

A Tribute To Our Namesake,
The Hon. William B. Enright
(1925-2020)



**October 21, 2021
5:30 p.m.**

**Carter/Keep Federal Courthouse
333 W. Broadway
Jury Assembly Room**

**William B. Enright Inn of Court
Chapter of The American Inns of Court**

**Tribute Team Leaders:
Hon. Joan P. Weber, Gregory A. Post**

**Tribute Team Members:
Hon. Howard B. Wiener, Ret., Hon. Irma E. Gonzalez, Ret.,
Hon. Barbara L. Major, John J. Freni, Karen P. Hewitt, Nancy L. Stagg**

PROGRAM

Opening Comments by Hon. Judy S. Bae

Hon. Judy S. Bae is a Judge of the Superior Court. She currently handles a family law assignment. Judge Bae serves as President of the Enright Inn of Court and is a Master in the Inn. Prior to taking the bench in 2019, Judge Bae was an attorney in San Diego, specializing in civil and trust litigation. Judge Bae previously served as a board member and Treasurer of the San Diego County Bar Association and as a board member and President of the Pan Asian Lawyers of San Diego.

Master of Ceremony Gregory A. Post, Esq.

Greg Post was a trial lawyer for more than 30 years at the San Diego law firm he co-founded. During that time, Mr. Post tried a variety of significant civil cases in California and Federal courts, representing both plaintiffs and defendants. He earned membership in the American Board of Trial Advocates. Now an arbitrator and mediator affiliated with Judicate West and the American Arbitration Association, as a neutral Mr. Post has handled hundreds of matters, predominantly business and commercial disputes, business torts, personal injury, real property, employment, and professional malpractice. He is a Master in the Enright Inn of Court, and a former Board Member and Inn Treasurer.

Remarks by Hon. Irma E. Gonzalez, Ret.

Hon. Irma E. Gonzalez, Ret. is a retired United States District Judge for the Southern District of California. She is now a neutral with JAMS. Judge Gonzalez was appointed to the United States District Court for the Southern District of California on August 12, 1992, becoming the first Latina of Mexican heritage to be appointed to the Federal bench. She served as Chief Judge of the District Court from January 2005 to January 2012. Judge Gonzalez is a Master in the Enright Inn of Court. Among her many awards and honors, in 2011, she received the Joan Dempsey Klein Distinguished Jurist award by the California Women Lawyers. In August of this year, the American Bar Association awarded Judge Gonzalez the Margaret Brent Women Lawyers Achievement Award for professional excellence and for actively paving the way to success for other women in the profession.

Remarks by Judy Clarke, Esq.

Judy Clarke is an attorney in private criminal defense practice. She served as the first full-time Capital Resource Counsel for the Federal Public and Community Defender Program from 2002-2009. Ms. Clarke has also served as the Executive Director of two Federal Defender Programs, Federal Defenders of Eastern Washington & Idaho (1992-2002) and Federal Defenders of San Diego, Inc. (1983-1991). She has represented a number of high profile clients accused of capital offenses, such as Ted Kaczynski (also known as the Unabomber) and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev (also known as the Boston bomber). Ms. Clarke is a Past President of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, a Fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers, and received the John Frank award from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals as well as the Griffin Bell award for Courageous Advocacy from the American College of Trial Lawyers.

Remarks by Hon. Joan P. Weber

Hon. Joan P. Weber is a Judge of the Superior Court for the County of San Diego, serving since her appointment in 1990. She is currently serving in the criminal trials division of the Superior Court where she has presided over many high profile cases. Judge Weber is a past President of the California Judges Association. Judge Weber has served as the Supervising Judge of the San Diego Criminal Courts, the Presiding Judge of the San Diego Appellate Division and the Supervising Judge of the San Diego North County Branch. She has received the Outstanding Jurist Award from the San Diego County Bar. In 2016, the American Bar Association awarded Judge Weber with its Pursuit of Justice Award. In 2021 the California Women Lawyers awarded Judge Weber the Joan Dempsey Klein Distinguished Jurist Award for her excellence as a jurist, her longstanding vigorous service and her inspiration to women lawyers in California. She is a Master in the Enright Inn of Court, and currently serves as a Board Member.

Remarks by Hon. Cindy D. Davis

Hon. Cindy D. Davis is a Judge of the Superior Court for the County of San Diego. Judge Davis presides over the Mental Health Court and Behavioral Health Court of the San Diego Superior Court. Prior to her appointment to the bench in 2013, Judge Davis was a Commissioner for the Superior Court, a Deputy City Attorney for the City of San Diego and an attorney in private practice. She began her legal career in 1993 as a law clerk to the Hon. William B. Enright.

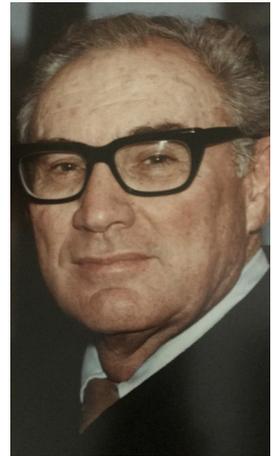
During her legal career Judge Davis has been active in local legal organizations. She has served as President of Lawyers Club of San Diego, Vice President and Treasurer of the San Diego County Bar Association, President of the San Diego Bar Foundation and as a member of the Board of Directors of the San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program.

Remarks by Hon. Dana M. Sabraw

Judge Sabraw is the Chief Judge of the United States District Court for the Southern District of California. He has presided over more than 300 jury trials, and has served as a visiting judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. Judge Sabraw has received numerous awards from the community and bar associations, including Outstanding Jurist from the San Diego County Bar Association, Judge of the Year from La Raza Lawyers Association of San Diego, Humanitarian of the Year from Casa Cornelia Law Center, Person the Year from the San Diego Union Tribune Editorial Board, Judge of the Year from Consumer Attorneys of San Diego, and the Trailblazer Award from the National Asian Pacific Bar Association.

Closing Remarks by Hon. Kevin A. Enright

Hon. Kevin A. Enright is a Judge of the Superior Court of the County of San Diego. He is currently serving in the civil trials division of the court. He has previously served as Presiding Judge of the San Diego Superior Court. Judge Enright is the son of our namesake, Hon. William B. Enright. Prior to his appointment to the bench in 1995, Judge Enright was a Deputy District Attorney and an attorney in private civil practice. As a Deputy District Attorney, Judge Enright tried more than 100 jury trials to verdict. Judge Enright has been active in many civic and legal organizations in San Diego, including Rotary International, youth sports, the Association of Business Trial Lawyers (Judicial Advisory Board) and the Inns of Court. Judge Enright is a Master in the Enright Inn of Court and a member of the Board. He previously served as President of the Enright Inn of Court.



The Life of the Honorable William B. Enright (July 12, 1925 - March 7, 2020)

Early Years and World War II Military Service

William Benner Enright was born on July 12, 1925 in Queens, New York, where he grew up and went to high school.¹

The United States entered World War II at the end of 1941. Eager to defend his country, Judge Enright obtained his mother's permission to enlist in the military at age 17. Soon after that, the U.S. Navy accepted Judge Enright into its V-12 officer training program.

When he finished his training, the Navy commissioned him as an ensign and assigned him to the U.S.S. *Marcus Island*, an escort carrier. After the Pacific war ended in August 1945, Ensign Enright served in the American forces in Japan²

Education

After he completed his military service, Judge Enright earned a bachelor's degree in Philosophy from Dartmouth College in 1947. He then studied law at Loyola Law School in Los Angeles, graduating in 1950.³

Family

Judge Enright married Bette Lou Card in 1951. The couple were happily married for more than 68 years, until Bette's death in 2019. The Enrights had three children, Kevin, now a judge on the San Diego Superior Court, and two daughters, Kimberly Enright and Kerry Kunde.⁴ The Enrights became grandparents to 8 grandchildren.



¹ [Former federal Judge William Enright dies at 94 - The San Diego Union-Tribune \(sandiegouniontribune.com\)](https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com)

² [Former federal Judge William Enright dies at 94 - The San Diego Union-Tribune \(sandiegouniontribune.com\)](https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com)

³ [Former federal Judge William Enright dies at 94 - The San Diego Union-Tribune \(sandiegouniontribune.com\)](https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com)

⁴ [Former federal Judge William Enright dies at 94 - The San Diego Union-Tribune \(sandiegouniontribune.com\)](https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com)

Judge Enright's Legal Career

The Trial Lawyer

Judge Enright began practicing law as a Deputy District Attorney for San Diego County in 1951. In 1954, he left to form a private law firm, Harelson, Enright, Levitt & Knutson⁵, where he conducted a criminal defense practice for almost two decades. According to his former judicial colleague, U.S. District Court Judge Larry A. Burns, Judge Enright developed a reputation in San Diego and throughout California as a formidable trial lawyer. "It was often said that he captivated juries with his distinctive, powerful voice and eloquence, and with his incisive mind."⁶ During his eighteen years as a practicing attorney, he handled 223 jury trials.⁷ Based on his remarkable achievements as a trial attorney, Judge Enright was inducted as a member into two prestigious invitation-only trial bar societies: the American College of Trial Lawyers and the American Board of Trial Advocates.

Many of his criminal defense clients were accused of egregious acts, including familial murder. Nevertheless, Judge Enright advocated zealously for every client in the best traditions of the bar, frequently expressing his belief that every person was entitled to a fair trial regardless of the notoriety of their alleged offenses.⁸

The Jurist

Although he was a Democrat, Judge Enright's esteem within the California legal community led President Richard Nixon, a Republican, to nominate him in June of 1972 for a seat on the United States District Court for the Southern District of California. The Senate confirmed him immediately and he took the oath of office within two weeks of his nomination on July 14, 1972.⁹

Judge Enright's appointment to the District Court occurred a few years after the creation of the what we now know as the Southern District of California. San Diego and Imperial counties separated

5 Hon. Gilbert Harelson, Hon. Jack Levitt and La Mesa City Attorney LeRoy Knutson were the other name partners.

6 Judge William B. Enright Tribute, San Diego Lawyer, May/June 2020

7 [Former federal Judge William Enright dies at 94 - The San Diego Union-Tribune \(sandiegouniontribune.com\)](https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com); San Diego County Bar Foundation, citation of induction of Judge William B. Enright. 2021.

8 [Former federal Judge William Enright dies at 94 - The San Diego Union-Tribune \(sandiegouniontribune.com\)](https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com)

9 [Former federal Judge William Enright dies at 94 - The San Diego Union-Tribune \(sandiegouniontribune.com\)](https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com)



from Los Angeles County in 1966 to form a new Southern District of California, rather than being merely the southern division of one district.¹⁰ The Southern District's collegiality made a lasting impression on Judge Enright, which he, in turn, advocated throughout his career: "[I] can remember no time whether there was any discord or disharmony. We reached consensus on all the problems confronting the court. We're a much larger court now, and we have maintained our collegiality....We still have all the harmony that I think is envied throughout the Ninth Circuit. I think we're unique in that aspect of our relationship. So it's always been a very, very happy court and very good hard-working court."¹¹

In handling criminal cases while on the bench, Judge Enright was scrupulous about affording fair trials to both the accused and the prosecution, and he was both stern and compassionate in dealing with convicted defendants.

On the compassionate side of the ledger, for those defendants he sentenced to prison, Judge Enright stayed informed about their behavior while serving their sentences and he reduced the terms of those he felt had demonstrated remorse and changed conduct behind bars. Moreover, for the defendants he sentenced to probation, he kept a box of

10 Western Legal History, Introduction (by Hon. Janis L. Sammartino), *The Journal of the Ninth Judicial Circuit Historical Society*, Vol. 28, No. 2, 2015, 153-154.

11 William B. Enright (judge, United States District Court for the Southern District of California), oral history memoir, sixth interview, transcript, 13, Ninth Judicial Circuit Historical Society (on file with Southern District of California, San Diego).

blank keys and would hand one to each probationer, explaining they themselves held the key to their own future freedom if they worked hard to stay out of trouble.¹²

Judge Enright's sterner side also came into play in some criminal cases. He often gave what came to be called "the Bill Collector" speech to dozens of convicted defendants. Admonishing the convicted on sentencing day, Judge Enright explained it was time for the court to "settle accounts" -- that "the Bill Collector" came for everyone -- and it was now the defendant's day to pay up. In 1985, upon sentencing J. David Dominelli to a maximum 20 year sentence after he was convicted of running a \$200 million Ponzi scheme, Judge Enright told Dominelli "you must know there is no free lunch in this life." Judge Enright also presided over the federal habeas appeals of convicted death row inmate Robert Alton Harris. Judge Enright denied the appeals and eventually Harris was executed at San Quentin in 1992.¹³

Judge Enright served in active status on the District Court from 1972 to 1990. He then served for another ten years in senior status. During this almost thirty year tenure on the District Court, Judge Enright presided over more than 300 criminal and civil trials.¹⁴

Between his military and judicial service, Judge Enright served the United States of America honorably and with distinction for more than 30 years.

The American Inns of Court and Judge Enright's Lifelong Service to the Legal Community

Judge Enright's own skill as an advocate and his concern as a judge that the courts and the trial bar should be competent, professional and ethical, led him to assist in the creation of the groundbreaking Louis M. Welsh Inn of Court in San Diego.

In the early-1980s, out of concern to maintain and enhance the quality of practice among the American bench and bar, the United States Judicial Conference (under the direction of then-Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court Warren Burger) created an ad hoc committee to study formation of American Inns of Court to emulate the British legal Inns which had trained lawyers for

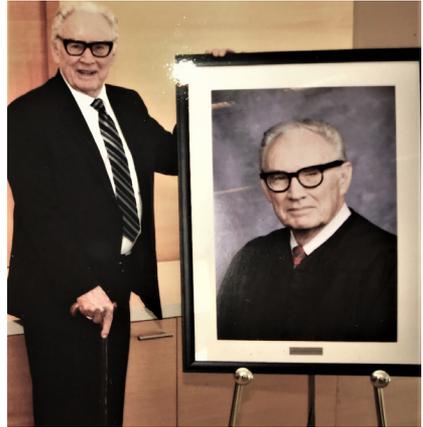
¹² [Former federal Judge William Enright dies at 94 - The San Diego Union-Tribune \(sandiegouniontribune.com\)](http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com)

¹³ [Former federal Judge William Enright dies at 94 - The San Diego Union-Tribune \(sandiegouniontribune.com\)](http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com)

¹⁴ [Former federal Judge William Enright dies at 94 - The San Diego Union-Tribune \(sandiegouniontribune.com\)](http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com)

hundreds of years in the English common law system.¹⁵

Under the guidance of Judge Enright and other founders, the American Inns of Court system constituted itself as a teaching institution. The model they fashioned continues to operate through the present day. Each local inn of court holds monthly instructional programs in which judges, lawyers and (sometimes) law students give practical demonstrations of how to take discovery in a civil case, how to conduct jury voir dire, how to draft and present motions to the court, and many other of the practical exercises lawyers must be able to perform in the real world.¹⁶



Around the country, local member inns were formed under the national American Inns of Court organization. In December 1983, Judge Enright and several other state and federal judges and leading local attorneys formed the first San Diego Inn of Court, the Welsh Inn, chapter number 9 in the national system.¹⁷

The San Diego Inn was named in honor of Superior Court Judge Louis M. Welsh, who helped found it and who was a leader from the bench in educating local attorneys for many years even before the formation of the American Inns of Court.¹⁸

In addition to his enthusiastic work for the Welsh Inn of Court, Judge Enright's commitment to educating the bench and bar and to serving the legal community was evident in his service in other organizations over the years and the accolades he won for doing so.

For example, while a practicing attorney, Judge Enright was a member of the California State Bar Board of Governors and was also the State Bar's Vice-President. He was also president of both

15 Robert G. Steiner, "American Inns of Court: The Origin of the Louis M. Welsh Inn, American Inns of Court IX," manuscript circa June 8, 2001.

16 Robert G. Steiner, "American Inns of Court: The Origin of the Louis M. Welsh Inn, American Inns of Court IX," manuscript circa June 8, 2001.

17 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Inns_of_Court (accessed 9/2/21); Robert G. Steiner, "American Inns of Court: The Origin of the Louis M. Welsh Inn, American Inns of Court IX," manuscript circa June 8, 2001.

18 Robert G. Steiner, "American Inns of Court: The Origin of the Louis M. Welsh Inn, American Inns of Court IX," manuscript circa June 8, 2001.

the San Diego County Bar Association and of the Federal Defenders of San Diego, Inc.¹⁹

As a judge, among other honors, he was named the San Diego County Bar Association Jurist of the Year. Two Inns of Court named awards in his honor: the California Inns of Court's "William B. Enright Award for Professionalism" and the American Inns of Court's "William B. Enright Ethics and Civility Award."²⁰

Judge Enright was also honored in a concrete and practical way by the formation in 1991 of this Inn. The Hon. William B. Enright Inn of Court is Chapter No. 138 of the American Inns of Court.²¹ Through the years, Judge Enright would attend Inn meetings. Many members of the Enright Inn fondly recall, with appreciation and a sense of awe, the times Judge Enright attended our meetings and spoke to us about civility, professionalism and important practical aspects of trial practice. Fortunately, some of those talks were recorded, and portions will be seen this evening.

Judge Enright served as Trustee for the American Inns of Court Foundation from 1985 to 1992. He was one of ten Emeritus Trustees.

In 1987, he was presented with the Chairman's Award (now the A. Sherman Christensen Award), which is bestowed upon a "member of an American Inn of Court who, at the local, state or national level has provided distinguished, exceptional and significant leadership to the American Inns of Court movement."

Judge Enright's Lasting Legacy

The complete list of Judge Enright's awards and service organization memberships is far too lengthy to detail here, but they are listed in the citation the San Diego County Bar Foundation issued in 2021 when it inducted Judge Enright into its roll of Distinguished Lawyers.²²

Judge Enright served not only the legal community, but also actively participated in civic and charitable associations, including the Rotary Club, United Crusade, Big Brothers, Little League, and the Urban Coalition.

¹⁹ San Diego County Bar Foundation, citation of induction of Judge William B. Enright. 2021.

²⁰ San Diego County Bar Foundation, citation of induction of Judge William B. Enright. 2021.

²¹ [The Hon. William B. Enright American Inn of Court - American Inns of Court](#)

²² San Diego County Bar Foundation, citation of induction of Judge William B. Enright. 2021.

Upon hearing of his passing, attorney Jerry Davee eloquently described Judge Enright and summed up how people who knew him felt about him: “I am not sure we have had a lawyer or judge in the community with more demonstrated character, sense of responsibility, dedication and integrity than [Judge Enright]. I never heard a word of disrespect from anyone about him. He was a lawyers’ lawyer and a judges’ judge. But it was for far more than his legal skills and achievements that I admired him. He was one of the most likable people I have ever met.”

Former Enright Inn President Craig McClellan also perfectly described Judge Enright: “Judge Enright is the father of the American Inns of Court in San Diego. He has said his involvement with the Inns was the proudest thing he had done in his legal career. He was the epitome of a lawyer, a judge and a gentleman. I wish everyone could have known him.”

Justice Judith Haller said of Judge Enright: “He impacted the lives of many and inspired us to do our best as lawyers and judges. How lucky we are to continue his legacy through the work of our Inn.”

His friend, attorney Milt Silverman, also spoke of Judge Enright’s legacy: “The most important thing I can say about [Judge] Enright, and the reason that he will be remembered, is how he lived. Before Bill Enright did anything, he thought about whether it was legal, ethical and moral.”²³

The clearest evidence of Judge Enright’s contributions and his stature as a lawyer, judge, mentor and educator is in the depth of the devotion shown by all the people who are present today in person or remotely to honor him. We will not soon forget him.

23 Milt Silverman, April 17, 2020, [Remembering Bill Enright \(blawg401.com\)](http://blawg401.com)

Additional Information and Special Acknowledgements

We are grateful for and indebted to Robert Jordan of AJL Media LLC for his tireless work on preparing the video clips of Judge Enright for this program.

www.AJLmedia.com

A special “thank you” to Mary Pappas and her team at Athens Market Taverna for catering and refreshments for this event.

www.AthensMarketTaverna.com

If you would like to make a charitable donation in honor of Judge Enright, the American Inns of Court Foundation has established an annual campaign fund in his honor to support the American Inns of Court’s work:

[Enright Donation - Honoring Judge William B. Enright \(innsocourt.org\)](http://innsocourt.org)

This program will be posted on the Enright Inn’s website at:

<http://enrightinnofcourt.org/s/tribute.pdf>

