

**HON. RICHARD A. CURTIS, COMM.***Los Angeles Superior Court**(Ret.)***Education**

A.B. – Stanford University, 1966

J.D. – UCLA School of Law, 1969

**1982-2008 Commissioner, Los Angeles County Superior Court*****Appointed November 1982; Family Law departments 1983-2003 and 2006-2008***

After serving part of a year in 1983 on the Juvenile Delinquency bench in Sylmar, Commissioner Curtis was chosen as one of two commissioners to open the Family Law Departments in the then-brand new North Central District (San Fernando 1983-84). He served a year in the Southeast District (Norwalk 1985) and two lengthy assignments in the East District (Pomona 1986-1994) and North Central District (Burbank 1994-2000). In 2001 he was assigned to the Central District (Mosk courthouse). He served on the court's Automation Committee (Subcommittee on Public Access) and the Family Law Committee (Subcommittees on Legislation, Family Court Services, and Family Law Webpage [co-chair]). The co-drafter of an unadopted 1994 bill to govern "move away" litigation, the objectives of which were since vindicated in *In re Marriage of Brown and Yana* (2006) 37 Cal.4th 947, 960-961, he has testified in the State Capitol on a number of measures relating to Family Law and procedure.

He has authored tracts on "Credits Relating to Use of Family Residence" (2003) and "California's Child Support Machine: Reflections on California's Unfortunate Choice of a Complex, Net-Income Based Child Support Guideline and Its Unjustifiable Cost to Ordinary Family Law Litigants" (2008) that have appeared in Los Angeles County Bar Association publications. He has served on many bar/bench Family Law panels over the years. Most recently he was on the drafting subcommittee of the joint bar/bench committee that produced the Los Angeles County model appointment order for Parenting Plan Coordinators (special masters) to be used for intensely conflicted child custody cases.

His proudest achievement came after he produced his "Domestic Relations Reading List" booklet in 1991-1993. The booklet was a compilation of his thumbnail reviews of various books of interest to dissolving and reconstituting families which were sprinkled with his own personal observations from his experiences on the bench. His comments about the books were designed to get people to think about their lives and about more peaceful and satisfying choices they could make for their and their children's futures than to engage in litigation.

Partially as a result of creating the Reading List, in 1994 he was presented with the Warren Burger "Peacemaker" Award by the National Council on Children's Rights. The award is given each year to lawyers and judges who uphold Justice Burger's admonition that the legal profession owes the public a duty to heal the wounds of litigation and not to deepen them.

Commissioner Curtis brings his passion for achieving peaceful resolutions to his new career as a private Family Law neutral.

## **1981-1982 Sole Practitioner**

General civil and criminal trials and appeals.

## **1970-1981 Deputy Public Defender**

1970-1976 Los Angeles County

1977-1981 State of California

- Specialized in Criminal Appeals during 11 years of public practice
- Principal experience was in Court of Appeal and Supreme Court
- Published cases of note: *People v. Thompson* (1980) 27 Cal.3d 303 [death sentence reversed]; *People v. Atchison* (1978) 22 Cal.3d 181 [instructional error amicus brief]; *People v. Borunda* (1974) 11 Cal.3d 523 [material witness disclosure]; *People v. Garcia* (1978) 86 Cal. App.3d 314 [invalid punishment; firearm instructional error]; *People v. Stevenson* (1978) 79 Cal.App.3d 976 [diminished capacity instructional error]; *People v. Bruce* (1975) 49 Cal.App.3d 580 [invalid knock-notice entry]; *People v. Bremmer* (1972) 30 Cal.App.3d 1058 [insufficient grounds to search probationer]; *People v. Abdon* (1973) 30 Cal. App.3d 972 [invalid forced entry to serve warrant]; *Finley v. Superior Court* (1972) 29 Cal.App.3d 342 [expert report for consultation purposes is subject to attorney-client privilege]; *People v. Mercurio* (1970) 10 Cal.App.3d 426 [booking search of arrestee on traffic infraction improper when s/he is not taken first before a magistrate].