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IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

CONFIDENTIAL REPORT

PROBATE CONSERVATORSHIP OF THE) Case No.: PR2100162 PERSON ESTATE OF:) INITIAL CONSERVATORSHIP) INVESTIGATOR'S REPORT RE BARBARA KELLER) AMENDED & COMPETING PETITIONS PROPOSED CONSERVATEE Hearing Date: 9/30/2021 Dept: 6 Time: 2:15 P.M.

PERSONAL HISTORY

PROPOSED COSERVATEE CONTACT INFORMATION:

Barbara Keller C/O Merrill Gardens at The Pines 500 West Ranch View Drive Rocklin, CA (916)365-9267

RESIDENCE: PRIVATE

DOB: 12/8/1943 Age: 77

Marital Status: Married

Court investigator had recommended ATTORNEY FOR PROPOSED CONSERVATEE: appointing the Public Defender for Public Defender Barbara in the initial court report and

1001 4th Street rightfully assumed this had been done as Eureka, CA 95501 it is pretty standard. No counsel has (707)445-7634

been appointed, why?

PROPOSED CONSERVATOR CONTACT INFORMATION:

Relationship: Daughter Sharon Wolff 3 Painter Street Rio Dell, CA 95562 (707)599-9961

ATTORNEY FOR PROPOSED CONSERVATOR: IN PRO PER

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PROPOSED CONSERVATOR CONTACT INFORMATION:

Relationship: Nephew Royce Mendonca (previously unknown nephew of Barbara's 5th 8320 Tail Race Drive husband - legal name is Roland Royce Mendonca Roseville, CA 95747 Jr.)

(916) 532-5913

ATTORNEY FOR PROPOSED CONSERVATOR:

STOKES, HAMER, KIRK & EADS Chris J. Hamer, Esq. 381 Bayside Road, Suite A Arcata, CA 95521 (707)822-1771

ADVISEMENT:

The conservatee was interviewed on September 20, 2021 at Merrill Gardens at The Pines located at 500 West Ranch View Drive in Rocklin, CA, and was advised of the following:

- 1. The contents of the citation;
- 2. The nature, purpose, and effect of the proceedings;
- 3. The right to oppose the proceedings;
- 4. The right to attend the hearing;
- 5. The right to a jury trial; and
- 6. The right to an attorney of own choosing or Court
 Appointed. The court has never appointed counsel for Barbara despite her request and civil rights

DETERMINATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS:

During and/or after the proposed Conservatee was advised of her rights, it was determined that the proposed Conservatee:

Made an intelligible response regarding the proceedings.	X Yes	☐ No
<pre>Indicated objection to Sharon Wolff. \[\begin{align*} \text{No response.} \end{align*} \]</pre>	X Yes	☐ No
Requested a jury trial.	Yes	No.
Indicated objection to Royce Mendonca. No response.	Yes	∑ No
Appeared capable with or without accommodations of voicing a desire to participate in the voting process.	∑ Yes	☐ No

her civil rights - why? 1 Wishes to be represented by counsel. Yes No 2 No response. 3 4 Specific attorney to be retained: Yes 5 6 Wishes to attend the hearing. ☐ Yes ☐ No 7 No response. 8 9 DEMENTIA POWERS: 10 11 Dementia Powers \boxtimes are \square not requested. 12 13 14 I specifically informed the conservatee that the X Yes 15 conservator is requesting the power to place the 16 conservatee in a secured facility for the 17 treatment of dementia. 18 19 The conservatee objects to this dementia Yes 20 power. 21 22 The conservatee made no intelligible 23 response. 24 I specifically informed the conservatee that the X Yes 25 26 conservator is requesting the power to 27 administer psychotropic medications for the 28 treatment of dementia. 29 30 31 32 The conservatee made no intelligible 33 response. 34 35 36 OBSERVATIONS AND EVALUATION 37 38 Before the Court are competing petition's for the probate 39 conservatorship of the person and estate of the Barbara Keller. 40 Barbara is an 77-year-old female who resides in an assisted living 41 facility located in Rocklin, CA. Confidential medical information is 42 included in the attachment. The proposed conservator's in this 43 matter are Barbara's daughter, Sharon Wolff; and Barbara's Nephew by 44 marriage, Royce Mendonca. 45 46 It is noted that this investigation and report follows a 47 previous investigation and report submitted to this court regarding 48 Sharon Wolff's initial petition. It is further noted that this 49 report builds on the first. 50

No counsel has ever been appointed to represent Barbara and protect

No.

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No.

No

No.

CAPACITY DECLARATION STATEMENT

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Andrew Johnston, M.D. examined Barbara and completed a Capacity Declaration for this report. Dr. Johnston, found that Barbara exhibits major impairment in her orientation to time and situation, as well as in her short-term and long-term memory, and in her immediate re-call. Major impairment was also found in Barbara's ability to reason logically. Moderate impairment was found in Barbara's ability to understand and communicate verbally, and in her ability to plan, organize and carry out actions. Dr. Johnston stated Barbara's mental function deficits are based in "probable Alzheimer's dementia with behavioral changes." Dr. Johnston determined that Barbara lacks the capacity to give informed consent to any form of medical treatment, but is able to attend the upcoming court hearing.

Dr. Johnston signed the GC-335 Capacity Declaration on

COLLATERAL CONTACTS 7/22/21

Diana Mendonca, Sister-In-Law

Diana reported that she is aware of her son's competing petitions and supports his appointment as Ron and Barbara's conservators. Diana explained that during the last investigation she was contacted by APS social worker Alma Barber and notified that her brother and his wife were not doing well and were repeatedly leaving their home to find a bus stop; and subsequently needing to be brought home by strangers. Diana stated she does not drive out of town and solicited her granddaughter to go and pick the couple up and bring them to her home. Ron and Barbara resided with Diana in her home for one month following this move.

Diana indicated that she has historically kept in contact with her brother and his wife over the phone and was not fully aware of the extent of their cognitive decline until they began residing with her. "They definitely have Alzheimer's. You could not leave either one of them alone. I never felt safe leaving Barbara alone, and then it got to the point where she did not want me to give her her meds anymore and I didn't want the responsibility of something happening to either one of them. I am not experienced in Alzheimer's and only knew that I could not leave them alone." The couple was ultimately placed in their current secured facility and occupy two adjoining rooms. Conservatorship is further indicated for Barbara as she is suffering from Alzheimer's and is no longer capable of caring for herself independently.

Ron and Barbara were described as settling in well to their current facility, and are "Really happy there." Diana visits the couple multiple times a week and stated; "Now they are safe and

are getting meds and food and can be together." Diana reiterated her support for her son to act in the role of conservator and expressed strong disagreement with Sharon acting in the role. Diana was asked if Ron or Barbara have mentioned any suicidal ideation since their move, and Diana responded, "I have never met Sharon, and I don't wish to; and I have only ever heard from her mother, [but] her mother just said 'I would rather die than go living with Sharon;' but I know Ronnie is safe because he is with me."

Diana also reiterated her concerns from the last report surroundings Sharon's refusal to take on the conservatorship of Ron's person as well as the conservatorship of her mother's person; as well as the fact that she is willing to separate the couple after "25 years" of marriage. The incident involving Ron and Barbara refusing to allow Sharon on to their Wells Fargo account was discussed. Diana stated, "For her (Sharon) to escalate the situation to where her mother had to call the police on her, that's a problem. If you have a problem you take a break. You don't force it to the point that your mother feels threatened and needs to call the police." Diana concluded by reading the statement made by Sharon within an e-mail and attached as an exhibit within the petitions, in which she states she is willing to act as a conservator of Ron's person and would not care if the state were to manage his care. Diana stated "I couldn't even imagine separating them. We will not separate them. No one in our family would."

Sharon Wolff, Proposed Conservator and Daughter

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Sharon reported that conservatorship remains necessary for her mother for all of the reason previously reported in the original investigation. As explained in the original report, Sharon sought out Royce and Diana Mendonca seeking assistance with their uncle and brother, as Sharon had determined Ron and Barbara were no longer able to care for themselves. Sharon stated that after she contacting them, Diana spoke with Ron and stated she appears "to believe all of the crazy things Ron has said" about her, and has now asked her son Royce to become involved and to file these competing petitions. Sharon noted that Diana and Royce have not been involved with Barbara, Ron, or Sharon's family in the 29 years that the couple has been married, and stated Diana and Royce are strangers to her mother. Sharon expressed frustration that Royce and Diana refused to speak with her regarding her concerns for Ron, and are now preventing her from having contact with her mother.

Sharon was adamantly against Royce being named the conservator of her mother. Sharon expressed concern over the unilateral decisions Royce has made on her mother's behalf and

stated these decisions have placed her mother in danger. Royce and his mother Diana purposely did not tell Sharon of their plans to move the couple from their home in Humboldt County and take them to Diana's home more than 6 hours away in Citrus Heights, CA. Sharon notes this move was conducted without regard to Barbara's health and upcoming medical appointments. It was further reported that Barbara's current medical providers in Rocklin, CA, do not have access to Barbara's medical records from Humboldt County and thus have no health history with which to treat Barbara. Sharon also reported that Royce has fraudulently signed as the decision maker for Barbara while placing her at her current facility, and has fraudulently altered, or allowed his attorney to alter, Barbara's Capacity Declaration. Sharon indicated she does not think Royce is a trust worthy person and stated, "I am concerned about Royce having anything to do with the estate because of the false paperwork [within the petitions.]"

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Report's that Sharon is financially motivated in her intentions to establish conservatorship on Barbara and Ron's behalf were discussed. Sharon stated these claims are false, and took offense to claims that because she and her husband had struggles raising their five children, all of whom are currently independent adults, that this would cause Sharon to want to steal from her mother. It was reiterated that when Barbara and Ron moved back to the Humboldt County area the last time, it was to be closer to Sharon so she could help the couple as they aged. Sharon stated that claims that Ron and Barbara are afraid of her or do not like her steam from Ron's cognitive decline and resulting paranoia, and are not based in fact. Further, reports that she repeatedly attempted to have Ron and Barbara place her on their bank accounts are true, and evidence that she has been attempting to assist the couple with their finances as detailed in the original petition. Reports that Ron and Barbara were resistant to these attempts are also true and evidence of the need for conservatorship.

It remains Sharon's position that she had a close relationship with her mother and Ron until recently, until Ron's paranoia and "wild accusations" began to affect Sharon's relationship with her mother. Sharon reports that her mother has severe memory impairment and is now unduly influenced by Ron to think negative and false things about her. Sharon further asserts that the negative statements made by Barbara about her are "fed" to her by Ron. Additionally, Sharon reiterated her fears from the original investigation relating to Ron's persistent suicidal ideation and his verbalized plans to "off" himself and Barbara. Sharon continues to feel that her mother would be safer if removed from Ron and continues to intend to place her mother at Sequoia Springs Senior Living Community in

Fortuna, CA. Sharon concluded that Royce's lack of involvement with Ron and Barbara over the last 25 plus years, mixed with his refusal to speak with Sharon regarding this matter, has created a situation in which Royce does not have adequate knowledge of the current situation and; "has based his petition on the claims of a man even he says within his petition does not have capacity."

Royce Mendonca, Proposed Conservator and Nephew

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Royce reported that he is seeking conservatorship of his aunt as she is no longer able to care for herself or manage her affairs independently, and as she requires protection from her daughter Sharon. Royce confirmed his mother's account that the family was urged to pick Ron and Barbara up by Adult Protective Services Social Worker, Alma Barber. "I want to make it clear that this (bringing the couple to the Sacramento area) was done on the recommendation of Alma Barber." Royce also repeated his mother's concerns surrounding Sharon's refusal to act as the conservator of Ron's person and her plan to separate the couple. Royce stated, "The bottom line is they do not want to be in Fortuna and their wishes should be respected ... If [Sharon's] original plan was to keep them together we 1,000% would not be having this conversation... We are not on the Will or Trust or anything like that. I don't need their money. What I want is them to be together and to be in a nice place because they have earned that and neither should get less care because they (Barbara's family) want to preserve assets." It was Royce's position that Sharon's statements within her petitions, notably her plans to add an addition to her home for only her mother to reside in, and plans to utilize the estate for Barbara's care while seeking out VA benefits on Ron's behalf, indicates that she is more interested in persevering a potential inheritance from the estate than adequately providing for the couple's care. It was further noted that "for whatever reason" Ron and Barbara are no longer comfortable having Sharon being involved in their care and finances, but are willing to accept assistance from Royce and Diana.

Royce was also asked if he has witnessed any suicidal statements or ideology from Ron or Barbara since their move; and stated he has not. Royce stated, "Basically they feared for their lives Samantha. They ran away from their homes, no cell phone, just left their house out of fear and were unaccounted for for four days; and by some miracle they made it home..." It was Royce's position that Ron and Barbara were in heightened states of agitation and fear due to Sharon's attempts to be added to their bank accounts, and made the suicidal statements as a result. Now that the couple has been settled into their

current care facility, there has been no further mention of suicide.

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Royce was also asked about the amount of familial contact he and his mother have had with Ron and Barbara over the years. Royce confirmed that they primarily maintained contact via telephone. Allegations that Royce and his attorney may have acted fraudulently were also discussed. Royce stated he signed as decision maker on Ron and Barbara's behalves as they required a decision maker to be placed at the facility. At the time it was critical to get Ron and Barbara placed, and Royce signed on the couples behalf to ensure they received prompt care. Regarding the Capacity Declaration, Royce stated he and his attorney were informed by Iris Medical Group that Nurse Practitioner Allan has the legal authority to fill the Capacity Declaration out. Royce echoed his mother's sentiments that Ron and Barbara are doing well at the facility and are well cared for by their care providers. Royce also confirmed that his mother frequently visits the couple and stated they appear happy at Merrill Gardens. Royce was asked about his level of communication with Sharon, and stated that while they have had contact in the past, they do not currently maintain contact with each other. Royce concluded that he would be willing to communicate with and work alongside Sharon moving forward.

Alma Barber, Social Worker with Adult Protective Services

Alma was contacted for this report and provided context to her recommendation to the Mendonca's. Alma described a situation in which the Keller's were decompensating rapidly within their home as Ron's delusions were preventing the couple from receiving any care or assistance. "Ron's delusions were pronounced and the couple was becoming gravely disabled before my eyes. There was a lot of delusional thinking around Sharon and thinking she had the ability to control everything around them and the way he wanted the police to patrol the street... Both of the Keller's were declining fast in their home and were throwing all of their groceries out with no way to get any more and stopped accepting assistance from Sharon... There was no food in the home and Barbara had lost 10 lbs.... It got to the point where Ron looked disheveled and was crying every time I saw him and they needed help immediately; and at that point I was reaching out to all relatives not just Diana and Royce.... Unfortunately the only person Ron will accept help from is his sister, and Barbara is not able to make decisions and is reliant on [Ron] for decision making, so unfortunately [their picking up the couple] was the only solution that actually worked." Alma noted her primary concern as a social worker with Adult Protective Services is the health and safety of the Keller's.

Alma was asked if she had any concerns with Royce acting as the couple's conservator. Alma noted that a lot of Ron's beliefs and behaviors are rooted in untreated mental illness and the Mendonca's seem to be, "kind of nested in the belief that [Ron's delusions are] really happening." Further concern was raised regarding both Sharon and Royce and the two family's inability to work together. Alma was supportive of the couple remaining together in their current facility as long as they are both receiving adequate care and supervision; noting that significantly altering the living arrangements of dementia patients tends to cause further decompensation.

Tim Jenkins, Son

Tim reported that he is aware of the competing petitions and continues to support his sister Sharon to act in the role. Tim stated that since the last report he has been making visits and attempted visits to the facility and has been able to meet with Barbara on several occasions. Tim reported no concerns with the care the couple is receiving, but expressed frustration with the facilities ability to communicate with him as Royce has named himself decision maker for Ron and Barbara within in their admissions paperwork; and the facility has a limited ability to provide Tim information. Tim was asked if he has any communication with Royce and Diana. Tim stated, "Diana had called me and we have had several phone calls and texts, but she is like talking to a brick wall. She was very combative and did not want to give me her email." Further explaining, "I tried to send her some supporting docs for our concerns [regarding Ron] and she claimed not to have one (an e-mail account) but I found out later she does have one she just didn't want to give it to me." Further stating, "I left my card for Royce (in the couple's room at the facility and with facility staff) and he has not called me back."

Concerns for Barbara, her wellbeing, and care needs were discussed at length. It was explained that until very recently, Ron was a beloved member of Tim and Sharon's family and is called Grandpa by all of their children. Tim confirmed that Ron's delusions and paranoid accusations came on slowly and initially involved neighbors and other peripheral people, but eventually expanded to include Sharon and other family members. Tim further confirmed reports that Barbara is fearful and suspicious of her family while Ron is around, but once separated from him enjoys her family and does not have negative things to say. Tim asserts that Ron had a history of alienating family members that Tim and Sharon only recently recognized due to these recent events. "There are many red flags with Ron that I missed." Tim notes the recent discovery that Ron walked out on his sons 30 years ago and disinherited them from his will, and a

past refusal to be driven to visit a family member who had been assaulted in the course of a home invasion, as evidence of Ron's lack of a sense of close familial ties. Since being placed at their current facility, Tim stated Ron has prevented him from seeing his mother. "I have made a lot of visits that have been denied because Ron is there. The first successful visit I had was while Ron was in the hospital... My daughters and grandchildren have been denied and we love Ron. That's what my kids can't understand. They have always called him Grandpa and recently he just turned on us and it's not that we don't like Ron, it's that we don't like what he is doing to mom and the family."

Tim was asked his opinion of Sharon's plan to potentially separate the pair. Tim stated, "I know it sounds terrible but I think it is the only way to get them the help they need... They need different kinds of care. Ron obviously has a good memory but he has mental health needs and clearly needs mental health care. His perception of reality is skewed to where he trusts strangers but not his grandkids. It is very odd." Tim reiterated his support for Sharon to act in the role of conservator and stated, "We were elected by mom and Ron a number of years ago and that can be proven in their will where they named us. There estate is very small and they do not have the funds [necessary] for their long term care needs. They will need [government] assistance at some point and with Sharon's [career] experience she will be able [to navigate that aspect of their care.]"

Tim also addressed the accusations within the competing petition regarding Sharon's income while raising five children and noted, "All of that has made Sharon very frugal actually, and she is good at preserving money where she can. In fact when Diana and Royce hired this attorney we thought well we have to hire one too now, but then we thought about it and they don't have much money in the estate and we don't want to burn the money down, so it has been an immense amount of work done on Sharon's behalf [to be frugal.]" Tim concluded by reiterating the fact that while the couple had capacity they nominated Tim and Sharon to manage their finical affairs on their behalf, and stated Barbara's entire family supports Sharon being named as conservator of Ron and Barbara's estate.

John Robertson, Manager at Merrill Gardens at the Pines

John reported that Ron and Barbara have settled in "great" to the facility and are doing well. "They are eating three meals a day and getting the care they need." John was initially confident that the facility would be able to manage the couples differing care needs and to keep the couple together, but did not seem aware of Ron's reported mental health needs. John

stated he has experienced no issues with Ron related to paranoia, delusions, or suicidal ideation since the couple's admission.

Conservatorship is appropriate for Barbara as she is unable to live independently and would "absolutely" benefit from having an advocate. Barbara was described as having similar care needs to her husband, as she is ambulatory and requires verbal cuing and reminders to complete activities of daily living and hygiene tasks; but John stated "Barbara's dementia is more pronounced than Ron's." Additionally, Barbara receives stand by assistance while showering. John described conservatorship as a "good idea" for the couple and expressed no concern with Barbara being conserved. John stated he has has contact with both Sharon Wolff and Royce Mendonca, and reported no concerns with either party being named their conservator.

INTERVIEW WITH PROPOSED CONSERVATEE:

Barbara was interviewed from her room at Merrill Gardens. During the interview Barbara appeared clean, well-groomed, and appropriately dressed. Barbara presented with noticeable memory impairment and frequently looked to her husband for responses to questions asked. Barbara was alert and engaged in our interaction and appeared to understand the nature and effect of the current proceedings. When asked to define conservatorship Barbara stated, "It's someone who takes care of you." Barbara consented to the establishment of conservatorship with Royce as her conservator after being provided with advisement by stating "I agree, I depend on Ron's knowledge of him." Barbara opposed the establishment of conservatorship with her daughter Sharon Wolff as her conservator.

When given a brief mental status exam, Barbara correctly stated her name, date of birth, and was oriented to time of day. Barbara was unable to state the current month and year, her medical diagnoses, the current president, or the names of her proposed conservators. When asked her address and city of residence Barbara stated, "I can't even think." When asked if she takes any medications Barbara stated, "I don't remember pills." When asked her current age Barbara stated, "You do the math." Barbara identified the purpose of our interview as, "To see if we are sane." Barbara appears capable of participating in the voting process.

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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Through investigation, it appears that Barbara Keller remains unable to provide for her own personal needs for physical health, food, clothing, and shelter, and is substantially unable to manage her own financial resources or resist fraud or undue influence.

After a careful consideration of the preceding interviews and review of the documents submitted in this case, the undersigned finds that Sharon Wolff is acting in Barbara's best interests, and was in fact nominated by Barbara and Ron to manage their estate while each had capacity. Therefore, establishment of the probate conservatorship of the person and estate of Barbara Keller with her daughter Sharon Wolff acting as her conservator is respectfully recommended.

Additionally, the undersigned recommends that every effort be made to keep Ron and Barbara together as long as safely and medically possible. The undersigned concludes that many of the issues presented in this case would be solved with proper communication between the Wolff / Jenkin's family and the Mendonca family. If productive communication in the couple's best interest is not established between the two parties promptly, the undersigned recommends a professional private fiduciary manage the couple's estate.

ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATION:

It is unknown if the conservatee's estate is sufficient to warrant assessment for this investigation and report.

Pursuant to Probate Code 1851.5, the assessment fee for this investigation is \$341.00. If the Court approves the assessment, the fee should be paid to: Court Operations, 421 I Street, Eureka, CA 95501.

Counsel has been appointed for the proposed	X Yes	
Conservatee.	M les	∐ No
The proposed Conservatee is able to attend the hearing.	Yes	⊠ No
The proposed Conservatee should be disqualified from voting.	Yes	No
The judge ignored the e	earlier	
recommendation from thi	s court	
investigator and never	appointe	d counsel
for the proposed conser	rvatee	

 I certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Date: September 24, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

Samantla Wahl

Samantha Wahl Court Appointed Investigator Quest Court Investigations

Respectfully submitted,

Dale Price

Court Appointed Investigator Quest Court Investigations

Cc Sharon Wolff
Royce Mendonca
Public Defender
Chris J. Hamer, Esq.
Diana Mendonca
Tim Jenkins
Barbara Keller
Ronald 'Ron' Keller