



Visions of Excellence

History can dog us and inspire us.

That was clear in December, when a series of events conspired to remind us how far we've come—and the distance we still have to travel.

A reception at the Arizona Supreme Court celebrated the 50th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education*, the watershed case that held, "In the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place."

The event was also a celebration of the foresight of Arizona jurists, two of whom ruled the same way even before *Brown* was handed down. Fred Struckmeyer and Charles Bernstein were Arizona judges whose wisdom preceded that of the U.S. Supreme Court. As Chief Justice Charles Jones pointed out, Arizona was "ahead of the match."

A number of people spoke eloquently on the legacy of those cases, none more so than **Hon. Penny Willrich** and **Hon. Elizabeth Finn**, who have written on the subject for ARIZONA ATTORNEY. **Calvin Goode** is President of the Carver Museum & Cultural Center—formerly called the Phoenix Union Colored High School. He spoke of that legacy in the 21st century: "Words on paper are good. But we still have not achieved the vision that [the judges] had for African Americans and other people of color."

See how that vision unfolds at the Carver Museum in February, Black History Month. The Museum is at 415 E. Grant Street in Phoenix, or on the Web at www.gwcm.org.

History also comes out of the tap in Arizona, which has a century-old legacy of **water rights** case law and statutes.

That legacy was examined at a seminar sponsored by **Fennemore Craig**, held at the Phoenix Art Museum. As the speakers pointed out, water law is one of the key issues that will determine our future.

And, boy, how visions can change. The event demonstrated that the words "growing" and "smarter" can be used in the same sentence without having the business community cringe.

As she spoke, **Gov. Janet Napolitano** mused that the painting behind her—*Pisa II*, by Al Held—might be an apt representation of water law and history in Arizona.

With events like this—and a decade-long drought—the vision of water rights management may be coming into focus, as well.



Water law: A plan or a jumble?




Tim Eigo

The **Superior Court in Maricopa County** is making its own history with the appointment of a new Presiding Judge.

The appointment of **Barbara R. Mundell** was announced on December 8, and she will assume that role on July 1, 2005, when Colin Campbell's term ends.

Mundell has a long c.v. of accomplishments in various court divisions. And she is also the court's first woman presiding judge, as well as its first Hispanic presiding judge. At her investiture, as she spoke alternately in Spanish and in English, the vision of *Brown v. Board* came ever more slightly into focus.

In this issue, we profile **Hon. Rosa Mroz**, who also is advancing a vision of excellence and diversity on the Arizona bench. 

Editor

TIM EIGO

Tim.Eigo@staff.azbar.org

Art Director

KAREN HOLUB

Production Coordinator

LESLIE ROSS

Contributing Writer

MIRA RADOVICH

Communications Assistant

KATE CORTEZ

Advertising Sales Manager

DREW WILLIAMSON

(602) 340-7230

Drew.Williamson@staff.azbar.org

Editorial Board

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RANDALL WARNER

M. APRIL WYNNE

Addresses

111 W. Monroe, Suite 1800

Phoenix, AZ 85003-1742

(602) 252-4804

320 S. Convent

Tucson, AZ 85701-2215

(520) 623-9944

1-866-48-AZBAR

(Toll-free outside Maricopa County)

www.myazbar.org

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