



FRANK MICKADEIT

## Cavallo says Haidl still owes him

**G**eorge Jaramillo wasn't the only player in O.C.'s real-life political-criminal drama to file a highly interesting document in Superior Court this week. Just got my mitts on a lawsuit **Joe Cavallo** filed against **Don Haidl** for allegedly not paying attorney fees for Cavallo's defense of **Greg Haidl**.

Here I was earlier this week lamenting how I missed my always-entertaining interactions with Cavallo and, lo and behold, I have reason to call him! And when about the third sentence out of his mouth was, "He's a deadbeat," referring to Don Haidl, well, Christmas came a little early this year.

**According to** the lawsuit, Cavallo dropped everything he was doing in July of 2002 to defend Greg. He continued pretty much nonstop, with no other clients, through the end of the second trial in March of 2005. Cavallo got a hung jury in the first trial but Greg and his two buddies were convicted in the second one. During Haidl I, the suit says, Cavallo put in 5,256 hours and was paid for some of that. He put in an estimated 2,100 hours in Haidl II and says he has been paid nothing for that.

Specific dollar figures are not mentioned in the lawsuit, but Cavallo and his civil attorney, **Daniel J. Callahan**, told me the billing rate was \$400 an hour, and that Haidl paid roughly two-thirds of what was billed for the first trial. Doing the math, then, I come up with roughly \$2.9 million in fees, of which Haidl still allegedly owes \$1.5 million. (Greg is also technically a defendant in the suit, but at 31 cents an hour for cranking out license plates or whatever, I'd say it's Papa Haidl who's on the hook.)

"I think everyone in this county knows how hard Joe worked on this case," Callahan said. "In light of the video evidence the prosecution had, I think Joe did a pretty good job." (Yep, one lousy juror away from acquittal in Haidl I. Then, in Haidl II, darn that **Chuck Middleton**.)

I attempted to contact Haidl's civil lawyer yesterday but was unsuccessful as of deadline. Complicating matters is that Haidl had not been served yet because Cavallo is unsure of his whereabouts. Haidl sold his Spy-glass Hill home where the assault on **Jane Doe** occurred and is rumored to be on Lido. Or maybe Vegas.

In any event, I have full confidence in Callahan's ability to find him. Why? Because Cavallo didn't mess around when he hired someone to go after Daddy Haidl's money. Callahan (whom I've met at **Wylie Aitken's** monthly Celtic Bar & Hibernian Chiseler Assn. meetings at Muldoon's) is none other than the man who won the largest civil verdict in Orange County history. The amount was \$934 million on behalf of Beckman Coulter - the successor to **Arnold Beckman's** instrument company - in a breach-of-contract matter.

"I'm looking forward to meeting Mr. Haidl," Callahan told me yesterday.

Could I be there?

**Lt. Bill Hunt's** so-called "Skelly hearing" to contest his demotion to deputy sheriff is Tuesday, but it looks as if there's no way he's going to allow me to attend or give me a copy of his disciplinary report. While the report could be revealing about what specifically Sheriff **Mike Carona** believes Hunt said during the campaign that constitutes gross insubordination, I wouldn't expect the hearing itself to be anything but perfunctory. Carona himself is the hearing officer and he doesn't have to do much more than listen and reaffirm his earlier decision. Basically, the hearing paves the way for Hunt to continue a grievance process that no doubt will end up in a lawsuit. (Hmm. Does he have Callahan's number?)

Hunt and I had an email exchange after my item about him last week and he pointed out an error. I wrote that he'd promised to give me the copy of another report - the attorney general's investigation of the Haidl pot bust in San Clemente, in which Hunt either did or did not exert undue pressure on a subordinate to alter the police report. What Hunt actually told me in 2005 was that he'd only give it to me after he'd had reviewed it and had decided it should be made public.

He made it clear he thinks I wasn't candid with him during the campaign in general and isn't inclined to trust me with sensitive personnel issues. I disagreed, but I don't want to get into it here and I'll give him the last word on the matter. "It really boils down to this: I'm no longer a candidate for public office and as such I really don't have much to say publicly at this point."

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