



UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
Central District of California

MAY - JUNE

COURT NEWS

Chief Judge Barry Russell

2006

Jon D. Ceretto, Executive Officer/Clerk

VICTORIA S. KAUFMAN APPOINTED BANKRUPTCY JUDGE

The Court is pleased to welcome newly appointed Bankruptcy Judge Victoria S. Kaufman to the Central District of California. On May 2, 2006, Chief Judge Russell administered the *Oath of a Bankruptcy Judge* to Judge Kaufman, commencing her term that day. Her formal induction will occur on May 31, 2006. Judge Kaufman will maintain her chambers in the Los Angeles Division.

Prior to her appointment, Judge Kaufman practiced bankruptcy law at Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker LLP. During her practice, she represented both debtors and creditors ranging from individuals to a diverse variety of industries.



Previously, Judge Kaufman served as a law clerk to Bankruptcy Judge Marilyn Shea-Stonum at the Northern District of Ohio. Judge Kaufman graduated from Bryn Mawr College in 1982, *magna cum laude*, and from Harvard Law School in 1989. Judge Kaufman was admitted to the California Bar in 1989 and was admitted to practice before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and all federal court districts in California.

CASE REASSIGNMENTS TO JUDGE THEODOR C. ALBERT AND JUDGE VICTORIA S. KAUFMAN

Effective May 2, 2006, all pending bankruptcy cases and adversary proceedings assigned to Judge James N. Barr were reassigned to Judge Theodor C. Albert who relocated his chambers from the Los Angeles Division to the Santa Ana Division. The initials following these bankruptcy case and adversary proceeding numbers changed from "JB" to "TA."

Also effective May 2, 2006, nearly all Los Angeles Division pending bankruptcy cases and adversary proceedings assigned to Judge Theodor C. Albert were reassigned to newly appointed Judge Victoria S. Kaufman and remain in the Los Angeles Division. The initials following these bankruptcy case and adversary proceeding numbers changed from "TA" to "VK."

For more information, please see [Public Notice 06-007](#) RE: *Case Reassignments to Judges Theodor C. Albert and Victoria S. Kaufman* at www.cacb.uscourts.gov.

eFILE NOW ACCEPTS CHAPTER 7 PETITIONS

On April 19, 2006, *eFile* introduced the ability to electronically file chapter 7 petitions under the new bankruptcy law. *eFile* now enables registered users to electronically file Motions for Relief From Stay (real property, personal property, and unlawful detainers), adversary proceedings, and chapter 7 petitions. Shortly, *eFile* will be available to accept chapter 13

JUDGE JAMES N. BARR RETIRES



After serving as a bankruptcy judge for the Central District of California for 19 years, Judge James N. Barr retired on May 1, 2006. Judge Barr was appointed to the bench in 1987 and maintained his chambers in the Santa Ana Division.

petitions under the new bankruptcy law. Please see [Public Notice 05-001](#) and Second Amended General Order 02-01 for information about mandatory electronic filing requirements for documents capable of being filed electronically.

COURT CLOSED: MEMORIAL DAY - MONDAY, MAY 29, 2006

INDUCTION OF JUDGE RICHARD M. NEITER

On March 23, 2006, Richard M. Neiter was formally inducted as a bankruptcy judge for the Central District of California during an official ceremony at the Edward Roybal Federal Building. Chief District Judge Alicemarie H. Stotler welcomed guests and members of the court family that included the Ninth Circuit, Pretrial, Probation, and judges from the bankruptcy and district courts, as well as William J. Lasarow, former Chief Bankruptcy Judge. Chief Bankruptcy Judge Barry Russell administered the *Oath of a Bankruptcy Judge* to Judge Neiter. Judge Neiter's wife, Lois, enrobed him and provided thoughtful and humorous insights into the career and personality of her husband.



Remarks on the many strengths and attributes Judge Neiter brings to the bankruptcy bench were provided by: Mr. Herman S. Palarz, Judge Neiter's friend since childhood; Theodore B. Stolman, a partner at Stutman, Treister, and Glatt where Judge Neiter had practice law for 40 years; and Frederick S. Wyle, Judge Neiter's colleague of over 30 years. Judge Neiter thanked his family, colleagues, and the many others in attendance and spoke of his exuberance at commencing his service as a bankruptcy judge.

JAMES C. DUFF ANNOUNCED AS NEXT DIRECTOR OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

On April 20, 2006, Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr. announced the appointment of attorney James C. Duff as the director for the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. Mr. Duff succeeds Leonidas Ralph Mecham, who is retiring after 20 years as director. The director of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts serves as chief administrative officer of the federal courts under the direction and supervision of the Judicial Conference of the United States, the principal policy-making body for the federal court system. The director also serves as the judiciary's liaison with Congress. Mr. Duff had served as administrative assistant to Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist and as an office and courtroom assistant to his predecessor, Warren E. Burger. Presently he is the managing partner in the Washington D.C. office of Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz.



COURT BEGINS PHASING IN ECF

The Court has implemented the Electronic Case Filing system portion of CM/ECF to limited groups of filers. In January, the chapter 7 trustees began filing *341(a) Meeting Worksheets*, and *No Asset Reports*. More recently, the Office of the U.S. Trustee has been enabled to electronically file presumption of abuse events through ECF. In mid-April, Becket & Lee LLP, counsel for several major credit card companies, began to electronically file their high volume of *Requests for Special Notice* and *Proofs of Claim* through ECF. The Court is currently developing ECF training programs for practitioners to provide additional electronic filing capabilities through ECF.



FILING FEE CHANGES

The following Bankruptcy Court fee changes became effective on Sunday, April 9, 2006, as a result of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (Pub.L. 109-171).

Chapter 7 Related Fee Changes

FILING TYPE	OLD FEE	NEW FEE
Chapter 7 Petition Filing Fee	\$274	\$299
Case Conversion From Chapter 7 to Chapter 11	\$780	\$755

Chapter 13 Related Fee Changes

FILING TYPE	OLD FEE	NEW FEE
Chapter 13 Petition Filing Fee	\$189	\$274
Case Conversion From Chapter 13 to Chapter 11	\$850	\$765

MAXIMUM FEES ALLOWED UNDER RARA INCREASED

Pursuant to General Order 06-01, the maximum fee allowable under the Rights and Responsibilities Agreement Between Chapter 13 Debtors and Their Attorneys (RARA) and Guidelines has been increased to \$3,500 in a case in which a debtor is self-employed; or \$3,000 for all other cases.

COURT SEEKS INPUT ON DRAFT OF CHAPTER 13 PLAN FORM

The Court has drafted a new Chapter 13 Plan form in light of the new bankruptcy law and now seeks input from the public. Please see Public Notice 06-006 to link to the draft form and e-mail address for submitting comments. The comment period closes on May 5, 2006.

Court Statistics through 4/21/06

	2006	2005	% CHANGE
	ANNUAL	TOTAL	% Change
Case Commencement:	ESTIMATE		06 vs 05
Chapter 7	13,784	79,948	-83%
Chapter 11	268	268	0%
Chapter 13	2,211	4,028	-45%
*TOTAL	16,263	84,244	-81%
National Filing Trends	12-Month period	12-Month period	% Change
	ending 12/31/05	ending 12/31/04	05 vs 04
Chapter 7	1,659,017	1,137,958	45.8%
Chapter 11	6,800	10,132	-32.9%
Chapter 13	412,130	449,129	-8.2%
*TOTAL	2,077,947	1,597,219	30.1%

*Excludes Chapter 9, Chapter 12, Chapter 15 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
American Restaurant Group, Inc. dba Stuart Anderson's Restaurants	LA-04-30732-TD	09/28/04	11	\$33	\$223	Multiple Stipulations to settle claims filed from February through April 2006.
Queen's Seaport Development, Inc.	LA-05-15175-VZ	03/16/05	11	\$47	\$29	Appointment of Trustee Howard Ehrenberg on 4/12/06 by U.S. Trustee.
Tradex LTD	LA-05-20537-ES	05/10/05	Sect 304	Over \$100	Over \$100	Status Report filed on 4/6/06.
WattsHealth Foundation, Inc., dba UHP Healthcare	LA-05-22627-TD	05/31/05	11	\$55	\$45	Hearing to be held 5/2/06 on Motion to Establish Sales Procedures.
Sierra Nevada Public Financing - City of San Joaquin	LA-05-27696-BR	08/03/05	9	\$1-10	\$10-50	Order dismissing case was entered on 3/30/06.
APX Holdings, LLC	LA-06-10875-EC	03/16/06	11	Over \$100	Over \$100	Order authorizing rejection of real property leases; multiple unexpired leases rejected and property returned to lessor.
Marion Knight, aka Suge Knight	LA-06-11187-EC	04/04/06	11	\$4	\$137	Status conference hearing set for 6/28/06.
Death Row Records, Inc	LA-06-11205-EC	04/04/06	11	undetermined	\$111	Status conference hearing set for 6/28/06.
Rancho Las Flores Development	RS-05-12224-MG	03/11/05	11	\$11	\$8	Hearing on Disclosure Statement set for 6/27/06 at 10:30 a.m. Hearing on objections to claims set for 5/4/06.
GSM Wireless	SA-05-13514-JR	05/19/05	11	\$10-50	\$10-50	Status Report for Period-Ending March 31, 2006 filed on 4/4/06.
Trigem America Corp.	SA-05-13972-RA	06/03/05	11	Over \$100	Over \$100	Fourth Stipulation Continuing The Disclosure Statement Hearing from April 24, 2006 to May 24, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. entered on 4/21/2006.
Trigem Texas Inc.	SA-05-14047-JB	06/08/05	11	Over \$100	Over \$100	Important notice on filing Fee Applications for Professionals was entered on 3/17/06.
Window Rock Entertainment, dba Cortislim	SA-05-50048-JR	11/23/05	11	\$18	\$162	Stipulation to continue hearing on the approval of the Debtor's Disclosure Statement. HEARING CONTINUED TO 5-3-06 AT 9:30 AM
Brett Livingston Strong	SV-05-10137-KT	01/11/05	7	\$184	\$21	341(a) meeting continued to 4/28/06 @ 9:00 a.m.
Franchise Pictures, LLC	SV-05-13855-MT	08/18/04	11	\$0-50	Over \$100	Stipulation and ORDER to extend exclusivity period on which debtor may obtain acceptance of plan extended to June 26, 2006.
Jill Kelly Productions, Inc.	SV-05-15389-KT	08/08/05	11	\$1-10	\$1-10	Hearing for Fee Applications scheduled for 5/30/06 a@2:00 p.m.
Persistence Capital, LLC	SV-05-16450-KT	09/13/05	11	\$85	\$29	Appointment of Trustee David L Hahn on 3/22/06 by U.S. Trustee.
10000 Millenium Plaza LLC	SV-05-50021-GM	10/26/05	11	\$50-100	\$30	Exclusivity period to file plan extended to June 1, 2006, entered on 4/19/06
Robert Blake, aka Michael J Gubitosi	SV-06-10125-GM	02/03/06	11	\$0.5	\$50-100	Claims bar date set to 5/15/06.
PureBeauty, Inc.	SV-06-10545-KT	04/18/06	11	\$10-50	\$50	No 341(a) scheduled; Appointment of officia committee of unsecured creditors entered 4/26/06.

*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.
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