



Huge wall calendars

TRACKING DUE DATES ON MONTHLY COLUMNS AND VACATIONS. ALSO, PEOPLE WE NEED TO THANK AND THOSE WE CHOOSE TO HONOR

I have two huge four-month wall calendars on my wall right beside my desk, so I have eight months' worth of calendar up there. I started putting up big wall calendars in my office almost 30 years ago, and I always encourage my associates to do the same. The calendars are made of those dry erase boards, so I can write something down and then just wipe it off with a Kleenex or paper towel as matters get cleared or settled, or something changes. While I also live and die by my Outlook calendar on my computer, (indeed the great joy of my day is to clear my Outlook calendar for that day), those big wall calendars also give me a quick way to glance over and see how many trials I have double and triple stacked in any given month.

I had January – April 2022 up there on my wall . . . until today. Today was the day I erased the past four months and added September through December 2022. Which, of course, got me thinking, which, of course, gave me an idea for this monthly column. Ask Doug Silverstein (the current CAALA president), or indeed any past president of the CAALA or the OCTLA . . . churning out a column each month is no easy task. It is even harder not to bore the hell out of your readers.

In my effort not to be too boring last month, I admittedly went a little over the top in my column, which was originally about butt-wipes. This understandably resulted in some heavy editing from the powers that be at Advocate. I can't say that I blame them. If you email me privately, I'll send you my original submission for a contrast and compare. Needless to say, Janet Thornton, our executive director, was happy with the heavy editing. Something about "appearing presidential." Those that know me well know that "appearing presidential" is a tough task for me. I usually appear disheveled.

Anyway, back to those big wall calendars. So, as I went to erase January

through April, I realized that we are now one-third of the way through 2022. One-third of the way through my presidency in the OCTLA. They say time flies. No kidding. I joke to Lindsey Aitken Campbell, the OCTLA president-elect, that it's almost time for her to take over the gavel.

Erasing the prior four months and putting up the next eight months in plain view also gives me a good look at what kind of free time I may have coming up later in the year. I have been doing this for over 25 years, and those that know me know I like to travel. A lot.

When I can clearly see the next eight months stretched out before me in plain view, inevitably I always have at least a two-week block where there are no trials or significant court events. I get very happy when I see that free block of time. I then take a red or orange marker, and I mark right through those two weeks. I then write VACATION in bold letters, and this time period is known as the forbidden zone. Then I sit down at my computer, decide where I am going to go, and book it. Travel tip – booking that far in advance gets you great deals on airfare and accommodations, and then you have months to dream about your upcoming adventures.

I have encouraged so many of my colleagues and even opposing counsel, to get into this practice. For while this is certainly an honorable profession, are you living to work, or working to live? We all work so hard and so many hours, we really need at least two weeks to unplug, simmer down, relax, and decompress. It's good for you, your loved ones, your colleagues, and employees.

A huge debt and thanks to Nick Rowley

Today, staring at my calendars, I got a big smile. I can easily see that I have a big orange line drawn through the first two weeks of September. I will be in Mallorca. A few years ago, I was lucky

enough at the annual OCTLA Top Gun Event to bid on, and win, Nick Rowley's compound in Mallorca for two weeks. Nick was very generous and kind to donate his place as a Top Gun Charity auction item. Thank you, Nick! (As everyone knows by now, Nick also was key in getting the new MICRA legislation passed this year. We all owe a huge debt and thanks to Nick Rowley!)

Each year for the past eight or nine years I have similarly donated a five-to-seven-night stay at my Joshua Tree and Mexico properties as a Top Gun auction item. Every single penny from these auction items goes directly to the charity. So, not only do you get a nice vacation, but you also get to feel pretty good about it from a charitable standpoint. Win-win! If you happen to be in Mallorca in September, stop on by. I'll make you a glass of sangria.

Top Gun Awards Gala Nov. 12

Speaking of vacations and charities and events (how do you like that segue) the OCTLA Top Gun Awards Gala will be held on November 12, 2022, at the Westin South Coast Plaza. We are already preparing a "save the date" card to be delivered to the bench and bar, and I can guarantee you that every year it sells out quickly. It is never too early to start thinking about items that you can donate to our silent auction. Better yet, start thinking about how you can go over the top and donate one of those very special items that lands in the live auction. Every year, Keith More, one of OCTLA's outstanding past presidents, acts as the auctioneer for the live auction. This year Keith promises that his tuxedo will exceed all expectations. That alone will be worth the price of admission. All proceeds will benefit this year's selected charity, Operation Helping Hands. So, save the date – November 12, 2022 and bring your credit card – bid until it hurts! 🍷