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# WINE INDUSTRY BUSINESS JOURNAL: Who's Who in Wine Law

By D. Ashley Furness, Business Journal Staff Reporter

The more than two dozen attorneys chosen for the Business Journal's first Who's Who in Wine Law represent a range of specialization and a deep appreciation of wine making, often extending to their own vineyards and vintages. Researchers surveyed attorneys from the largest 20 firms on the Business Journal's 2008 "Legal Service Providers to the Wine Industry List," and accepted recommendations from local wineries and vineyards.

Others were selected from Wine Institute suggestions, and several were also found through the Napa, Marin and Sonoma County bar associations.

(Listed alphabetically by name)

## Richard Abbey

**Abbey, Weitzenberg, Warren & Emery**, 100 Stony Point Road, Santa Rosa 95401, 707-542-5050, [www.abbeylaw.com](http://www.abbeylaw.com)

Abbey, Weitzenberg, Warren & Emery Partner Richard Abbey is considered one of the North Bay's premier litigators, with close to 40 years in the business and a wide breadth of experience.

He's spent much of his career representing financial institutions in commercial, corporate, employment and banking law, but in recent years he has also prioritized representation of those in the wine industry. He has served several years as a judge pro tem for the Sonoma County Superior Court, and he is a member of the Arbitration Panel for Sonoma County Consolidated Courts and fee arbitrator and past president of the Sonoma County Bar Association.

In his spare time, Mr. Abbey also teaches law at Empire College, and he is on the board of directors for the Sonoma County Family YMCA. He received his bachelor's from U.C. Berkeley and his law degree from UCLA.

## Robert Anderson

**Lanahan & Reilley**, 600 Bicentennial Way, Ste. 300, Santa Rosa 95403, 707-524-4282, [www.lanahan.com](http://www.lanahan.com)

Robert Anderson has served as partner for Lanahan & Reilley for more than 20 years and focuses primarily on licensing and contracts, including grape purchases, custom crush, vineyard management, wine sales and marketing and the purchase and sale of wineries.

In addition to his practice, Mr. Anderson spends a lot of his free time aiding operations at his other venture, Cole Bailey Vineyards in Mendocino County, named for his son who was born during the week the first vineyard was planted. He produces several varieties of wine including cabernet sauvignon, syrah, sauvignon blanc and a bordeaux blend he calls "cabernet sesquipedalian."

He received his degrees from Dartmouth College and UCLA School of Law and said his "claim to fame" was being the real-life model for the character Otter in the film "Animal House." Mr. Anderson also served as an officer in the United States Marine Corps.

Lanahan was listed as the 17th-largest legal services provider to the wine industry with one wine specialist and several that serve the industry on an auxiliary basis.

## Jay Behmke

**Carle, Mackie, Power & Ross**, 100 B St., Ste. 400, Santa Rosa 95401, 707-526-4200, [www.cmprlaw.com](http://www.cmprlaw.com)

When asked what attracted Carle, Mackie, Power & Ross Partner Jay Behmke to wine law, he said very simply, "I was attracted to wine law, because I was attracted to wine." And noting his history, it could be argued that the 700-bottle wine collector knows just as much about the fruit as he does about the law.

The Illinois-native said he was first introduced to wine while teaching law at a university in south France and it was his growing interest that made him choose to move to the American wine country. During the past 10 years, he has attended numerous conferences with the International Office of Vine and Wine in locations around the world including France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Germany, Russia, South Africa, Argentina, Uruguay and Chile. During the late '80s and early '90s he was also the chief financial officer for Belvedere Winery.

Professionally, Mr. Behmke focuses on corporate law, wine real estate, alcoholic beverage law, trademarks and mergers and acquisitions. He graduated with a bachelor's from Princeton University and got his law degree from Yale, where he also has a master's in philosophy.

In his spare time he teaches classes on business formation, alcoholic beverage regulation and trademarks at Sonoma State University.

## Stephen Buehl

**GagenMcCoy**, 1030 Main St., Ste. 212, St. Helena 94574, 707-963-0909, [www.gagenmccoy.com](http://www.gagenmccoy.com)

GagenMcCoy shareholder Stephen Buehl began his wine law experience as general counsel to Rutherford Hill Winery and Jaeger Vineyards in 1990 after being introduced to the profession by new friends in the business.

"Through those friendships, I came to have a great appreciation for not only the natural beauty of the area but also the industry, ingenuity and commitment that it takes to make the exceptional wines that the Wine Country produces," he said.

"I felt that my skills as a business lawyer could be of help in that process, and when the opportunity presented itself ... I decided, wisely so, not to let it pass by."

After four years as general counsel to Rutherford and Jaeger, Mr. Buehl joined Gagen and now concentrates on real estate, land-use matters, business transactions and drafting and negotiating vineyard leases and grape contracts.

He received his bachelor's from Yale University and his law degree from Stanford Law School. He is a moonlighting keyboardist and has chaired the entertainment committee for the Napa Valley Wine Auction on three separate occasions. In the '70s and '80s, he also served as chief deputy secretary to the California Agriculture and Services Agency and as executive assistant and special counsel to the chief justice of California.

He is an associate member of the Napa Valley Grapegrowers Association and one of 18 attorneys listed as a wine specialist by the Napa County Bar Association. Gagen is the ninth-largest legal services provider to the wine industry and has nine other attorneys that work in "wine and vine" law.

## Michael Carlson

**Geary, Shea, O'Donnell, Grattan & Mitchell**, 37 Old Courthouse Square, Santa Rosa 95404, 707-545-1660, [www.gsoglaw.com](http://www.gsoglaw.com)

Though born in the South Bay, Geary, Shea, O'Donnell, Grattan & Mitchell shareholder Michael Carlson has deep roots in the Wine Country with three generations of family in Sonoma County. He focuses on transactional and litigation practice for wineries, growers and vineyard managers as well as general business law, real estate and employment.

Mr. Carlson started as a clerk for Geary while he completed law school at the University of San Francisco before becoming an associate in 1996. He left briefly to work as an in-house attorney for a software company for two years and returned to the firm as a shareholder in 2003.

The Geary firm also has long lineage in wine, with roots dating back to 1876 when Thomas Geary moved his practice to Santa Rosa.

## Clay Clement

**Clement, Fitzpatrick & Kenworthy**, 3333 Mendocino Ave., Santa Rosa 95403, 707-523-1181, [www.cfk.com](http://www.cfk.com)

Clement, Fitzpatrick & Kenworthy Managing Partner Clay Clement said 40 years of real estate litigation sparked his interest in the wine practice, which for his firm ranges from the smallest boutique wineries to the largest producers. He has handled escrow and title insurance disputes for wine industry businesses as well as contract cases and other business litigation.

He received his bachelor's from the University of the Pacific and his Juris Doctorate from U.C. Berkeley. In 2004, he was selected as one of the top 100 lawyers in Northern California through a survey conducted by Law & Politics Magazine, and he is a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers. He was also invited to join the American Board of Trial Advocates. Mr. Clement moved to the North Bay in 1972 from Oakland, and in his spare time he enjoys flying his plane, skiing and fishing. Also when he is not working at the firm, he has taught at Sonoma State University, Santa Rosa Junior College and elsewhere.

The Clement firm was founded in 1972 and is the 18th-largest legal service provider to the wine industry with about six attorneys that specialize in the area.

## Thomas Davenport

**Beyers Costin**, 200 Fourth St., Santa Rosa 95401, 707-547-2000, [www.beyerscostin.com](http://www.beyerscostin.com)

Bay Area native and Beyers Costin shareholder Thomas Davenport represents a long list of established wine industry businesses including Domaine Carneros Winery, Rack & Riddle, Roche Winery, Sequoia Grove, St. Francis Winery and others.

He provides services in a variety of transactions for growers in Napa, Sonoma and Mendocino counties including in real estate and winery sales, acquisitions, leasing, development and construction.

He said one of the industry's most pressing issues today results from the recent lower-than-normal precipitation, which has made water-rights issues more contentious. Also, in shaky economic times, he more often consults in corporate restructurings and loan workouts.

Mr. Davenport received his undergraduate degree from Santa Clara University and his law degree from University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law.

Beyers Costin is listed as the sixth-largest legal service provider to the wine industry with about six wine attorneys.

## Jeanne DeVincenzi, Kevin Block

**Block & DeVincenzi**, 1407 Main St., Ste. 202, St. Helena 94574, 707-967-9130, [www.winelawyers.com](http://www.winelawyers.com)

The Web site of attorneys Jeanne DeVincenzi and Kevin Block, [winelawyers.com](http://winelawyers.com), exemplifies the pair's practice, as the two primarily represent wine and tourism-related businesses.

Though the small firm of two might not have topped the legal services list in size, it represents some of the valley's most recognizable names including Constellation Wines, Twomey Cellars, Frog's Leap Winery and Voss Vineyards, to name a few.

Ms. DeVincenzi specializes in real estate and business practice and has counseled in many wine and vineyard transactions, including the acquisition of Viansa Winery & Italian Marketplace, Chimney Rock Winery and Ravens-wood Winery. She also helped negotiate the sale of Edgewood Estate Winery, Pacific Echo Winery, Stonegate Winery and Matanzas Winery.

She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois and her law degree from Loyola University, and she is one of 18 lawyers listed as a wine specialist by the Napa County Bar Association.

Mr. Block is a litigator and transactional attorney, whose practice focuses primarily on corporate, commercial and real estate law. Once a partner with 200-lawyer Holme, Roberts & Owen and others in Ukraine and Russia, the Napa-native returned to the valley in 1998 to practice wine law. He's also served publicly for the city of Napa on the Planning Commission, City Council and as deputy mayor. Mr. Block received his Juris Doctorate from New York University and an international affairs degree from Columbia University. He also holds a Russian language and literature degree from Oberlin College.

## Warren Dranit

**Spaulding, McCullough & Tansil**, 90 S. E St., Ste. 200, Santa Rosa 95404, 707-524-1900, [www.smlaw.com](http://www.smlaw.com)

Spaulding, McCullough & Tansil partner and trademark expert Warren Dranit was recently selected to act as secretary to the intellectual property section of the California Bar Association, a title earned out of more than 7,000 state members.

In the past, he also founded the intellectual property and technology law section of the Sonoma County Bar Association.

"Wine is a brand-intensive industry, and the need to create and protect the name of a wine, winery or vineyard can be critical to the success of a business," he said.

Mr. Dranit said the wine industry has become more creative and vigilant about how it sets up and protects its brands, which has led to an increase in trademark disputes. He earned his law degree from the University of San Francisco magna cum laude and a bachelor's and master's degree in mathematics and computer science from Emory University.

## Elisabeth Frater

**Gravett & Frater**, 1125 Jefferson St., Napa 94559, 4381 Broadway, American Canyon 94503, 707-258-1030, [www.gravettlaw.com](http://www.gravettlaw.com)

Los Angeles native and Gravett & Frater Partner Elisabeth Frater said as one of only 18 attorneys listed as a wine specialist by the Napa County Bar Association she likes to target those areas, varietals and vineyards most underrepresented.

Ms. Frater covers a variety of wine businesses both in litigation and as counsel for limited liability company formation, alcohol compliance, crush contracts, trade secret and trademark protection and other issues. Her clients include individuals, small and mid-sized wineries and vineyards, start-ups and virtual wineries.

She said part of her reasoning for moving to Napa was to focus on the wine industry, but she also services clients in Sonoma and others across the country.

Before starting her own practice, she served as a deputy district attorney for 12 years in Napa, Sacramento and San Francisco counties. In 2000, she authored a series of wine law columns printed for a publication in Washington, D.C., and later was asked to write a regional wine travel guide. In addition to her role at the firm, Ms. Frater serves as general counsel to a wine compliance management firm.

She received her law degree from Hastings College of Law, and she has participated in several community organizations on the board and as a member, including the Napa Chamber of Commerce and the American Canyon Chamber of Commerce.

## Scott Gerien

**Dickenson, Peatman & Fogarty**, 809 Coombs St., Napa 94559, 707-252-7122, [www.dpf-law.com](http://www.dpf-law.com)

Dickenson, Peatman & Fogarty Director Scott Gerien is considered one of the most knowledgeable wine trademark-protection attorneys in the nation and the world, representing dozens of industry-related clients, serving on several prominent boards and speaking at wine law events across the globe.

As the son of a New York City police officer, Mr. Gerien initially aspired to be a district attorney but later decided to focus on intellectual property law and has practiced wine law specifically for more than 13 years. For wineries and vineyards, he counsels in unfair competition dealings related to brands, labels, packaging, advertising trade secrets, American Viticulture Areas and geographic indications.

He represents wine clients in California, Oregon, Washington, Canada, Europe, South America, Australia and New Zealand with big names including Sutter Home and Chateau Ste. Michelle. Mr. Gerien is also counsel to a number of small and mid-sized producers – including Seghesio, Camellia Cellars and Dalla Valle Vineyards – and associations and retail groups, including the Napa Valley Vintners, Zinfandel Advocates and Producers and Bounty Hunter Rare Wine & Provisions.

He said trademark and labeling issues have increased in regularity since the development of vineyards extends to new regions, especially internationally in developing countries. Even Mr. Gerien's first legal position related to wine, when he served as an associate with a firm representing Kendall-Jackson in a case against Gallo.

In 2006 and 2007, he was named one of the top 50 trademark lawyers in the U.S. by the industry publication The Trademark Insider, and he serves as the vice chairman of the International Trademark Association's geographic indications committee. He is also a board member of the International Wine Law Association.

He received his law degree from U.C. Berkeley and his bachelor's from Trinity College. He said his biggest professional triumph was protecting the Napa Valley AVA internationally by helping it become the first American designation registered in Europe. Dickenson is the fourth-largest legal services provider to the wine industry with about 10 attorneys focusing on the niche.

## Mark Gladden

**Passalacqua, Mazzoni, Gladden, Lopez & Maraviglia**, 1201 Vine St., Ste. 200, Healdsburg 95448, 707-433-3363, [www.pmg-legal.com](http://www.pmg-legal.com)

Healdsburg-based Passalacqua, Mazzoni, Gladden, Lopez & Maraviglia, led in part by Mark Gladden, have for more than 70 years centered its practice around serving Sonoma County grape growers and wineries – counseling on issues related to business, real estate, corporate counsel, contracts, marketing agreements, intellectual property rights, leases, succession planning, litigation easements, property management and other contracts.

The company also represents businesses related to wine, including farm management contractors, marketing companies and farm equipment and service providers. Mr. Gladden said increasing technology and demand in wine have amplified the number of potential conflicts between growers and wineries, and the Passalacqua firm has had to evolve with it.

Mr. Gladden has worked with the group for about 30 years after practicing in Santa Clara. He graduated from Santa Clara University School of Law and received his bachelor's from the University of San Francisco.

In the past he received a Healdsburg Business Person of the Year Award and Sonoma County Spirit Award. He is a past president and current director for the Healdsburg Area Chamber of Commerce and a past leader and current member for the Healdsburg Rotary.

## Steven Goldberg, Ronald Wargo

**Friedemann Goldberg**, 420 Aviation Blvd., Ste. 201, Santa Rosa 95403, 707-543-4900, [www.frigolaw.com](http://www.frigolaw.com)

Friedemann Goldberg partners Steven Goldberg (pictured) and Ronald Wargo are two of the region's most specialized wine business succession planners, helping many wine families transition the business to the next generation.

Mr. Goldberg said he has long been interested in the intricacies of law, but he also follows in the footsteps of his father, who practiced estate planning for five decades. He focuses primarily on estate and business succession planning techniques as well as tax strategies and complex trust administration matters.

Mr. Goldberg and Mr. Wargo are both certified estate planning, trust and probate law specialists with the California State Bar and two of five attorneys at the firm that practice in the wine industry. Mr. Wargo is also a professor of business organization at Empire College in Santa Rosa.

He received his bachelor's in history from U.C. Berkeley and his law degree from U.C. San Francisco.

Mr. Goldberg graduated from San Jose University with a bachelor's in journalism, and he earned his Juris Doctorate from U.C. Berkeley.

## Michael Imfeld

**Law Offices of Michael D. Imfeld**, 2033 Big Ranch Road, Napa 94558, 707-259-1650, [www.mdi-law.com](http://www.mdi-law.com)

Michael Imfeld of the Law Offices of Michael D. Imfeld is one of 18 lawyers listed as a wine specialist by the Napa County Bar Association, and he is actively involved in the industry in both his professional and personal life.

He moved to Napa in 2006 to start his own private practice, and he is currently pursuing a secondary education in viticulture and winemaking. Today, he helps many of his clients reduce losses while they endure the current economic slowdown, but for the same reason, he also works in an increasing number of dealings with commercial customers' ability to pay for wine they shipped.

Mr. Imfeld graduated cum laude from Ohio State and went on to earn his law degree from U.C. Hastings College of Law. In addition to wine law, he also practices real property law and mortgage law and is a licensed real estate broker.

## Katja Loeffelholz

**Gaw Van Male**, 1000 Main St., Napa 94559, 707-252-9000, [www.gawvanmale.com](http://www.gawvanmale.com)

Working with the second-largest wine industry firm in the North Bay, Gaw Van Male attorney Katja Loeffelholz provides counsel to a long list of wine clients including Darioush, Domaine Carneros, Artesa Vineyards & Winery, Blackbird Vineyards, Cartlidge & Browne Winery, Frog's Leap, Hill Family Estates, Jessup Cellars, Titus Wine and Pahlmeyer Wine.

Ms. Loeffelholz specializes in intellectual property law, business and trademark and copyright security. The Kansas native discovered her interest in the grape business as a child, helping her family grow and produce wine. She moved to Yountville eight years ago and joined Gaw Van Male in 2004.

In her spare time, she serves on the Yountville Chamber of Commerce advisory board. She received her bachelor's in political science from UCLA and her law degree from the University of South Carolina. She is also a member of the Family Winemakers of California, Napa County Women Lawyers Association, Women in Winesense and the Napa Valley Grapegrowers Association.

Gaw Van Male has about 18 attorneys dedicated to the wine industry, five of which are listed on the Napa County Bar Association Web site as wine specialists.

## John Mackie

**Carle, Mackie, Power & Ross**, 100 B St., Ste. 400, Santa Rosa 95401, 707-526-4200, [www.cmprlaw.com](http://www.cmprlaw.com)

Carle, Mackie, Power & Ross Partner John Mackie is an active participant in his firm's wine practice, but he is also known in the industry for his volunteer legal counsel to several related organizations.

Additionally, in his personal life Mr. Mackie serves in top positions for the Berkeley Food and Wine Society and Sonoma County Food and Wine Center, and he is a producer of several lines of wine.

Almost two decades ago, Mr. Mackie briefly considered leaving law completely for the wine industry while studying culinary arts in Tuscany, but eventually he comprised, convincing his firm at the time, Bronson, Bronson & McKinnon, to establish a wine and food practice.

Today, in addition to focusing on food and wine law, he emphasizes business organization, finance, mergers, acquisitions and environmental regulation for a variety of clients.

Mr. Mackie is actively involved in the community in a variety of settings including as a legal adviser to the Sonoma Valley Vintners and Growers Alliance, Bennett Valley Growers, WineVision, Sonoma County Culinary Guild and the Alexander Valley Winegrowers Association.

Mr. Mackie serves as a wine business program adviser for Sonoma State University, and he has spoken at numerous wine law and other trade association events.

Carle Mackie is the fifth-largest wine legal service provider with nine attorneys dedicated to the industry.

## Chuck Meibeyer

**Meibeyer Law Group**, 1236 Spring St., St. Helena 94574, 707-963-7703, [www.meibeyerlaw.com](http://www.meibeyerlaw.com)

Meibeyer Law Group founder Chuck Meibeyer has devoted the last 25 years to serving the wine industry as legal counsel, first as a partner with Dickenson, Peatman & Fogarty and then with his own firm.

The Michigan native has worked with many big names including Mondavi, Darioush Winery, Frank Family Vineyards, Hall Winery, renowned chef Michael Chiarello, Rombauer Vineyards, Staglin Family Vineyards, V. Sattui Winery and many others.

Mr. Meibeyer currently operates out of an office in St. Helena, but he plans to open a new location in Healdsburg this year.

Mr. Meibeyer earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan and his Juris Doctorate from U.C. Berkeley. In his spare time he has served in leadership positions with the St. Helena Rotary Club, St. Helena Chamber of Commerce, the Napa Valley Unified School District, Napa Valley Unified Education and the Napa County Mental Health Association.

## Kate Ohlandt

**Farella Braun & Martel**, 899 Adams St., Ste. G, St. Helena 94574, 707-967-4000, [www.fbm.com](http://www.fbm.com)

Farella Braun & Martel Partner Kate Ohlandt said the chance to work with generations of families is her favorite part of practicing in the wine country.

As leader of the firm's Wine Country office in St. Helena, Ms. Ohlandt helps some of the most well-known wine families complete important estate planning that prepares the business for movement to the next generation.

She received her bachelor's degree from Stanford University and her law degree from the University of Texas at Austin, where she graduated with honors. In her spare time, she enjoys skiing, hiking and fly fishing, and she serves on the board for the Napa Valley Community Foundation and as a trustee for the Queen of the Valley Medical Center in Napa.

Farella was founded in 1962 and is the largest legal service provider to the wine industry, according to the Business Journal's 2008 "Legal Service Providers to the Wine Industry List." The firm reported it has 30 attorneys that specialize in wine out of 133 total.

## Jeremy Olsan

**Perry, Johnson, Anderson, Miller & Moskowitz**, 438 First St., Santa Rosa 95401, 707-525-8800, [www.perrylaw.net](http://www.perrylaw.net)

Jeremy Olsan became a partner of Perry, Johnson, Anderson, Miller & Moskowitz in January after serving close to 15 years with Anderson, Zeigler, Disharoon, Gallagher and Gray.

He is a specialist in land acquisition and sale, vineyard leasing, grape purchase agreements, custom crush agreements, vineyard management agreements and distribution, and he works with clients in Sonoma, Napa, Mendocino and Lake counties.

He received his undergraduate degree from the U.C. Berkeley and his Juris Doctorate from the University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law.

Mr. Olsan is a longtime member of the board of the Volunteer Center of Sonoma County. He is also a past president of the board for the Santa Rosa Downtown Market. The Perry firm was founded in 1997 and was listed as the 12th-largest legal services provider to wine industry.

## Leslie Perry

**Perry, Johnson, Anderson, Miller & Moskowitz**, 438 First St., Santa Rosa 95401, 707-525-8800, [www.perrylaw.net](http://www.perrylaw.net)

Leslie Perry is a founding member of Perry, Johnson, Anderson, Miller & Moskowitz and has practiced law in Sonoma County since 1975. He handles winery and vineyard real property issues including easements, boundary lines and sales disputes, as well as land-use development and entitlement processing.

He said recent dominant issues in the industry include complying with local planning and environmental review, which can range from monitoring groundwater impacts to permitting for special events.

Mr. Perry received his undergraduate degree in economics and his law degree from U.C. Davis. He serves on the board of directors for the Sonoma County Fair and Sonoma County Harvest Fair. He also supports the Volunteer Center of Sonoma County and is a Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital board of trustees member.

In the past, he has also spent time with the Sonoma County Planning Commission, Sonoma County Civil Services Commission, Sonoma County Emergency Medical Care Committee, Sonoma County Energy Advisory Committee and the North Coast Air Pollution Control District.

## Katherine Philippakis

**Farella Braun & Martel**, 899 Adams St., Ste. G, St. Helena 94574, 707-967-4000, [www.fbm.com](http://www.fbm.com)

Farella Braun & Martel Partner Katherine Philippakis chairs the firm's wine industry practice and advises a broad range of clients including privately and publicly owned wineries, vineyards and other industry-related businesses. She is one of 18 attorneys listed by the Napa County Bar Association as a wine specialist, and she deals primarily with structuring, negotiation, real estate, corporate and land-use issues.

Ms. Philippakis also chairs the St. Helena Planning Commission, where she helped develop a small winery ordinance. She received her law degree from Arizona State University.

Farella was founded in 1962 and is the largest legal service provider to the wine industry with about 30 attorneys that specialize in wine out of 133 total.

## Robert Quail

**Clement, Fitzpatrick & Kenworthy**, 3333 Mendocino Ave., Santa Rosa 95403, 707-523-1181, [www.cfk.com](http://www.cfk.com)

Clement, Fitzpatrick & Kenworthy attorney and shareholder Robert Quail started his wine law career as an in-house attorney for a large Sonoma Valley winery, where he worked for nearly a decade. During his tenure, he helped guide the company through real estate transaction and acquisitions, which included negotiations worldwide.

Outside his career, Mr. Quail also maintains a personal interest in wine production, even winning three medals for amateur winemaking at the Sonoma County Harvest Fair.

"This industry has a very large group of genuinely nice, sincere and compassionate people who are also very smart and dedicated to their craft," he said.

"Working with those types of people is very rewarding in and of itself."

He joined the Clement firm in 2003 and now specializes in transactional, general business and beverage alcohol licensing for wineries for mostly local clients. He said the biggest issues for wineries and vineyards today is abiding by constantly changing environmental regulations and strict shipping requirements.

Mr. Quail received his bachelor's degrees in political science and economics from U.C. Santa Barbara and his Juris Doctorate from Santa Clara University. He is a board member of the Children & Family Circle and on the board of trustees for the Oak Grove School District.

## Robert Rutherford

**Anderson, Zeigler, Disharoon, Gallagher & Gray**, 50 Old Courthouse Square, Santa Rosa 95404, 707-545-4910, [www.azdgg.com](http://www.azdgg.com)

Anderson, Zeigler, Disharoon, Gallagher & Gray Managing Director and shareholder Robert Rutherford has worked for the Santa Rosa firm for more than 22 years, since he graduated from Hastings College.

The firm is the seventh-largest wine legal service provider in the North Bay with about five specialists, including Mr. Rutherford, who focuses on business formation, supply contracts, real estate, vineyard leases and management and mergers and acquisitions.

He services wine clients in Sonoma, Napa and Mendocino counties, and he is a member of the Thurston Society and the Order of the Coif. Mr. Rutherford was also an adjunct professor in business organization at Empire College from 1992 to 1997 and a former economic steering committee member for the Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce.

## Randolph Skidmore

**Coombs & Dunlap**, 1211 Division St., Napa 94559, 707-252-9100, [www.coombslaw.com](http://www.coombslaw.com)

Coombs & Dunlap Partner Randolph Skidmore said the wine industry practice more than any other requires constant education. As industry technology and tasting preferences evolve, so do the contracts associated with them.

During his 20 years as partner of the North Bay's eighth-largest wine industry legal servicer, Mr. Skidmore has advised many prestigious winemakers including Mumm Napa Valley, Sterling Vineyards, Stag's Leap Wine Cellars, ZD Wines, Ricci Vineyards and Corison Wines.

He focuses primarily on grape agreements, vineyard leases, mergers and acquisitions, vineyard management agreements, winery use permits and corporate practice and real estate practice. He also consults for participants in the wine industry on the construction end, including engineers that design and build wineries and other developers of reservoirs and wine caves.

Mr. Skidmore received his law degree from California Western Law School and his bachelor's from U.C. Berkeley. He is a past "Attorney of the Year" winner from the Napa County Legal Secretaries Association and has served on the board for the Napa County Bar Association, United Napa Valley Associates and the North Bay Regional Center.

Coombs & Dunlap has about five attorneys that practice wine law. The group has a yearly winemaking tradition, where members of the firm come together and produce a small number of cabernet or bordeaux blends. They have used grapes from Snowden Vineyards and Rutherford Ranch.

## Jan Gabrielson Tansil

**Spaulding, McCullough & Tansil**, 90 S. E St., Ste. 200, Santa Rosa 95404, 707-524-1900, [www.smlaw.com](http://www.smlaw.com)

Spaulding, McCullough & Tansil equity partner and experienced industry attorney Jan Gabrielson Tansil said her love for the wine practice stems from a childhood in rural Minnesota and a desire to continue work with people that remind her of that time.

"The clients I work with very much remind me of the people I grew up with in Minnesota – down to earth, practical, able to see a bigger picture with a long-term view, interested in sustainability," she said.

"And I love wine." She covers all aspects related to employment and contractors as well as issues of mergers and acquisitions of vineyards and wineries.

Employment law as it applies to the wine industry is particularly challenging, according to Ms. Gabrielson Tansil.

She said advising wine clients requires a balance. "The artistry and complexity of the making of the wine calls for a third kind of approach, where I work to keep my client legally compliant and protected, but I also want to stay out of the way and let the magic happen," she said.

She advises clients in real property issues, environmental, estate planning, land preservation and income management.

Ms. Gabrielson Tansil also exemplifies an appreciation for agriculture in her personal life, farming a five-acre apple orchard with her husband, Mark, and two teenage daughters. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of Minnesota School of Management and her Juris Doctorate from the University of Colorado School of Law.

Ms. Gabrielson Tansil has served on the board of directors for the United Way, Personnel Association of Sonoma County, Brush Creek Nursery School, Reach Creative Arts Magnet Parent Foundation and the Analy Education Foundation. In the past, she also taught human resources at Sonoma State University.

## Jeff Wesselkamper

**Kendall-Jackson Wine Estates**, 425 Aviation Blvd., Santa Rosa 95403, 707-569-0105, [www.kj.com](http://www.kj.com)

Jeff Wesselkamper started his work at Kendall-Jackson more than 11 years ago and is now the senior vice president and corporate general counsel for the estate.

The Ohio-native started his career at Latham & Watkins in Chicago before transferring to the firm's San Francisco office and opening a Palo Alto division. He was offered an in-house job with a telecom startup at the height of the boom but instead chose to pursue a career in wine.

"I was told I was crazy not to do the Internet startup job, but my heart felt that wine would be a better fit for me," he said.

"Now I am so happy I did. Everyday is exciting." At Kendall-Jackson, Mr. Wesselkamper oversees three attorneys that handle the wine end of the business. He said he enjoys the challenge of maneuvering through the highly regulated industry, though the biggest issue for them today continues to be the consolidation of distributors.

He received his undergraduate degree in English and philosophy from Dartmouth College and his Juris Doctorate from Northwestern University.