

# NO NAME NEWSLETTER

KALAMAZOO COUNTY TRIAL LAWYERS

FEBRUARY, 2013



## KCTLA MEETING

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2013 PARK CLUB**

**SPEAKER: VICENTE SANCHEZ VENTURA**

**(CONSUL OF MEXICO IN DETROIT)**

**RSVP BY WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6**

**(TODAY!)**



## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

### CIRILLO MARTINEZ TO RECEIVE CERTIFICATE FROM MEXICAN CONSULATE FOR HIS EXCELLENT WORK

Vicente Sanchez Ventura is consul of Mexico in Detroit, a post he assumed in June 2006. Prior to coming to Detroit, he was the deputy consul general at the Consulate General of Mexico in Austin, Texas from 1999 to 2006.

His career in international diplomatic service is diverse and extensive. Consul Sanchez has formally served as Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of Mexico at Nicaragua, from 1994 to 1997, as Deputy Consul General at the Consulate General of Mexico in New Orleans from 1990 to 1994, as Deputy Consul General at the Consulate General of Mexico in Puerto Rico from 1988 to 1990, and as Consul in charge of protection and legal council to Mexican nationals for the Consulate General of Mexico in Dallas from 1985 to 1988. He has been a member of Mexico's Foreign Service organization since 1981.

He is a graduate of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), where he received a bachelor's degree in International Relations. Since September, 2010 Vicente Sanchez Ventura has been the Dean of the Consular Corps of Michigan (CCM).

Mr. Sanchez is going to be our speaker on Friday. He will also be giving Cirillo Martinez an award.

(This looks just like the Flag that Earl Dalzell wears on his Backpack when he travels to Mexico...)



“**Bill Culver** was a very well respected Kalamazoo attorney who had compassion for oppressed people and a willingness to take on unpopular causes. In the 1950’s he helped establish a legal aid program to provide legal services to the poor. In the 1960’s he was a civil rights worker doing what he could to integrate the south in places like Jackson Mississippi. To all who knew him, he was the epitome of a good attorney and an all-around nice guy. Everyone liked Bill...everyone. In a remembrance that appeared in the Gazette at the time of his death, Judge C. H. Mullen stated that “Kalamazoo is a better place for him having been here.” And Judge Mullen was right. The Willie Moore case was one of the reasons why. ...” Cont. (next page)

## WILLIE MOORE...AGAIN!

Back in 1950, Bill took on an unpopular cause in Kalamazoo County. He filed a delayed appeal of a 1938 rape/murder conviction and got it set aside by the United States Supreme Court. **Moore v Michigan 355 US 155 (1957)**. This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision in that case.

Willie Moore was serving a life sentence in 1950, for the brutal rape/murder of Josie Zeedyk, the 68 year old mother of a county juvenile worker. Willie beat her, raped her and stabbed her to death in the basement of her son's home on South Burdick. He was arrested on Wednesday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, shortly after the crime was discovered. A few days later, on Saturday, October 29<sup>th</sup>, after incessant questioning *without access to an attorney*, he had confessed; he had been given a life sentence; and he was on his way to Jackson Prison. It happened that fast.

Although there didn't appear to be any doubt, reasonable or otherwise, that Willie Moore committed Josie Zeedyk's murder, there must have been some lingering concerns about how his conviction had been obtained...and of course there were. Twelve years later Bill Culver filed a motion to address those "lingering concerns," and you can be sure he took a lot of heat locally for doing so. In fact he may be feeling some of that local heat right now from some of the people reading this viewpoint.

Bill argued that Willie Moore's conviction back in 1938 denied him the "rights essential to a fair trial." More specifically he argued: that the process was hurried; that he didn't understand what was going on; that he didn't understand his constitutional rights, and finally, he claimed that he didn't have an attorney and didn't know that he could have one.

At this point it might be helpful to provide a little context. Willie Moore was 17 years old back in 1938. He had a seventh grade education, *and he was black*. Gazette articles at the time referred to him as a "negro moron." During his questioning he was told by the Sheriff that tension was very high in the community and there could be trouble. He claimed he was told that if he didn't plead guilty there could be a riot and they couldn't assure him that they could protect him. Finally, when they drove him to Jackson Prison to serve his life sentence, they chose not to take the direct route through Galesburg. They took the back roads through Gull Lake instead, hoping to avoid trouble. I guess times were different then.

Bill Culver ended up appealing Willie Moore's case all the way to the United States Supreme Court. Seven years later they ruled in his favor and sent it back to Kalamazoo for the trial *and the attorney* that Willie never had. At the conclusion of that trial the jury found Willie guilty again. However, this time he was represented by an attorney. This time the Court sentenced him to 25-40 years in prison instead of life. But the case wasn't over yet. Cases like this seldom are. The Court refused to give Willie credit for any of the prison time he had already served. That necessitated still another appeal, which Willie also won.

It's been over 50 years since the Supreme Court decision in the Willie Moore case. Some of you may be asking what's the point...

According to NLADA, Michigan Indigent Defense is in a "**race to the bottom**" with other states, most of them still fighting the *Civil War*. Not much to be proud of there. But I think we can be proud of local attorneys who like Bill Culver do their best every day, under difficult circumstances, so that Willie Moore, and countless others like him, have their constitutionally guaranteed day in court. So let's all have a Dream (It's Black History Month...why not, Let's dream Justice...Not McJustice. RCK



v



## **ANY CLUB THAT WOULD WANT ME AS A MEMBER...**

Welcome new members:

Hal Welch

David Swiderski

The officers of KCTLA recently met at O'Duffys tavern and drank beer on Fred Taylor's tab. Things got a little rowdy after the second round of drinks. Nevertheless, we were not asked to leave.

We talked about a lot of things, but the most important topic of discussion, aside from who was going to pick up the bar tab, was new membership.

So, all of you old farts, and we know who we are, lets reach out to Hal and David. Introduce yourself. Call them up on the phone. Invite them to lunch. Get to know them. Make them feel welcome. It's the least we can do... So let's try to do the least we can do the best we can.

Kupferschmidt said this.