

## HONORABLE DAVID G. SILLS, PRESIDING JUSTICE

BY

NEIL F. AUWARTER

ADI STAFF ATTORNEY AND “AMBASSADOR” TO DIVISION THREE



**D**avid G. Sills, retired Presiding Justice of Division Three of the Fourth District Court of Appeal, died August 23 after a battle with cancer. He was 73.

Justice Sills had an amazing list of accomplishments. He was appointed to the Court of Appeal by Governor George Deukmejian in 1990. Before his career on the appellate bench, Justice Sills had a successful private practice and served as mayor of Irvine. Recently, Justice Sills oversaw the construction of Division Three’s new courthouse, which in 2009 brought all the court’s justices under one roof.

Justice Sills authored over 2000 opinions in his two decades on the court, but found time for unstinting public service beyond the courthouse doors. He served on Chapman University’s Board of Visitors, taught as an instructor at UC Irvine and was chairman of the board of the Irvine Health Foundation. Most recently, Justice Sills was a driving force in the creation of UC Irvine’s new law school as a member of the Founding Dean’s Advisory Counsel.

Justice Sills was known as a keen intellect, a skilled consensus builder, and a gifted writer. He was also known for his wry sense of humor. A lawyer crafting an argument for the Division Three court was well-advised to ponder, “Yes, but will it play in Peoria?”—the town of Justice Sills’ birth.

I encountered Justice Sills over many years at oral argument and on administrative business for ADI. I will remember him as congenial, thoughtful, and eager to do justice. He was a friend to ADI and the panel and will be missed greatly.