

# 2005



David O'Keefe

## Letter from the President

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Bonne, Bridges, Mueller, O'Keefe & Nichols has embarked upon its 45th year as one of Southern California's most experienced trial law firms. When originally formed, the Firm's main focus was on the representation of physicians and health care institutions in the defense of professional liability law suits. Based upon its jury trial results, the Firm quickly gained a reputation for unprecedented excellence. For many years, this reputation has been built upon not merely litigating cases, but for having tried on average 40 to 60 complex civil cases to verdict annually, with a win record of over 90 percent of those cases. Although the Firm continues to emphasize professional liability defense as one of its major areas of interest, our practice has expanded with time into other areas of litigation, including elder law, employment law, and general liability defense.

The past few years have been a period of transition for many civil litigation defense firms, including Bonne Bridges. We have attempted to address these changing times proactively through continuous improvements in our in-house educational programs, and a recent restructuring of the Firm's management team. I am confident that these recent developments will allow the Firm to enhance its ability to provide our clients with the highest possible level of professional service.

I am honored to announce that Margaret Holm, the shareholder who has managed our Orange County office for some years, has recently been elected to the Firm's Board of Directors and to serve a two-year term as the Firm's managing shareholder. In that capacity, Margaret will represent the unified voice of the Firm's leadership and will be responsible for enhancing and streamlining Management's communications both internally among our shareholders and associates, as well as with our clients. Margaret will also continue to actively manage her own trial calendar and provide her clients with the exceptional representation that they have come to appreciate.

Margaret's management contribution will be augmented by the Firm's newly elected Board of Directors, consisting of myself as the Firm's President, along with fellow shareholders Denise Taylor and Brian Hoffman. This new Board will be focused upon preserving the Firm's longstanding client relationships, developing new business opportunities, and preserving the Firm's culture and its reputation for excellence.

This tradition of excellence is exemplified by the honor recently bestowed upon Ray Blessey, as the Firm's tenth member of the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA), an organization to which only the most experienced trial attorneys, both plaintiff and defense, are invited to join. Moreover, this year six of our shareholders were selected by Law & Politics to be recognized as "Super Lawyers." These Super Lawyers: Joel Douglas, Margaret Holm, Jim Nichols, Peter Osinoff, Denise Taylor, and myself, were recently profiled in the September edition of *Los Angeles Magazine*. For the fourth consecutive year, Denise Taylor was recognized by the *Daily Journal* as one of the "Top Women Litigators," and Margaret Holm was one of a select number of female attorneys to be appointed a committee member for the prestigious American College of Trial Lawyers.

The Firm's long track record of exceptional trial results is something that we shall continue to foster through select hiring of talented young associate attorneys for whom the Firm provides extensive litigation training under the tutelage of more senior attorneys. This training is specifically designed to nurture and develop new trial talent capable of meeting the challenges of a highly competitive trial practice.

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## Note from the Managing Shareholder



Peggy Holm

While sitting here waiting for my jury to return, I thought it would be a great opportunity to write to you for the first time as Managing Shareholder of Bonne Bridges. This new position is designed to aid our firm's growth and improvement in new and innovative ways, and I am thrilled to be a part of it.

Our Firm is committed to you and your business and in that regard we want to ensure we are meeting your expectations. In 2006, we will offer news briefs, seminars, educational programs, and direct contact by me, which we believe will be of benefit to you and your staff. Your feedback is valuable and essential to us. I look forward to meeting with and hearing from you throughout the year. Hopefully this level of interaction and communication will enable Bonne Bridges to provide you with the highest level of service.

We wish you all the best in 2006.

P.S. 10-2, no negligence!

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The Firm's Elder Law Department, under the guidance of Kippy Wroten and several other shareholders, has expanded rapidly. Kippy has obtained exceptional results for our clients and continues to solidify herself as one of the premiere experts in the defense of long term care and elder abuse cases. Peter Osinoff, Joel Douglas, and Ray McMahon, continue to oversee the Firm's Administrative Law Department, with particular emphasis on Medical Board and Medicare/MediCal hearings. Vangi Johnson has recently assumed responsibility for the Firm's Appellate Department, with a string of successful appellate decisions. Patricia Daehnke, who is licensed to practice in both California and Nevada, continues to manage the Firm's Nevada office, while trying cases in both California and Nevada venues. Each of the Firm's shareholders manage active trial calendars which have them attending hearings and trials in both federal and state courts.

Our vision and plan for 2006 will further define Bonne Bridges as one of Southern California's premiere litigation firms. Our goal is to provide a level of performance and satisfaction that demonstrates to both clients and peers nothing less than the best legal service available. With our new business structure, diversification, unprecedented trial experience, and our commitment to fulfill our client's expectations, we are poised to embark upon a second half century of preeminent professional service.

I wish to express my gratitude to all of the employees of Bonne Bridges, whose unparalleled expertise, professionalism, and commitment, have made the Firm what it is.

As always, we wish to thank our many clients for their continued trust and support and we are committed to assisting them in achieving their litigation goals. We look forward to working with you for many years to come. Our very best wishes to you for a prosperous and successful 2006.

David J. O'Keefe  
President

## Legal Community Leader and True "Cowboy" Jim Nichols Broadens His Horizons

After 30 years with Bonne Bridges—and more than 250 cases in his career—Mr. Nichols says his greatest lifetime achievement is his role as grandparent.

Jim Nichols has always been a true American cowboy. He received his first horse at the age of 9 and he's still riding, roping and rounding up cattle on his California ranch. "It's in my blood," he says, "like a virus that burns through me." So much so, in fact, that Jim is now spending much more time on his ranch doing the things he loves the most—spending time with his family, playing with his grandchildren and being a cowboy.

He keeps his legal pad close to his lasso, however, with no intention of giving up practicing law. Jim will continue working, "of counsel," on cases for the firm. "I'm really enjoying spending more time on the ranch, but I remain committed to Bonne Bridges and our clients."



Jim Nichols with his grandson "Bucky"

# Bonne Bridges Sponsors Corporate Work Study Program *of Verbum Dei High School*

Verbum Dei High School's Corporate Work Study Program (CWSP) provides students with real-world job experiences and allows them to earn a portion of the cost of their education. Verbum Dei is a college preparatory high school that serves South Los Angeles, including the communities of Inglewood, Compton, Carson, Gardena and Watts.

The Corporate Work Study Program is a highly effective partnership between business, education and a group of talented young men seeking a better future through education, work and self-discipline. Bonne Bridges is proud to be one of the organizations across the greater Los Angeles area participating in the program.

Students from Verbum Dei High School have joined the team at Bonne Bridges, assisting in entry-level administrative and clerical work (filing, mail room, copying, etc.). A team of four students work one full day a week (each on a different day, five days per month) earning an annual salary of \$25,000 that will cover a large part of the costs of educating the students. The students' salary is forwarded to VDHS Work Study, Inc., a non-profit public benefit corporation that will in turn offset the majority of their educational costs. This program helps the students pay for a college preparatory school education and receive real-world experience that translates to access to opportunity. As a result of working in the business environment, students acquire desirable job experience and marketable skills, develop a network of business contacts and gain exposure to a variety of career opportunities.

Darren Acker, senior at Verbum Dei, now working at the firm adds, "I have been a part of the Work Study Program at Verbum Dei since I was a Freshman. It has helped my classmates and I learn how to conduct



Darren Acker, Verbum Dei student

ourselves in a business environment. Being involved with the program has helped me develop great business relationships and friendships. When I graduate in June, I feel that I'll be ahead of the other graduating classes because of the program."

Rose Bazan, the Director of Administration for Bonne Bridges says, "This program is an innovative way of providing the students with work experience while empowering them with a means to finance their education and exposing them to a motivational atmosphere conducive to achieving their scholastic goals. Not only is it a great opportunity for the students but also a privilege for us to take part in such a meaningful program."

This program is designed to expose students to new possibilities and help them attain success. In addition, students have demonstrated a strong work ethic that leads to increased self-esteem.

g i v i n g  
b a c k

At Bonne Bridges, we recognize that our obligations extend not only to our clients but to our communities as well. The firm and its lawyers and staff give generously of their time, financial support, expertise and leadership skills in order to give back to the communities in which we live and work. Areas of Bonne Bridges' commitment to the community include:

**California Women's Law Center**  
**Chapman University School of Law**  
**Chapman University School of Law - PILF**  
**Children's Hospital of Los Angeles**  
**Children's Hospital of Orange County**  
**Cystic Fibrosis Foundation**  
**Good Samaritan Hospital**  
**Homeboy Industries**  
**Lorraine Jackson Foundation (cancer)**  
**Los Angeles Free Clinic**  
**Loyola Law School - Civil Justice Program**  
**Marymount High School**  
**More Than Shelter Fund**  
**Orange County Child Abuse Prevention Center**  
**Southern California Presbyterian Homes - Alzheimers and Dementia Programs**  
**The American Red Cross - Hurricane Relief**  
**The Help Group**  
**The Paralysis Project of America**  
**UCLA School of Law**  
**USC School of Medicine**  
**Venice Family Clinic**  
**Verbum Dei High School**  
**Women's Cancer Research Fund**

# Employee Spotlight



Kris Marse has been with the firm since 1988, after moving to Southern California from her native Milwaukee, WI. After seven years with Bonne Bridges, she became secretary to president David O'Keefe and has been his right-hand woman for the past ten years.

Kris really prides herself in her work. As a paralegal, she volunteered her services for the Katrina Disaster through the Los Angeles Pro Bono Lawyers Association. Kris has also worked part-time at Pottery Barn for the past five years—you sure can't beat those employee discounts!

In what's left of her spare time, Kris enjoys reading, sewing, collecting antique dishes and attending cooking classes and wine tastings. She loves weekend getaways, especially to San Francisco, where she goes as often as possible. Kris also likes to spend vacations with her family in Wisconsin, and is looking forward to being there for Christmas this year. Her Dad's fruitcake is fabulous (really) and her Mom makes the best-ever homemade German stollen. Bon appétit!

## h o n o r i n g

All of the hard work and dedication from the employees at Bonne Bridges is very much appreciated. A special "Thank you" goes to the following outstanding employees celebrating anniversaries with Bonne Bridges.

### 45 years

**Bruce Bonne**  
(of Counsel, LA office)

### 40 years

**David O'Keefe**  
(President, LA office)

### 25 years

**Elizabeth Alcaraz**  
(Secretary, LA office)

**Gerry Bannister**  
(Secretary, LA office)

### 20 years

**Janice Lee**  
(Attorney, LA office)

**Pat Tyler**  
(Secretary, LA office)

**Lilly Fukui**  
(Secretary, LA office)

**Renato Garcia**  
(Records, LA office)

### 15 years

**Brian Hoffman**  
(Shareholder, LA office)

**Greg Werre**  
(Shareholder, LA office)

**Tom Scully**  
(Shareholder, OC office)

**Kippy Wroten**  
(Shareholder, OC office)

**Alicia DeMedio**  
(Secretary, LA office)

**Mary Test**  
(Attorney, LA office)

**Cyndy Haworth**  
(Office Manager, LA office)

### 10 years

**Ray Blessey**  
(Shareholder, LA office)

**Sarah Medina**  
(Secretary, LA office)

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# YEAR-IN-REVIEW

**Bonne Bridges**  
Mueller O'Keefe & Nichols  
PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION