

# Inquiring Minds: Finding Good People, Finding Hope

#46 December, 2017 “Trust is equal parts character and competence....” –[Stephen Covey](#)

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## ARAM SEVERIAN: 1932-2017 HE KNEW AND LOVED THE LAW

He was a friend to many of us who played tennis at the local Red Morton tennis courts in Redwood City. We all knew he was a retired judge, a nice guy who espoused liberal causes, and was a fair tennis player even in his seventies. What we didn't know, but found out at his funeral service is that he was a highly regarded lawyer and Superior Court judge who was even recruited to help Armenia form its constitution once the Soviet Union collapsed in 1989.



## IN SEARCH OF EXCELLENCE IN CHARACTER AND COMPETENCE

In the midst of so much corruption, both political and personal, it helps us to seek out and find heroes of humanity to inspire us and keep of from sinking into a cesspool of sin and/or incompetence. Aram was one such person, so was Ed Lee, and maybe even John Kennedy, the Republican Senator (no relation to JFK) who publicly exposed the embarrassing incompetence of Trump's lame nominee for a life-long Federal judgeship. Bravo to them all. We so need good people to recapture the headlines from the few ignorant, arrogant, and self-serving Ugly Americans.



## VIGILANTE JUSTICE, DUE PROCESS OR BOTH?

My brother-in-law and I had an email discussion about Due Process in Protecting the Rights of the Accused. No question the [#metoo](#) and [#BlackLivesMatter](#) movements have bypassed the rigged or clumsy, expensive, and ill-equipped-proof-driven court system and Congressional Ethics Committee; and there seems to be some satisfaction in quick justice. But, he and others are asking: “Wherein lies the protection for the

accused?” The public then becomes the judge, jury and executioner. Are we to be reduced to a nation of [Kangaroo Courts](#)?

Public opinion via social media seems to suss out the credibility of the accuser(s) by noticing the intent, character, conviction, specificity of their stories, and number of forthcoming accusers. These unwritten criteria for a credible accusation of non-witnessed crimes have allowed the alleged victims to come out of their closets of shame, fear, embarrassment, and danger. In police brutality cases credibility is enhanced by more objective evidence (videos or witnesses), but he-said-she-said scenarios are much more difficult to prove in a court of law. So maybe where there's a lot of circumstantial smoke, there probably was a fire. And if there wasn't, the accused still has the ability to countersue in court, or just deny the claim in the first place—a tactic seems to have worked for the President. One way or the other, the truth will emerge, eventually. The Judgement Day is upon us. I pretty much know how Aram would have weighed in on this just by who he was on the tennis courts, a spirit-of-the-law guy.



[Tanya Burke founder of the movement](#)

The 128 page Double Issue of last week's *Time* featured [#metoo](#) women as Persons of the Year adding more credibility to what we have seen or heard on the news. *Time* reports that literally millions of [#metoo](#) women *worldwide* have since outed male harassers.

## HOW TO DO A FUNERAL SERVICE

I am not a big fan of funerals, especially my own, but Aram's memorial was different. Hasma, Aram's wife, who is an wonderful person in her own right, had the foresight to keep the ceremony brief—40 minutes in all. She choose two excellent speakers to talk about the two focal points in Aram's life: his career as an attorney and judge, and his love of tennis and tennis friends. Afterwards we met at Aram's favorite restaurant in Menlo Park, Galata's on Santa Cruz, and share in the Mediterranean food he loved. There we reconnected and honored Aram and friendships formed over the years. Thank you, Aram and Hasma. *Pax* -Joe