

May 20, 2011 – Letter from Charlene Wagner – wife of Trustee Charlie Wagner

The courtroom was packed with mostly friendly faces, the judge's decision was great, and the members went from victims of the SEC lawsuit to victorious owner/members. A good day for transparency and democracy but getting out of the Courthouse was a bit of a hassle.

Charlie and I were delayed in the courtroom so most people had already left the building when we walked downstairs to the main front hall. A cluster of people including the Wade family were gathered at the end of the hall near to the stairway. As we walked past the group, someone started yelling curses and insults directed at Charlie. We ignored the outburst and continued walking toward the front door. The man doing the yelling followed us persisting with his rants. When he shifted in front of Charlie and started screaming into his face and attempting to push and poke him in the chest, Charlie backed up and asked someone in the Treasurer's office to call the police.

I had backed away from the man (who we now know to be named Xavier Ortiz) and went to the Sheriff's office for help. I returned to the courthouse where Mr. Ortiz was still verbally abusing Charlie. When I walked up to let Charlie know that the sheriff was on his way, Mr. Ortiz turned to me demanding to know if I was "his wife." If I had not stepped back, he would have hit me in the chest. A courthouse employee came to my assistance. At this point, deputies came through the front door and escorted Mr. Ortiz outside and Sheriff Montoya arrived through the back door and remained with Charlie and me. We decided to press charges and a deputy wrote down our information and saw us safely to our car. At this point Mr. Ortiz was just west of the entry to the courthouse shaking the hand of and being patted on the back by Trustee Don Wolberg.

I later learned that, while I was looking for a lawman, a lady had walked down the hallway and Mr. Ortiz turned to her demanding to know if she was Charlie's wife. A friend who was outside the building saw Mr. Ortiz accost Terry Last as a member of the press.

The situation was frightening and dangerous and could have had a very bad outcome. The fact that it took place in the courthouse was an added offense. I wish that Judge Mitchell would have witnessed the scene. I also question why Mr. Ortiz's companions did nothing to restrain his actions and foul outbursts which mirrored behavior that has often occurred at meetings of the SEC Board. Such behavior has to stop and this board has got to go.

I received an email from members who attended the court hearing. While walking them, they overheard a conversation between Trustees Wade and Wolberg and heard them say, "well, nothing has changed--It is the same as always." These guys don't know when to give up!!!!

Xavier Ortiz (left) buttonholes a reporter outside the courthouse

