

FROM THE CHAIR

by Michael R. Diliberto

I am honored to serve as chair of *Los Angeles Lawyer* for the 2024-2025 bar year. In this inaugural issue for my term, I want to provide a brief history of the magazine and introduce the people behind the scenes who keep this fine publication running.

Los Angeles Lawyer started around 44 years ago as the *Los Angeles County Bar Bulletin*. It became *Los Angeles Lawyer* in 1979. The publication converted from print to a digital-only format in May 2021. John Lowe, our staff editor since 2013, formerly worked at Skadden–Los Angeles for nearly 20 years, primarily assisting with SEC and other corporate matters. He holds a doctorate in modern middle eastern history, with a focus on economics. John faithfully guides us to meet each publication deadline. For almost 40 years each, Patrice Hughes, our art director, has overseen the art and design for each issue, and Linda Bekas, our advertising director, has kept our humble funds flowing. Tom Keller has been our staff photographer for more than 30 years. Shannon Lee, our administrative coordinator, started in 2023.

Each issue of *Los Angeles Lawyer* contains one outstanding article which we select to be the cover feature. The author of each feature article is invited to be on the cover of that particular issue. One of the requirements for the cover is that the cover author must be a member of the Los Angeles County Bar Association, which owns the magazine. Many distinguished individuals other than attorneys have graced various covers of the annual May Entertainment Law issue, such as comedian Mel Brooks, actor, Morgan Freeman, and singer-songwriter Etta James.

The image of Marilyn Monroe appeared on the cover for an article about a Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals decision that affirmed that, at the time of her death, the legendary actress was domiciled in New York, which meant that her heirs could not

utilize California’s right of publicity statute to protect her name, image, and likeness. Sophia Loren appeared on the cover for an article about film dealmaking and finance, written by an attorney who represented her filmmaker son, Eduardo Ponti, who accompanied his mother. The magazine had its own Hollywood close-up in the movie *Erin Brockovich* when Ed Masry (portrayed by actor Albert Finney in the film) was shown on the cover of *Los Angeles Lawyer* after a major settlement with the Pacific Gas & Electric Company. The real Ed Masry and Erin Brockovich had a cameo appearance in *Erin Brockovich* (Ed as a restaurant patron sitting behind Julia Roberts; Erin played a waitress).

This is your magazine, and we invite you to contribute to its content. Your article can educate, inspire, or effectuate change. For example, I wrote a Closing Argument for the April 2022 issue in which I suggested that Judicial Council form CIV-110 (Request for Dismissal) should be revised by adding a new “check the box” option to request dismissal of an action and with the court’s retaining jurisdiction under Code of Civil Procedure Section 664.6 (a foolproof solution to ensure jurisdiction is retained before a case is dismissed). The Result: My suggestion in the article was vetted by a Judicial Council committee and is currently proposed to be included in a new Request for Dismissal form, effective January 1, 2025. If you have an idea for an article, please reach out to me or any member of our editorial board. (See the masthead for the board on page four in each issue of *Los Angeles Lawyer*.) ■

Michael R. Diliberto is a mediator and arbitrator with ADR Services, Inc. He is the immediate past chair of LACBA’s Alternative Dispute Resolution Section.