Bench-Bar Reception:

New Venue, New Sponsor Record

By Herb Bolz and Edward Lester • Photos courtesy of Christina Cortino

After several years at the California Auto Museum, the Sacramento County Bar Association's annual Bench-Bar Reception moved downtown this year to the Tsakopoulos Galleria. Though we missed the classic cars, we appreciated the new, beautiful setting, such as the towering granite-like columns that reach toward the five-story vaulted ceiling from which three sparkling glass rings are suspended. Again, attendance was excellent–over 500 people. Again, this year we enjoyed the support of a record breaking number of sponsors: 55, up from a count of 45 last year. These generous sponsors made this event possible. Another first for 2013 was a "state of the court report" for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, from **Judge Consuelo Callahan**.

On the evening of September 12, 2013, wine, beer, cocktails and food were served at one end of the Galleria, while the Martini Crush Jazz Ensemble performed at the other end, in front of an arched, floor-to-ceiling window. As the sun set, distinguished judges were honored with awards and publicly acknowledged by friends, family and colleagues for their dedicated service to the legal community.

"State of the court" reports were made by Ninth Circuit Judge Consuelo Callahan, **Chief District Judge Morrison England**, **Presiding Justice Vance Raye**, and **Assistant Sacramento Superior Court Presiding Judge Robert Hight**. **Christine Jacob**, President, Women Lawyers of Sacramento, presented the Karen Pedersen Stevens Scholarship Award.

The Judge of the Year award was presented to **Laurie Earl**, Presiding Judge of the Sacramento County Superior Court. Receiving the award, Judge Earl remarked that Sacramento County struggled this year to meet the needs of justice with fewer resources. She expressed her appreciation for the program in which attorneys volunteer their legal services as mediators and arbitrators. Judge Earl observed that 39 courtrooms closed in California this year; she reached out to all lawyers in the audience to remind our sister

WLS President Christine Jacob, Judge Robert Hight, Justice Vance Raye, Judge Laurie Earl, Judge Morrison England, Judge Consuelo Callahan, and SCBA President Bruce Timm

Judge Jim Mize, Justice Ronald Robie, Justice Andrea Hoch, Justice Kathleen Butz, and Justice William Murray, Jr

Monica Hans, Alana Mathews, SCBA President Bruce Timm, and Doug Rothschild

Natalie Bustamante, Katie Patterson, Pamela Hooley, Judge Laurie Earl, and Karen Jacobsen

Reception Committee members Shanae Buffington, Herb Bolz, Elisa Ungerman, Jeannie Lee Jones, Sabrina Thomas, Monica Hans, and Rhonda Harrigan. Not pictured: Doug Rothschild

branch of government, the state legislature, that a fully functioning judiciary needs adequate funding. In closing, Judge Earl stated that her family is her proudest accomplishment, and that as a wife and woman, she is the luckiest person in the world. This dynamic environment provided a perfect setting for Judge Earl's call to lawyers and judges to rededicate themselves to work together to improve the quality of justice.

Herb Bolz serves on the SCBA Board of Directors representing the St. Thomas More Society. Edward Lester is an associate attorney with the Law Offices of Mastagni, Holstedt, Amick, Miller & Johnson.

Los Angeles County Superior Court Presiding Judge David Wesley, Judge Laurie Earl, and Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Lee Edmon. Judges Wesley and Edmon have worked closely with Judge Earl in dealing with challenging judicial funding issues

Dean Francis Mootz III and Assistant Dean Tracy Simmons

Patricia Sturdevant, Judge Emily Vasquez, and Judge Raul Ramirez (ret.)

From left, Kim Pittner, Solymar Herrera, Tony Alves, Brant Nelson, Bianca Saad, Lawrance Bohm, Maria Minney, Victoria Baiza, Bradley Mancuso, and Jennifer Callaghan, all from platinum sponsor Bohm Law Group

Isabella Hannon, Molly Stafford, Justice Louis Mauro, Sarra Ziari, Judge Kimberly Mueller, and Justice Elena Duarte

SCBA President Bruce Timm with Judge Laurie Earl