



AUGUST 2022

MIRACLE MILE MIRROR

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE GREATER MIRACLE MILE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

A FOND THANK YOU AND SUMMATION FROM OUR L.A. CITY ATTORNEY MIKE FEUER

By LA City Attorney Mike Feuer



It has been my great honor to serve as your City Attorney for these past nine years. As my final term comes to a close in December, this will be my last annual report to you on my Office's work. I thought it would be a good opportunity to look back at some of the many highlights, always aided by the strong partnership and support of the Miracle Mile community.

MAKING NEIGHBORHOODS SAFER

When I first ran for this job, I promised to reinvigorate the effective Neighborhood Prosecutor Program, pledging to double it. We did that and then some, tripling the number of Neighborhood Prosecutors. These are Deputy City Attorneys who are embedded in our communities working to tackle tough public safety issues.

For the last eight years, your Neighborhood Prosecutor in LAPD's Wilshire Division has been the marvelous Nooshi Zahiri. Nooshi has been indefatigable in her work with the Miracle Mile community and other partners to improve the quality of life here. (Cont on pg 3)

THE STATE OF LOS ANGELES FAMILY LAW

By Maureen Stubbs ESQ. CFLS



I had the good fortune earlier this year to be invited by my former colleague, David Glass, to join the family law department of ENENSTEIN PHAM & GLASS LLP (EPG) on an "Of Counsel" basis. The civil side of the firm handles all manner of business and intellectual property litigation as well as labor and employment matters. The family law department handles the full range of family law matters, representing both heterosexual and same sex couples in high asset divorces, child custody, support and property division matters. The firm handles similar custody and support matter for non-married couples in paternity matters as well. Mediation services as an alternative method of dispute resolution is also offered for all family law matters.

David J. Glass, the managing partner of the firm's family law department, is one of a few, select attorneys dually-trained in Law and Clinical Psychology (PhD) offering clients an "inside look" at and understanding of the procedures employed by court-appointed mental health and psychological professionals.

The Los Angeles family law community has been seriously impacted by the Covid pandemic which has created a huge backlog of cases. Our courts saw an increase in Domestic Violence cases which were given priority over all other cases. We are now seeing an increase in "Covid Divorce" cases where couples who experienced too much togetherness with the stresses of living and working together from the same household, some with the added pressures of zoom... (Cont. pg. 4)

WHAT IS ESTATE PLANNING By Attorney Stephen W. Kramer, Kramer Law Group



What is Estate Planning?

Many people think that estate planning is simply the writing of a will. People plan their estate because they want to control who will receive their assets after they die, preferably with as little as possible going to legal fees and taxes. As you will see, for most of us, estate planning encompasses much more than the simple writing of a will or what happens after you die. A good estate plan will also protect you in the event of your incapacity. It will let you – not the courts – keep control of your assets, as well as control of decisions about your medical care and financial affairs when you can no longer handle on your own.

The best time to plan your estate is now – while you can and before you need it. With estate planning, there is no second chance. None of us like to think about our own mortality or the possibility of becoming incapacitated. That is exactly why so many families are caught off guard and unprepared when incapacity or death occurs.

What is my Estate?

Your estate consists of everything you own – your home, other real estate, bank accounts,... (Cont. pg 6)



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**GMMCC JAZZ NIGHT
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WHAT IS A NOTARY PUBLIC?

By Mobile Notary Public Kristi Tarpley



What is a Notary Public? A Notary Public is an official appointed by the California Secretary of State and authorized to serve the public as an unbiased witness when performing many legal formalities relating to the drafting or certifying of contracts, deeds, Powers of Attorney, Trusts, various estate planning documents and other official documents. Having a document notarized assures the parties to a transaction that a signature is authentic and can be trusted. It is important to note that Notary Publics are NOT Attorneys, we cannot give any legal advice.

What does a Notary Public do? A Notary Public can perform a variety of duties, but only in the state they are commissioned in, which include:

- Witnessing the signing of documents or administering oaths
- Administering oaths and affirmations during court proceedings and when officials are sworn into office.
- Maintaining proper records of their activities as mandated by their state.

As a Notary, it is my duty is to screen signers of important documents for their true identity, their willingness to sign without duress or intimidation, and their awareness of the contents of the document or transaction. The most common form of proof of identification that signers would need to show for proof of their true identity would be a state issued ID, such as a current Driver's License or State Identification card. Current passports are also acceptable. There are a few other acceptable forms of proof of identification, but it can get tricky and really depends on the situation.

(Cont. pg 8)

(LA City Attorney Feuer)

**PREVENTING GUN VIOLENCE**

Throughout my public service career, I have led efforts to prevent gun violence. One of the first things I did when assuming this office in 2013 was to create the Gun Violence Prevention Unit to work aggressively to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and kids. Putting adults on alert, we brought charges against parents who do not properly store their guns which later fall into the hands of their kids – tragedies waiting to happen. I've worked with LAPD to create new protocols to assure that domestic violence perpetrators cannot get weapons, given the chilling link between domestic abuse and gun violence: abused women are five times more likely to be killed when there is a gun in the house. Following the mass school shooting in Parkland, Florida, I convened the Blue Ribbon Panel on School Safety, charged with examining, evaluating and recommending ways to enhance efforts by LAUSD to keep students safe from violence, particularly gun violence, both in schools and surrounding neighborhoods. Our panel received hundreds of comments and suggestions in public hearings across L.A., and submitted 33 important recommendations to the School District. More recently, I issued an eight point plan to address the surge in gun crimes we've seen across our City. And I was a founder and co-chair of the national coalition, Prosecutors Against Gun Violence.

GRAPPLING WITH OUR HOMELESSNESS CRISIS

All of us need to go well beyond our traditional roles to confront our homelessness emergency. For the first time in the history of the Office, I appointed a senior City Attorney to lead our homelessness work. My office has successfully intervened, time and again, to stop the unlawful discharge of homeless patients to the street, changing the practices of medical facilities throughout the region. We initiated efforts to use motels to house people experiencing homelessness. My office created a program that sends teams of a nurse, substance abuse... (Cont. pg 4)

(LA City Attorney Feuer Cont.)



...expert, mental health expert and caseworker to some of L.A.'s grittiest encampments, intervening to provide an array of services to people experiencing homelessness. Because old outstanding fines, citations and warrants can impede people experiencing homelessness from getting the housing, services or jobs they need, we established a program that has helped erase these impediments when participants connect with programs to help lift them out of homelessness

TAKING AGGRESSIVE ACTION ON COVID-19

When the pandemic hit hard in March of 2020, my Office took swift action, targeting price gougers online and in brick and mortar stores; successfully combating fake tests and cures; launching "Behind Closed Doors" to help domestic violence victims trapped with their abusers; partnering with Mayor Garcetti on "LA Represents," the unprecedented legal assistance initiative helping thousands of Angelenos facing hardship due to the crisis; and, hosting the Hate Crime Prevention Forum in response to hate incidents targeting the Asian American Pacific Islander Community. Recently my office reached a groundbreaking \$22.5 million settlement with a national COVID testing chain, Sameday Health, over allegations that it faked and forged COVID-19 test results.

PROTECTING CONSUMERS

We also have focused on protecting our most vulnerable residents including kids, seniors, immigrants and disabled residents. We were the first government entity on to Wells Fargo for the millions of fake accounts set-up without customer permission, resulting in a landmark national settlement requiring Wells Fargo to provide restitution to affected customers and pay \$50 million in civil penalties, the largest such payment in the history of the City Attorney's office.

We have taken aggressive action against nursing home operators over allegations of abuse and neglect, reduced lead in prenatal vitamins, successfully fought... (Ct. pg 5)

(Family Law in LA cont.)



...schooling children, have made the decision to separate. Initially, we observed a lot of economic uncertainty while couples delayed separating until they could sort out their finances before taking action to transition to separate households. These couples are now finding their way to our offices and filing for divorce. While the courts have kept the doors open, virtually, if not always in person for critical matters like Restraining orders, other family law cases have been pushed to the back burner. As one attorney put it, "while the courts have not shut down, access to justice has slowed down".

Not surprisingly, resolving divorce, custody and support matters by the cost effective method of mediation is becoming a first choice by many couples. The mediation process can effectively provide couples with a resolution that they personally create, rather than a court-mandated solution. It affords the couple the opportunity to deal with underlying personal/emotional issues which are thrown under the rug during litigation, often defeating a settlement. Couples have a long and personal history with one another, and as a result, emotions sometimes run rampant; often, there are underlying issues that need to be sorted through before financial matters can be addressed. Oftentimes, parties naturally feel tense and adversarial during a divorce. This can deter the couple from making the appropriate and beneficial decisions regarding their individualized needs. Sometimes, one party may put up a tough fight, but all he or she wants is some acknowledgment and appreciation before making some concessions. Taking a non-confrontational approach to divorce leads to higher personal satisfaction due in part to the required active involvement and cooperation of the parties themselves in resolving issues in their divorce. For families with children, the therapeutic nature of mediation provides parents the opportunity to formulate long term goals and create a parenting plan in the best interest of their children and family. (Cont. pg 7)

(Feuer Cont) ... vaping companies to stop sales to minors, stopped immigration fraud targeting vulnerable residents, played a leading role in getting taxpayers restitution for allegedly unfair and deceptive practices tied to ostensibly free online tax preparation services, and much more.

REDUCING RECIDIVISM THROUGH INNOVATIVE CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACTION

In 2014, I established a neighborhood-focused initiative to reduce crime, assist victims, and turn around the lives of nonviolent offenders. This Neighborhood Justice Program (NJP) is a pre-filing diversion program in which first-time offenders and other eligible individuals repair the harm they caused through a community-based process, instead of in a courtroom. It requires the individual to take responsibility while avoiding having a criminal record. And it has been a remarkable success. Since its inception, NJP has accepted thousands of participants, with a recidivism rate of only 5%—a dramatic improvement over the results of traditional misdemeanor prosecution. In addition, NJP participants have completed tens of thousands of hours of community service to improve our neighborhoods. Hundreds of community volunteers participate in this effort, frequently reporting how rewarding it is to make a difference in their neighborhoods.

(Continued)

COMBATING WAGE THEFT

Standing up for workers, my office won hundreds of thousands of dollars in back wages for home health care workers who so often are exploited, and secured more than \$1M in restitution for car wash workers deprived of minimum wages, overtime and rest breaks. We have sued three Port of Los Angeles trucking companies alleging each had misclassified truckers working for them as "independent contractors," instead of "employees" in order to evade their obligations to provide benefits and pay relevant taxes.

IN CLOSING

I was deeply honored when the American Bar Association selected our Office as the winner of its top award in the nation for a public law office—the prestigious Hodson Award. We are the first and only City Attorney’s Office in America ever to receive this distinguished award.

Well, I’ve run out of room, and I’ve barely scratched the surface of the groundbreaking, impactful work that the dedicated members of the City Attorney’s Office have achieved. Thank you so much for the great privilege to serve as your City Attorney, State Assembly Member and Councilmember. Whatever my next chapter may be, I look forward to continuing working with you, the wonderful people of the Miracle Mile.








Station Construction Continues

Decking removal east of the Wilshire Bl/La Brea Av intersection is complete. Decking removal in the Wilshire Bl/Fairfax Av area begins September 9.

THREE NEW STATIONS SLATED TO OPEN IN 2024

- > Wilshire/La Brea Station
- > Wilshire/Fairfax Station
- > Wilshire/La Cienega Station

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(Estate Planning Cont.)



...investments, retirement benefits from your employer, IRAs, your insurance policies, collectibles, and personal belongings.

When you start adding it up – especially when you add in potential death benefits from your insurance policies, annuities, etc. – you may find, like most people do, that you actually own a lot more than you think.

What if I do no Estate Planning?

If you die intestate (without a will), then California's laws of descent and distribution will determine who receives your property by default. Contrary to popular belief, if you die without a will, everything you own does not automatically pass to the state. Typically, the distribution will be to your spouse and children and then to other family members (including half-siblings and potentially, step-children). The "state's plan" reflects the legislature's guess as to how most people would dispose of their estate and establishes protection for certain beneficiaries, particularly minor children. The rules of "intestate succession" may or may not reflect your actual wishes. Estate planning affords you the opportunity to alter the state's default plan to suit your personal wishes.

Who needs Estate Planning?

Whatever the size of your estate, you should consider the benefits associated with designating a person who, in the event of your incapacity, will have the responsibility for the management of your assets and your care, including the authority to make health care decisions on your behalf.

What is a Will?

A will is a written document naming who you want to handle your final affairs (your Executor) and who you want to receive your assets after you die (your beneficiaries).

Unfortunately, your will only controls the assets that are titled in your name alone. it will not affect assets which are titled in joint ownership, such as... (Continued)

(Estate Planning Cont.) ...joint tenancy. Additionally, it does not control assets with beneficiary designations, like your IRA, retirement benefits or life insurance policies. With respect to assets that are controlled by your will, these assets will have to go through a court-controlled process called "probate".

What is Probate?

Probate is the name given to the court supervised process developed under State law which handles the administration and subsequent distribution of your assets pursuant to the terms and desires expressed in your will (or pass by intestate succession). In short, probate means the process by which your assets are gathered, applied to pay debts, taxes and expenses of administration, and distributed to those designated as beneficiaries in your will. After the notice is given, and a hearing is held, and if all is in order, your will is admitted to probate and your executor is formally appointed by the court.

While probate is a clear, orderly process, it can, in many situations, be unnecessarily time-consuming and expensive. In larger counties, such as Los Angeles County, the process will customarily consume at least 12-15 months, if not longer, and legal and executor fees may well be greater than comparable services rendered in the administration of a revocable trust (Living Trust).

What is a Revocable Trust?

A revocable trust (sometimes referred as a "living trust") is a written agreement between the person creating the trust and the person named to manage the assets of the trust (typically yourself during your lifetime). The revocable trust will also name the person and/or financial institution who would handle your assets in the event of your disability and their distribution in the event of your death.

A revocable trust may be amended or revoked by you at any time during your life, as long as you are competent. The terms of the trust become irrevocable (not subject to change) after your death.

The use of a revocable trust can, if implemented properly, eliminate the need for probate of your assets held in the name of your trust, thus avoiding additional legal and probate fees as well as preventing the court from controlling your assets in the event of your incapacity.

As you can see, trusts are not only for the wealthy. Anyone desiring to control when or how their assets are distributed, following their death, should consider a revocable trust. A revocable trust can avoid probate at death, prevent court control of assets in the event of incapacity, provide privacy (since a revocable trust is not a public document), allow speedy distribution of assets or control the distribution of assets following your death.

(Continued on pg. 7)

LACMA**PARK DAE SUNG: VIRTUOUS INK AND CONTEMPORARY BRUSHT**

Jul 17–Dec 11, 2022

Park Dae Sung was born in 1945, the official end of both the Japanese colonization of Korea and WWII. In 1950, during the Korean War, his parents were killed by Communist soldiers, and he found solace in painting. The exhibit spotlights paintings in Park's signature style that catapulted the respected artist to the next level. With a single brush, he portrays his subjects by effortlessly fusing the aesthetics of East and West.

ANDY WARHOL: CARS - WORKS FROM THE MERCEDES-BENZ ART COLLECTION

Now Open!

Commissioned on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the motor car, Andy Warhol's uncompleted 1986/87 Cars series was to include 80 pictures intended to record the history of the motor car from the Daimler Motor Coach and Benz Patent Motor Car, both dating from 1886, to the present day. The last series of pictures to be undertaken in his lifetime, only 36 silk-screen paintings and 13 drawings representing eight different Mercedes-Benz models were completed.

REGENERATION: BLACK CINEMA 1898–1971 -**August 21st, 2022 - April 9, 2023**

The exhibit explores the visual culture of Black cinema in its manifold expressions, from its early days to just after the civil rights movement. It is an in-depth look at Black participation in American filmmaking. Regeneration highlights the work of African American filmmakers and creates dialogues with visual artists while simultaneously expanding discussions surrounding US film history

AUGUST'S THURSDAY NIGHT SUMMER MUSIC SERIES

Thursdays in August - 6:00PM – 8:00PM Farmers Market Plaza

Ernie Watts Quartet, winner of the 2014 Frankfurt Music Prize, will get things going when they arrive in town on August 4th with their straight-ahead jazz & bebop tunes. Not to be outdone, Jumpin' Joz will keep the party going on August 11th with their unique combination of swing, jazz, blues, jump, early R&B, and more! The Summer Music Series runs every Thursday from 6-8PM on the Farmers Market Plaza until August 25th.



(Estate Planning Cont.) Should I seek help with my estate planning? It is possible to prepare one's own estate plan using "do-it-yourself software" or "fill-in-blank forms". It is unlikely, however, that these methods will result in a suitable solution that accomplishes all of your objectives. It is generally advisable to consult with a qualified attorney who can interpret the various laws dealing with property rights, taxes, wills, trusts, and probate.

If you do decide to consult with an estate planning attorney, you can save time and money by preparing thoroughly for your meeting. You can organize information regarding your assets, liabilities, disposition, desires and other objectives as well as gather important documents such as prior wills or trusts, powers of attorney, life insurance policies, employment benefits, and other related documents and information.

The purpose of this article is to provide you with a general overview of the subject matter covered. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, you should consult with a competent professional.

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(Family Law Cont.) It takes a patient and skilled mediator to understand and sort through the emotional aspect of the conflict. By doing so, mediation makes the transition from married to the "single" status easier. Mediation offers the couple the flexibility to come up with creative solutions that benefit each party and the family. The pace and timing of the divorce process is left to the parties themselves. Mediation is a two way street. The parties must have the desire to cooperate for any sort of progress.

Mediation offers couples both a personally and financially cost effective method of reaching a resolution of the custody, support and property division issues they face in their divorce. Litigation to finalize a divorce may take up to two years at best. The mediation process may take three to four sessions, depending on the issues. In conjunction with efficiency, mediation also has a modest price tag. Litigation is expensive. When a divorce drags on for several years, this can be personally stressful as well as financially costly. To put it in perspective: a mediation can cost a bare minimum of \$5,000 while the litigation costs, especially those involving custody disputes, can run about \$50,000—ten times the amount of a mediation! Cooperation is the key to keeping divorce costs low. We at the ENENSTEIN PHAM & GLASS (EPG) law firm approach all cases from a settlement perspective at the outset. Mediation is one of the services we offer which has proven to be personally, emotionally and financially satisfying to our family law clients.

(Notary Cont.)



When I decided to become a Notary Public I had to meet and pass many requirements. First, of course, I had to be a legal California resident. Then, I had to complete a course of study approved by the California Secretary of State and complete and pass a written examination prescribed by the California Secretary of State. Lastly, clear a background check and be fingerprinted. Once I passed all of this, I took an Oath and received my Notary commission. To maintain my commission, every three years, I must take a refresher course approved by the California Secretary of State and complete and pass a written examination prescribed by the California Secretary of State all over again.

As many of you may know, I am a Legal Assistant to Stephen Kramer and the Firm does lots of estate planning on a regular basis, most of these documents need Notary Verification. Besides keeping quite busy at the office, I am also a Mobile Notary Public, which means I will come to you, and I offer a discount on my Travel Fees for Greater Miracle Mile Chamber Members too!

I continue to keep up with all current state laws and the challenges that Covid has brought on, keeping my client's safety, health, and comfort as my top priority.

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