



COURT NEWS



Chief Judge Barry Russell

2005

Jon D. Ceretto, Executive Officer/Clerk

THEODOR C. ALBERT APPOINTED BANKRUPTCY JUDGE

The Court is delighted to announce the appointment of Costa Mesa attorney Theodor C. Albert as Bankruptcy Judge. Mr. Albert, 52, will begin his fourteen-year term as a bankruptcy judge for the Central District of California on June 1, 2005, when the Oath of a Bankruptcy Judge is administered to him. Mr. Albert will maintain his chambers in the Los Angeles Division. He will succeed Judge Arthur M. Greenwald, who is retiring from the Central District bankruptcy bench after 16 years of service on May 31, 2005.

Mr. Albert is an experienced attorney who has practiced bankruptcy law almost exclusively for more than 22 years. In 1995, he co-founded and developed a successful Costa Mesa law practice, Albert, Weiland & Golden, a 20-lawyer bankruptcy firm which handles all types of insolvencies. Prior to 1995, he was with the Newport Beach office of Buchalter, Nemer, Fields & Younger for 12 years.

Born in Fort Sill, Oklahoma, Mr. Albert obtained a B.A. in History in 1975 from Stanford University and a J.D. from University of California at Los Angeles School of Law in 1978. He was admitted to the California bar in 1978. He has co-published bankruptcy articles and is an active member of the bankruptcy community. He was a founding director of the Orange County Bankruptcy Forum and chaired the Commercial Law and Bankruptcy Section of the Orange County Bar Association in 1987. He is also on the panel of trained mediators for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Central District of California and is certified as a Business Bankruptcy Specialist.



Theodor C. Albert

In 2000, the Orange County Bankruptcy Forum and the Orange County Bar Association gave Mr. Albert the *Peter M. Elliott Award* as the practitioner who best exemplifies the highest standards of ethics and scholarship. He previously served as master and former treasurer of the Peter Elliott Inn of Court and was a visiting scholar at the American Academy in Rome in 2003.

MANDATORY eFILE REMINDER

eFile usage becomes **mandatory** as of **June 1, 2005** (see **Public Notice 05-001** on the Court's web site <www.cacb.uscourts.gov>, at Notices & Orders->Public Notices->Mandatory Electronic Filing. If you are not already registered to use eFile, you can register online from the eFile home page, which can be accessed at <<https://efile.cacb.uscourts.gov>> or through the Electronic Services ->eFile buttons of the Court's web site.



COURT CLOSURES



Day/Date	Holiday
Monday, May 30, 2005	Memorial Day

PRESIDENT SIGNS NEW BANKRUPTCY LAW

On April 20, 2005, the President signed *S. 256, the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005*, into law. The Act makes substantial changes to title 11 of the United States Code. These changes will generally become effective on 10/17/05. Court News will keep you updated on how this legislation affects the Court, as the information becomes available.

CLERK'S OFFICE UNDERGOES LARGEST-EVER STAFFING REDUCTION

As a result of a severe budget shortfall, the Court notified 26 Clerk's Office staff members that they would be involuntarily separated, effective April 15, 2005. To aid these individuals in finding new employment, the Court provided 3-weeks notice; relieved them of their job duties so they could seek new employment; and provided severance pay. Additionally, to reduce the number of involuntary separations required, the Court offered buyouts, which 7 staff members accepted. These individuals will separate from the Court on May 1, 2005. Taken together, these separations represent a 12% staff reduction district-wide, the largest in the Court's history, and the fourth staffing reduction in the last five years. Since the year 2000, the Clerk's Office has lost approximately 42% of its staff (176 of 418).

ILLINOIS JUDGES AND CLERK'S OFFICE STAFF VISIT COURT

The Court was pleased to host 9 individuals from the Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Illinois on March 15 and 16, 2005. The guests, who included Chief Judge Eugene Wedoff, Judge Benjamin Goldgar, Kenneth Gardner, Clerk of Court, and other Clerk's Office staff, visited the Court to study how our Court implemented its successful team-based management structure for its Courtroom Services judge teams.

Jon D. Ceretto, Executive Officer/Clerk of Court welcomed the guests and facilitated the discussions. Chief Judge Barry Russell and Judge Vincent P. Zurzolo expressed to the guests how well the team-based concept works and that each judge develops a strong working relationship with his or her team. The Clerk's Office management staff gave the guests tours of the Los Angeles and San Fernando Valley Divisions. The visitors also received a detailed review of the Court's development of employee cross-training, skill enhancement, and teamwork.

TWO BANKRUPTCY JUDGESHIP OPPORTUNITIES IN LOS ANGELES

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit invites applications from highly qualified individuals for the position of Bankruptcy Judge for the Central District of California. One position will be available in February 2006, and the other in May 2006. Persons selected will maintain chambers in Los Angeles, but may be required to travel to hear cases in other divisional offices in the District. Applications may be downloaded from the Ninth Circuit's website at www.ce9.uscourts.gov (click on "documents"). The deadline for receipt of all completed application materials is May 31, 2005, at 5:00 p.m. For more information, contact the Office of the Circuit Executive at (415) 556-2000 or write to 95 Seventh Street, Suite 429, San Francisco, CA 94103-1518, Attn: Bankruptcy Recruitment, CAC.

COURT OFFERS CM/ECF TRAINING FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

As a service to attorneys in southern California, the Court is offering CM/ECF training for attorneys who electronically file in any division of the Northern District of California (Oakland, San Francisco, San Jose, and Santa Rosa). CM/ECF is the Judiciary's national Case Management/Electronic Case Filing system. The training will satisfy the requirement for the Central District when it converts to ECF in early 2006.

A *debtor* attorney session will be held on Thursday, May 12, 2005 from 9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., and a *creditor* attorney session

CMECF

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COURT OFFERS CM/ECF TRAINING FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

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will be held on Friday, May 13, 2005 from 9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Both training sessions will be held in Los Angeles at the Roybal Federal Building. Classes are already full at this point, but if you are interested in attending, we encourage you to contact us, as we are maintaining a list of alternates. To register, please call Lenora Butcher at (213) 894-8583. Those who register must have both a PACER and e-mail account.

GOT COMMENTS? WE'RE ALL EARS

The Court invites you to share any comments you may have on our customer service at any of our five office locations. As the Court continuously strives to provide you with the best service possible, your feedback aids us in making improvements where necessary and maintaining the overall quality level of service you have come to expect.

You may give us your comments by filling out a *Customer Service Questionnaire* at any of our divisional offices, or you may visit us online at <www.cacb.uscourts.gov>. Just click on the "Guestbook" located at the center of the Court's home page.

Court Statistics January - April 2005

	2005 ANNUAL ESTIMATE	2004 TOTAL	% CHANGE 05 vs 04
Case Commencement:			
Chapter 7	53,966	54,892	-2%
Chapter 11	255	302	-16%
Chapter 13	3,211	5,445	-41%
*TOTAL	57,432	60,639	-5%
Complaints:			
Dischargeability	1,202	1,693	-29%
Recover Money/Property	973	2,629	-63%
All Other	256	419	-39%
TOTAL	2,431	4,741	-49%
Motions:			
Personal Property	2,417	4,172	-42%
Real Property	1,274	3,655	-65%
Unlawful Detainer	542	673	-19%
Other RFS	352	448	-21%
Dismiss	4,100	7,992	-49%
Dismiss/Convert	99	217	-55%
Fees, Employment, Expenses	6,980	9,400	-26%
TOTAL	15,764	26,557	-41%

National Filing Trends	12-Month period ending 12/2004	12-Month period ending 12/2003	% Change 04 vs 03
Chapter 7	1,137,958	1,176,905	-3.3%
Chapter 11	10,132	9,404	7.7%
Chapter 13	449,129	473,137	-5.1%
*TOTAL	1,597,219	1,659,446	-3.7%

*Excludes Chapter 9, Chapter 12, and Section 304 filings

20 Largest and Other Cases of Interest Filed in the Last 24 Months							
	Debtor Name	Case Number	Date Filed	Chapter	Asset Level in Millions	Liability Level in Millions	Last Milestone
Largest Cases	Imperial Credit Industries, Inc.	LA-03-28969-ES	07/17/03	11	\$169	\$291	Order approving employment of professional on 4/28/05.
	Vista Hospital Systems, Inc.	RS-03-18901-DN	06/10/03	11	\$142	\$132	Currently multiple hearings on objections to claims and Trustee preference actions.
	InterDent Service Corporation	SA-03-13594-JR	05/09/03	11	\$139	\$348	Pending Motions - Orders requested
	Brett Livingston Strong	SV-05-10137-KL	01/11/05	11	\$184	\$21	Emergency motion to vacate or in the alternative stay enforcement of orders granting relief from stay and 2004 examination filed 4/21/05
High Profile Cases*	Illuminations.com, Inc.	LA-04-10427-SB	01/12/04	11	\$52	\$55	Order approving employment of professional on 4/20/05.
	Spectrum Restaurant Group, Inc.	SA-03-15911-RA	08/06/03	11	\$39	\$107	Objection to claims hearings set for 5/10/05 through 7/19/05
	Strouds Acquisition Corporation	LA-03-23620-ER	05/20/03	11	\$27	\$36	Post confirmation status conference to be held on 9/28/05.
	Clothestime Stores, Inc.	SA-03-14555-RA	06/13/03	7	\$15	\$49	Fee Applications set for hearing 5/24/05 at 2:00p.m.
	Botanicals International Extracts	LA-03-18788-BB	04/01/03	11	\$10	\$15	Post confirmation status conference continued to 8/24/05.
	Tri-City Mental Health Center	LA-04-13167-BR	02/13/04	9	\$1-10	\$10-50	Disclosure statement hearing continued to 5/3/05.
	Aaron Tonken	LA-04-12883-EC	02/10/04	7	\$1-10	\$10-50	Order granting relief from stay entered on 3/10/05. No other activity.
	Queen's Seaport Development	LA-05-15175-VZ	03/16/05	11	\$47.0	\$29.0	Order granting use of cash collateral on 4/26/05.
	American Restaurant Group, Inc. dba Stuart Anderson's Restaurants	LA-04-30732-TD	09/28/04	11	\$33	\$223	Hearing re motion to permit late filing of claims on 5/19/05.
	Checkmate Staffing, Inc.	SA-03-19318-JR	12/29/03	11	\$22	\$31	Order entered 4/7/05 re: Disclosure Statement and Plan to be filed by 7/8/05.
	Santa Paula Memorial Hospital	ND-03-13454-RR	12/22/03	11	\$18	\$6	Plan confirmed at hearing on 4/6/05. Status conference set for 10/24/05.
	Sega Gameworks LLC	LA-04-15404-BB	03/09/04	11	\$26	\$36	Debtor's motion to assume or reject property lease hearing on 5/4/05.
	Jeffrey and Nan Bennett	RS-03-26484-MG	11/14/03	11	\$21	\$27	Plan confirmed 9/13/04. Multiple hearings re: objections to claims currently scheduled.
	Rancho Las Flores Development	RS-05-12224-MG	03/11/05	11	\$11	\$8	Order for joint administration entered 4/25/05. Lead Case 05-12224; Rosedale Properties LLC 05-12225; Desert Community Developers, Inc. 05-12228; Desert Community Developers II, Inc. 05-12234.
	Fujita Corporation USA	LA-04-27072-ES	08/05/04	11	\$5	\$111	Case was closed on 4/14/05.
	Franchise Pictures, LLC	LA-04-27996-MT	08/18/04	11	\$0-50	Over \$100	Motion for relief from stay hearing on 5/24/05.

*based on a combination of Asset and Liability Levels, Number of creditors, high activity, and/or name recognition

Court News

is published by the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Central District of California as an informational service for the practitioners and public of our Court.

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Suggestions and comments are always welcome.
Please call (951) 774-1066 or e-mail us at <Oscar_Sosa@cacb.uscourts.gov>.