



## Wayne R. Gross

President's Page

# Ephemeral Moments

*I'm not one of those complicated, mixed-up cats. I'm not looking for the secret to life . . . I just go on from day to day, taking what comes.*

— Frank Sinatra

I recently turned fifty. To celebrate, a client and very good friend opened her swanky home for a Sinatra-themed party that included a Sinatra-like singer, martini bar, a cigar roller, and dancing. Guests were asked to dress in black tie. The event was not only fun but also served a great charitable cause. Guests, in lieu of gifts, were asked to support Girls Incorporated of Orange County, a nonprofit that inspires underprivileged girls to achieve greatness. As a result, a significant sum was raised for this fantastic organization.

The greatest birthday gift for me, however, was to have my parents come to the party from their home in Northern California. Earlier this year, my father battled prostate cancer and only recently completed his treatments. And so the party, though ostensibly for my 50th, was in reality for me a celebration of my father's success at having made it through that ordeal.

Growing up, I didn't appreciate the greatness of my father. He was born in San Francisco and came from humble circumstances; his dad was a longshoreman and his mom worked at a department store. My father was the first in his family to attend and work his way through college (the University of San Francisco). He then served in the Army as an officer, and, upon returning to civilian life as a public high school teacher with a wife and young son, obtained a Doctorate in Education from UC Berkeley. As I became a teenager and young adult, my dad, based on his exemplary work as a teacher, began to climb the ladder of the local high school district, serving as a Vice Principal, Principal, Assistant Superintendent, and ultimately, Superintendent of the district. I learned about his various responsibilities because he would regale my mom and me with stories about work every night at the dinner table. From these stories, along with watching various colleagues visit him at the house, I came to learn much about public education at its finest. In 1994, my dad, after more than thirty years of service, retired from the profession. I still remember the retirement party, which was filled with so many people expressing their love and appreciation for his friendship and his extensive service to the community as a world-class educator.

I mention these two events, the birthday celebration and retirement party, because they underscore the importance of taking advantage

of the opportunity to enjoy life's ephemeral blessings, such as friends and family, when we have the opportunity to do so. In October, the OCBA's Charitable Fund will provide an opportunity to the entire Orange County legal community to do just this. Since 1988, the OCBA has held an annual gala for charity. The first one was a black-tie dinner dance appropriately called "Black-Tie Dinner Dance." Since then, the annual gala has been called different names, including "Bar Charity Bash" and "Crystal Casino," and has been held at various venues, but the focus has consistently been the same: to gather the legal community for an evening of fun and charity.

Since 1995, the gala has been put on by the Bar's tax-exempt 501(c)(3) foundation, which is now called the Charitable Fund. The Charitable Fund is extremely fortunate to have Dimetria Jackson as its president this year. She, along with the Charitable Fund board of directors, has worked extremely hard to make this year's gala the best it has ever been. For the first time in OCBA history, the event is being organized by a professional event planner whose impressive track record includes Oprah Winfrey's 50th birthday party. That credential alone tells me that we are in for quite a night, which will include not only fabulous food, wine, and entertainment, but also a tribute to Corporate honoree Allergan Foundation, Law Firm honoree Robinson Calcagne Robinson Shapiro Davis, Inc., and



Robert W. Gross and Wayne R. Gross

Community Partner honoree LexisNexis.

I ask all of you to join me in supporting the Charitable Fund's gala at Big Canyon Country Club on October 1. It will be an evening to remember—not only because of the event's glitz and glamour, but also because it will provide all of us an opportunity to take a moment to enjoy the close bond we share as members of this magnificent profession of service. We will not have such moments forever.



**Wayne R. Gross**, the 2013 President of the Orange County Bar Association, is a founding partner of Greenberg Gross LLP, where he focuses on trial practice, complex civil litigation, and white-collar defense. He previously served as Chief of the Orange County U.S. Attorney's Office and prosecuted cases of national and international significance. His email is [wgross@ggtriallaw.com](mailto:wgross@ggtriallaw.com). Follow Wayne on Facebook: [www.ocbar.org/PresidentFacebook](http://www.ocbar.org/PresidentFacebook).