all of us aspiring authors. Please take a moment to contribute!

Council member Chuck Thomson has joined the State Bar's **Advancement and Improvement Committee**, and has attended several meetings. Stay tuned here for news.

Musings from a Senior Lawyer

Recommended Reading:

Genesis, Artificial Intelligence, Hope, and the Human Spirit by Henry Kissinger, Craig Mundie and Eric Schmidt. This is a must read for a comprehensive analysis of social, economic, and political aspects of AI. The authors' emphasize the need to preserve human dignity and values.

Why We Remember, by Charan Ranganath, PhD. Dr. Ranganath is the director of the Memory and Plasticity Program and the Dynamic Memory Lab at UC Davis. He is an engaging speaker (The First Gentleman and I attended his virtual seminar) and an excellent writer. He explains why you and I can remember all the lyrics to songs from the 1970s but cannot remember what we ate for lunch yesterday.

Hope, The Autobiography by Pope Francis. Reading this is as though the Pope is having a private conversation with you.

Recommended Viewing:

Conclave, a movie that turned out to be a thriller.

The Irrational, an NBC series set in Washington, DC, about a psychology professor and the FBI.

Matlock, a CBS series starring Kathy Bates. How many ethical violations can you spot per minute?

Vienna Blood, a PBS series set in the 1907 capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire featuring a police inspector and a Freudian psychiatrist (then called a neurologist) who solve murders.

Paddington in Peru, a delightful movie for kids of all ages.

Thoughts for These Turbulent Times:

Be kind.

Give the other the benefit of the doubt.

Honor the absent.

Don't be a jerk.

Listen patiently to someone who is long-winded, boring, or complaining.
Release yourself from that grudge.

Thanks to Fr. Eric Tellez and Fr. James Martin, SJ

Have a glorious Spring and see you at the Drop-Ins,
Denise

Opportunities to Serve

March 2025

By Sally Simmons

When I was a judge on the superior court, the most rewarding bench to me was Juvenile Court. There were times in both dependency and delinquency cases (and many in which kids were involved in both) that I thought we might actually be making a difference in children's lives. Now that I'm completely retired, and almost retired from Grammy Uber duties, I decided to give back to those kids. I have applied to be a member of a **Foster Care Review Board** in Pima County.

I still must pass the background check and be appointed by the Presiding Judge of the Pima County Juvenile Court. If those two things occur, I'll have to undergo training and observe a session of the Board I'll be joining. Then I'll have a three-year commitment.

The official role of a Foster Care Review Board is to "advise the juvenile court on progress toward achieving a permanent home for a child involved in a dependency action and in an out-of-home placement". The Board members, from my experience on the judge side, can push to be sure that commitments regarding treatment or other services for a child are kept and that appropriate efforts are being made toward reunification, adoption, independent living or whatever outcome is in the best interest of the child.

The time commitment is minimal. There is a Zoom meeting of the Board one day each month that can run to 5-6 hours. In addition, you get the case files for your review about a week ahead of the meeting, and you'll need to review the files. There is at least one Foster Care Review Board in every county, so Senior Lawyers in counties other than Maricopa or Pima have this same opportunity to change kids' lives.

If this doesn't sound like your volunteer opportunity, consider becoming a **Court Appointed Special Advocate** instead. CASAs, as they are known, are appointed in much the same way (apply on the Supreme Court's website and undergo a background check).

A CASA's time commitment is greater than that of a FCRB member, both in terms of training (30 hours initially) and in terms of time spent on a case. A CASA really is the eyes and ears for the court, appearing at court hearings. The CASA meets with the child one or two times a month. The CASA has access to the child's school records and medical information so the CASA can monitor the child's progress. My friend, another retired lawyer, serves as a CASA and really has gotten to know the three kids to whom she's been assigned during her last two years of service. I think she's

an incredible advocate for the kids to whom she's assigned. I know that, as a judge, I counted on the CASA to give me a straightforward assessment and report on the child in those cases in which there was a CASA assigned.

Whether you decide to be a CASA or a member of a Foster Care Review Board, you'll be helping children who need your help.

And, if neither of these activities appeal to you, look at the list of **committees** and **commissions** on the **Supreme Court** website (scroll down on the site map until you find committees and commissions) to see what might be of interest. I know the **Judicial Nominating Commissions** need volunteers, too. With that activity, you're helping make judges.

Postscript

Have something to contribute? We have two listservs – the Senior Digest and the Creative Writers Listserv – and the *Vintage Voices*. Comments and articles welcome!

See you at the Senior Lawyer Breakfast in June!