



Nina Schuyler

**D**efinition of the San Francisco Giants: Jack F. Bair. That may seem like a stretch, but San Francisco Giants' Senior Vice President and General Counsel Jack Bair has probably done more for the Giants than just about anyone else. Consider:

- In 1992 as deputy city attorney for San Francisco, Bair successfully directed the legal effort to prevent the Giants from being sold and relocated to Florida.
- As general counsel for the Giants, he handled governmental affairs and was the primary strategist, determining how and where to develop a new ballpark.
- Before taking it to the voters, he coordinated efforts to select the site for the new ballpark and worked extensively on its design with the project's architects.
- In 1996 he coordinated the political and public affairs "Yes on B" campaign to win voter approval for a new ballpark.
- He negotiated the ballpark real estate transaction and the successful effort to gain all the local, regional, state, and federal approvals—including environmental—necessary to construct and open the ballpark on time for the 2000 season.



**Jack F. Bair**

Photo by Jim Block





# In-House Profile— **SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS GENERAL COUNSEL JACK F. BAIR**

“I played baseball growing up,” says Bair. “Then I played as an adult in the semipro baseball league after law school. I’ve always had an interest in the sport, and since I grew up in the Bay Area, I’ve been a Giants fan since I was young.”

A graduate of Yale Law School, Bair didn’t envision becoming a sports lawyer, though he did take a sports law class taught by Bart Giamatti, former commissioner of Major League Baseball and former president of Yale. “He was one of the more interesting people that I’ve ever met,” says Bair.

But even a cursory look at Bair’s list of accomplishments shows his practice extends far beyond the confines of sports law. With a small legal department, consisting of himself and one other lawyer, Elizabeth Murphy, and a legal assistant, Jennifer Freitas, Bair is, by necessity, a generalist, handling an array of issues: labor and employment, contracts, real estate, litigation, and baseball matters. “In many ways it’s just like serving as the general counsel of any other big business,” he says.

In fact, the Giants operation has two hundred full-time staff in San Francisco, not including players, coaches, trainers, and scouts, well over a thousand part-time employees, and overseas employees in many countries. The Giants also have minor league teams and affiliates in the

Dominican Republic, Arizona, Oregon, Virginia, and Georgia and two in California.

Through the years, he’s used an array of outside counsel. For nearly two decades, Robert Herr at Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman has provided advice on business and real estate matters. Bair frequently consults with Nancy Pritikin at Littler Mendelson about employment issues. Bair turns to Coblenz, Patch, Duffy & Bass for real estate. For personal injury matters, he uses Robert Frassetto at Low, Ball & Lynch. Occasionally, Bair holds a beauty contest, but most of the time, he selects outside counsel based on referrals or his experience with the lawyers themselves.

“It’s my objective to handle as much as possible in-house and only seek assistance from outside counsel where the size or the nature of the particular matter requires it,” says Bair.

In 2006, when Major League Baseball and former U.S. Senator George Mitchell conducted its twenty-one month investigation into the use of steroids and other performance-enhancing drugs, Bair was the point person responding to their inquiries. The result was a 409-page report released in December 2007. “It took up a great deal of my time,” he says.

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—Jack F. Bair

He's currently involved in real estate and development again. In 2009, the Port of San Francisco selected the Giants as the preferred developer for the sixteen acres of property located south of the ballpark, known as Parking Lot A. The port owns the land and the Giants lease much of it for parking. Bair is leading the effort, which is planned to include structured parking to serve the ballpark, shops and restaurants, office space, housing, exhibit/event space, and public open space.

“The ballpark was a major project,” says Bair. “It was very complicated, but it involved only one use. The project across the channel is mixed-use, and in some ways is much more complicated because we're attempting to address several different needs in one project. We need to make sure it's economically successful and has the right mix of public spaces to make it an attractive place for people to visit.” Bair is working with the Coblenz firm, which also assisted him with the ballpark.

While Bair has had many career highlights, the one that is closest to his heart is the development of the ballpark itself. When he was helping with the design, he had several guiding values: to evoke a romantic response from voters and customers, generate excitement among the fan base for the future, and provide comfort to nearby residents and businesses that the ballpark would be a good neighbor.

“Our ballpark is unique in that it's on the water with terrific views of the San Francisco Bay,” he says. “It has brick and styling that is steeped in the history of ballparks and the neighborhood. We wanted the ballpark to fit into the

neighborhood gracefully. The ballpark itself is very intimate and smaller than most other parks. As a fan you feel more engaged because you are closer to the action. It's been great to be part of a project that's become a landmark and been so well received and embraced.”

Just as the current development project is more complicated, the business of baseball has become more complicated. It's not just about baseball games anymore. The baseball park hosts concerts and college football and bowl games, private events, and parties. There's a carnival on Lot A, and the Coca-Cola Fan Lot, with a miniversion of the AT&T Park, a giant baseball glove (a replica of Bair's father's glove), and special slides. Bair is also tackling other development projects, such as a new baseball academy in the Dominican Republic. And as investors in Comcast Sports Net, Bair and the management team need to take advantage of new technological advances. “The reach of the organization is far beyond baseball at the ballpark,” says Bair. And that's what he likes about it. “Because it's so diverse, I've continually been fulfilled and energized by my job.”

Despite his busy schedule, he still makes time for baseball. “Well, it's softball now,” he says. On weeknights, he plays infield and bats fourth for the Olympic Club.



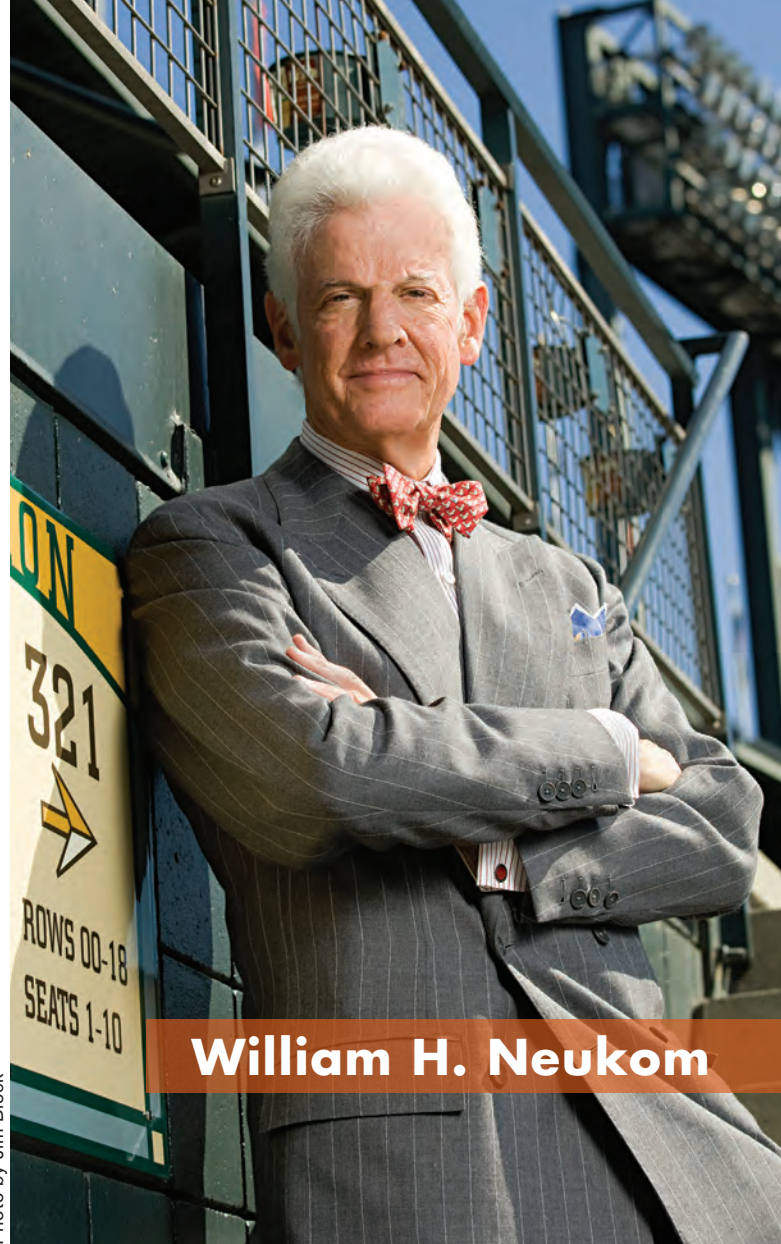
## San Francisco Giants CEO William H. Neukom

**W**hen William H. Neukom became managing general partner and chief executive officer of the San Francisco Giants in 2008, he took his lifelong passion to a new level.

“I love baseball,” says Neukom, 2007–08 president of the American Bar Association. “It’s a demanding game based on the merits. Some people call it a game of failure: you’re an all-star if you can hit safely three times out of ten. It’s so nuanced with so much strategy. On every single pitch there is a strategy in place, a matching of wits.”

Strategy is also integral to running a major baseball team. Neukom comes to the Giants saturated with strategic thinking, after spending nearly twenty-five years as lead lawyer for Microsoft, the world’s largest software company, including seventeen years as general counsel and head of Microsoft’s legal, government affairs, and philanthropic activities. In 1994 he led Microsoft’s successful legal victory over Apple in what’s known as “the look and feel” case. He was also Microsoft’s lead attorney during the government’s antitrust case against the company in 1998. When he retired in 2001 to become a partner at K&L Gates in Seattle, he said running a legal team was like being a general manager of a baseball team.

Baseball and high-tech are not that far apart in Neukom’s mind. Foremost, both are fiercely competitive. “Our job is to be more imaginative and more resourceful and get more out of our resources than the twenty-nine other major league teams,” he says, “not just with the baseball players, but having the best judges of talent to help us pick our talent, the best teachers in baseball to give our athletes every opportunity to become great baseball players.”



**William H. Neukom**

To heighten the Giants’ competitive edge, he hopes to integrate some of Microsoft’s basic cultural tenets. “At Microsoft we viewed the workplace as a meritocracy,” he says. “The quality of work didn’t have to do with which department you were in or whether your boss was favored or your connections. If we worked hard and were smart and contributed in a material way to the advancement of the mission, we would succeed. We promoted teams where captains would deflect credit to other teammates,

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where teammates would share credit readily. Those kinds of teams get the most done and the best work done. We are building those principles into the culture here.”

In that vein, Neukom regularly meets with small groups of ten to twelve people to listen to ideas and criticisms. Departments are encouraged to work together to heighten coordination and collaboration. Though he no longer practices law, he reviews everything, including matters from the legal department. “The happiest days for me will be when I learn someone in marketing got a bright idea from someone in baseball.”

Another aspect of Microsoft’s culture that Neukom admires is realism. “We never got too caught up in success,” he says. “We were always aware of what a competitive business we were in and that we could always do better. We held ourselves to a high standard of critical thinking, of using our imagination and coming up with novel approaches. We weren’t satisfied with just doing things the same way, but finding a better way of doing it.”

Neukom isn’t new to the Giants. In 1995 he became a member of the Giants’ ownership group and in 2003 a general partner. In Neukom’s opinion, the biggest challenge facing him in his current position is “to present exciting baseball played the right way for our fans as a major league and also seven of our farms.”

Part of that fan base includes three siblings, who live in the Bay Area, and friends from San Mateo High School and Stanford Law School, Neukom’s alma maters. “It’s been great fun reconnecting with everyone,” he says, “and refreshing myself about the remarkable life that is accessible here in Northern California.”

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## SAVE THE DATE!

**BASF’S 5th Annual Law & Disorder Night  
@ AT&T Park, San Francisco  
Monday, July 26, 2010 at 7:15 p.m.  
Giants vs. Florida Marlins**

The San Francisco Giants will host the 5th Annual “Law & Disorder” Legal Professionals Night at AT&T Park. Pregame reception starts at 5:15 p.m. and runs until the start of the game.

Judges, lawyers, law students, summer interns, friends, and family are invited to celebrate their contribution to the community during an evening of drinks, music, and the chance to rub elbows with the Giants legal team!