

WILLAMETTE LAWYER

The magazine of the first law school in the Pacific Northwest

Fall 2004



U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski JD'85:
An Advocate for Alaska

Special Issue
NORTH TO ALASKA!



$$1+1=3$$

NO, IT'S NOT NEW MATH.

It's an opportunity to double your gift and triple our money.

An anonymous donor recently gave the College of Law \$1 million to endow the Clinical Law Program. If the College of Law can raise \$1 million by Dec. 31, 2005, this generous donor will give us another \$1 million. That's \$1m + \$1m = \$3m!

The Clinical Law Program, under the direction of full-time supervising attorneys, provides legal assistance to needy Oregonians while offering practical legal experience for our law students.

We can use your help. Any gift you can make for the endowment of the Clinical Law Program will be doubled. Gifts and pledges can be funded with stocks, bonds, real estate and/or cash.

For more information, contact Mike Bennett, Development Director, Willamette University College of Law, 245 Winter St. SE, Salem, OR 97301, or call 503-370-6761. Email: mbennett@willamette.edu.



DEAN'S LIST OF DONORS

2003-04

This list recognizes alumni and friends who made generous gifts of \$1,000 or more to the College of Law during the 2003-04 fiscal year.

We are grateful for the special support and leadership these donors provided.

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DEAN'S MESSAGE



Dear Friends,

As you will notice, this issue of the *Willamette Lawyer* is larger and more colorful than previous issues. In a small way, this improvement symbolizes the school's steady progress in recent years.

Here are some examples from our Office of Admissions, whose herculean efforts are aptly expressed by the Olympic motto *altius, fortius, citius* (higher, stronger, swifter):

- The number of applications for admission to the College of Law is now the highest in the school's history – double what it was four years ago. (See story p. 6.)
- The percentage of applicants admitted is now the lowest in the school's history – about half of what it was four years ago.
- The new entering class is academically the strongest in the school's history with an average LSAT 19 percentiles higher than the national average.

These significant gains have come about without reducing the size of the entering class. In fact, despite admitting fewer applicants every year, the number of students who chose to enroll at Willamette has risen in each of the last four years. This year's class is the fourth largest in the school's history.

Once again, the generosity of our benefactors continues to fortify and inspire us. For the third consecutive year, we celebrate a seven-digit gift to the College of Law. After a \$2 million gift from Kenneth D. Peterson JD' 80 and his wife Claudia in 2002, and a \$2.5 million gift from Roderick C. Wendt JD'80 and his wife Carol in 2003, a third donor who wishes to remain anonymous has donated \$1 million in 2004 to partially endow the Clinical Law Program. In addition, this noble and generous donor will match another \$1 million we have pledged to raise for the program by the end of 2005. (See story p. 7.) These three gifts have more than doubled the book value of the school's endowment. They are an encouraging beginning in our campaign to bring the endowment a bit closer to the national average.

This issue of the *Lawyer* is also novel in that it is focused exclusively on our alumni who live and work in one state – Alaska. This is not only because these alumni are thoroughly wonderful and impressive people, but also because Alaska is one of those states in which Willamette alumni seem to dominate the legal landscape. We thought we should recognize and celebrate their accomplishments. So pull on your parkas and enjoy a vicarious trip to the great state of Alaska.

With my best regards

Symeon C. Symeonides
Dean and Professor of Law

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WILLAMETTE LAWYER

The magazine of the first law school in the Pacific Northwest

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North to Alaska!

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LISA MURKOWSKI: AN ADVOCATE FOR ALASKA

U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski JD'85 demonstrates she can stand the heat in the Senate's pressure cooker.

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COVER PHOTO: Lisa Murkowski JD'85, U.S. Senator from Alaska, stands in front of the stained glass window in the foyer of Juneau's public library. The stained glass was created by local Alaskan artist Bruce Elliot. Photograph by Frank Miller.

LAW SCHOOL BRIEFS

NEWS AND NOTES

LARGE, BRIGHT INCOMING CLASS

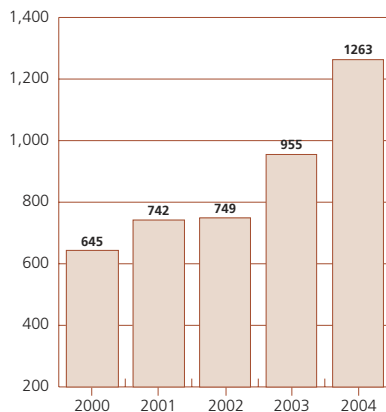
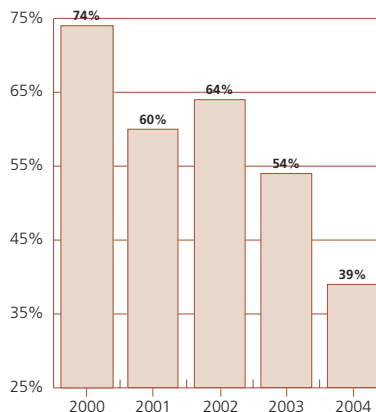
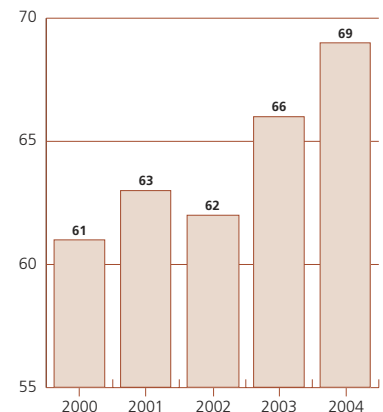
There is plenty of good news from the admissions front this year. The College of Law has received 1,263 applications for admission – the highest number in the school’s history. This is 96 percent higher than it was four years ago. It is also 32 percent higher than last year. The corresponding national and regional increases have been only 6.1 percent and 6.3 percent, respectively.

The percentage of applicants admitted is now 39 percent – the lowest in the school’s history. “Four years ago, the acceptance rate was 74 percent and the Long-Range Plan called for a reduction to 39 percent by

2007,” said Law Dean Symeon Symeonides. “We have reached this goal three years ahead of schedule.”

The median LSAT of the entering class is now at 69 percent. Four years ago, it was at 61 percent and the Long-Range Plan called for an increase to 65 percent by 2003.

“These improvements are due to the hard work of our Admissions Office staff under the able leadership of Carolyn Dennis and her predecessor Larry Seno,” said Dean Symeonides. “But they are also due to the dedication and accomplishments of the law faculty, which make this a more attractive school for prospective law students.”

Number of Applicants**Acceptance Rate****LSAT Median as a National Percentile****2003 CLASS EMPLOYMENT TOPS 90%**

Employers are discovering what we’ve known all along: Willamette University College of Law graduates make top-notch lawyers. Despite a difficult economy, WUCL graduates are in demand, especially here in the Northwest. Results from our most recent graduating class survey indicate that more than 90 percent of those seeking employment were employed within nine months of graduation. As of February, 2004, the class of 2003 had an overall employment rate of 93.3 percent, compared with 88 percent for the class of 2002. The majority of new grads are beginning their legal careers in private practice (48.7 percent), with two-thirds of those graduates working for smaller firms of two to 10 attorneys. Several graduates chose to “go solo” and open their own practices, rather than brave a tough job market, or chose to use their law degree in an alternative way.

Based on reported salaries, the overall range for full-time salaries was \$24,000 to \$110,000 per year. The average salary overall was \$45,784. The median salary was \$ 41,662. Geographically, almost 90% of the class stayed in the Pacific Northwest region.

MAJOR GIFT HELPS ENDOW THE LEGAL CLINIC

For the third year in a row, Willamette University College of Law has received a gift of \$2 million or more for the endowment of the Law School.

On March 16, 2004, the College of Law formalized a gift and pledge agreement with an anonymous donor who wants to provide endowed support for the Clinical Law Program. Operated in its current form by the College of Law since 1991, the Clinical Law Program offers practical legal education to Willamette's law students by providing legal assistance to needy Oregonians under the direction of full-time clinical supervising attorneys.

The agreement calls for a \$1 million outright gift for the endowment of the Clinical Law Program. It will also match, up to \$1 million, any funds raised for the Clinical Law Program by other alumni and friends by **Dec. 31, 2005**. If fully funded, endowment for the program would total \$3 million and would give the Clinical Law Program the largest programmatic endowment at the College of Law.

The Clinical Law Program provides law students with opportunities for supervised legal casework in situations involving clients who would otherwise be unrepresented by legal counsel. Cases frequently involve family law, consumer fraud and other personal civil law matters. Both the law students and their clients benefit significantly from their experiences with the Clinical Law Program.

Commenting on the gift, Law Dean Symeon Symeonides, said, "Almost a decade ago, the Willamette Legal Clinic was in jeopardy of closing because of limited financial resources. With the help

of special financial assistance provided by alumni and friends, the clinic survived and its program grew stronger. Now, with this generous gift to endow it, the Law

Clinic's valuable role in preparing our students for their legal careers and providing services to needy Salem-area citizens is assured for generations to come."

"Now our immediate challenge is to go about raising the \$1 million of endowment gifts for the Clinical Law Program which will fully maximize the matching gift from our anonymous donor," he said.

The law school continues with its efforts to increase the endowment base of the school. Two years ago, Ken Peterson JD'80 and his wife, Claudia, endowed the Center for Law and Government with a \$2 million gift. Last year, Rod Wendt

JD'80 and his wife, Carol, endowed a faculty chair in Business Law with a gift of \$2.5 million. "We are grateful for these donors and their investments in the law school and excited by all that they enable us to do in strengthening the faculty, students and programs of the College of Law," Dean Symeonides said.

If you're interested in making sure the College of Law gets the additional \$1 million in matching endowment for the Clinical Law Program, you can send your contribution to the Clinical Law Program Matching Endowment, Willamette College of Law, 245 State St. SE, Salem, OR 97301. For more information, contact Mike Bennett, Development Director, Willamette University College of Law, at 503-370-6761. Email: mbennett@willamette.edu.

— Mike Bennett BA'70










North to Alaska!

Fly over any part of Alaska's nearly 600,000 square miles and you begin to get a sense of the vastness of this great land. Look at Alaska's WUCL alumni and you begin to appreciate just how many of them are making a huge impact in this special place.



When we started planning this fall issue of the *Lawyer*, someone pointed out that Bruce Botelho BA'71, JD'76 had been re-elected as mayor of Juneau, Alaska. Then someone mentioned that Alaska's U.S. Senator, Lisa Murkowski JD'85, was a Willamette graduate. A Willamette trustee said that much of Alaska's case law had been decided by Judge James Fitzgerald LLB'51, another Willamette law graduate. A young WUCL alumna, Lesil McGuire BA'93, JD'98, has quickly become one of Alaska's most powerful lawmakers. With so many of Alaska's WUCL alumni casting long shadows in the Land of the Midnight Sun, we realized that something important – and very special – is going on between Willamette University College of Law and the state of Alaska.

So we bring you the first all-Alaska issue of the *Willamette Lawyer*, profiling some of the state's best and brightest. We hope to give you a look at how WUCL alumni are shaping Alaska and how this vast and rugged land is influencing them.



FACULTY PERSPECTIVE

BUSH LAWYERING

Practicing law in Alaska is like practicing law anywhere. Except that your client may live three hours away by bush plane on the other side of a 12,000-foot mountain range. Important documents or necessary witnesses may be inaccessible due to distance, terrain or weather. Conferences and court hearings regularly give way to snow storms, spring “breakup” (thaw) and hunting and fishing seasons. And, there’s always the constant lure of the great outdoors to distract lawyers from professional obligations.

As a young lawyer in the early 1980s, I was drawn to Alaska by the outdoors and by my desire for a nontraditional practice to challenge my newly-honed skills. I didn’t know what I was in for. Without having visited the state, I accepted a job with Alaska Legal Services Corporation (ALSC).

I arrived in Dillingham, Alaska, in the driving rain on a chilly 40-degree day in August. I quickly located a “quaint” place to live – two rooms with a toilet in the main room and no running water. At work, I handled domestic relations and commercial fishing permit cases for our largely Native clientele.

I still remember my first bush flight to a Native village to meet with a client about his case. We were flying 100 feet above the ground when the pilot took us into a heart-stopping nose dive. He yelled above the engine’s din, “Let me show you where I crashed on my last flight out here!”

I made it to the village – sans breakfast – only to find my client was out hunting and wasn’t expected back for several days. I quickly learned that subsistence takes priority over legal matters.

After a year in Dillingham, I moved to the ALSC Anchorage office, where I handled a caseload of domestic relations, children’s and public entitlement cases. Anchorage’s legal establishment proved collegial and supportive of young lawyers. I came to know many of Alaska’s best lawyers and judges – Victor Carlson, Karen Hunt, Beverly Cutler, among others.

It wasn’t long before I was appointed to serve as district court magistrate in Palmer. My court’s jurisdiction stretched 150 miles north as far as Denali National Park. At the ripe young age of 28, I presided over DWI trials, small claims matters, criminal arraignments and evidentiary hearings. Palmer was a busy court and I was on

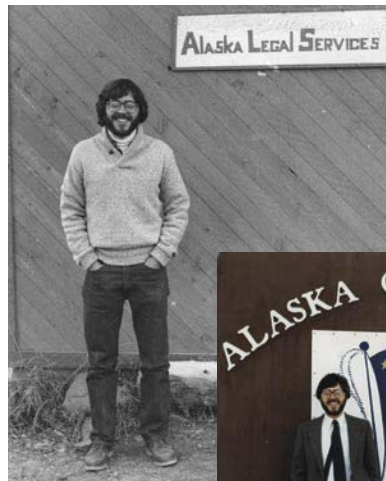
the bench six to seven hours a day, learning by the seat of my pants. In many ways, lawyering in the bush is law in its purest form: by reason and persuasion (and

luck if your client shows up for the hearing).

I also served as the district’s coroner. Many a night I was awakened by a telephone call from the middle of nowhere from a state trooper asking for permission to move a dead body. “Are you sure he is dead?” I’d ask in a sleepy stupor. The response from the other end of the line would often be, “Well, the griz left more than half of him, but I don’t think he’ll recover!”

– Steven Green

Steven Green is a law professor at Willamette University College of Law.



SERVICE TO OTHERS

Joshua Kindred JD'05, the newly elected editor-in-chief of the Willamette Law Review, hails from Alaska and plans to return to the state which has had a profound influence upon his life.

The son of David and Judy Kindred of Anchorage, Kindred played soccer at Bartlett High School, served as a trail guide for groups of German tourists visiting Alaska and was active in the Anchorage Boys and Girls Club.

In 2002, Joshua earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Anchorage with a major in American history and a minor in political science. As an undergraduate, he served as a soccer coach for East Anchorage High School, worked with the Boys and Girls Club and was an intern for Judge Stephanie Rhoades and Judge John Lohff in Anchorage's Mental Health Court. After college, he considered a doctorate in history, but "my favorite professor said that if I went to law school I would be able to do about anything I wanted to do."

When deciding on a law school, he asked his court co-workers. "Willamette was the overwhelming choice of my co-workers because its graduates are well prepared," he says. "Time and again I heard, 'You will be ready to be a lawyer when you get out of Willamette law school.'"

Kindred enrolled at Willamette College of Law in August 2002 and became immersed in the life of a first-year law student. "I was pleasantly surprised at the great sense of community and the friendliness of Willamette students. I was also pleased that students are interested in a variety of activities."

He was a finalist in the first-year appellate competition for his section. Last summer, he clerked in the Alaska Attorney General's office for John Bandell.



This past year, he served as co-chair and judge coordinator for the Regional Jessup Moot Court Competition, hosted by the College of Law, and served as a member of the Moot Court Board. In 2004-05, he and classmate, Hamilton Emery, will share editorial duties on the WLR.

Kindred attributes much of his motivation and interest in the law to having grown up in Alaska. He shares the pride that they have in Alaska's identity, lifestyle and independent thinking. He also believes that Willamette's great reputation in Alaska is well deserved. "Alaskans have a great sense of independence and community and the

same is true at Willamette," he says.

An avid rock climber who also enjoys the outdoors, Kindred has a strong interest in politics and welcomes opportunities to serve his community and his state. He believes that a responsibility of citizenship is to give something back to the community and he plans to do so by returning to Anchorage to practice law. "My parents worked hard and sacrificed a great deal for me to have post-graduate educational opportunities. I hope that by furthering my education, I can honor their hard work in some small way."

— Edward J. Harri

Edward J. Harri is a law professor at Willamette University College of Law.

ALUMNI PROFILES: LAW IN THE FAMILY

SISTER ACT



Heidi (L), Holly (R) and their parents, Mark and Kathy.



Holly catching a coho.



Heidi and Holly in Russia.



Holly is in her third year at WUCL.

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The term “mundane” doesn’t exist in the Drygass family vocabulary. For sisters Heidi JD’03 and Holly JD’05, growing up on the rural outskirts of Fairbanks, Alaska, meant that adventure was only a step out the door.

When it came to their education, however, the chance to study law at Willamette beckoned with a different kind of opportunity – one that promised to test the ruggedness of their minds.

The only sisterly rivalry between Heidi and Holly Drygass is who can talk most glowingly about Alaska. The closeness they display comes from a tight-knit family and the fact that they lived miles away from other kids their age. They were raised together on a steady diet of the Alaskan outdoors – hiking, skiing, fishing, snowshoeing and camping. “Those are the hobbies that we’re used to because that’s how you entertain yourself in Alaska,” explains Heidi, the eldest sister by two years. “There certainly aren’t any amusement parks in Alaska.”

Why did these sisters leave the splendors of Alaska to study law in Oregon? Heidi and Holly have a simple explanation – they were looking for a challenge. “We like the idea of being challenged,” says Heidi. “We’ve

never shied away from anything and law school presented a new and exciting opportunity.”

“I knew that the profession of law would challenge all of my faculties,” says Holly. “I also knew that I would never go to work and feel bored or find myself doing something mundane.”

For Heidi, studying law at Willamette tested her limits mentally, physically and emotionally. She also describes her time at Willamette as one of the most stimulating in her life. “I miss that atmosphere of being with people who really want to learn,” she says. “The people who go to law school, especially at a place like Willamette, are driven and want to discuss important issues in law and in life. They are also just down-to-earth and fun to be around. They’re normal people with extraordinary abilities.”

Those same qualities piqued Holly’s interest in Willamette. Having her older sister at the same law school was “icing on the cake.” She had someone to show her the ropes and provide a steadying hand dur-

ing the challenging first term of law school. “Heidi used to tell me, ‘don’t panic, it’s going to be over before you know it and you’re going to do great.’” recalls Holly. “The best advice she gave me was to take time for myself, exercise regularly, cook dinner and relax a bit, because otherwise I would go crazy.”

Now in her third year at Willamette, Holly has her sanity firmly in hand – a feat she credits in no small measure to the College

of Law’s collegial spirit. “The biggest reason I like Willamette is that I don’t feel like a number,” she says. “Everyone tries to help you. I suspect that doesn’t happen at a lot of schools.”

Once she graduates, Holly hopes to use her legal abilities to help influence the lives of others in a positive and meaningful way. “I like the idea of being a problem-solver and a counselor. I really see myself doing that and being happy.”

Holly isn’t so sure she’ll follow her older sister Heidi’s lead and return to Alaska after graduation. Heidi has spent the past year clerking for a superior court judge in Fairbanks. The work is intense, complicated and exactly what she was looking for. Her diverse caseload involves everything from civil and criminal law to family law. “I think I’m lucky because I get to work on such a broad range of issues,” says Heidi.

Heidi’s clerkship has also given her a unique glimpse into the advantages and challenges of practicing law in a tight-knit community like Fairbanks. “You have to build a good reputation for yourself because everyone knows who you are,” she says. “At some point, you’re bound to cross paths with every attorney in town.”

While life and their careers may eventually take them to different areas of the country, both sisters know that they can always go home to Alaska to find love, camaraderie and renewal. For them, Alaska is more than just the place where they grew up. It is the bedrock of their identity formed by the most important people in their lives – their family. “My parents are the people who have

influenced my life the most,” says Holly. “They’ve been very supportive of what we’ve wanted to do. I know it was hard for them to see us leave Alaska, but they pushed us to go to Oregon because they knew we wanted to practice law.”

Leaving home may have been a difficult decision for Heidi and Holly, but it is clear from the choices they have made that Willamette College of Law was a challenge they simply couldn’t resist.

– Brad Millay BA’97

The only sisterly rivalry between Heidi and Holly is who can talk most glowingly about Alaska. The closeness they display comes from a tight-knit family and the fact that they lived miles away from other kids their age. They were raised on a steady diet of the Alaskan outdoors – hiking, skiing, fishing, snowshoeing and camping.

Did you know ...

- Alaska’s state motto is “North to the Future.”
- In Fairbanks, Alaska’s second-largest city, the temperature ranges from -66 degrees F to 99 degrees F, the widest temperature spread of any city on earth.
- The largest state, Alaska is more than twice the size of Texas and about one-fifth the size of all the Lower 48 states combined.
- Alaska has only 640,000 residents or one person for every 570 acres.
- Mt. McKinley, in Alaska’s Denali National Park, rises 20,320 ft., making it North America’s highest peak.

ALUMNI PROFILES: LAW IN THE FAMILY

SCHIER-SUCCESS



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Forget oil or fish, Joe JD/MBA'85 and Nancy Schierhorn JD'86 offer convincing proof that perspective is Alaska's greatest natural resource. Unlike many of their friends and colleagues, the Schierhorns didn't head for the big cities of the Lower 48 to make their careers. They sought success in Anchorage.

Joe, a dual law and management degree recipient, began working in the tax department for the Anchorage branch of KPMG in 1985. Three years later, with a certified public accountant (CPA) degree in hand, Joe had had enough of audits and estate taxes. "I wanted to work more closely with people and use the skills I'd developed from law and business school," he says.

Joe began working for Key Bank just as Alaska's banking industry was climbing out of recession. The experience allowed him to learn from mistakes made by the industry. "My boss said, 'There's no better time to get into banking because you'll see the back end of a lot of transactions that unraveled and you'll learn.' He was right."

Those lessons paid off in 1990, when Joe and a group of associates formed Northrim Bank. Starting with one

branch and \$8 million in capital, Northrim currently has assets of \$739 million and employs 280 people in 10 branches. Now Northrim's CFO, Joe says the key to their success is meeting the unique demands of Alaska's businesses. "The business community was not being well served. We came in and provided local, responsive decision making and a higher level of service."

As her husband found success in banking, Nancy was building her career with a local firm, Hartig, Rhodes, Norman, Mahoney and Edwards. The work thrust her into the courtroom representing banks in bankruptcy proceedings and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) in closing and liquidating banks. "I was being allowed to do much more than my classmates were allowed to do as associates in bigger firms during those first years of practicing," she says.

As her family grew, Nancy decided that her career would never come before her family. She moved into a part-time associate role, but that soon proved unworkable with raising three children. When Nancy tried contracting for specific projects, she struck the right balance. She could be a full-time mom and make formidable contributions to her firm.

"I go from case to case, which is wonderful. One thing I didn't like about practicing law full time was working on a case for up to five years before it was completed."

She can also concentrate on what she considers her most important role – being a mom. It's meant trading the courtroom for school board meetings and hockey practices. "At the end of my life, I'm going to count how much time I spent with my family rather than how many hours I spent at the desk."

With successful careers and a balanced family life, the Schierhorns make a strong case that a little perspective does indeed go a long way.

– Brad Millay BA'97

DETAILS, DETAILS, DETAILS

If “politics is life and the rest is just details,” thank heavens for people like George Utermohle JD’85 and Deborah Behr JD’85. They thrive on details. This husband and wife duo are the jewelers of the political arena, shaping, cutting and refining documents and legislation until they gleam with high polish. Working on the finer points of public policy may not sound glamorous, but George and Deborah do the kind of day-to-day work that has profound consequences for thousands of people.

A legislative counsel for the State of Alaska since 1986, Utermohle is an expert in natural resources. If it swims, oozes, has a pelt, is covered in bark or buried beneath the ground, then he has a significant role in how it is utilized. Utermohle works on natural resource policy formation, from advising legislators to developing and drafting documents. Although he may not be as publicly visible as a state legislator, Utermohle is right in the middle of the debate over how to use and preserve Alaska’s natural resources. “We’re in many ways a safety deposit box of many of Alaska’s national resources,” he says. “Sometimes protecting resources and utilizing resources come into conflict, so there’s constant tension.”

As an Alaska assistant attorney general, Behr is the governor’s eyes and ears on regulatory issues. Any attempt to create a new regulation has to pass muster with her. “I do the technical drafting and make sure that it’s clear and says what the commissioner wants it to say,” she says. What Behr truly appreciates about the work she has done for 13 years is that every day holds something new and different. “I might edit an amendment, look at regulations, or be called to testify before the legislature. I truly don’t know what each day will bring and that’s part of the excitement.”

Utermohle and Behr have always operated as a team. Together, they made the life-changing decision in 1982 to leave Alaska and move to Oregon to attend

Willamette Law. Utermohle had been working as a research analyst on resource issues and Behr was a state administrator when they decided to come to Willamette.

Tackling the difficulties of law school as a couple may sound like a recipe for divorce, but not for Utermohle and Behr. “Being in law school together was a real advantage because we both had the same kind of stress for exams,” Behr says. “We had the same schedule, so no one had to be quiet at odd hours while the other studied.”

Now, they have an unwritten agreement not to talk shop when they’re home. “We do not talk about law at home,” says Behr. “If we did, our jobs would be 24 hours a day, seven days a week.”

While the detail Utermohle and Behr immerse themselves in isn’t the stuff of John Grisham novels, it’s vitally important. We all know, “law is in the details.”

— Brad Millay BA’97



ALUMNI PROFILES: LAW IN PUBLIC SERVICE

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Mary K. Hughes JD'74 has a full plate. She's an attorney, a radio show host, a campaign chief administrative officer for a U.S. Senator, a Willamette University trustee, a trustee of the University of Alaska Foundation, a regent for the University of Alaska, director of the Providence Alaska Foundation and the Anchorage Economic Development Corporation, and a spouse, mother and grandmother – and she still finds time to workout every morning.



While Hughes' non-stop schedule would overwhelm most of us, she finds all the activity and involvement invigorating. "It's exhilarating," she says, grinning. "There's not a day that goes by without a crisis. I'm pretty good at crisis management and I can do a lot of tasks simultaneously, so my plate is always full. For me, it's fun."

The Kodiak, Alaska native prepared for her whirlwind career by getting an undergraduate degree in business management at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks,

studying graduate-level labor economics at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, Scotland, and earning her JD at Willamette University College of Law. It was her father, legendary Alaskan attorney John C. Hughes, one of the founders of Hughes Thorsness Powell Huddleston & Bauman, one of the state's most respected law firms, who chose Willamette for her. "My father had hired several Willamette lawyers and thought they were excellent," she says. "He knew Willamette would train me well."

At Willamette, Hughes had the advantage of studying with professors who are considered the stalwarts of Willamette. She cites Jack Mylan, John Paulus and Henry Bailey as favorites. "The whole experience at Willamette provided maturation and a great educational foundation. Every year I'm out of school, I realize how formative my Willamette years were."

The fact that there were only a half dozen women in her class didn't faze her. "I was raised in a family of three girls and my parents always assumed we could do anything," she says. "Growing up, we had nurses' outfits and cowgirl outfits, but we also had firemen and policemen outfits. I never thought I wouldn't be able to do something because I'm a woman. I always thought I'd have an advantage because I'm me."

After earning her JD and completing a year's internship at the Multnomah County district attorney's office, it came as a shock when the Anchorage D.A.'s office wouldn't hire her because she was a woman. So she went to work at Hughes Thorsness, et al. where she met her mentor, Richard Gantz. "The State of Alaska lost perhaps an effective prosecutor, but my decision to go into private practice at my father's firm

was great,” she says. “Sometimes things we can’t do create new opportunities.”

Hughes worked at the firm for 20 years, practicing administrative and regulatory law, telecommunications law and labor law. She served on the Alaska Bar Association’s Board of Governors and, at age 34, she was its president. She says being a lawyer in Alaska gave her opportunities some lawyers never have. As a young attorney, she represented RCA Alascom, the state’s long lines carrier, in a major rate case. “I didn’t have a clue what a rate case was,” she says. “The people at RCA Corporation knew that I was a woman (from my name), but they didn’t know how young I was. In my mid-20’s, I was doing work that would normally be done by a 45-year-old lawyer.”

She won an 87 percent rate increase for RCA Alascom, which led to her representation of dozens of other national and multi-national communications companies. Then, at the height of her career at the firm, she accepted an appointment as Anchorage’s municipal attorney. It was a job that suited her multi-tasking style. “It was fabulous because the Municipality of Anchorage governs so many things – telephone, electric, garbage, an airport. I was general counsel for the many businesses we operated as well as the general government of the Municipality of Anchorage.”

Nearly six years later, with the death of her sister from breast cancer, her aging parents and grandchildren demanding more of her time and her community commitments taking their toll, Hughes took a well-deserved break. It didn’t last long. Less than a year later, she re-joined her father’s firm Of Counsel

handling public policy matters. The governor of Alaska appointed her to the Board of Regents for the University of Alaska in 2002. She also took on running her ex-boss’ mayoral campaign. She continued serving as a Willamette trustee and chairing the board for the Sisters of Providence’s Foundation. “Even though I wasn’t working full time, my plate was full,” she says.

Then, two years ago, she was asked to be part of a radio program, “Hometown Talk,” on KBYR 700AM. It’s become one of her passions. In April, she launched her own radio show, “Profile Alaska with Mary Hughes.” It’s a casual, conversation-style show in which Mary talks with

notable Alaskans like U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski, in whose re-election campaign Hughes is intimately involved. “I want listeners to know people as I know them,” she says. “I want to acquaint Alaskans with Alaska the way I see it.”

So what’s the next adventure for Hughes? She’s taking on shorter-term projects and getting more involved with her husband’s health and fitness club business, The Alaska Club, a statewide organization of 13 clubs. She recently produced a DVD on sexual harassment for the club. “I probably have at least four careers left in me,” she says, smiling broadly. “If people looked at my career, they’d think it was all planned out. But I didn’t make many plans. Opportunities occurred because I did my very best each and every day. If I’ve made a little difference, that’s what I can walk away with.”

Don’t expect Hughes to walk away anytime soon. “There are so many more things that can make a difference for the people of the state of Alaska. I’m not done yet.”

– Bobbie Hasselbring

“Opportunities occurred because I did my very best each and every day. If I’ve made a little difference, that’s what I can walk away with.”

– Mary K. Hughes

ALUMNI PROFILES: LAW IN PUBLIC SERVICE

PROBLEM-SOLVER

If you're not careful, Bruce Botelho BA'71,JD'76 will dance right into your heart and make magical things happen. That's what lovely, young "Lupita" Maria De Guadalupe Alvarez found out. And so have dozens of groups and individuals representing cruise lines, the oil and mining industry, Native Alaskans, school districts, gays and lesbians and many others.

Botelho, a bear of a man with a neatly trimmed beard and ready laugh, was recently re-elected for his second term as mayor of Juneau, Alaska. He's an equally nimble negotiator, problem-solver, litigator and politician who has helped create precedent-setting law in his state. He's also an accomplished folk dancer who has danced all over the world.

Like many youngsters, Botelho was first introduced to folk dances like the Virginia Reel in sixth grade. In high school, as an exchange student in Germany, he learned dances native to his host family's small village. As an undergraduate a "seminal event" occurred that solidified his love for dance. He signed up for folk dancing to fulfill a physical education requirement. "There were 15 women in the class and me," he says, smiling. "I was hooked."

After graduating from law school, he lead dance groups to countries like Macedonia, Bulgaria and Mexico. It became his cultural passport, giving him a different way to "appreciate other cultures" and creating experiences he calls his "pocket full of little diamonds."

One of those diamonds is Lupita. At a dance festival in Mexico, they met, danced and fell in love. "We danced that night and over the course of the following week," he recalls. "It became a long distance courtship." After several visits to Mexico and a dance trip together to Europe, he "convinced her she needed to think about living in Alaska." They recently celebrated their 15th wedding anniversary.

People have come to expect that kind of footwork from Botelho. After earning his JD, he was hired by the Alaska Attorney General's office. It was an exciting and challenging time. The state was only 17 years old and didn't have much case law. The AG's office tackled big issues like consumer protection, oil and gas

industry taxation, resource development and educational equality. "We were idealistic, 20-something lawyers at the core of state law, advising the legislature and litigating issues worth billions of dollars," he says. "The environment encouraged great debates and policy choices. I knew I'd found where I wanted to be."

In 1994, then Governor Walter Hickel tapped Botelho to be the state's top lawyer. As attorney general, one of the first challenges he faced was the Department of the

Interior's recognition of 226 Native Alaskan tribes. Prior to that, the state insisted the tribes did not exist and had no rights or claims to land or resources. "Suddenly we had 226 new jurisdictions," he says. "We had to sort out new relationships and deal with divisions in the state, especially in the state legislature where they were largely opposed to recognizing the tribes."

Botelho refused to challenge the tribes in court. It proved to be one of many courageous decisions he'd make. As attorney general, Botelho served "a department that could take on the big issues. We earned a reputation for calling the balls and strikes as we saw them. We provided high-quality lawyering that was non-partisan and we kept the public interest at the



fore. We weren't the biggest law firm in Alaska, just the best."

He was so successful, in fact, that the next incoming governor retained Botelho as attorney general. It was unprecedented. "I never expected to be appointed in the first place," he says. "I really never expected to survive changing administrations. Perhaps it was a series of good fortunes and good advice."

More likely it was Botelho's firm belief that the law is about solving problems and being "more collaboration than adversarial." He credits Willamette with giving him a "different lens" through which to view the world. "Willamette gave me a framework for resolving disputes. Whether it's domestic relations, government-to-citizen or corporate relations, the law and law school teach you how to define the problem and create solutions."

The ultimate problem-solving, says Botelho, occurs at the local level. That's why, after serving as mayor of Juneau from 1988-91, he's back for a second term. "In many respects, local government is the most exciting," he says. "Your views and actions may not be as long-term, but they're immediate and the feedback you get is instantaneous."

Botelho has been around long enough to see the fruits of his labor. During his first term as Juneau's

mayor, cruise industry officials were demanding major tax-payer supported improvements and incentives. Communities that refused to comply were threatened with the loss of cruise ship business. Botelho refused to be intimidated. He thought the industry should pay for things like harbor improvements. He began a yearlong campaign to tax cruise lines. "They told us they'd pull out. Over the objections of the industry, we worked out an agreement for a \$10 million bond issue that was unanimously approved by the assembly.

It's become a model for other communities in the state."

Another hot button he tackled was discrimination against gays and lesbians by city government. When the gay and lesbian community expressed concerns, the city assembly consid-

ered passing an anti-discrimination ordinance. The religious right fought back with a vengeance, dividing the community. Botelho came up with an ordinance that says all hiring, retention and promotion in the city will be based solely on merit. It satisfied all sides, while protecting the rights of everyone.

It's that kind of problem-solving ability that's made Botelho one of the state's best. "As lawyers, if we understand each side's perspective – their goals and fears – and find a settlement that protects the dignity of everyone, we can contribute to a healing process."

– Bobbie Hasselbring

"We were idealistic, 20-something lawyers at the core of state law, advising the legislature and litigating issues worth billions of dollars. The environment encouraged great debates and policy choices. I knew I'd found where I wanted to be."

– Mayor Bruce Botelho

Did you know ...

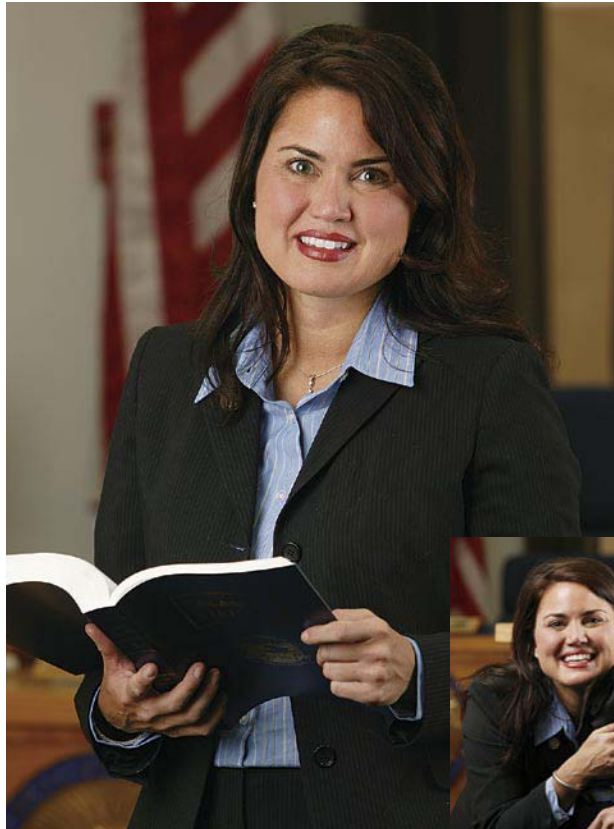
- The Alaska Mountain Range has 23 peaks taller than 10,000 feet and 5,367 sq. miles of glaciers and ice fields.
- Alaska has some 100,000 glaciers covering 29,000 sq. miles, giving it more active glaciers than the rest of the inhabited world combined.
- Thanks to long daylight summer hours, cabbages grown in the Matanuska Valley just west of Anchorage weigh 70 pounds and are the size of basketballs.
- Native Alaskan peoples make up approximately 16 percent of the state's population. They include the Aleut, the Eskimos
- (Yup'ik and Inupiat), the Athapaskans, and the Northcoast Indians (Tlingit, Tshimshian and Haida).
- Alaska boasts five kinds of salmon: King (Chinook), chum (dog and fall chum), silver (coho), red (sockeye) and pink.

ALUMNI PROFILES: LAW IN PUBLIC SERVICE

A SHINY NEW STAR

Lesil McGuire BA'93,JD'98 is young, smart and powerful. And she's making some serious waves in the male-dominated bastion of the Alaska State Legislature.

McGuire is one of the young stars that's dazzling state politics in Alaska. In 2000, she was the legislative aide – the “go-fer” – for the Judiciary Committee in the Alaska House of Representatives. Today, she's the chair and the only woman on that powerful committee. In her second term as state representative for her South Anchorage district, she received 75.5 percent of the vote in 2002 in her bid for re-election. She's vice-chair of the Special Committee on Economic Development and International Trade and Tourism and a member of a number of other influential committees, including rules, oil and gas, joint state/federal research and development and finance subcommittees. Last year, she was installed as the new chair of the Western Legislative Futures Forum for the Council of State Governments–West, a group that addresses how state governments do business. She's leading the charge and getting legislation passed on favorite issues like beefing up child support enforcement, fighting sex crimes and pornography, protecting victims' rights, defeating federal estate tax and stimulating and protecting Alaskan business. By anyone's assessment, she's a powerhouse to be reckoned with.



McGuire's meteoric rise began as an undergraduate at Willamette University with a double major in speech and politics. “Willamette taught me how to write, how to think critically, how to appreciate the

opinions of others, how to recognize differences and address them in an intellectual way,” she recalls. A two-year internship with Alaska's venerable U.S. Senator, Ted Stevens, “showed me how a law degree is key to understanding how the world works. I knew I could make a difference if I had a law degree in my tool belt.”

She chose Willamette College of Law because, “it's Alaska's law school. Many of Alaska's key figures in private practice and in elected office are Willamette graduates. I knew my opportunities

in Alaska would be greater if I went to Willamette.”

During law school, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and Legal Research and Writing Instructor Edward J. Harri, who she calls a friend and mentor, got McGuire involved in the *Willamette Law Review*. “On *Law Review*, we were trying to identify the cutting edge trends in law and what legislators were doing across the country,” she says. “In many ways, it prepared me for being a legislator.”

After receiving her JD, McGuire's brief exposure to municipal finance at Birch Horton Bittner & Cherot convinced her "it wasn't my cup of tea." When an opening occurred for a legislative aide for the Alaska State Legislature's Judiciary Committee, she jumped at the chance. Within three months, she was approached by John Cowdery, who was resigning his house seat to run for state senate. "He called me into his office and asked if I'd ever thought of running for public office. He thought I should run."

After some soul searching, she decided to go for it.

At 29 and fresh out of law school, she was elected to the Alaska House of Representatives. She calls the road she chose "very, very tough for a 29-year-old woman. The first thing I did was seek out a mentor, Lisa Murkowski [U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski JD'85. See cover story]. Then I stayed real quiet for a couple of months and watched and listened. I wanted to understand what people value, how they speak and how they think before I spoke up. Then I just worked hard and showed them I was competent."

She says her Willamette law degree has given her a key tool for success. "We have people in the Alaska State Legislature who don't have college degrees and who don't understand the law. It frustrates them. I use the tools I have to help others shine and be successful, which in turn builds relationships."

In many ways, McGuire is a traditional Republican. She's for a small, efficient government. She's against government marketplace supports such as ceilings and price-fixing. She's extremely pro-Alaska in her support for keeping jobs at home and has sponsored a pilot project for state government to "buy Alaska" goods and services.

In other ways, she's a new Republican, more forward-thinking and more socially liberal than many of her counterparts in the legislature. "I'm a Lincoln Republican," she says. "I believe in the individual first. You can't put the government into every aspect of people's lives and expect healthy individuals or a healthy economy."

To that end, she's for overturning the Patriot Act, calling it "an onerous intrusion into people's lives." She's

also outraged at the current rush to ban gay marriages.

"The government shouldn't have a say in whether people who are of a different sexual orientation should marry. Frankly, it's none of our business."

For McGuire, fairness and equality are paramount. "I don't think it's appropriate

for the government to put people down because of their race, their gender or their sexual orientation. I believe in allowing the individual to go forward and thrive."

One of McGuire's missions is getting young people interested in government. "I go to every elementary school, every junior and senior high school and talk with them about what we do in the legislature," she says. "The perception is that you have to make your fortune and not run for office until you're in your 50s or 60s. That's not true. When you're young, you have energy and drive and you bring a new perspective."

One legacy McGuire says she'd like to leave is inspiring other young people to get involved in politics. "One of the biggest gifts you can give your community is serving in public office," she insists. "As a young person, you can make a difference in public life."

—Bobbie Hasselbring

"Willamette College of Law is Alaska's law school. Many of Alaska's key figures in private practice and in elected office are Willamette graduates. I knew my opportunities in Alaska would be greater if I went to Willamette."

—Rep. Lesil McGuire

Lisa Murkowski:

AN ADVOCATE FOR ALASKA

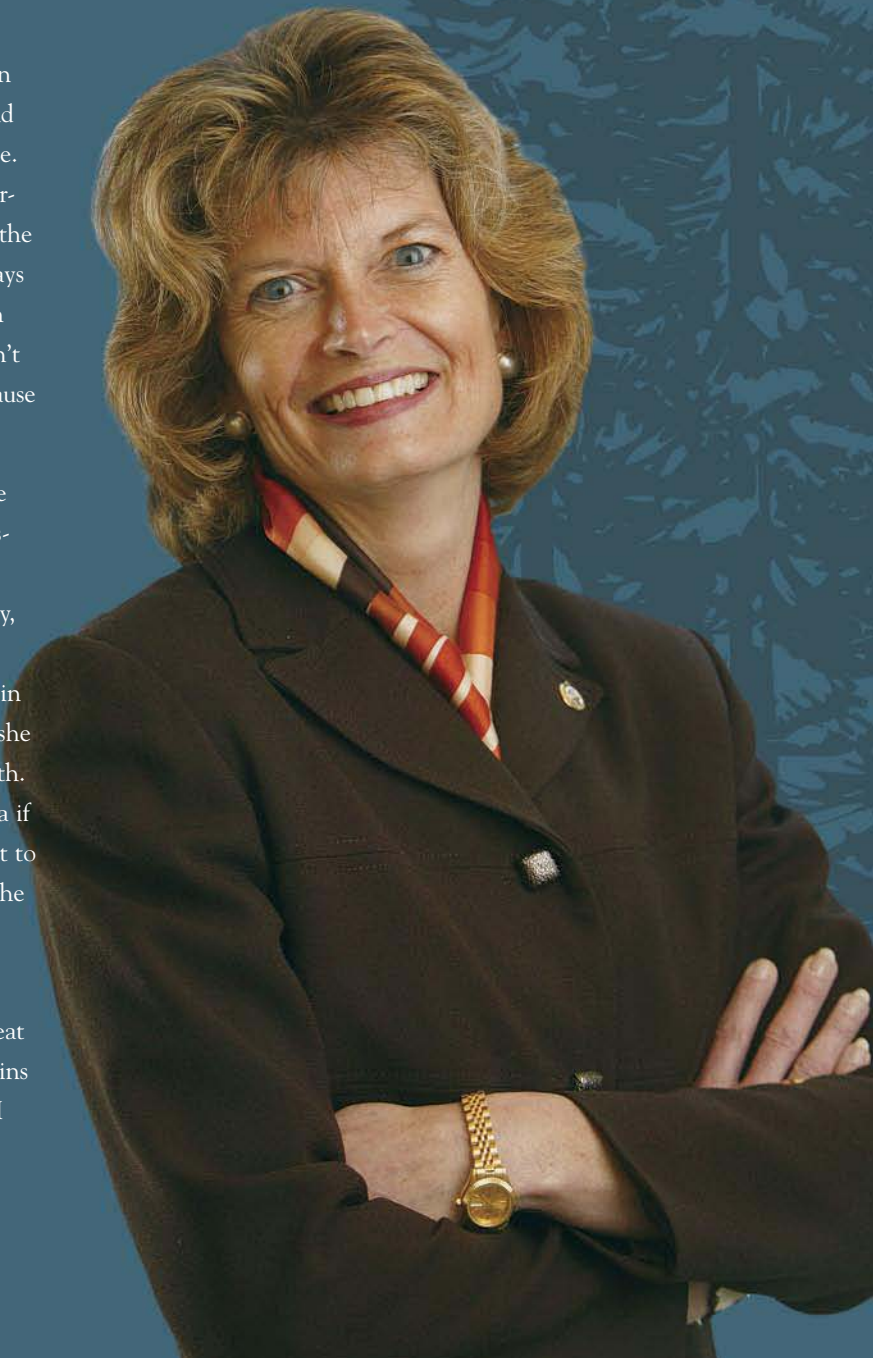
by Bobbie Hasselbring

Lisa Murkowski JD'85 is one of only 14 women in the U.S. Senate, arguably the most powerful lawmaking body in the world. As the most junior senator from Alaska steels herself for what promises to be a hotly contested re-election campaign, she is confident she has earned the right – what she calls the privilege – to be returned to represent her beloved state.

Born in Ketchikan when her father served in the Coast Guard, she lived in Wrangell and Juneau and then later moved to Anchorage. She learned early on to love Alaska's abundant opportunities. "I take pleasure in telling tales to people in the Lower 48 about the midnight sun, the dark winter days and our bird-sized mosquitoes – always with a certain amount of embellishment," she says. "But it really isn't amazing that we live here – it's easy to live here because we love it."

She completed two years of her undergraduate degree at Willamette University, but her father's work necessitated a move back East. After graduating in 1980 with a BA in economics from Georgetown University, Murkowski helped her father successfully run for the U.S. Senate. When she returned to the state capital in Juneau to work as a staffer for an Alaskan legislator, she found a flaw in the system that would change her path. "Lawmakers were enacting laws, but they had no idea if they were constitutional," she said. "It made me want to go to law school to learn about law and understand the Constitution."

Two years later, she entered Willamette University College of Law "because I knew the college had a great reputation. It was close to the water and the mountains and close enough to a city yet far enough away that I could focus on my studies."





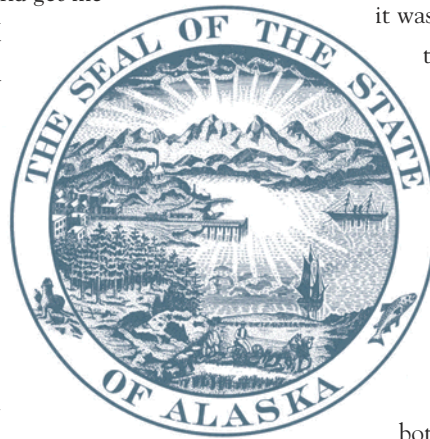
That first semester she was sure everyone was light years ahead of her. “I worked very, very hard and I did pretty well. I remember thinking ‘I can do this.’ It gave me confidence. My legal training has been invaluable because it taught me how to think critically.”

Professors like Bryan Johnston and John Paulus helped shape her. “Bryan Johnston taught criminal procedure and I wasn’t particularly enthralled with it,” she recalls. “But he was able to reach me and get me enthused. Paulus intimidated me, but I loved him. There are things from John Paulus’ class that I still pull out and think, ‘Where’d that come from after all these years?’”

After earning her JD, Murkowski returned to Alaska and went to work with a commercial law firm. She was the only woman in the firm. “They had a reputation of being pretty old school,” she says. “The firm had had one women lawyer before me, but she didn’t stay very long.”

Murkowski stayed for about a year and then took a job with the Anchorage District Court, clerking for seven district court judges and working as a temporary magistrate for small claims. “God has a way of making you learn things you may not want,” she says, smiling broadly. “Dallas Isom’s civil procedure was the course I hated most in law school. When I got the job in district court, it was all about civil procedure. All those rules make sense when you put them into application.”

She got married and joined the firm of Hoge & Lekisch where she stayed for the next eight years. In 1998, yearning for a new challenge, Murkowski decided to open her own practice, but fate had something else in store. “I left the firm in January and by May I was running for the state house,” she says. “I’d always been involved in the community – politics at different levels, the PTA, my kids’ schools – but I really didn’t think about running for elected office. A state representative decided to retire and there was an opening. I knew it was one of those opportunities if I didn’t try, I’d always regret. As they say, the rest is history.”



Murkowski has been making history ever since. She successfully ran for the Alaska Legislature three times, earning a reputation as a thoughtful policymaker and a natural leader. Elected as a Republican, she proved her willingness to work both sides of the aisle to make things happen. Faced with a growing state deficit, she grappled with answers to the state’s chronic imbalance between revenues and expenses and the use of dwindling savings accounts to make up the difference. Just months before her 2002 re-election campaign, she joined House Democrats and four other Republicans to propose an income tax to close the projected billion-dollar fiscal gap. The measure passed in the House, but failed in the Senate. Her bold move earned her both enemies and supporters.



“In the House, Murkowski was moderate and bi-partisan,” a staffer for one of the state’s most liberal Democrats confides. “She got things done by working with both Republicans and Democrats.”

It wasn’t only her bi-partisan style that made her third term re-election tough. A redistricting in 2002 took away a large chunk of Murkowski’s Anchorage neighborhood, moderate-leaning Government Hill, and added the more conservative communities of Chugiak and Eagle River. Opponents charged that she wasn’t conservative enough. They claimed she was soft on gun rights, favored raising taxes and was on the wrong side of the pro-life, anti-abortion question. Her critics almost won. She was re-elected to the House by 57 votes.

Murkowski was selected by her colleagues as house majority leader for the 2003-04 session. However, fate stepped in again to change her destiny. Her father, Frank Murkowski, had resigned the U.S. Senate seat he held for 22 years to run for governor of Alaska. When he won, he appointed his daughter to serve out his term, an appointment allowed by Alaska state law. It was a decision that angered many voters in Alaska and one that may cost her this fall.

“It’s unprecedented,” says Murkowski of her appointment. “It’s the elephant under the carpet that people don’t want to talk about until you’re out of the room. I want to talk about it. Not for one day, not for one

minute since coming to the Senate have I let concerns about the process interfere with my duty to represent all Alaskans.”

She points to other appointees such as Maine’s Margaret Chase Smith, who became the first woman nominated for the presidency; Ernest Gruening, an F.D.R. appointee who became a territorial governor in Alaska; and current U.S. Senator Ted Stevens, who has

represented Alaska for the past 36 years. “These senators have taught me that it doesn’t matter how you got there, it’s what you do with the trust that counts.”

Since she took office in December 2002, Murkowski has been learning the ropes in the U.S. Senate. “There’s no rule book for the Senate,”

she says. “It’s a fascinating institution built on precedent. You have to understand the process and the procedure and the history. There is nothing that can prepare you for it. You have to just listen and watch and learn. I’m fortunate to be working closely with Ted Stevens, a real master in the Senate.”

As a woman and a mother, Murkowski brings a different and much-needed perspective to the male-dominated Senate. “Women are making a difference in the Senate,” she says. “The fact that I have young kids in the public school system gives me a real perspective on issues like education.”

Faced with a growing state deficit, she grappled with answers to the state’s chronic imbalance between revenues and expenses and the use of dwindling savings accounts to make up the difference. She proposed an income tax to close the projected billion-dollar fiscal gap. Her bold move earned her both enemies and supporters.



Murkowski says spending time with her family keeps her grounded.

To lessen the impact her demanding job has on her children, Murkowski's husband, Verne Martell, a small business owner, has assumed the role of "Mr. Mom" in caring for their children, Nicolas and Matthew. The Senator also flies back to Alaska every weekend, logging more than a quarter million air miles between Washington, D.C., and Alaska since she took office. She devotes Sundays entirely to family. "I tell my staff they can book me as tight as they want during the week, but they can't have Sunday because it's my time with my family. We go to church, we go skiing, we have a good Sunday dinner. Being able to be a mom and a wife at least one day a week keeps me grounded."

Her experience as a mother and her knowledge of the Alaska school system has prompted her to fight for waivers to the No Child Left Behind Act. She says the great distances between Alaskan communities make enforcing school choice provisions unrealistic. The diversity represented in Alaskan schools make specific language requirements unreasonable. She's also been

working to improve housing for rural teachers. Often, teachers in bush communities live in tiny, substandard quarters, a fact that makes attracting and retaining teachers difficult. She recently secured \$10 million through the Denali Commission to construct and renovate teacher housing.

One of the battles she constantly faces is translating Alaskan issues for "outsiders." Like most Alaskans, Murkowski resents people in the Lower 48 who want to decide Alaska's future and think they know best how to deal with issues like developing Alaska's vast resources. She favors developing Alaska's gas, oil, mineral, timber and fish resources in ways that protect the environment and create good-paying jobs throughout the state.

"When it comes to our natural resources, Alaskans know what they're doing," Murkowski recently said in an address before the Alaska State Legislature in Juneau. "We live here, and work and play and raise our families here. It's in our best interest to balance devel-



opment with care for our environment so that we can enjoy the best of all worlds – good paying jobs in the most beautiful place in the country.”

Those words are more than just political speechifying for Murkowski. They’ve become her mantra and her mission – doing what’s best for Alaska. It’s not an easy task in the polarized and politicized climate of Washington, D.C. “Washington is driven by politics and labels,” she says.

“With polarization between the parties, the merits of legislation become secondary. What seems to matter is who gets credit or who gets nailed on a vote. There’s huge pressure to engage in this divisiveness because you’re not supposed to give the other side an edge.”

It’s a divisive game that Murkowski refuses to play. “Our focus should be on the end product, which is good policy,” she insists.

She supports many of the policies and legislation of her party, including construction of the Alaska natural gas pipeline and development of the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) oil fields and new oil exploration onshore and offshore. She voted for the Medicare prescription drug benefit for seniors and for keeping the “under God” phrase in the Pledge of Allegiance. She voted against partial birth abortions.

However, she also challenges policies she doesn’t agree with, a gutsy stance for a freshman senator. She recently co-sponsored a bill with U.S. Senator Ron Wyden, an Oregon Democrat, to roll back surveillance provisions of the Patriot Act. Supporters of the bill characterize it as “modest checks and balances” and a “much-needed mid-course correction” of hastily passed legislation that infringes on constitutional liberties and privacy. The move led Bill Barr of the American Conservative

Union Foundation’s 21st Century Privacy and Freedom Center to state, “Senator Murkowski is leading the charge to create sound public policy that will assist law enforcement and simultaneously preserve the privacy and

civil liberties of law-abiding Americans.”

Undoubtedly, not everyone will agree. For some, she’s too conservative. For others, she’s not conservative enough. For Murkowski, it’s a matter of acting on what she believes in. “At the end of the day, you’ve got to answer to yourself,” she says. “If you do something for the sake of politics and shove policy aside, you have to question what you’re doing. You’ve got to stay true to your values and your principles and do what you believe is right.”

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– Senator Lisa Murkowski
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## SERVING THE PUBLIC GOOD

**R**obin Taylor JD'69 has been called a lot of things throughout his 61 years, including attorney, state senator, legislator, judge, vice mayor and assemblyman. You may also call him dedicated.

Born in Washington, the 43-year resident of Ketchikan and later Wrangell, Alaska, has led a life most men would envy. He graduated from the University of Washington in 1965 and received a master's degree from the Oregon College of Education in 1966. He was the first member of his family to attend college. When not on a college campus, his home and office for seven years was an Alaskan seine boat.

"That was a wonderful opportunity to learn," Taylor said. "I think about my close personal associations with highly skilled men and women who earn their living with their hands. That's something many of my colleagues don't appreciate."

Intellectual curiosity drew him to study law at Willamette University in 1966. After graduation, he returned to Ketchikan and began a journey that has yet to end.

"My family thought I was crazy coming back to such a small Alaskan town. But I was blessed with going into partnership with a gentleman quite a bit my senior. He was well known in Alaska and put me in contact with the movers and shakers. We were together until 1977 when he retired and I went on the bench."

Taylor served as district court judge from 1977-82. When he left the bench, he started his own law prac-

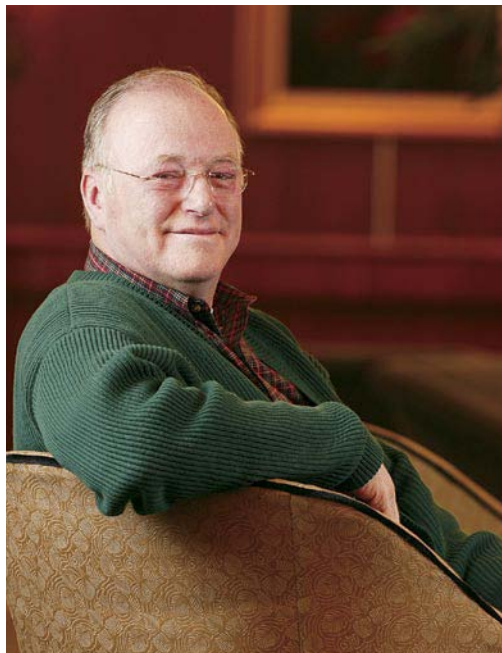
tice, but a life in politics was waiting. In 1984, he was elected to the House of Representatives.

"I served in the House and Senate for 19 years. I'd been frustrated with the quality of representation. I felt I could do a better job, be a little kinder to people, a little more understanding and compassionate. I wanted to be a strong advocate for the issues affecting the lives of the people around me."

Taylor believes his primary achievement in those years was protecting victims rights. "I'm proud of the work I did to prevent the insurance industry from raping Alaskans. I held the wall for about 15 years and helped create the first self-insurance pools. It was a reciprocal insurance company that worked as a pool to cover worker's comp injuries. It was tremendously successful. Later I passed legislation for similar programs for municipalities and school districts."

In 1992, Taylor was appointed to fill a vacated state Senate seat. He was elected later that year and again in 1996 and 2000. He resigned from the Alaska State Senate in the fall of 2003 and was appointed by Governor Frank Murkowski as special assistant to the southeast region transportation director.

A father and grandfather, Taylor practices a philosophy he embraced as a 13-year old Boy Scout: "Our motto was always leave a place in better shape than we found it ... to make it better for the next guy." By all accounts, public servant Robin Taylor has done exactly that.



## ALUMNI PROFILES: LAW ON THE BENCH

## BUILDING THE RULE OF LAW IN ALASKA

*Ask anyone in Alaska who has had the greatest impact on the state's legal system and they'll say Judge James M. Fitzgerald LLB'51.*

The venerable judge is a former football star, a war hero and one of the driving forces behind bringing the rule of law to a wild and woolly young state.

It was Dec. 7, 1941 and Fitzgerald was a star freshman football player for Willamette University. His team had just played in a bowl game in Honolulu the night before the bombs began to fall. "On the morning of Dec. 7, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor," he says. "On Dec. 9, they issued us uniforms and rifles and put us on guard duty."

Two weeks later, he was headed back to the mainland aboard the ocean liner Coolidge, which was filled with wounded. Many of the young men onboard had been terribly burned and Fitzgerald and his fellow students were assigned to take care of them. "I kept trying to talk to one of the wounded assigned to my cabin," he recalled. "But he didn't respond. The corpsman came over and said, 'He's dying. Leave him be.' The boy died on Christmas Eve."

It was the beginning of four war-torn years that would see Fitzgerald earn three Air Medals and the Distinguished Flying Cross for his service as a Marine gunner in the Pacific Theater.

After the war, Fitzgerald simultaneously earned his BA and LLB at Willamette College of Law. Then, intrigued by stories of adventure he'd heard from his Klondike miner father, he and his new wife packed up their Model A and headed north to Alaska. "When we got to Ketchikan, we were just about broke," says Fitzgerald. "I got my first job pulling lumber on a green

chain at the spruce mill. Later that season, I worked as a deck hand on a cannery tender."

An attorney friend suggested he apply for a job as assistant U.S. attorney in Ketchikan. It was a job that tested the young lawyer's metal and gave him a reputation for being fearless and independent. At the time, Alaska was still a territory and Ketchikan was largely wild and lawless. The local chief of police was on the take from the brothels on infamous Creek Street. None of the local authorities would prosecute, so the job fell to Fitzgerald. "The territorial judge,



George Full, ordered me to investigate and prosecute,” he says. “The police chief had to resign. It was quite a notorious event.”

The case didn’t make Fitzgerald popular with the locals and he transferred to Juneau. There he prosecuted a U.S. Marshall. “At that point, the Department of Justice decided that I’d become contentious because I’d prosecuted law enforcement officers who were highly thought of in their communities.”

To turn down the political heat, they transferred him to Anchorage where he became city attorney. In 1959, Alaska voted for statehood and the state’s first governor, William Eagan, appointed him special legal counsel. The move made Fitzgerald one of the primary architects of the state’s legal system. He was appointed superior court judge (1959-72); presiding judge (1969-72); and a Supreme Court Justice of Alaska from 1972-75.

“Alaska’s judicial system is different because we adopted a variation of the Missouri Plan in which judges are appointed by the governor,” he explains. “We run for re-election, but not against other people. It’s far less political. We’ve largely taken politics out of the court system.”

Because the state had had no judiciary and no case law from which to draw, every case Fitzgerald argued

as an attorney, every decision he made on the bench, became part of the state’s rule of law. Fitzgerald has been involved in dozens of landmark cases. He fought the powerful fishing industry when he argued before the U.S. Supreme Court that the state had the power to outlaw giant fish traps. The case eventually defined the state’s authority over this important natural resource. As a justice, he ruled on the case that forced the state to abandon its regional school concept and establish local schools, something that fundamentally changed the educational system in Alaska.

In 1975, President Gerald Ford appointed Fitzgerald as a U.S. district judge for the District of Alaska. From 1984-89, he served as chief judge. He earned senior judge status in 1989. Today, at the age of 84, Judge Fitzgerald continues to try federal cases throughout Alaska and throughout the Ninth Circuit.

After 45 years on the bench, what advice does the judge have for law students and young attorneys? “Become wholly familiar with federal law,” he says. “Tremendous issues like gay marriage are coming up and they’ll be decided by the Supreme Court. Read the Supreme Court decisions, keep up with them and understand them. You need to carry out the law as stated by the Supreme Court of the United States.”

– *Bobbie Hasselbring*

## James M. Fitzgerald: A Life of Honor

- U.S. Army, 1940-41
- U.S. Marines, 1942-46
- Three Air Metals for Meritorious Service
- Flying Cross
- Asst. U.S. Attorney, Ketchikan and Anchorage, Alaska, 1952-56
- Legal counsel to governor of Alaska, 1959
- First Public Safety commissioner, 1959
- Superior Court Judge, 1959-72
- Justice, Supreme Court of Alaska, 1972-75
- Judge, U.S. District Court, 1975
- Chief Judge, U.S. District Court, 1984-89
- Senior Judge, U.S. District Court, 1989-present
- Certificate of Commendation, U.S. Navy, 1991 (He and other members of the Willamette football team received this honor for their contributions at Pearl Harbor December 7-24, 1941.)
- Willamette University Football Hall of Fame, 2000
- Distinguished Alumni Citation for Achievement in Public Service, Willamette University, 2001
- Professionalism and Ethics Award, Anchorage Chapter of the American Inns of Court, 2004



## ALUMNI PROFILES: LAW ON THE BENCH

## IN THE TRENCHES



Judge Peter Froehlich JD'75 sees it all – DUIs, truancy, assault, domestic violence, petty larceny, alcoholism, drug addiction. Froehlich, the only district court judge in Juneau, is the first line of defense in the battle to turn around the lives of everyday people. And he does it with creative use of the law and the power of the bench.

As a student at Willamette University College of Law, which he calls “one of the best law schools on the West Coast,” Froehlich was interested in environmental law and local government. He says he saw “a lot of social turmoil and people being treated unfairly. I thought the law was a way to be involved in changing that.”

After graduating, he worked with the attorney general's office in Juneau drafting and editing legislation and doing natural resource law and business regulation. In 1989, his life took a dramatic change when Governor Steve Cowper appointed him district court judge. He became the only lower trial court judge in the vast northern half of Southeast Alaska. It didn't

take him long to realize it's an area plagued by alcohol abuse. “Alcohol abuse is really an epidemic here,” he says. “Seventy to 80 percent of the criminal cases I see are alcohol-related.”

It also didn't take him long to realize that locking people up isn't effective. “I have to be innovative to get people to sober up and turn themselves around.”

One of his approaches is Wellness Court, something he initiated in 1999. Instead of sending drug and alcohol offenders to jail, they can get treatment. Wellness Court requires defendants to enter treatment, take Naltrexone, a medicine that stops alcohol cravings, attend Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, work and appear monthly before Froehlich for compliance hearings. The program is amazingly effective. “The success rate for traditional alcoholism programs is about one-third,” he says. “Our success rate is double that.”

He is similarly creative with youth offenders, many of whom are borderline students who see an appearance in court as a way to cut class. He set up After School Court on Friday afternoons to deal with kids who are ticketed for underage tobacco or alcohol use. “Instead of cutting class and being fined, they attend an educational program after school on alcohol and tobacco.”

Another Froehlich innovation is Youth Court, a diversion court where the offenders are sentenced by their peers. It's more effective than traditional court because “kids take it more seriously. Teenagers are very peer-oriented. It's a lot easier to tune out an old guy like me than it is kids your age.”

Froehlich gets a lot of satisfaction from his work. “I've tried to be a little more personalized, a little more positive and therapeutic within the context of the system. Every week, someone comes up to me in the grocery store and tells me they've been sober for so many months. It's touching. That's really my job – to help people make a positive change.”

– Bobbie Hasselbring

## MAN ON A MISSION

Judge Advocate General (JAG) officer Lt. Col. Scott Marchand MBA'83, JD'87 does not fly planes, perform rescue missions or solve mysterious crimes. In fact, real JAG officers don't usually get into the kind of thrilling predicaments depicted by their super-sleuthing counterparts on TV. However, after spending an hour with Marchand, it's clear that being a JAG officer involves enough day-to-day challenges and high-stakes decision making to create some compelling drama.

As chief of general law at the Elmendorf Air Force base near Anchorage, Alaska, Marchand deals with everything from resolving disputes between company commanders to handling court martials. "Court martialing an officer is always interesting because there's a lot of pressure involved," he notes. "Officers are held to a pretty high standard of leadership and professionalism. For them to mess up and be facing a court martial is big news."

Marchand's legal work doesn't stop in the courtroom. His office oversees nearly all of the base's legal operations – handling contracts, environmental law, ethics issues, labor law, fiscal real estate, utility issues and administrative law. That means the base is constantly negotiating with parties outside of the military structure, and Marchand has to be right in the middle of the action. "These military installations are like little cities," he says, remarking on the diversity of issues that confront him. "My job is a lot like being a municipal attorney because you get to deal with so many areas of the law."



The job certainly puts Marchand's management skills to the test. As a dual-degree recipient from both Willamette University College of Law and Willamette's Atkinson Graduate School of Management, Marchand says he is more than equipped to handle the unique demands of being a lawyer and a superior officer. "My dual degree has been very useful in the JAG community because

you come in as an officer and you're immediately a supervisor. You're thrust into a situation where you're supervising people who have five, 10, sometimes 15 years of military experience. But, because of Willamette, I felt ready for the task."

What appeals most to Marchand about the JAG community is both its sense of mission and the collegiality it inspires. As he says, "Nothing is profit-driven in the JAG corps. It's mission-driven and

everyone pulls together to get the job done. I like that a lot."

For someone who has moved several times for new assignments, the JAG corps also gives Marchand a reassuring sense of continuity and community. "I like the atmosphere of working in the JAG community. It's very close-knit and people depend on their coworkers."

So while the job of being a JAG may not involve unraveling international conspiracies or parachuting onto a ship, Marchand's sense of duty and love for what he does is far better than any work of fiction.

– Brad Millay BA'97

## ALUMNI PROFILES: LAW IN THE COURTROOM

## LONG-DISTANCE LAWYER

Tim Lamb JD'83 was born in Seattle during his family's brief break from Alaska, but was brought to Anchorage while he was still an infant. So, except for a few months in Seattle (that he doesn't remember at all) and three years he spent at Willamette Law (that he remembers quite fondly), Lamb is a lifelong Alaskan.

He is a partner in the Anchorage firm of Delaney Wiles Hayes Gerety Ellis & Young, specializing in civil litigation defending medical malpractice cases, as well as the ski industry and occasionally the State of Alaska. But when he isn't in the office or in a courtroom, he's on a bicycle.

"When the trials are out of town, I'll take my bike with me," says Lamb. "For the fire trial\*, it was really long so I actually took my elliptical trainer and put it in a separate motel room with a big fan. It was really fun."

The multi-day road races he participates in (such as the Denali Classic, which he's won 13 times), Lamb likens to chess games or trials on wheels. "They are somewhat like trials," he says. "You prepare, you prepare, you prepare, and then you have a very short period in which you do it, and there's strategy."

Lamb has had a sports-law connection since he was a teenager competing in ski racing when his coach was the husband of Mary Hughes JD'74, a principal of

*\*The February-April 2003 trial in the Millers Reach class action suit against Alaska's Division of Forestry, which the defense won.*

the firm Hughes Thorsness Gantz Powell & Brundin. Other family friends were lawyers and judges and when Lamb began soliciting opinions on law schools, Willamette was the name most mentioned.

"A lot of people whom I thought highly of spoke real well of Willamette, and particularly the litigation program there, the trial program, the moot court," he says.

But of course the bike-friendly environment of Salem figured prominently in his decision: "I wanted somewhere I could ride bikes and not get run over. We'd go toward Portland, take the ferry across the river, come back the other side of the river and into town over the main bridge. Or we'd go south into the farmlands, do a big loop and come back on the road by the park."

Lamb is married to Sabrina Hill-Lamb, whom he met while he was competing as a ski racer for the University of Alaska at Anchorage. His wife is also a bike rider. Their two sons, aged five and 12, are both avid skiers.

Lamb says his passion for sports and fitness serves him well in his work as a trial lawyer. "It actually takes physical endurance to make it through a six- to 10-week trial."

As with bicycle road racing, not just anybody can go the distance.

— Susan G. Hauser



## Did you know ...

- Alaska has been inhabited by human beings for at least 30,000 years.
- In 1964, Anchorage suffered a 9.2 quake (larger than San Francisco's 1906 quake) in which the earth heaved for a full five minutes, creating 10-foot drops in soil level at the epicenter and leaving 100 people dead and 4,000 homeless.
- The four-foot diameter pipe of the Trans Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS), carries crude oil 800 miles from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez, crossing the Brooks, Alaska and Chugach mountain ranges and 34 major rivers and streams and nearly 500 others.



## EARTH ATTORNEY

Douglas Pope JD'73 graduated in 1970 from the University of Alaska in Anchorage on the very first Earth Day, which for him is symbolic of the era's idealism that inspired him to go on to law school at Willamette.

"I felt called to it," he recalls. "At the time it was the end of the '60s, and there was a real rising. I wanted to do my part and I just felt called to the law to do that."

Specifically, it was environmental law that called to him. Oil had just been discovered on Alaska's North Slope and plans were underway to build the Alaska Pipeline from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez. Pope realized that the great expanses of Alaskan wilderness would soon be impacted by industry.

"So I was really interested in trying to do my best for the environment in Alaska and I felt I could do that through the law," says Pope, who is the senior partner in a small Anchorage law firm, Pope & Katcher.

Although an interest in environmental law took him to Willamette, Pope found that he wanted to do other cases too. The cases his firm now handles are generally complex, involving thousands of documents. They range from defending medical malpractice cases to appealing a state law that required government workers to conduct official business only in English.

In the English-only case, Pope filed a lawsuit on behalf of Togiak, an Eskimo village in Southwestern Alaska where the majority of state workers speak the

Yup'ik language. Pope won the case, which he took on pro bono.

"I think we figured out that we put about 800 hours into that case, attorney time," he says. "But it's a just cause and it was a lot of fun to do."

Pope is married to an elementary school counselor and has three children, who all enjoy outdoor activities such as skiing and canoeing. At his firm, his days are spent either at the keyboard or reading documents.



"I don't try many cases anymore," he says. "Most of the cases I get involved in either settle or get disposed of on a motion. Because we handle large civil cases, there's so much money involved that either side can't afford the risk of a trial, basically."

Pope's passion for preserving Alaska's environment was what led him to Willamette Law. To this day, it influences his decisions and actions, on and off the job. He was one of the sponsors of an initiative to ban the use of airplanes in hunting wolves, and an initiative to ban billboards on Alaska's highways. He helped organize other home owners in the Chugach National Forest to resist schemes to develop the public lands for uses other than recreational.

In addition, he's a regular contributor to the *Anchorage Daily News*, writing travel accounts of his family's outdoor adventures in Alaska.

"I think that people see me as an outdoor person and as a lawyer – a good lawyer," he says.

– Susan G. Hauser

- Ketchikan, Alaska's fourth-largest city, receives 13.5 feet of rain per year.
- Alaska's Kodiak Island, the second-largest island in the U.S., is home to more than 3,000 bears.
- The Inside Passage, the world's longest protected inland waterway, stretches 1,000 miles from Puget Sound to Skagway.
- Alaska's St. Elias Range is the tallest coastal mountain range in the world.
- Barrow, the northern most community in North America, is 2,136 miles from Salem, Ore. The temperature is below freezing in Barrow 324 days of the year.
- Alaska has only 13 highways. Three of them are dirt.

## ALUMNI PROFILES: LAW IN BUSINESS

## ALYESKA ALUMS

*Alyeska Pipeline Service Company is the operator of the Trans Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS), which carries crude oil over 800 miles from Prudhoe Bay on Alaska's North Slope to the Port of Valdez. The company has about 1,000 employees, as well as about 1,000 contractor employees. There are five lawyers at Alyeska Pipeline – three are graduates of Willamette Law. Jordan Jacobsen is general counsel. Larry Wood is assistant general counsel. Susan Murto is in-house counsel in Alyeska's Human Resources department.*

Jordan Jacobsen JD'89 is back in his native Alaska, working as Alyeska's general counsel. But he often returns to the Lower 48 to participate in long-distance road biking events.

"I did an event at Mt. Shasta where we went over five mountain passes for 129 miles with 20,000 vertical feet of climbing," he remembers. "There were two thunderstorms that day and I was riding a metal bike. It was pretty exciting."

Such demanding exercise no doubt helps him keep up with his varied responsibilities at Alyeska, including assuring security for the 800-mile pipeline.

Since 9-11, security for the pipeline has grown extremely complicated, he says. Keeping track of all the new government regulations has been one of the greatest challenges.

"We're one of the top 10 infrastructure targets in the United States," he says. "So we attract a lot of potential attention from people we don't want to have attention from, as well as the government. It's a real balancing act."

Jacobsen began his career working as a petroleum engineer for Arco, but when the petroleum industry slumped in the early '80s, he entered Willamette University College of Law. He recalls that the professor who was his greatest influence was Carleton Snow.

"I liked his teaching style," says Jacobsen of his contracts professor. "I liked his professionalism and his commitment to the details around the law. Having been an engineer, I've always been about details."

After graduation, Jacobsen took a position with the Anchorage firm of Hughes Thorsness Gantz Powell & Brundin. Two years later, he took a job working under Alyeska's assistant general counsel. He eventually rose in the ranks to become Alyeska's general counsel, covering environmental law and operational support, as well as overseeing the law department, the land, insurance and claims professionals and security. Jacobsen is proving he can go the distance – whether it's on a bike or in the oil business.



Pictured left to right: Susan Murto, Jordan Jacobsen and Larry Wood

It's a small world, even when you're from Alaska, as Larry Wood JD'75 learned when he mentioned a job opening in Fairbanks to Yamhill County Judge Kurt Rossman, for whom he'd been clerking. As a third-year law student at Willamette, Wood was one of three finalists for a job clerking for Judge Gerald Van Hoomisen of the Alaska Superior Court. Turns out the two judges had been law school classmates, so Rossman put in a good word for Wood.

"To his credit, Judge Van Hoomisen still interviewed me," Wood recalls. "And he sent me on an adventure that's lasted almost 30 years now. I got interviewed in

## Pipeline Trivia

- The Trans Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) covers 800.3 miles.
- About 70,000 workers built the TAPS at a cost of \$8 billion.
- The pipe is 48-inch diameter high-tensile carbon steel.
- There are 71 gates and 80 check valves to block oil, if needed, on the Alaska pipeline.
- To avoid thawing the permafrost, most of the pipeline is elevated. In areas where it's buried, it's insulated and 4 miles of it is refrigerated.
- The Alaska oil pipeline is designed to withstand earthquakes from 5.5 to 8.5 on the Richter scale.
- The TAPS is built in a zigzag fashion to accommodate expansion and contraction due to temperature changes.



August and five days later, I was driving my '64 Ford Falcon up the Alaska-Canada highway to Fairbanks. The second night I was there I was helping Judge Van Hoomisen cut up a moose. Thought I'd died and gone to heaven."

Convincing his new bride that life in Fairbanks was heavenly was another matter, especially when it was 10 below zero when he carried her over the threshold.

"Ellen was in tears," he says. "By October, it was minus 30. By January, it was minus 62 below zero. Ellen was really wondering what she'd gotten herself into."

Four kids, a shared love of the outdoors and nearly 30 years later, Alaska is home sweet home for the family. Woods has been with Alyeska since 1991, after working at a variety of positions around the state. Currently, he's assistant general counsel, filling in for fellow Willamette Law alum Jordan Jacobsen when necessary.

"I administer most of our litigation, I handle larger commercial transactions, and everything else," he says. "That can be everything from insurance and claims to real estate and leases, personnel matters. I back up Susan Murto when she's gone and the other attorneys when they're gone. So it's a really broad umbrella."

**S**usan Murto JD'86 is in-house counsel in Alyeska's Human Resources department, practicing employment law and some labor

law. Those were the two areas that caught her fancy at Willamette University College of Law, while she was a student fresh from Butte, Mont. Although she had studied elementary education at Rocky Mountain College in Billings, and had even completed her student teaching, she was drawn to law and to labor and employment issues.

"I came from a city that had a lot of represented labor," says Murto. "Butte had a lot of labor unions. And so it was interesting to me. I can remember taking employment and labor law classes at Willamette and loving them. So I just continued to pursue it. "

After being interviewed in Salem and again in Anchorage, Murto landed a job with Hughes Thorsness Gantz Powell & Brundin. After two years with that firm, she worked as an assistant municipal attorney in Anchorage for about three years. She's been with Alyeska since October 1991.

"It's really fun because every day my phone rings and it's a different question," says Murto, who collects antiques in her spare time. "And if I get in on the ground level of issues when they first start, we can hopefully nip them in the bud before they develop into lawsuits or litigation."

Murto says she likes having a business relationship "where you can talk on a daily basis and be part of building something and making sure it's right. When I go home at the end of the day, I can say, 'I felt good about that decision.'"

— Susan G. Hauser

## ALUMNI PROFILES: LAW IN BUSINESS

## KABOOM

*You know you've arrived at Robert Hall's JD'83 business by the gorillas hanging 20 feet in the air. As the owner of Gorilla Fireworks, the largest purveyor of consumer fireworks in Alaska, Hall has a reputation for using outlandish strategies from gorillas to Batmobiles to wildly painted fireworks stands and silly advertising jingles to put the boom – and a bit of fun – into his pyrotechnic business.*

Hall didn't plan to be the king of Alaskan fireworks. If he hadn't earned his law degree, he probably wouldn't be. After graduating from Willamette, Hall and his new wife moved back to his home state of Alaska and he went to work as an attorney for a small firm in Anchorage. Before the Fourth of July, Hall took a few days off to sell fireworks to help out a family business associate. He says it was fun – and profitable.

Despite the money, Hall didn't take the fireworks business seriously. During his third year practicing law, he indulged his entrepreneurial leanings and opened his own solo practice. "I had lots of small clients," he says. "While it was paying the bills, my law practice wasn't big."

He continued his summer fireworks sales, but when he tried to sell fireworks in Houston, a small town 45 minutes outside of Anchorage, he was turned down. "Even though fireworks were permitted, the fire marshal refused to give anyone a permit," he says. "There were some apparent conflicts in local laws. The state fire marshal told me, 'Get a judge to give you a court order and I will give you a permit.'"

Undaunted, Hall reviewed the statute and wrote a legal interpretation. The state attorney general agreed with him and ordered the fire marshal to allow fireworks sales. Sensing a unique business opportunity, Hall didn't tell anyone about his permit until two weeks before the Independence Day celebration. The local newspaper ran the story on July 2. "The next

day, there were 150 cars in the parking lot," he says, smiling at the memory. "People were lined up 10 feet deep to buy fireworks. We worked 20 hours a day."

Hall became intrigued with the business potential of fireworks. "That winter, I read more than a hundred books on marketing and positioning your brand in the market place. I developed the name Gorilla Fireworks because it's memorable and makes people smile. We sell fun and excitement and we wanted a fun and exciting image. I wanted to position ourselves so that when the competition showed up, we'd have the advantage."

Hall was still practicing law, doing a lot of work in collections. But the following summer, the demands of his growing Gorilla Fireworks convinced him he needed to run his business full-time.

Today, Gorilla Fireworks commands

more than half of Alaska's consumer fireworks market. They operate stands in Houston and North Pole and supply 100+ bush villages. The largest fireworks company in the world has sent executives to study Hall's unique marketing approach. He's traveled to China on buying trips and regularly travels across the U.S. searching for new and unique products for his customers. He's also had offers from large, out-of-state companies to buy his company, but for now he'd rather run his own show.

"I thought I'd do this for two or three years," he says, chuckling. "Almost 20 years later, we're still doing it."

One of the keys to Hall's success is that he's made fireworks family friendly. "When I first started out, I painted the fireworks stands every week and made sure





the employees wore ties and had a clean cut look,” he says. “I wanted to give it a family atmosphere.”

Hall is also committed to community involvement. Many of his employees are members of the volunteer fire department. Hall was president of the local United Way and vice-president of the local chamber of commerce. He’s involved in Rotary and helped start the Children’s Place, a child advocacy center. Every year, Gorilla Fireworks puts on a free pyrotechnic display for the communities of Houston and North Pole as a way of saying thanks. “When we shot the city celebration show for North Pole in December this year, it was 32 degrees below zero so we shot the show really quickly,” he says. “But a lot of people came out to watch. It’s crazy up here.”

Hall’s law degree not only helped him get in on the ground floor of Alaska’s fireworks business; it also helps him negotiate a myriad of state and federal regulations affecting his company. “Fireworks is a heavily regulated industry from transportation to insurance,” he explains. “I’ve worked with the state fire marshal and local officials to help redraft regulations and ordinances.”

After a random worker’s compensation audit, the state agency reclassified his workers from retail sales to explosive handlers and increased his insurance premiums by nearly \$20,000. He successfully fought back, winning a ruling that later became the basis for a nationwide exemption. “All fireworks stands in the U.S. now have a worker’s compensation exemption,” he explains. “The national exception was based, in part, on Alaska’s exception.”

Over the years, it hasn’t always been smooth sailing for Hall and his three full-time and 80-90 seasonal employees. In 1996, a devastating wildfire swept through Houston, consuming 30,000 acres and destroying 300 homes. “Everything we’d bought that year burned,” he recalls. “We lost an entire season and a considerable amount of money. It took years to recover.”

The lean times have not dissuaded Hall. In fact, he enjoys the boom and bust nature of the business. “I like to win and I like to gamble,” says the man who has won both the state chess and poker championships. “I like the gamesmanship aspect. To me, business is a fun game that you can either win or lose. Here in Alaska, we want to have a lot of fun doing it.”

– *Bobbie Hasselbring*

## CLASS ACTION

## 1960s

**Kenneth B. Stewart BA'64,JD'67** of Oregon City, Ore., has been appointed as Clackamas County Circuit Court's first judicial hearings officer. Ken has practiced law for 32 years, including five years as a prosecutor in the 1970s. He resides in Tigard with Pam, his wife of 16 years.

**Faith (Enyeart) Ireland JD'69** of Seattle, Wash., announced that she will not run for re-election as justice for the State Supreme Court. She was elected in 1998 after 15 years as a judge on the Superior Court. She will finish her current six-year term Jan. 10, 2005. Justice Ireland was one of two women in her class at the College of Law. She was a founding member of Washington Women Lawyers and a board member of the Washington State Trial Lawyer's Association. Ireland was named Judge of the Year by the Washington State Trial Lawyer's Association and received the President's and Vanguard awards from Washington Women Lawyers. Ireland is a world-class powerlifter and earlier this month won the national powerlifting championship in her age and weight class.

## 1970s

**Steven W. Seymour JD'75** of Portland, Ore., has been named chairman of legal affairs for the Boy Scouts of America/Cascade Pacific Council. Steven is with the Samuels Yoelin Kantor Seymour & Spinrad LLP firm and specializes in employment law and litigation.

**Mary Linda Pearson JD'76** of Nine Mile Falls, Wash., is now semi-retired, working as acting chief judge for the Couer d'Alene Tribe of Idaho, and is shopping for a publisher for her finished 800-page manuscript on the legalized genocide of Indian people. She is also doing other consultant work, such as technical assistance in setting up tribal drug courts and evaluating tribal court systems.

**Thomas A. Collins JD'77** of Reno, Nev., is president of the Reno Corvette Club and chairman-elect of the Nevada State Bar Elder Law Section.

**Richard H. Wollenberg JD'78** of Longview, Wash., was elected president, C.E.O., and chairman of the board of Longview Fibre Company.

## 1980s

**Jeffrey R. Johnson JD'80** of Seattle, Wash., reports that the practice of law remains exciting, but not as exciting as having two children get married within five months of each other in 2003.

**Mark L. Cushing JD'81** of Washington, D.C., has joined Sonnenschein Nath & Rosenthal LLP as partner in the firm's Public Policy & Strategies Group.

**Jo Ann (Greene) Stringfield JD'81** of El Segundo, Calif., a colonel in the U.S. Air Force, is the staff judge advocate for the Space & Missile Systems Center. Her practice includes government procurement, ethics and business integrity, criminal and civil litigation.

**Margaret Herrmann Taylor JD'81** of Salem, was recently hired as a principal contributor at the Oregon Department of Human Services.

**Jeffrey G. Condit JD'82** of Portland, Ore., has been named a partner of the Miller Nash LLP firm. Jeff joined Miller Nash as counsel in 1998 and focuses his practice on the areas of government, administrative law, K-12 and higher education law and land use planning. He has done extensive work at the Oregon Legislature and with state agencies on behalf of clients. Before joining the firm, he served as city attorney for Lake Oswego and county counsel for Benton County, Ore.

**Douglas C. Kirkpatrick JD'82** of Turlock, Calif., recently started an executive coaching and human resources consulting firm, The Celestia Group, LLC, to provide coaching and business consulting services to organizations experiencing rapid change. His presentation to the London 2003 Global Business Process Forum, entitled "Running an Organization Without Management," was voted the most interesting and insightful case study. His website is: [www.thecelestiagroup.com](http://www.thecelestiagroup.com).



**Tim W. Nay JD'84** of Portland, Ore., a Portland elder law attorney

with the firm Nay & Friedenberg, has been elected president of the Oregon Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association. Nay, also a clinical social worker, is the past chair of the Oregon State Bar Elder Section.

**P. Gregory Frey JD'86** of Honolulu, Hawaii, was recently elected to the board of directors, for the Island of Oahu, of the Hawaii State Bar Association. He also recently earned a M.A. in psychology from Honolulu University, which he puts to good use as litigation partner at the firm Coates & Frey, voted by local readers' polls as Hawaii's Best Divorce Lawyers.



**Donald L. Krahmer, Jr. BS'81, JD/MBA'87** of Portland, Ore., shareholder

of the Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt firm, has been appointed to serve on the advisory board of the Oregon Nanoscience and Microtechnologies Institute (ONAMI). ONAMI is a collaborative effort between Oregon's public universities and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory to advance research in and commercialization of nanoscience, nanostructures, materials characterization, microfluidics, process intensification and microfabrication. He co-chairs the firm's technology and business practice group. Krahmer currently serves on the board of directors of the Portland Business Alliance, Pacific Continental Bank, Cascade Pacific Council of the Boy Scouts of America and is the 2004 president of the Arlington Club.

## 1990s

**Nancy M. Erfle JD'90** of Portland, Ore., shareholder of the Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt firm was honored as one of Portland's *The Business Journal's* "Forty Under

40." This award honors 40 of the most accomplished and influential young executives in Portland, selected from nearly 250 nominees. Erfle chairs Schwabe's business and products liability litigation group and specializes in the defense of pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturers, automotive manufacturers and agricultural chemical manufacturers. She is past president of the Multnomah Bar Association's Young Lawyers Section and a past member of the Oregon Board of Bar Examiners.

**Michael D. Levelle JD/C'90** of Portland, Ore., is special counsel with the Sussman Shank firm. Levelle, who was with Sussman Shank from 1994 to 2000, rejoins the business department. He has extensive experience handling guardianships and conservatorship issues that involve financial and health care decision-making when a person's ability to handle his or her affairs is in question.



**Ronald W. Messerly JD'90** of Phoenix, Ariz., was recently elected to

partner in the Phoenix office of Snell & Wilmer. Messerly has been with the firm since 2000 concentrating his practice in construction, insurance, government contracting and complex real estate development transactions. He is former vice president and general counsel of Holt & Haugh Land Development and former vice president of Holt & Haugh Construction Co.

**Peter B. Tiller JD'91** of Centralia, Wash., a partner in the Tiller Law Firm, has had an article pub-

lished in the current issue of *The Confederate Philatelist* (Vol. 49, No. 1). A life-long stamp collector, he has written "People behind the Covers: The Dickinson-Kilpatrick Correspondence."

**Brian E. Smith JD/MBA'92** of Eugene, Ore., has been promoted to senior technology development associate in the University of Oregon Technology Transfer office. This office commercializes university-owned intellectual property via license agreements with both existing and start-up companies. Brian previously worked as an attorney for the Federal Bureau of Investigation and in a Corvallis business law practice.

**Sharon O'Reilly Heth JD'93** has been named vice president, Charitable Services, for Allen Trust Company. Her responsibilities include assisting nonprofit organizations, their donors and advisors regarding the various charitable management services offered by the company. Heth also administers gift plans for individuals and charities. Prior to joining Allen Trust Company, she was associate director of Planned Giving for Oregon Health and Sciences University Foundation and Doernbecher Children's Hospital Foundation. Sharon and her husband, **Jacob A. Heth JD'94**, reside in Portland, Ore.

**Robyn L. Helmlinger JD'96** of San Francisco, Calif., was recently named partner in the firm Sidley Austin Brown & Wood LLP. The firm is the third largest in the country.

## CLASS ACTION



**Christopher R. Casey JD'96** of Seattle, Wash., former principal and sole

attorney at Christopher R. Casey PLLC, recently settled the largest non-condominium residential construction defect case in Washington State. He settled the defect claim on behalf of 57 individual homeowners in November 2003, and in excess of \$4.3 million. He is proud to announce the formation of his new firm, Casey & Skoglund, PLLC, in Seattle, and can be visited at [www.casey-skoglund.com](http://www.casey-skoglund.com).

**Kari L. Oakes JD'97** of Las Vegas, Nev., is with the Goldsmith & Guymon firm doing primarily estate planning and probate work.

**Michael S. Thornicroft BA'93, JD'97** of Ashland, Ore., is an instructor of criminology at Southern Oregon University and also a reporter for KTVL Channel 10 in Medford, Ore.

**Mitchell A. Viner JD'97** of Marina Del Ray, Calif., has joined FrontBridge Technologies as their counsel. FrontBridge provides enterprise message management services for companies large and small.

**Erik W. Gellatly JD'98** recently relocated back to Tigard, Ore., after spending three and a half years in the San Francisco Bay area. He is currently senior product manager for Matrix Logic, a leading software integrator for law firms, corporate legal departments and governmental agencies and will be heading up the company's Pacific Northwest office in Portland.

**Lesil L. McGuire BA'93, JD'98** of Anchorage, Alaska, is going into her fourth year in the Alaska State Legislature. She was elected to her second term in the House of Representatives in 2002. Lesil currently serves as the chair of the House Judiciary Committee, vice chair of Economic Development Committee and is a member of the Rules Committee and the Oil and Gas Committee. She represents the district she grew up in and also owns a public relations firm, Midnight Sun Consultants, based in Anchorage.

**Rhonda A. Haymon JD'99** of Los Angeles, Calif., has been appointed to the position of deputy public defender I with the law offices of the Los Angeles County Public Defender.

**Travis R. Marker JD/C'03** of Ogden, Utah, completed an LLM in dispute resolution from Bond University in Gold Coast, Australia, where he received marks of high distinctions on his papers. Travis also traveled to New Zealand and Fiji before returning to Utah where he opened his own law practice. Marker is also a director of a dispute resolution center and the chair of his high school alumni association.

## MARRIAGES

**John L. Gibbs JD'86** married Allison Rootsart on Sept. 12, 2003, and they now reside in San Jose, Calif.

## 2000s



**Matthew D. Wride JD'00** of Salt Lake City, Utah, joined the firm Parsons Behle &

Latimer as an associate in the corporate and tax department where he focuses his practice on federal income taxation, estate planning, state and local taxation, tax litigation and controversies and probate matters. Before joining the firm, he was a senior tax consultant with Deloitte & Touche.

**Crystal L. Miller-O'Brien JD/C'01** of Los Angeles, Calif., is a litigation associate with another law alum, **Troy A. Biddle JD/C'98**, in the Robie & Matthai firm.

## FAMILY ADDITIONS

To **Kassim M. Ferris JD/C'96** and wife **Heather L. Grossmann JD'97** of Portland, Ore., a daughter, Samira Rose Grossmann-Ferris, born May 8, 2004. She joins big sister Isabelle.

To **PJ Sorensen BA'93, JD'96** and wife Margo of Kalispell, Mont., a daughter, Bethany, born Nov. 15, 2003. She joins big brother Jonathan.

To **Heather A. Hess-Lindquist JD'00** and husband **John A. Lindquist II MM'99**, of Ogden, Utah, a daughter, Chloe Elizabeth, born April 2, 2004. She joins big brothers Charles and John and big sister Laura.



To **Kymerlee C. (Barrow) Stapleton JD'00** and husband Evan of Woodland, Calif., a son, Andrew Jeffrey, born Nov. 4, 2003.

To **Jill S. (Davis) Holinka JD'02** and husband Erik of Boise, Idaho, a son, Jackson Bryan, born July 1, 2003, weighing 8 lbs., 12 oz. He joins sister Morgan, now 4.

## OBITUARIES

**Sanford Clement LLB'40** died Mar. 17, 2004, in Portland, Ore., at age 89. He is survived by his wife, Florence, one daughter, two step-daughters, two grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.



**John W. Purvis LLB'46** died Mar. 24, 2004, in Richland, Wash., at age 85. He is survived by a daughter, a son and two grandchildren.

**Cecil H. Queseth AB'40, LLB'46** died Jan. 14, 2004, in Salem, at age 86. He is survived by his daughter, a grandson and two sisters.

**Stephen J. Fouчек LLB'48** died March 3, 1998, in McCallen, Texas. He is survived by his daughter.

**Frank C. McKinney LLB'49** died Feb. 21, 2004, in Burns, Ore., at age 84. He is survived by his wife, Lillian, one daughter and two granddaughters.

**V. Grant Mumpower LLB'52** died Mar. 16, 2004, at age 74. He is survived by his wife, Patricia, one daughter, one son and five grandchildren.

**Charles L. Thomas JD'53** died Mar. 5, 2004, in Issaquah, Wash., at age 90. He is survived by his wife, Evelene, one daughter, two sons, a stepson, one brother, 10 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

**Richard W. Sabin LLB'57** died Feb. 21, 2004, in Lake Oswego, Ore., at age 75. He is survived by his wife, **Katharine (Anderson) Sabin CLA'51** and two daughters.

**Gottlieb J. Baer JD'58** died Mar. 8, 2004, in Sacramento, Calif., at age 73. He is survived by his wife, Mary Ann, four sons, one daughter, a sister **Barbara (Baer) Rebenstorf CLA'60**, two brothers, and 13 grandchildren.

**Robert L. Johnson LLB'58** died April 30, 2004, in Lewiston, Mont., at age 76. He is survived by his wife, Anita, four children, three grandchildren, 3 step-grandchildren and 2 step-great-grandchildren.

**Richard V. Kengla JD'68** died Mar. 29, 2004, in Grants Pass, Ore., at age 61. He is survived by his wife, Jeanne, a step-son and a brother.

**Gary L. Hill JD'74** died April 13, 2004, in Roseburg, Ore., at age 57. He is survived by his wife, Lisa, a son, two daughters, his mother, two sisters and two grandchildren.

**Charles S. French JD'76** died July 6, 2004, in Everett, Wash., at age 53. He is survived by his wife, Diane, two sons, his father, two sisters and a brother.

**Eric A. Heisel JD'81** died Mar. 18, 2004, in Guam at age 57. He is survived by his wife, Maria.

## GUIDELINES

If you have information you would like to submit for Class Action, please send it to:

*Willamette University College of Law  
Office of Alumni Relations  
245 Winter Street SE  
Salem, OR 97301*

or email:  
*wu-lawyer@willamette.edu*

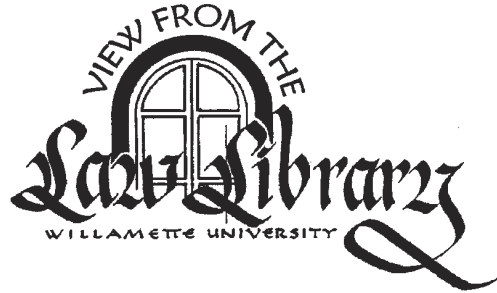
Please print or type all submissions in the interest of accuracy. If something has been written about you in a newspaper or other publication and you would like it to be included in the *Willamette Lawyer* Class Action as well, please submit a copy with a note giving your permission.

It is the practice of Class Action not to print pregnancy or engagement announcements, nor candidacies for political offices due to the lag time between receiving such information and the publication dates. The *Willamette Lawyer* reserves the right to edit or omit any information submitted.

We welcome photographs for possible use, depending on space and photograph quality. Please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you would like your photo returned.

## KEY

JD = Doctor of Jurisprudence  
LLB = Bachelor of Law (equivalent of JD)  
LLM = Master of Law  
MM = Master of Management, Master of Administration  
MBA = Master of Business Administration  
H = Honorary Degree  
CDR = Certificate in Dispute Resolution  
BA = Bachelor of Arts  
BS = Bachelor of Science  
BM = Bachelor of Music



## ELECTIONSPEAK!

In an election year, numerous political subgroups of our multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious citizenry seek candidates who will support a particular value as worthy of government policy to be enshrined into law for the benefit of all.

Seasoned politicians learn to relate to each such group by fully committing themselves with passion and eloquence to both sides of the social divide and none have done so better than Mississippi Circuit Court Judge Noah S. "Soggy Sweat," Jr. in his 1952 whiskey speech before the Mississippi House on the issue of legalizing liquor:

My Friends:

*I had not intended to discuss this controversial subject at this particular time. However, I want you to know that I do not shun controversy. On the contrary, I will take a stand on any issue at any time, regardless of how fraught with controversy it might be. You have asked me how I feel about whiskey. All right, here is how I feel about whiskey.*

*If when you say whiskey you mean the devil's brew, the poison scourge, the bloody monster, that defiles innocence, dethrones reason, destroys the home, creates misery and poverty, yea, literally takes the bread from the mouths of little children; if you mean the evil drink that topples the Christian man and woman from the pinnacle of righteous, gracious living into the bottomless pit of degradation, and despair, and shame, and helplessness, and hopelessness, then certainly I am against it.*

But,

*If when you say whiskey you mean the oil of conversation, the philosophic wine, the ale that is consumed when good fellows get together, that puts a song in their hearts and laughter on their lips, and the warm glow of contentment in their eyes; if you mean Christmas cheer; if you mean the stimulating drink that puts the spring into the old gentleman's step on a frosty, crispy morning; if you mean the drink which enables a man to magnify his joy, and his happiness, and to forget, if only for a little while, life's great tragedies, and heartaches, and sorrows; if you mean that drink, the sale of which pours into our treasuries untold millions of dollars, which are used to provide tender care for our little crippled children, our blind, our deaf, our dumb, our pitiful aged and infirm, to build highways and hospitals and schools, then certainly I am for it.*

*This is my stand. I will not retreat from it. I will not compromise.*

We too do not, and will not, compromise.

We are, as is often said, "a government of laws and not of men." All political viewpoints spanning the social spectrum find shelter in the law library under the umbrella of the First Amendment. The legal literature on perennial election year issues, including abortion, assisted suicide, capital punishment, gay rights, gun control, school vouchers and taxation, is available to all constituencies.

For more information on election year politics, visit our web page at [www.willamette.edu/law/longlib](http://www.willamette.edu/law/longlib) and click on "Election2004" at the bottom of the page.





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