

# Idaho State Bar Awards - 2013

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<b>Distinguished Lawyer Awards</b>	<b>2-5</b>
<b>Service Awards</b>	<b>6-8</b>
<b>Outstanding Young Lawyer</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Professionalism Awards</b>	<b>9-13</b>
<b>Denise O'Donnell Day Pro Bono</b>	<b>14-16</b>
<b>50- 60- 65- Year Attorneys</b>	<b>16-19</b>
<b>The Advocate Awards</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Retiring Judges</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Section of the Year Awards</b>	<b>20</b>

# Distinguished Lawyers

## Dwight Baker – on a journey of meaningful work

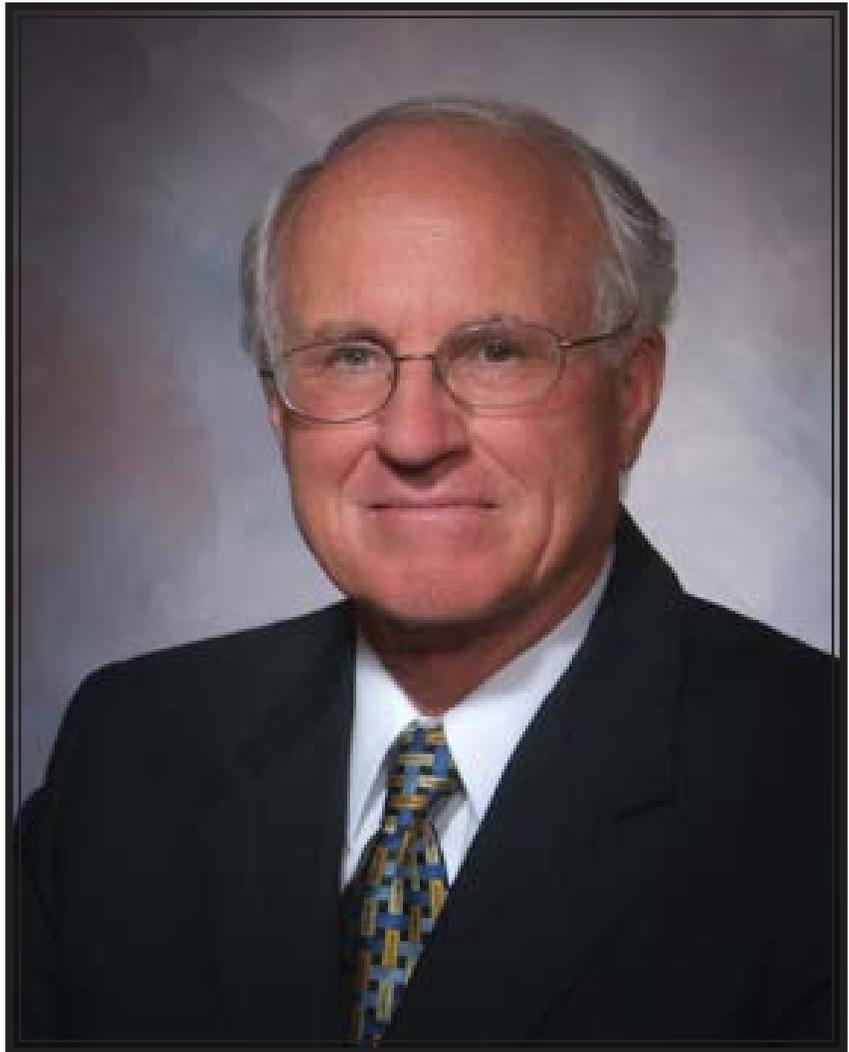
**When difficult situations arise he asks himself, “What would Blaine (Anderson) and Lou (Racine), do?”**

**B**lackfoot attorney Dwight Baker cultivates a law practice that now consists almost entirely of mediation. Rounding out a career steeped in polite dispute, he notched about 1,000 mediations over the last decade, making him one of the state’s elder statesmen in both litigation and mediation.

His journey from chemistry teacher to litigator, to Idaho State Bar President and mediator has been a natural progression for a high-achiever in search of an ever more meaningful place in the world.

He didn’t always know he would be a lawyer. As an educator fresh out of college, he got to know his students’ parents in Blackfoot. They told Dwight he should study law and that he would be a good lawyer. So Dwight enrolled at the University of Idaho College of Law and then began his practice in 1971.

Cultivating characteristics for a successful practice, he said, primarily involves a positive attitude. Professionalism and success require a “meaningful, down-to-earth connection with other attorneys and clients, which requires good communication,” he said.



“Good trial lawyers have a capacity to relate to people,” which Dwight said he can manage. It helps to be charismatic, a quality he quickly denies having. Those who know him say Dwight makes up for any lack in charisma with humility and sincerity.

His values reflect those of his parents and the simple lessons in nursery rhymes he learned as a child. Later, those same values were refined by working with great attorneys.

Throughout the years, Dwight said, when difficult situations arise he asks, “‘what would Blaine (Anderson) and Lou (Racine), do?’”

“Both of whom have received this award,” he points out.

As a commissioner for the Idaho State Bar he came to understand the level of accomplishment associated with the Distinguished Lawyer Award. With his characteristic humility Dwight said, “There are

# Distinguished Lawyers

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so many people more deserving, objectively speaking.”

But out of respect for the previous recipients, he said he could share a little about the values that have defined his own practice. Dwight tries to avoid “expensive game-playing, posturing and unnecessary competitiveness that sometimes goes on,” he said. These were values that developed early in his career.

When he was starting out at the firm of Furchner, Anderson and Martsch, Dwight suggested the firm buy a legal ethics book for the office. The partners responded that “if you have to read about ethics from a book, you are too close to the line.”

Another important lesson in his early career was being appointed to represent indigent defendants in criminal matters. At that time, attorneys for indigent criminal defendant cases were assigned by judges.

“On reflection,” he said, “it was an important opportunity to try cases. I had four first-degree murder cases as a young attorney.”

Those opportunities gave him good experience trying a wide variety of cases in challenging circumstances. “Lou (Racine) always sort of took me under his wing,” he said.

In 1980, Dwight joined the firm of St. Clair Hiller in Idaho Falls and “the bar was set high,” he said. “We expected a lot out of each other.”

The intensity of litigation eventually gave way to mediation. “I have worked with some great clients. We all have the opportunity to listen and learn from our clients,” he said.

It was during a road trip with Fred Hoopes, Dwight recalled, when he was complaining that “I had lost some of my spark for the practice,”

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and Fred encouraged a new level of service – to run for bar commissioner.

“Service is a big part of professionalism,” Dwight said, which ultimately helps each attorney develop “your own way to do the best you can to effectively represent your clients.”

In the end, Dwight has found that “the best outcomes are win-win,” a formula that led him into the more social services world of mediation, which takes up the bulk of his current practice.

“We tend to be peacekeepers,” he said. “We all fulfill that role. Ray Rigby once said we are social engineers.”

And even those who come away from mediation with virtually nothing can appreciate mediation. “They write personal letters of appreciation,” he said. “By the end, at least they understood why they didn’t get what they wanted.”

“Mediation is what you did in the first grade when your two best friends wouldn’t talk to each other. Both sides need to walk away with something. It’s a matter of empowerment. You validate them as people. They want to be heard.”

The journey from science teacher

to litigator, bar president and finally mediator has been one of constant learning, Dwight said.

“You have to be yourself - be comfortable in your own skin.” And in characteristic humility he quickly added, “I’m not sure I am.”

## Snapshot

Idaho State Bar Professionalism Award - 1998

Served on Idaho State Bar Board of Commissioners – 2006-2009

Served on Bingham County Hospital Board – 9 years

Serves as President, Industrial Development Corporation of Bingham County

## Distinguished Lawyers

Walter H. Bithell – an advocate with passion for collaboration and self-control

*“We were just honest and candid. I think that’s healthy for professional and personal growth.”*

Over the course of his 40 years trying cases, Walter H. Bithell has developed an approach that makes practicing law enjoyable - almost like a hobby.

“I have learned you can contend without being contentious,” Walt said. “You can still be an extremely vigorous advocate.”

For Walt, developing that sense of professionalism was exemplified by older attorneys in Boise who took time to share their knowledge and strategies with him as a young lawyer.

From 1972 to 1984 he practiced with Langroise, Sullivan and Smylie, a firm that in 1984 joined with Holland and Hart, where Walt continues working alongside a few of the lawyers he practiced with when he started there. “Thirty years later, and we still are a great support for each other.” Those lawyers include Fred Mack, Larry Prince and Steve Anderson, who now works at another firm.

One colleague in particular, John Ward, has been a longtime touchstone: “We somehow developed the ability to be open and honest with each other. We seldom socialized



outside of work. We were just honest and candid. I think that’s healthy for professional and personal growth.”

### **His secret weapon**

Walt maintains a level of comfort and ease in his practice by trying to

take the high road, never harboring grudges or trying to get even. “I have found that there were lawyers who were disingenuous. Although I’ve had a suspicion, I didn’t confront them. I wasn’t naïve. I just don’t think the law is advanced by yelling at each

# Distinguished Lawyers

other. It's not my nature to be nasty with people."

By being even-keeled and focusing on the case at hand, Walt said he achieves an important goal: "I want to be in control of myself and the case. Once words are out, it's hard to take them back. Litigation is hard enough anyway.

"Lawyers say and do things that come back to haunt you. And once it happens, the case is more contentious. Some lawyers feed off that. I'm not one of those. I've seen depositions where the attorney screamed and shouted. It's not a healthy way to practice law."

Staying clear of negative entanglements, Walter said he can enjoy the many opportunities of collegiality in the profession. "Most lawyers are competent and trustworthy," he said. "That's what makes it so enjoyable."

## How it all happened

Trying cases can be stressful, but Walt knew instantly he belonged in a courtroom: "I remember my first trial. It was terrifying. Exhilarating. It was, 'Wow! This is OK!' You're at the OK Coral and all that's left is the shout-out."

Did he win decisively? "No, I lost. But I enjoyed it. Most everyone wants to be a trial lawyer while in law school. But not many are suited for it. I liked the competitiveness and plowing new ground. When representing plaintiffs, by the time you get to court, you believe in your client's cause."

Once he caught the bug, he set about finding his own style. With an undergraduate degree in accounting, Walt was asked to challenge the Idaho Tax Commission on its uniform law for distributing taxes. After the judge ruled Walt reflected on the amount of money involved.

"That was when I realized the power of the courts," Walt said.

As a young solo practitioner, he

*"I remember my first trial. It was terrifying. Exhilarating. It was, 'Wow! This is OK!'"*

asked the best lawyers to advise him on cases. "I made it a point to go visit with senior lawyers at other firms," Walt said.

"It was a form of respect."

Those consultations brought a wealth of wisdom and experience, "They would just unload on me," he said. "I ended up getting more mentoring than some attorneys in their firms."

Over the years, Walt continued to seek the guidance and perspective of other attorneys: "I remember meeting four or five other plaintiffs' lawyers about working with each other. That was the germination stage of what became the Idaho Trial Lawyers Association. The seminal moment was when we realized we needed to communicate with each other. So I got involved with the ITLA. It was a great way to formalize it. It was very comforting."

"If you were depressed, lonely, that's no way to practice law," Walt said. "That's no way to live."

And on that topic, Walt credits his own greatest advocate: "I've been terribly supported by one person through all this – my wife, Sherry. She's had her own life, her own career, but always been caring and supportive of me."

By emphasizing the best among people over many years Walt now enjoys the results of a practice befitting a distinguished lawyer – a litigation practice that is more like a hobby than a burden.

## Snapshot

Idaho State Bar  
Professionalism Award

Served on Idaho State Bar Board  
of Commissioners 1996-1998

Past member, Idaho Law  
Foundation Board of Directors

Idaho Trial Lawyers Association  
2006, Trial Lawyer of the Year

President, Idaho Trial Lawyers  
Association, 1981-82

University of Idaho Alumni  
Association, UI Gold and Silver  
Award, 2001

2012 Litigation Counsel of  
America, Idaho State Delegate  
Co-Chair

Board of Governors, American  
Association for Justice, (formerly  
American Trial Lawyers  
Association)

Litigation Counsel of America  
Idaho State Delegate Co-Chair

# Service Awards



## John G. Hall John Glenn Hall Company, Boise

Q: Please describe your community service efforts:

A: I worked closely with bar staff to develop a classroom technology project that facilitates video conferencing among other things. I advised the bar about what equipment to purchase and answered many questions as the project evolved. We all worked together to design the bar's class room remodeling project.

Q: What inspired you to do this work?

A: The inspiration came from knowing we could be doing a much better job in operating the classroom and the broadcasting from there.

Q: What have you learned in the process?

A: What a great bunch of people who work at the bar. Thanks go to Mahmood, Dayna and Beth. We're a team!

Deputy Executive Director Mahmood Sheikh noted the following examples of John's service to the Bar.

- John spent at least 5-10 hours of his personal time in visiting with the classroom technology providers, Data Projections, in explaining the Bar's needs from a CLE standpoint. He also spent time at least 10-20 minutes each

week for about a month answering questions in person, over the phone and via email with regards to the type of equipment being recommended by Data Projections and how it fit into our overall needs.

- John worked closely with us during our transition to Peach New Media. Once again he provided sound technical consulting. Since last April, he has spent time working with Peach's IT staff in ensuring our webcasts are high quality. He was with us during the thick of things when we were working out some bugs and spent his own time in determining best options for us and represented us at the table with Peach during those discussions.

- John has always taken photographs for us at the Annual Meeting without charging us for his time or product. He has also done this at a few CLEs as well.

- John has put together roundtable discussions with partners such as Boise State, Concordia and the Idaho Supreme Court to share technological best practices and to get a feel for what the future holds.

## Ernest A. Hoidal Ernest A. Hoidal Law Office, Boise

Having represented clients from more than 150 countries, Ernest, or Ernie, Hoidal has emphasized immigration law in his practice, but has always made time for public service. He has helped businesses attract and retain individuals to conduct scientific research, as well as helping restaurants with their immigration requirements. Public service areas have included extensive service with the Idaho Legal History Society, where he has served as chairman of the oral history committee, taking oral histories of dozens of important figures in the Idaho legal community, and having been a prolific historian for numerous topics in Idaho History.



Ernie commented that, "as a native Idahoan, I have lived in Boise as well as Nez Perce and Mackay during my elementary school years. Since my parents were both born in Idaho, Idaho history has always interested me."

"The Idaho Legal History Society provided numerous contacts for research of Oscar Worthwine from 1985-1960. Oscar Worthwine was an attorney who practiced in Idaho from 1911 until 1960. I learn new things every day regarding Idaho's legal history and my immigration law practice."

Ernie has helped obtain visas for professional workers, intra-company transferees, treaty traders and treaty investors and other qualified scholars, entrepreneurs as well as families and individuals seeking immigrant visas, residence, asylum and citizenship.

His other community service includes serving on the Boise State University Foundation, writing for The Advocate, and the Idaho Legal History Society Newsletter.

He has served as Chairman of the Humanitarian Bowl, Chairman of the Advisory Council of the College of Social Sciences and University Affairs at Boise State University.

He served on the Dean's Advisory Council for Concordia University School of Law, and is the President of the Idaho Museum of Mining and Geology.

# Service Awards



**Dawn Justice**  
Executive Director  
of the Idaho Bankers  
Association, Boise

Dawn Justice was contacted by the Idaho State Bar and the Idaho Law Foundation to help inform the banking industry about changes to the IOLTA rules, which went into effect last year.

"I was pleased to help as it was a natural that the state bankers association would be uniquely positioned to get the word out," she said.

"We mailed packets, we emailed some follow-up messages, and finally made a few phone calls to make sure every IBA member was aware and had the opportunity to become an IOLTA-approved financial institution."

It was a benefit to the ISB and ILF to have Dawn and her organization to make these contacts, and it was helpful to the banking industry because they needed to be informed of the changes to have an opportunity to remain an IOLTA participating bank.

"It was a win/win, as they say," she said.



**Jonathan M. Volyn**  
Pocatello

Q: Please describe your community service efforts:

A: I have served for four years as a district bar officer, and am currently the 6th District President. I am a frequent speaker at Soundstart and Court Assistance workshop presentations. In 2012, following the Charlotte fire in Pocatello, (which destroyed about 70 homes and over 1000 acres of developed residential land), I organized and hosted a town-hall style meeting where victims could come and ask legal questions relating to fire losses, liability, and insurance claims from a panel of experienced local attorneys. The event was held very close in time after the fire and was very successful and well received/attended.

Q: What inspired you to do this work?

A: I have always been involved in pro bono and community service efforts, and have received pro bono awards from both Idaho and Washington in the past. After the fire, I was struck by a desire to help, and attempted to utilize the unique skillset of attorneys to help in a way that only we can.

Q: What have you learned in the process?

A: I have learned that lawyers can help in their community in ways other than legal representation. We can volunteer in service, fundraise, or simply be there to help out in the community in any way where we might be needed.



**Thomas M. Vasseur**  
Vasseur & Schlotthauer,  
PLLC, Coeur d'Alene

Q: Please describe your community service efforts?

A: Assist, mentor and sponsor attorneys and others in my community.

Q: What inspired you to do this work?

A: Observation of friends, senior members of the Bar and leaders within my community whom I admire and who have demonstrated their dedication, modesty and humility, and the benefits of their service.

Q: What have you learned in the process?

A: The anonymous helping of other people who, as myself, have suffered debilitating circumstances, and who thereafter have been able to experience a new and better life and new happiness, provides me with personal satisfaction and a sense of accomplishing goals in my life that are much more significant than material awards.

# Service Awards

## Ryan P. Henson

### Gulstrom Henson & Roark, PC, Nampa

Ryan Henson earned a Bachelor's of Science in Marketing from the University of Idaho in 1996 and his J.D. from the University of North Dakota in May 2002.

A former Canyon County Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, he also worked in the criminal defense firm of Larivee and Light, LLC, and for the King County Prosecuting Attorney in

Washington State, where he worked on the "Most Dangerous Offenders Project."

In May, Ryan earned accolades when he saved a teenage client's life by stopping him from jumping from the roof of the Ada County Courthouse.

Ryan jumped two, five-foot walls, to follow the teen onto a fifth-floor roof ledge, where the teen contemplated jumping. The teen suffered from autism spectrum disorder, and Ryan snatched him from the ledge.

Ryan did not respond to the Q&A.



# Scott Randolph - Outstanding Young Lawyer

## Scott uses lessons from his clerkship with Judge Randy Smith

At 35, Scott Randolph has developed a personal philosophy so profoundly simple it seems fitting he developed it during a clerkship for Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Randy Smith.

Scott credits Judge Smith for imparting a lasting impression. "He was, and is, just an amazing person," Scott said. "What impressed me was the respect with which he treated everyone - from the taxi driver to the clerks, everyone. I valued that example. I found that to be something I wanted to take away and carry into my life."

Originally from Twin Falls, Scott got his undergraduate degree in healthcare administration from Oregon State University and his JD from the University of Texas at Austin. He began his practice in Boise and joined the litigation group at Stoel Rives. He joined the Young Lawyers Section and practiced a couple of years before he heard that Judge Smith was hiring clerks.

"It was a huge opportunity and I jumped for it," Scott said.

After a year clerking in East Idaho he returned to Boise and joined Holland and Hart's litigation group where he continues to do mostly business and employment litigation. The firm encourages pro bono work and Scott said lawyers are asked to perform 100 hours of pro bono or community service work each year. Scott didn't have any problem meeting the target.

He served as an attorney for multiple Guardians Ad Litem with the CASA program and took other pro bono cases in criminal and civil rights areas, including two appeals to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

"It was good because it gave me exposure to different kinds of people," he said, "and to do pro bono for people when there were good cases. It was rewarding for me, professionally."



After the clerkship, Scott found other ways to expand his volunteer work for the profession. He has been active in the Labor and Employment Law and the Litigation Sections of the Bar. Scott also volunteered to serve on the Editorial Advisory Board of The Advocate, where he served for 8 years, including a stint as chairman.

His civic work continued when he was appointed to serve on the Board of the United Way of Treasure Valley earlier this year. With a steady case load and all these community, professional and civic activities, one might expect to see Scott thoroughly frazzled.

Not so. "If I am having a tough day, it just takes about three seconds of playing with my two young kids to help me keep things in perspective," he said. He also stays active, gets out "to enjoy the sunshine," and tries to remember to keep a respectful attitude for others.

"It might not be foolproof, but it works for me," he said. "This bar is truly a remarkable place. People have been good mentors. I appreciate the professional environment to practice and you do your best to perpetuate it."

# Professionalism Awards



**John M. Adams**

Law Office of the Kootenai  
County Public Defender,  
Coeur d'Alene

Q: Professional attributes you find most beneficial in your own practice:

A: The ability to recognize and work with the legal talent around you.

Q: What inspired you to ascribe to these principles or characteristics?

A: Accepting that I was limited to my own view of the world and that others often had different and valuable insights.

Q: What have you learned in the process?

A: One is a better lawyer, a more successful person, when fortunate, as am I, to work with people that are dedicated, honorable and committed to the rule of law.



**William F. Boyd**

Ramsden & Lyons, LLP,  
Coeur d'Alene

Q: Professional attributes you find most beneficial in your own practice:

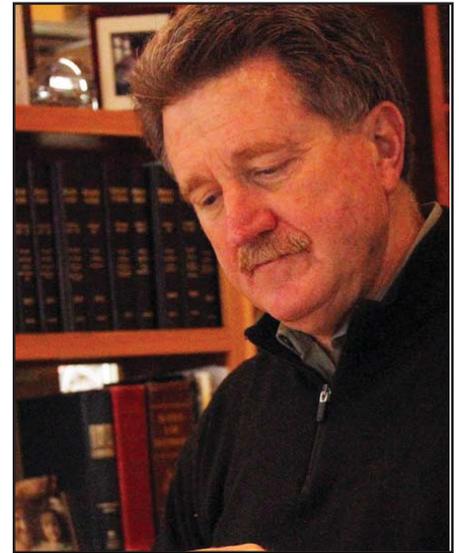
A: The professional attributes I find most beneficial in my practice are employment of the Golden Rule; treat clients, lawyers and judges the way I would want to be treated.

Q: What inspired you to ascribe to these principles or characteristics?

A: I was inspired to ascribe to these principles by the lawyers for whom I worked in Kellogg right out of law school: Robert E. Brown, John J. Peacock and James P. Keane. In addition I learned from other good lawyers, including judges, in our geographic area by observing them, dealing with them and appearing before them.

Q: What have you learned in the process?

A: I have learned in the process that clients, lawyers and judges appreciate a prompt, straight-forward, and courteous approach and usually respond in the same way. This makes the practice of law enjoyable.



**Ronald J. Landeck**

Landeck & Forseth,  
Attorneys at Law, Moscow

Q: Professional attributes you find most beneficial in your own practice:

A: The key professional attributes in my legal practice are integrity, collegiality, a mindset and commitment of service to others and development and use of excellent legal practice and problem solving skills.

Q: What inspired you to ascribe to these principles or characteristics?

A: My inspiration to ascribe to a profession that values honesty, fairness and justice in people's interrelationships with one another was the product of a loving, faith-filled and hard-working family, a public primary and secondary education system that reminded me daily of the unique fabric of our society and a higher education experience that provided perspective into and tools to deal with the differences that define and sometimes divide us as people.

Q: What have you learned in the process?

A: One simple lesson that came early and stands out, is I learned my

# Professionalism Awards

personal biases could potentially interfere with my readiness to listen to the substance of what was being said by my client or an opposing counsel. My overall perspective as to what I have learned during the 44 years since my graduation from law school is that, while the practice of law makes extraordinary demands on time, mind and heart, being able to employ one's education, experience and professional judgment in service of others makes for a worthy and meaningful life's work.



**Hon. Gregory M. Culet**

**Retired, currently serving as an Idaho Senior District Judge, Caldwell**

Q: Professional attributes you find most beneficial in your own practice:

A: Integrity, courage and independence, both as an individual and in maintaining the integrity and independence of the judicial system;

A necessary corollary to that is understanding and accepting that

a judge will sometimes be required to make decisions that are disliked or unpopular and may even put the judge at significant personal risk, both professionally and physically;

Diligence, impartiality, preparation and decisiveness;

Patience, understanding and empathy for the lawyers, litigants and other participants in the judicial process, along with maintaining common sense and a sense of humor;

Optimism, innovation and leadership;

Incumbent with that is the willingness to become engaged in efforts to improve and maintain the judicial process so that it actually provides fairness and justice to the participants, provides relief when appropriate, and that actually benefits our community. Examples of this are the various ongoing Bench-Bar committees focused on maintaining and improving the many components of the judicial process.

Q: What inspired you to ascribe to these principles or characteristics?

A: These are the characteristics of the judges and lawyers who impressed me the most during my career. We all know individuals who reflect those characteristics, and it is not coincidental that they are invariably successful and appear to be contented and enthusiastic with their chosen profession.

These were also the values and principles of my parents and family that I experienced while growing up.

Q: What have you learned in the process?

A: By following (or trying to follow) these principles, I found that I can enjoy, and even be enthusiastic about, my work in the judicial system without sacrificing the quality of my work.

As a judge, I can appreciate and enjoy the competitiveness and advocacy of lawyers and the fascinating issues of many our cases, while still remaining impartial.

With each case I am assigned

*I can appreciate and enjoy the competitiveness and advocacy of lawyers ...*

in retirement, I now make a special effort to appreciate the experience and the opportunity to interact with counsel and court personnel, knowing that these opportunities are limited, and I may never have another case with the same individuals again.

I believe that the judicial system can function so that individual litigants in both civil and criminal cases, and other participants such as jurors, crime victims, or children who are the subject of domestic disputes, can be involved in our judicial system, regardless of the outcome, and still feel that were treated with dignity, respect and fairness.

As judges, we can leave the judicial system in a better position than it was when we entered our judicial service.

Along that same theme, as judges and lawyers, we can engage ourselves in efforts to improve the outcome of the judicial process, and to be innovative and collaborative in that effort. Examples are evidenced by the significant increase in problem solving courts, and an increase in other Bench-Bar collaborations, such as standing rules committees to address the various disciplines and focus areas of the system, the development and acceptance of mediation in family law cases, as well as in civil and criminal cases, the development of the Lawyers Assistance Program to develop and administer resources to assist lawyers and judges in securing treatment for addictive diseases and mental health issues, and to educate the bench and bar on those issues, and the continued development of pro bono programs in each judicial district, as well as other innovative Bench-Bar collaborations.

# Professionalism Awards



**Scott D. Hess**

## Holland & Hart, LLP Boise

Q: Professional attributes you find most beneficial in your own practice:

A: Stated broadly, I believe that an attorney's professional attributes fall within three primary categories - education, experience and reputation. Formal legal training in law school is important but, in my experience, success in law school is not always predictive of an individual's ultimate success as a lawyer.

Rather, the hands-on training that comes from actual practice, interaction with clients that have real-life issues to be addressed, and mentoring from senior bar members prepares and ultimately guides an attorney through a successful career.

Obviously, experience cannot be over emphasized. The experience provided by a clerking position for a state or federal judge early in a career emphasizes development of one's writing abilities, but it also provides the perspective that judges are simply lawyers and people, too.

Milestones in one's career are significant also. The first opening statement to a jury, or the first closing

on a major transactional matter are experiences that will never be forgotten.

These, and other experiences, become meaningful with the recognition that the practice of law always imposes challenges. An important attribute of a successful attorney includes the enjoyment of facing and resolving those daily challenges - when the job is no longer enjoyable or challenging, it is time to look elsewhere. A lawyer must be curious and imaginative, willing to listen. As we go through our daily routine we must not forget that the decision to seek counsel, for most people, is as stressful as seeing a doctor or a dentist.

Finally, reputation is an attorney's goal. While not every case can be won, a reputation for honesty, integrity and compassion will follow a lawyer through his or her career. One misstep with honesty before a court can prove fatal. One instance of lack of integrity to an opposing counsel can spread like wildfire through the Bar and tarnish the attorney's future dealings and effectiveness.

Clients demand, rightfully, a compassionate ear. They demand an attorney who conveys a true and legitimate concern for their problem. While many clients verbalize a demand for a warrior as their counsel, what they are truly seeking is a lawyer who will answer the phone when they call, listen to their concern, show imagination in seeking a solution, and provide an honest evaluation of the result to be expected. When I pick a jury, I want 12 decent human beings; I believe that when the jury looks at the attorneys trying the case, they will side with the one who is the most like them.

Q: What inspired you to ascribe to these principles or characteristics?

A: I watch young lawyers, who believe that their only path to success is through billable hours racked up at the rate of 12-14 (or more)

hours per day. They ignore their family, their friends, their law school acquaintances. The importance of working to live instead of living to work was emphasized to me by the Chief Judge of a Circuit Court for whom I clerked. He had a passion for sports, for the outdoors, and for the arts, which he balanced against a very successful and rewarding career. He inspired me to achieve a similar balance.

I recall the very first deposition that I took as a young lawyer. At the conclusion of the deposition, I sought the praise of the senior lawyer who had watched over my questioning of the witness. His response was telling and has stuck with me: "You got enough for summary judgment, but you didn't get his story."

Every client has a story to tell, and if we fail to listen we cannot successfully represent that client or his or her interests.

Recently I sat in a meeting the goal of which was to address a strategic plan for a litigation group. As often happens with attorneys, war stories were told.

Few of those stories dealt with difficult legal issues; almost all revealed aspects of the client's story that were surprising and often unbelievable. My true mentors have inspired me to seek out the story.

Q: What have you learned in the process?

A: I hope that I have learned to be humble. Education, experience and reputation are all important. But any lawyer that denies the importance of luck simply needs some more experience. I am humbled by the great lawyers with whom I have practiced, the great lawyers that I claim as my mentors, the great lawyers from whom I have been educated as they destroyed my client on cross examination. As I continue to practice and as I continue to be passionate in resolving my clients' problems, I continue to learn.

# Professionalism Awards



**Deb K. Kristensen**

**Givens Pursley, LLP, Boise**

Q: Professional attributes you find most beneficial in your own practice:

A: I have long known that being competent, hard-working and diligent is essential to building a practice. But, over the years, I have learned that being civil, courteous and cooperative may be even more important. I always say that there may be six degrees of separation in the world, but there are only two degrees in Idaho (at best). And, in the legal profession, it is likely even less. Reputations are hard won, but easily lost. Being a respectful, civil advocate – even in the most contentious litigation – is something I strive for in and out of the courtroom. I also realize that much of my practice is made possible by the people I work with - my partners, associates, paralegals and staff. Anyone who knows me knows that I take a cooperative, collaborative approach to problem-solving. Egos are checked at the door in order to get the best results possible.

Q: What inspired you to ascribe to these principles or characteristics?

I practiced in California and

Washington before coming to Idaho. Suffice it to say that I was able to see many “styles” of lawyering – often much more aggressive and contentious than I felt comfortable with. An exception to this rule was a mentor of mine who, at the time, was nearing retirement. He was never contentious for the sake of being contentious. He was kind, courteous and wickedly smart. No one saw him as a weak advocate – in fact, he had a reputation as being one of the nation’s foremost First Amendment experts. His approach to the practice of law made me realize that being civil and courteous in your practice is not a sign of weakness, it is a sign of confidence and strength.

Q: What have you learned in the process?

I have learned that I am blessed to practice law in Idaho. I am able to practice law at a very sophisticated level, with a professional bench and bar that work cooperatively together. Opportunities to get involved in public service and efforts to promote the improvement of the administration of justice – at the state and federal level – are readily available and have brought me tremendous personal and professional satisfaction.

**James C. Meservy**

**Williams, Meservy & Lothspeich, LLP, Jerome**

Q: Professional attributes you find most beneficial in your own practice:

A: Honesty with the client, opposing counsel and the court. Your reputation means everything. Providing wise counsel that guides your client helps him or her to make good decisions to resolve the issue at hand. The best way to build a practice is to provide good, wise, sound counsel to clients that help them. If your clients feel you have



**James Meservy**

done that, they come back.

Q: What inspired you to ascribe to these principles or characteristics?

A: I realized early that good counsel is what most clients want. Providing good counsel is the basis of all that we do. Such is the foundation of the practice of law.

Q: What have you learned in the process?

A: Most clients really appreciate their attorney when they have had effective representation. Over the years, on many occasions, a client will come up at a movie, super market, gas station, etc. and thank you for work or counsel that has blessed their lives in some manner or another. At the end of the day, if, looking back, a client feels that you have helped them in some way, and made a difference; well, that is what it is all about.

**David P. Gardner**

**Moffatt, Thomas, Barrett, Rock & Fields, Pocatello**

Q: Professional attributes you find most beneficial in your own practice:

# Professionalism Awards



David Gardner

A: The attributes of professionalism that I try to apply in my own practice include competence, patience, kindness, gratitude and diligence. In our profession, it is possible to disagree with someone without being disagreeable. I also believe that the more time we try to put ourselves in someone else's shoes and the less time we focus on our own perceived position, help us to be better advocates for our clients.

Q: What inspired you to ascribe to these principles or characteristics?

A: I give credit to my wonderful law partners at Moffatt Thomas, especially Gary Dance, Brad Williams, Lee Radford and Julian Gabiola. It is much easier to be professional when that is what you see around you.

Along that same line, the amazingly professional attorneys in the Sixth District Bar Association are also examples to me. Gary Cooper, Jim Spinner, Reed Larsen, Brent Roche, Tony Sasser and many, many, more are constant examples of professionalism.

Finally, I cannot thank enough my wonderful mentor and great friend, the Honorable N. Randy Smith. I had the privilege of being his first law clerk when he was a new judge on the State Court Bench. My time working

with him was an absolute privilege, and he demonstrated to me on a regular basis the highest example of professionalism.

Q: What have you learned in the process?

I am truly humbled and honored to even be considered for this award, and I find it quite remarkable and unexpected to receive it. I certainly do not consider myself to be a professional at any of these attributes, but the practice of law is just that, "practice."

It is something that I am constantly working at with the hope of doing better every single day. I am proud to be an Idaho lawyer and have the opportunity to work with some great lawyers. Thank you to the Idaho State Bar for this wonderful award.

## Charles A. Homer

### Holden, Kidwell, Hahn & Crapo, PLLC, Idaho Falls

Charles Homer has long earned the trust of fellow attorneys, clients and the greater community of Idaho Falls with an active real estate and business practice.

Charles, or Chuck, as he is known, has distinguished himself throughout his legal career, starting in law school, where he served as Articles Editor of the Idaho Law Review at the University of Idaho College of Law, where he graduated with honors. He now works at Holden, Kidwell, Hahn & Crapo, PLLC, one of the larger firms in Eastern Idaho, where he practices in the areas of real estate transactions, commercial litigation, banking, commercial lending, creditor's and debtor's rights and business law.

Willing to get involved, Chuck served many years on the Board of Directors for the Idaho Law Foundation. In that capacity he



Charles Homer

served as President during a time when the ILF was forced to adjust to a more difficult funding climate as IOLTA funding dramatically decreased. That is the interest earned on clients' trust accounts. As interest rates dropped in recent years, so has the ILF's revenue. Chuck served on ILF Committees dealing with the IOLTA Funding, and for Law Related Education, which operates the state's Mock Trial program and connects classrooms with volunteer lawyers and curriculum.

Chuck has long been a member in the Real Property Section of the Idaho Bar, and has served as chair of that organization, one of the largest and most active Sections in the bar.

Chuck presents seminars on real estate transactions and real estate foreclosures. He won the Idaho State Service Award in 2010, when he was recognized for his extensive service to the Bar.

In his Idaho Falls practice, Chuck serves as corporate counsel for several local businesses. He is currently serving as Chapter Chair of the Upper Snake River Valley Chapter of the J. Reuben Clark Law Society.

Chuck did not return the Q & A.

# Denise O'Donnell Day Pro Bono Awards



1<sup>st</sup> District:

## Jay Q. Sturgell

Jay Sturgell helped the Court Appointed Special Advocate program on multiple cases. His heart for the children and their welfare always remained front and center. Jay's knowledge with Idaho Child Welfare Act was used to the fullest with a successful outcome for a child protection case. CASA would like to thank Jay for his hours of work donated to the in best interest of children.

2<sup>nd</sup> District:

## Charles E. Kovis

- (photo not available)

For the last 15 years Moscow attorney Charles, "Chuck" Kovis has prevailed in more jury trials than nearly any other criminal defense lawyer in Idaho. He has time and again achieved outstanding verdicts on a shoestring budget, representing indigent clients almost exclusively. Chuck has sacrificed lucrative remuneration in order to provide superlative representation to the least powerful in the community.



3<sup>rd</sup> District:

## Matthew K Shriver

Most people cannot imagine how difficult it is to raise a child with serious developmental delays and mental disorders, particularly when the family's financial resources are very limited. Now try to imagine how that difficulty is increased when that child reaches age 18 and the parent can no longer legally make decisions for the child's medical care etc., without becoming the legal guardian. Fortunately Matt generously agreed to assist a Canyon County parent to successfully gain guardianship so that she could continue to care for her adult child and see that he received proper medical attention and appropriate assistance.

4<sup>th</sup> District:

## Audrey L. Numbers

Among the greatest legal needs of low-income people is help navigating the family law court to achieve stability and security (and sometimes safety) for adults and their children. Audrey Numbers always gives generously of her family law skills to low income



Audrey Numbers

clients and to assist at organizations such as the Women's and Children's Alliance. In 2012 Audrey donated over 100 hours in assisting a client who had suffered from severe stress brought on by a serious injury and emotional and physical abuse from her husband. The client's attempt to seek medical help for her stress afforded her husband in a divorce proceeding and her ex-husband in a custody modification case to mount claims for custody of the client's two daughters. Audrey took the modification case to trial and obtained a stipulation favorable to the client in the divorce proceeding.

## Victoria M. Loegering and Kirsten A. Ocker

Sometimes facts surrounding a family law dispute can be complex, difficult and highly disputed. Victoria Loegering and Kirsten Ocker agreed to take on a pro bono custody case, knowing this was one of the hard ones. Together they worked diligently over a long haul and donated a total of 246 hours, to achieve a positive result for a mother who had custody on paper but who had been bullied and manipulated to the point where

# Denise O' Donnell Day Pro Bono Awards



Victoria Loegering



Erika Birch



Paula Brown Sinclair



Kirsten Ocker

her contact with her two children was almost nonexistent. Without resources to hire an attorney to fight what turned out to be a monumental battle, these children and their mother would have been lost to each other.

Today the children are doing well and the parents are operating under a sharing custody arrangement, which Victoria notes, is in the best interest of the children. Mss. Loegering and Ocker want to thank Chris Huntley and the Huntley Law Firm for their

support in this extraordinary pro bono effort.

## Erika Birch

Idaho Rule of Professional Responsibility 6.1 recognizes the importance of lawyers participating in "activities for improving the law, the legal system, or the legal profession" as pro bono service.

Few lawyers exemplify the spirit of this provision as well as Erika Birch. In 2012 Erika donated more than 60 hours of service in leading the development and implementation of the Boise "Street Law Clinic."

Her work covered the gamut of setting up a new service program including recruiting volunteers and agency partners, finding a suitable location, and developing a library of resources for use at the clinic sessions.

The Clinic is staffed with lawyers who donate their services and with law students from the University of Idaho and Concordia law schools who are offered a hands-on learning experience.

The Clinic offers a new source of free legal services to the public in the Treasure Valley in the form of advice and counsel as well as actual representation in some instances.

## 5<sup>th</sup> District:

### Paula Brown Sinclair

Among the greatest legal needs that some low income people experience is assistance with freeing themselves from abusive relationships with those who have power over them. In 2010, Paula Brown Sinclair agreed to represent a client with a disability whose conservator was both unresponsive and abusive. Through Paula's efforts over the course of three years the client was able to have the conservator replaced and her personal dignity restored. Without Paula's generous donation of her legal expertise this client would have been utterly powerless to defend herself from the abuse of a person who was appointed to protect her.

## 6<sup>th</sup> District:

### Peter M. Wells

Some guardianships are uncontested and all parties agree that the protected person is well-served by the process. At such times the volunteer attorneys' roles are relatively easy and the result is one everyone can feel good about.

Peter Wells, however, volunteered for one of the hard ones: agreeing to

# Denise O' Donnell Day Pro Bono Awards



Peter Wells

represent a low income mother with a disability who wanted to contest a guardianship that had been established on temporary basis over her baby.

The petitioning guardian had a lot to offer as an educated and middle class mother of adult children; she also knew how the system worked and had the resources to hire an attorney. But, the mother's fitness to raise the child had not been thoroughly reviewed by the court. By volunteering Peter gave the mother the access to the court that she needed to make her case and an advocate to negotiate a shared custody arrangement that preserved the stability offered by the guardian and yet allowed the mother time with her child.



Aaron Crary

7<sup>th</sup> District:

## Aaron Crary

Family law cases sometimes present heart-breaking issues that some attorneys are unwilling to handle. Fortunately other volunteers like Aaron Crary step in to help where they are most needed. In this case, a Jefferson County mother of 2 young children was, with Aaron's help, able to obtain a custody order that protected her 2 year old daughter and baby son from a father that was physically and verbally abusive, and who suffered from a psychotic disorder that caused some of his behavior to be bizarre and frightening.



Brad Willis

The stability and security accorded these young children and their mother through this volunteer attorney's help cannot be overvalued.

6<sup>th</sup> District:

## Bradley R. Willis

Bradley Willis works in the world of family law with the magistrate courts. He also works on criminal defense and general civil cases. Brad has become the go to volunteer for the CASA program. He is always eager to assist whenever called on to help and his expertise is highly valued by the 6<sup>th</sup> District CASA program.

# 50, 60 and 65-year Attorneys

65 Year Attorney:

## Jack B. Furey

Challis

Jack Furey comes from a long line of ranchers in the heart of Idaho's wilderness. Growing up, he knew he would stay in ranching, but would also need another profession that would allow him the independence to come and go on his ranch when needed. When he realized he wouldn't have to work for anyone else if he was

an attorney he decided the practice of law was the field for him. He was able to attend the University of Idaho and graduate with a law degree without ever obtaining an undergraduate degree. During his career he had a general practice, and for sixteen of those years served as prosecuting attorney for Custer County. His brother, Sherman F. Furey, Jr., now deceased, provided mentorship to Jack when he started his career. Jack was always involved in the Bar and his community. He was a recipient of a Professionalism Award in 2000. Jack

believes the number of lawyers has increased exponentially, but is very impressed with "how prepared these young folks are" when they enter the legal profession. His advice to new admittees to the Idaho State Bar, "If you enjoy the work and don't mind the preparation, it's a great place to be."

Jack and his wife Nancy have a son Pat and daughter Nancy Kathleen "Kit" Furey. Both have followed in their father's and uncle's footsteps and are attorneys. Jack and Nancy also have six grandchildren.

# 50, 60 and 65-year Attorneys

## 60 Year Attorneys:

### **Gerald W. Olson**

Pocatello

Charlie Johnson says of Gerald "he represents the best tradition of Idaho lawyers advocating for their clients in a civil manner. He's a great guy." Gerald Olson graduated from Washburn University with a law degree.

After college he practiced with Johnson Olson Chtd. Gerald chose to go into the practice of law after his role as a prosecuting attorney with the American Legion's Boys State program. He was the first one in his family to practice law and gives nod to Ben Davis and Lou Racine for being mentors during his career.

Gerald has served as a past ISB president and received the Distinguished Lawyer award in 1996 and his 50 years in practice award in 2003. He and his wife Glenna have three children, three grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

### **William C. Roden**

Boise

A lifelong resident of Idaho, Bill graduated with a political science degree from University of Idaho before obtaining his law degree from the University of Idaho College of Law.

He served in the U.S. Army for two years as a Special Agent in the Counter-Intelligence Corps. Upon returning to Idaho he served as Ada County Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for one year, Assistant Attorney General for two years and was elected to the office of Prosecuting Attorney for Ada County in 1958. Entering private practice in 1960, Bill was elected to the Idaho Senate representing Ada County and served

four terms.

He is on the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Idaho Historical Museum, Buy Idaho, Inc. and the Idaho Tax Foundation. He and his wife Betty have two children, three grandchildren, four great grandchildren, love the outdoors and enjoy their summer home on Payette Lake.

### **Archibald W. Service**

Pocatello

Archie was influenced to practice law "after serving two years in the Navy as an electrician I knew I didn't want to do that." His practice area is in taxation, trusts, estate and probate with Service and Spinner. Archie states his reason for success is to "stay in contact with the client. Remember who you are representing. Do what is best for your client." He received the ISB Professionalism and 50 year attorney awards in 2003 and the Distinguished Lawyer award in 2012. Those who know Archie talk about a personable, trustworthy and competent professional who is always willing to lend a hand.

He is also known for his interest in learning and sharing the fine points of trusts and estates. In that capacity he has been a founding member of the Idaho State University's Annual Tax Institute. Archie has two sons and one grandchild. He enjoys playing golf, traveling and is currently studying piano.

### **Thomas A. Mitchell**

Coeur d'Alene

Tom started law school his junior year at University of Idaho, one of the last years an undergrad degree was not required. He states "Eugene Bush bet me a stolen case of beer that I wouldn't apply to law school. Back

then, all you had to do was sign your name on the 'law school sign up list' taped to the Dean's door."

Tom has served as a past Idaho Law Foundation board member, past ISB President and received the Distinguished Lawyer award in 1987. He advises young attorneys to "be straightforward with your clients." Tom enjoys spending his time with family and reading.

He and his late wife Jody have six children and five grandchildren. His son John is a First District Court Judge and his daughter Elizabeth is an attorney. Tom's granddaughter Molly will be starting law school this fall.

## 50 Year Attorneys:

### **James R. Bennetts**

Challis

Jim served our country in the para artillery unit of the US Army and was selected as one of the top 10 Army officers in 1956. He attended Idaho State University with a degree in Business Pre Law, was active in the ROTC and received his law degree from University of Idaho College of Law.

He sat as a city judge in Moscow for two years and practices mostly real estate law with Sawtooth Law Offices. Jim gives a nod to Jack Furey and his brother Sherm as being very influential in his early career and Lou Racine for being an attorney whom he admired and emulated. He is most proud of always working with pro bono clients who truly needed assistance and recommends young attorneys "try to shape the bar up by example."

Jim owns ranches in the Challis area and enjoys spending time there with his four children and four grandchildren.

# 50, 60 and 65-year Attorneys

## W. Anthony Park

Boise

Tony received his BA from the University of Idaho and his JD from the University of Idaho College of Law. He began his own law practice, Thomas, Williams & Park, LLP, less than a year after graduation from law school through luck and hard work, his emphasis on general civil litigation. Tony felt that law as a profession was a "pretty clear choice for me."

He cites Senator Frank Church as being influential to his career as a role model, "he demonstrated the highest level of integrity and intelligence." In his personal life, his wife Gail has been the most influential "her intelligence and strength of character have been inspirational and extraordinarily supportive."

He has served as an Attorney General for the State of Idaho and is a member of the ISB Alternative Dispute Resolution section. Tony and his wife Gail have three children, Patricia, Adam and Susan who is an attorney teaching at Boise State University.

## Hon. Jesse R. Walters Jr.

Boise

Judge Walters was encouraged by a ninth grade teacher to choose law as a profession concluding it would be a good way to help people. He received his BA in Political Science from the University of Idaho, his J.D. from the University of Idaho College of Law and his Master's in Judicial Process from the University of Virginia. Judge Walters served as a Fourth Judicial District Judge from 1977 to 1981, Chief Judge, Idaho Court of Appeals from 1982 to 1997, Idaho Supreme Court Justice from 1997 to 2003 and a Senior Judge from 2003 to the present. He passes on the advice to young attorneys he received from Tony Fredericks, "go to court and

watch the good attorneys work."

He and his wife of 54 years, Harriet, delight in their three children and seven grandchildren. Judge Walters also enjoys travelling, fishing and fly-tieing, playing the ukulele and taking advantage of cultural performances in Boise.

## Craig B. Marcus

Boise

After graduating from the University of Idaho, Craig followed in his father Claude Marcus' footsteps and continued a family legacy. He is humble about his 50 years in practice citing his father's service, "I found father's plaque for 69 years. So when I have put in 70 years I'll feel entitled to some acclaim."

Their son Trent and Craig's brother Barry, practice in the same office. He and his wife Lynne have three children and six grandchildren. Craig enjoys hunting, fishing, finding fossils, skiing, caring for his cattle and is an occasional golfer.

## Fred Kennedy

Sun Lakes, AZ.

Fred had several friends who were attorneys that encouraged him. This led to his development of an interest and appreciation for the practice of law as an undergraduate at the University of Idaho. He received his JD with honors from George Washington University Law School. One of the biggest influences in his life was Senator Frank Church for whom Fred worked while attending law school.

He stated "his work ethic and keen interest in government and law had a substantial influence." Fred acknowledges that the legal profession has become much more specialized than it used to be and suggests to fledgling attorneys "find out the names and addresses of the most reputable and highly thought

of attorneys in the community in which you expect to live, and ascertain the possibility of becoming employed as a new attorney at one of those firms." Fred and his wife of 54 years, Patty, have three children, eight grandchildren and one great grandchild. They enjoy their time golfing, hiking, reading and spending quality time with their family.

## Michael E. McNichols

Lewiston

After graduating from the University of Idaho with a BA in Political Science, Mike received his LL.B. from the University of Idaho College of Law in 1963.

He went into practice with his father Ray McNichols in Orofino then joined Clements, Brown, McNichols of Lewiston. Mike has served with many committees and programs with the Bar including two terms on the Idaho Judicial Council, ISB Commissioner and president, member of the Bar Exam Grading Committee, chair of the Client Security Fund committee and member of the Litigation section. He is a founding member of the Idaho Law Foundation and has served as a director.

He is a member of the University of Idaho College of Law Advisory Board, served as a lawyer delegate to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals Conference and was past secretary and president of the Clearwater Bar Association. Mike belongs to the International Association of Defense Counsel and is a life fellow of the American Bar Foundation along with many other accolades.

Mike received the ISB Service award in 1986, the ISB Professionalism award in 2000 and the Distinguished Lawyer award in 2005.

He and his wife Katie love to travel and enjoy good food and wine.

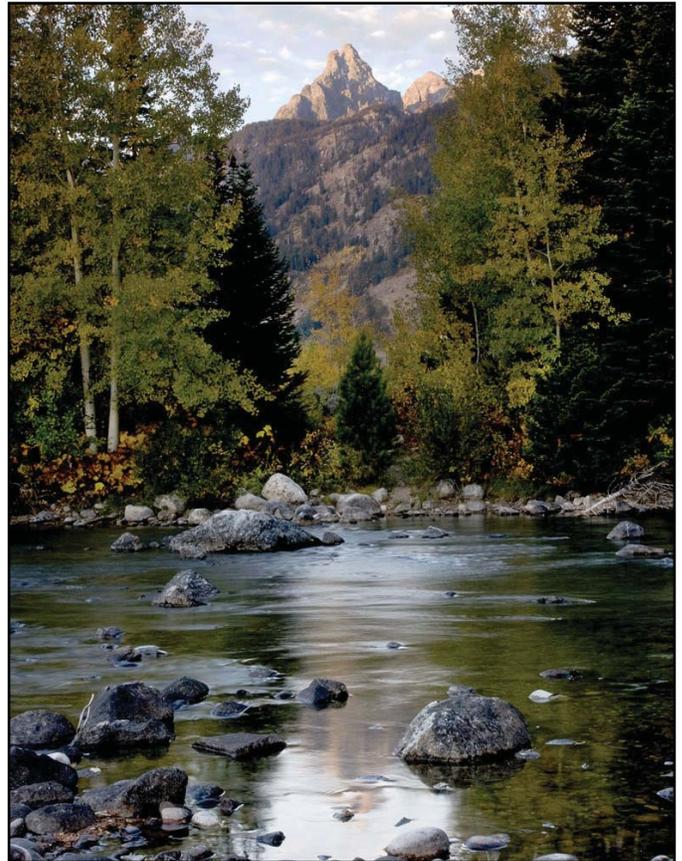
# Advocate Awards



## Best Cover Picture

*Storm in the Tetons*

Monte Stiles, November/ December, 2012



## Best Cover Picture

*Tetons*

Thomas Dial, September, 2012

## Bar members' journalistic talents shine

This was an exceptional year for The Advocate. Written contributions reached an all-time high in both quantity and some could argue in quality. Voting among the Editorial Advisory Board members originally produced a tie in two categories, which created a runoff election. The second round decided one of the two tie contests, but members were evenly split between two magnificent photos used for the cover of the magazine. So Best Cover Photo was awarded to both contributors.

### Best Article

Excellent submissions throughout the year made this a particularly

difficult decision. In the runoff election, the EAB selected [Ritchie Eppink](#) - "The Joke's On Us: Pausing to Reflect on the 50th Anniversary of Gideon v. Wainwright." The article coincided with a national effort to review Wainwright, and evaluate the ruling and its mandate for equal access to justice in light of today's realities.

### Best Cover photo

This Award was a tie with two extraordinary images winning: [Tom Dial's](#) picture of the Tetons with a river and forest in the foreground, and [Monte Stiles'](#) artful capturing of a heavy snowfall among aspen trees in the Sun Valley area. Both were breathtaking photos that drew comments

from members of the bar and remains some of the best nature photography around.

### Best Issue

The January 2013 issue sponsored by the [Diversity Section](#) and the [Idaho Women Lawyers](#) drew strong reactions from the board for its readability, depth and keen insights. The winning issue included two of the strongest articles seen all year, the aforementioned "Wainwright" article by Ritchie Eppink, and a cogent analysis of legal rights of those in a same-sex marriage by Lisa Shultz titled, "No Faith, No Credit, No Union." Overall, the Diversity Section's collaboration with the Idaho Women Lawyers produced a compelling issue .

## Retiring Judges



Gaylen L. Box



David E. Day



A. Lynn  
Krogh



Renee J. Hoff



John P.  
Luster



Steve C.  
Verby

## Diversity Section

Linda Pall is this year's recipient of the Diversity Section's Award for her dedication to those who survive in the margins. She previously won the ISB Service Award, has served on the CLE Committee and was active in Animal Law, Business and Corporate law, Diversity and Family Law Sections. Health concerns forced her retirement this year.



## Family Law Section

Stephen Beer retired this year after serving countless families. Since 1995 he took 16 pro bono cases with the IVLP, and has taken 18 CASA cases. He worked in family law for 41 years and was selected by the Idaho Supreme Court to conduct child custody mediations.



## Section of the Year Award - Litigation Section

Practice Sections are one of the most rewarding volunteer avenues for members, and among the 20 Sections in the Idaho State Bar, the Litigation Section stands out. It has earned the Section of the Year Award for its excellence.

Last year the Litigation Section provided opportunities for members to develop exceptional professional growth through producing publications CLE seminars and public service activities. In particular, the Section sponsored its annual "Trial Skills Academy" in March 2013 and "Mastering the Art of Voir Dire" in September of 2012. The Section also presented "E-Discovery: Legal and Ethical Obligations to Preserve, Collect and Produce Electronically

Stored Evidence" in July 2012 in conjunction with ISB Annual Meeting.

The Section also supported nonprofit legal entities through financial contributions. It gave \$4,000 in 2012 & \$12,000 in 2013 to entities such as IVLP, Legal Aid, IALL, BLSA, IWL, U of I Professionalism Orientation, and others.

The Section excelled in its communication with its membership through email, its website and during regular meetings. Deputy Executive Director Mahmood Sheikh said the Section did more than merely communicate, but "truly engaged the membership."

The Section worked to involve members from various locations in Idaho. For example, the Trial Skills

Academy was chaired by Don Harris of Idaho Falls, Rusty Robnett of Coeur d'Alene and Michelle Points of Star. That event also had mentors from each Judicial District including District Judges from 5 of the 7 Judicial Districts. The Litigation Section emphasizes the need for continuous recruitment and retention of members. It grew 4 percent since 2010 and is the fifth largest Section in the Bar.

While the Section fully complied with all responsibilities and guidelines, it met a minimum of eight times in the last year. At least half of those included 30-minute CLEs for members. The Section also never failed to have a representative participate in the Practice Section Council, which meets every quarter.