Accomplishments

1960s

R. Dale Peddicord BN’51, LW’62, Des Moines, was certified as a member of the Millicon Dollar Advocates Forum. Membership is limited to trial lawyers who have demonstrated exceptional skill, experience and excellence in advocacy by achieving a verdict or settlement in the amount of $1 million or more. There are approximately 700 members throughout the United States.

1970s

Larry Lazarus LW’71, a Phoenix attorney, was feaured in the city’s Business Journal for his role as the lawyer representing Kabuto International of Japan, owner of the Adobe golf course at Arizona Biltmore Country Club. Kabuto may redevelop the golf course, causing controversy among local homeowners. Lazarus also was noted for his diverse interests and activities, including professional sports, whitewater rafting and travel.

Scott H. Peters LA’72, LW’75 was elected chairman of the Drake Law School Endowment Trust Board of Directors. He is a shareholder of Peters Law Firm P.C., which has offices in Council Bluffs, Glenwood and Neola, IA. A frequent national speaker and author on personal injury litigation topics, Peters is former president of the Iowa Trial Lawyers Association and a former governor of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America. He also is on the national board of directors of Faith Alive!, chair of the board of directors of Nebraska Walk to Emmaus, and secretary and member of the executive committee for Opera Omaha.

Elizabeth Kruidenier LW’73 and her husband, David, in November were honored by the Central Iowa Chapter of the National Society of Fund Raising Executives as the 1997 Outstanding Individual Philanthropists. Liz, a Des Moines attorney, is involved with such organizations as the Homestead Board, the Interfaith Alliance, the Morris Scholarship Fund and the Blank Park Zoo Foundation.

1980s

Morris Eckhart LW’74 was appointed a magistrate for the Benton County, IA, courts. He has maintained his law practice in Vinton, IA, for the past 23 years.

George Oleson LW’74, Des Moines, was elected vice president and corporate counsel of the Allied Group of Companies. He had been secretary and corporate counsel.

Jennifer J. Rose LW’76, Morelia, Michoacan, Mexico, wrote a monthly column, Listserv Review, for the Internet Law Researcher. Rose also is writing travel articles for the Mexico File and various travel magazines.

John M. French LW’74, Council Bluffs, IA, was accepted for membership in the American Board of Trial Advocates. French is a senior partner in the law firm of Willton & Pechacek P.L.C.

Dave Dorff LA’79, LW’82 celebrated his 40th birthday by completing an Ironman triathlon, a race consisting of a 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bike ride and a 26.2-mile run. A veteran of more than 30 triathlons, Dorff has been ranked one of the top 10 triathletes in the state of Iowa the past three years. He is an environmental attorney with the Iowa attorney general’s office. He and his wife, Kathy, have three children: Stephen, 7; Kevin, 5; and Erika, 2.

Patrick B. Byrne LW’83, Clear Lake, IA, joined the law firm of Winston & Byrne Lawyers. He was the chief Crawford County, IA, public defender for 11 years.

Paula Dierenfeld LW’84, Johnston, IA, was appointed to the Iowa Utilities Board by Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad LW’74. She has served on the governor’s staff since 1989 and is his legal counselor and policy adviser on criminal justice and health and human services.

Cheryl Critelli LW’85, GR’92, Clive, IA, was elected assistant vice president of Allied Mutual Insurance Co., AMICO Insurance Co., Depositors Insurance Co., Allied Property and Casualty Insurance Co. and Allied Group Inc., Des Moines. Critelli is the Securities and Exchange Commission counsel for the corporation.

1990s

Michael J. Manno LW’84, West Des Moines, earned a master’s degree in political science from Iowa State University. An attorney, he divides his time between his practice — Manno Law Office — and teaching at Grand View College. He also finished third in points in the SCCA Mid-Am Road Racing Championship driving a Formula Vee.

Michelle L. Nelsen AS’91, LW’94 became associate counsel for the Board of Veterans’ Appeals, Department of Veterans Affairs, in Washington, DC. The board issues decisions on appeals of veterans’ benefits claims.

Katherine L. Hansen LW’91, Detroit, received her master of law degree from Wayne State University in May 1997. She is a member of the Michigan Employment Security Board of Review, in which she decides cases involving unemployment insurance benefits and unemployment tax matters.

Robert E. Tucker LW’91, Ankeny, IA, opened a legal consulting firm specializing in jury verdict valuation in addition to his private law practice, which focuses primarily on workers’ compensation, personal injury and employment cases.

Kent Balduchi BN’92 LW’96, Des Moines, was featured in an article in The Des Moines Register regarding his work as both a practicing attorney and firefighter. He recently tried and won a case for a fellow firefighter against the fire department.

Iiene Rootberg Gilson LW’92 and Zachary Gilson LW’93 are co-owners of Kidding Around, a West Des Moines store that sells used and new children’s merchandise.

Edean M. Murray LW’92 and her husband, John, opened a law practice, Murray & Murray, P.C. with offices in Storm Lake and Ida Grove, IA. Edean previously was an associate with the Peters Law Firm in Council Bluffs, IA.

David S. Gorham LW’93, Washington, IA, joined the law firm of Morrison, Lloyd, McConnel, Mullins & Davis. He had been doing trial work with the Des Moines law firm of Hopkins and Huebner P.C.

Ash-Thompson honored for career and humanitarian achievements

Luvenia Ash-Thompson, LW’62, received an honorary doctor of humane letters from Franklin College in Indiana, where she received her undergraduate degree in 1937. She was honored for a 35-year career as a lawyer, judge, government official and educator in Liberia.

In 1986 Ash-Thompson founded a private school, Ash-Thompson Memorial Academy, which has been destroyed three times by civil war. Her dedication and commitment to the children of Liberia were unwavering, however, and each time she rebuilt the school. In May, Ash-Thompson declined a nomination as chief justice of the Liberian Supreme Court in favor of rebuilding the academy after its most recent destruction.

Currently dean of the University of Liberia’s Law School, Ash-Thompson also has served as assistant deputy minister of labor, youth and sports, and has been the Liberian representative to international and United Nations meetings.