

A SUPPLEMENT TO SOUTH CAROLINA LAWYERS WEEKLY



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ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW

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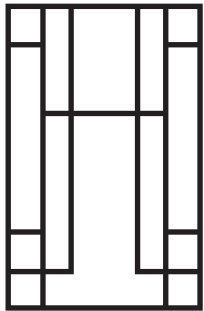


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The staff of **Ballard & Watson** wish to congratulate **Desa Ballard** on her inclusion in the introductory class of the South Carolina Lawyers Hall of Fame. Her leadership is admired, and her accomplishments are many. Some clients say “she makes pigs fly” and we agree. We could not be prouder of Desa.



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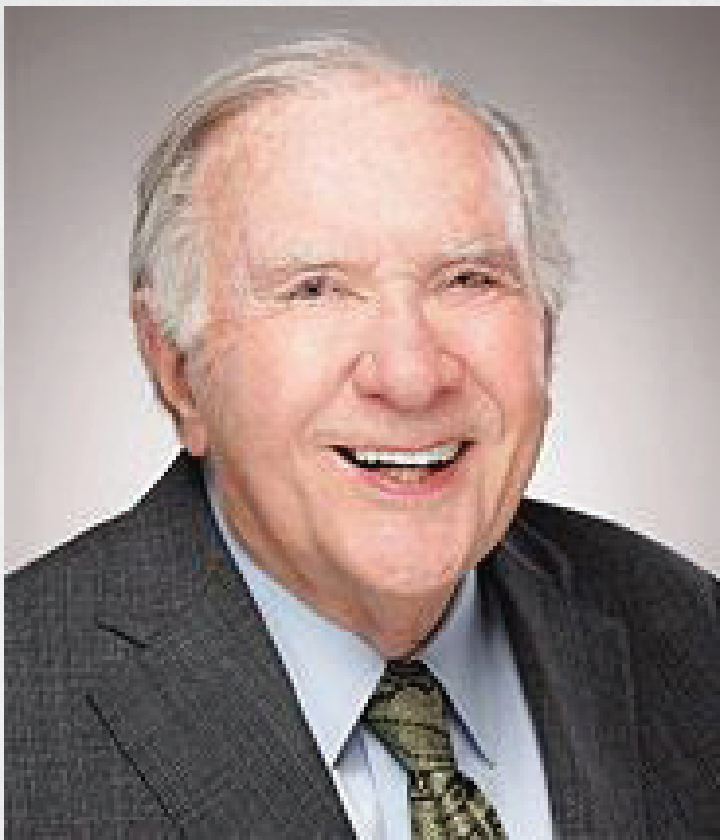
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Congratulations,
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John Hagins



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Congratulations to Ron Scott and the
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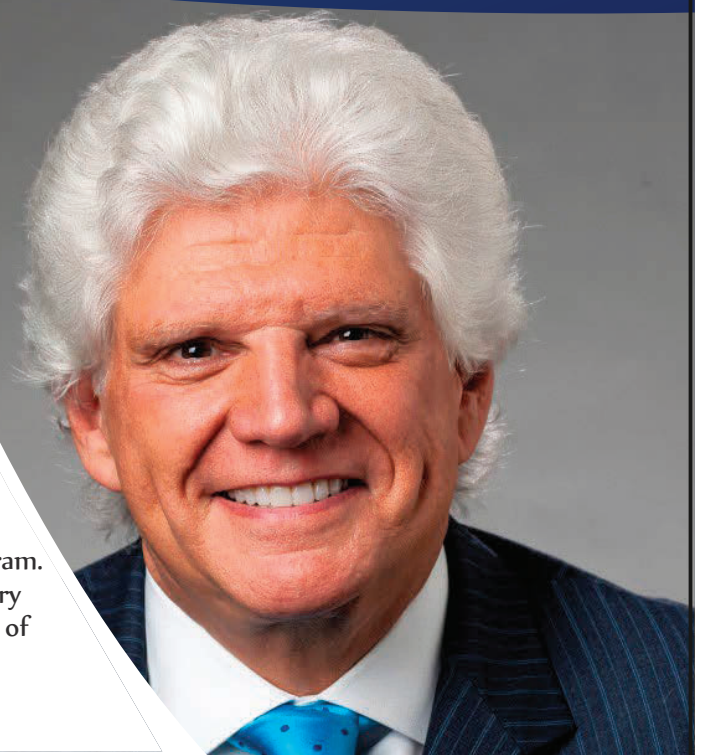


SCOTT & CORLEY, P.A.
ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW

Ron Scott serves as chairman, and Reggie Corley serves as president and managing attorney of Scott & Corley, P.A. The firm is focused primarily in the practice area of statewide representation of major financial institutions as to mortgage credit matters as well as in its handling of various residential, multifamily, and commercial real estate transactions. The firm also represents two state professional associations on legal and legislative matters.

The firm has been selected in its primary practice area for inclusion in the 2014 to 2019 Best Law Firm rankings in *US News & World Report*. Ron has been selected for 10 consecutive years (2010-2019), and Reggie for the past two years (2018-2019) for listing in the Best Lawyers in America®. Ron was also selected "2018 Lawyer of the Year" in Best Lawyers® in the firm's primary practice area. Ron and Reggie both carry an AV rating, which is the highest professional rating from *Martindale-Hubbell*®. In addition Ron is a repeat selection for Super Lawyers® in the firm's primary practice area. Reggie was a selection in 2017 for the prestigious Riley Diversity Leadership Fellow program. Ron has been awarded the Order of The Palmetto, the state's highest civilian award for his extraordinary lifetime of service and achievements of national or state significance. In addition, the Mayor of the City of Columbia and City Council likewise unanimously decreed October 12, 2017, as "*Ronald C Scott Day*" in Columbia.

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Sam Applegate



Moore & Van Allen Charleston

For a Charleston kid who grew up riding his bicycle to school, and whose first job was moving furniture, Sam Applegate is all about covering ground. The UNC Law School grad helped launch the first statewide law firm in 1987 by combining three previously independent firms in Charleston, Columbia, and Greenville into Haynsworth, Marion, McKay & Guerard.

Applegate covered quite a bit of ground on his first date with now-wife, True. He told her presciently that he would marry her. You might say he was True to his word.

The son of school teachers, Applegate enjoys the mentoring role himself, and is proud of his work guiding young attorneys in the sunrise of their careers. He joined Moore & Van Allen in 1997 to help the firm inaugurate its Charleston office and while serving as managing director had many opportunities to mentor colleagues.

"My last formal mentee was Moore & Van Allen Charleston associate Andrew Rhea, Esq.," he said.

Like many lawyers, Applegate is enamored with the dimpled little ball. He describes golf as his favorite guilty pleasure and says his vision of the next phase of his life is to continue doing what he does now, except get better at golf.

If Applegate hadn't been a lawyer, he says he would have used his economics degree from North Carolina to go into finance. Or he might have been a hockey player. Friends are surprised to discover that he played varsity hockey in prep school in Connecticut. His team made it to the championship game played in the Yale Whale Ice Rink.

Desa Allen Ballard



Ballard & Watson, Attorneys at Law West Columbia

Desa Ballard is a little different than your average lawyer. By her own account she grew up in a trailer park. "I have no pedigree," she says proudly.

Her love of words took her to the University of South Carolina, where she majored in journalism and then to USC law school. After a decade and a half of clerking and working as a staff

attorney at the South Carolina Supreme Court and at the firm Ness Motley, she opened her own solo practice focusing on professional ethics and licensing, which later grew to encompass civil litigation.

Ballard's path to law isn't the only circuitous route she's taken in life. Though she's married to her high school sweetheart, whom she met at age 14, it took her 30 years to reconnect and tie the knot. "All the years we were apart just melted away," she says.

A self-described Superwoman, her practice grew to the point in 2011 where she needed a partner. Together, she and Harvey Watson claim, unofficially of course, that they make pigs fly.

"A lot of phone calls to our office begin with, 'this case is a little unusual...'" she says. "Lawyering is not for everyone. It's a contact sport."

Ballard is dedicated to mentoring those who are coming up behind her, both as an adjunct professor at USC Law School and as a volunteer for Lawyers Helping Lawyers. She also does CLE presentations several times each year.

Asked her favorite getaway spot, Desa Allen Ballard puts the "brief" in brief writing:

"Home," she says.

James Edward Bell III



President, Charleston School of Law Charleston

Like many in the Lawyer Hall of Fame, Ed Bell hardly requires an introduction, even to non-lawyers. As co-founder, president, and to many the savior of the Charleston School of Law, Bell has converted the school to non-profit status and turned around its fortunes while serving for an annual salary of \$1.

The son of a pediatrician, he learned early the importance of caring for everyone. Now his job at Charleston School of Law is helping fulfill "one of life's dreams to mentor young lawyers and

help them understand the highest goal in our profession, which is to endeavor to do things for others that is larger than ourselves," he said. "Our school motto, 'Pro bono populi,' exemplifies this ideal. I am able to interact with the students and share with them the importance of giving back as a major goal in life."

A well-known litigator who has argued before the U.S. Supreme Court, Bell is founding and senior managing partner at Bell Legal Group in Georgetown. Selected to the list of Super Lawyers the last seven years, his approach to litigating led him to establish the Arvada Jury Project, which analyzed the impact of trial attorney and jury attitudes.

That said, arguing the law might not be his number one skill. The Sumter native has won cooking competitions, including several in which he was the only non-chef. "If not for being a lawyer, I secretly might have wanted to be a Master Chef on the Food Network," he says.

Bell, the father of three grown children, one of whom is an attorney, works alongside his wife, Dawn. Together they are raising two young children, which takes most of his non-work hours now and "is a delight beyond words," he says. They are among the many young people he hopes his legacy will impact.

"I hope that my work on civil rights and public policy initiatives will be beneficial to those affected both now and in the future."

Chief Justice Donald W. Beatty



Supreme Court of South Carolina Spartanburg

Donald Beatty has always been committed to put his legal training to work for those most in need. One of seven children in a family of modest means growing up in Spartanburg, Judge Beatty began his career as a legal aid attorney, eventually winning election to the circuit court in 1995 after a stint as an elected representative in the state's House

of Representatives. He was elected an associate justice of South Carolina Supreme Court in 2007.

A Democrat during his tenure in elected office, Judge Beatty was unanimously elected to become Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in 2017 by a Republican-dominated General Assembly, a testament to the respect and esteem in which he was held by lawmakers. He became the second African-American judge elevated to chief justice since Reconstruction.

At the time, lawmakers hailed Beatty for his rulings and judicial temperament. "Not only is this historical," said state Sen. Gerald Malloy, a member of the Judicial Merit Selection Commission, "but we elected the right person today. He will rule by consensus and we will end up doing a lot of things that will move our state forward."

Beatty has a long track record of community service. He has served on the Piedmont Legal Services Board of Directors, the BMW Minority Advisory Board, the Southside Neighborhoods Association Partnership, and a host of other leadership positions aimed at lifting up the community.

When the arguing is done, Beatty enjoys getting away from it all. He says he doesn't care where that is, as long as it provides solitude.



Beverly A. “Bev” Carroll



Beverly A. Carroll
Rock Hill

The president-elect of the South Carolina Bar Association, Bev Carroll has a passion for community and professional service. A veteran bar activist dating back to 1997, she has a long history of working to improve conditions in the legal profession and beyond. Her involvement has included stints on the USC School of Law Alumni Council, the Rock Hill Economic Development Corp., and the Board of Directors of the York Regional Chamber of

Commerce, to name just three.

When Carroll talks about mentoring young lawyers, she means it. A participant in her law school’s mentor program the last six years, she has offered her expertise to countless lawyers coming up the ranks behind her.

“I felt fortunate to have great mentors all through my legal career and have tried to pass on the good habits and tough lessons necessary to be a good attorney,” she said.

A Columbia native, Carroll discovered early the value of hard work at Rose’s Store in Trenholm Plaza where her mother was the office manager. “I did any job that needed to be done that day—clean the bathrooms, work behind the lunch counter, or run the register,” she remembers. “I learned no job should be beneath you.”

As a highly regarded employment and labor lawyer, she helps her business clients negotiate the issues related to compliance, licensing, contracting, and negotiating. When things go wrong, she is also a certified mediator.

“I hope I will be remembered as a hard-working and thoroughly prepared attorney who served the needs of my clients,” she says.

When she takes down her shingle, Carroll says she would like to dedicate more of her time to economic development and nonprofit work. It’s a natural fit for the way she has conducted her entire career.

Steve Farrar



Fox Rothschild
Greenville

All you have to do is listen to Steve Farrar sing to discover one of his lifelong secrets—he is tone deaf with extreme prejudice. Fortunately, the careers he has pursued (accounting and the law) and the one he would like to dabble in (day trading stocks) don’t require golden tones when crooning.

The day trading appeals to him because of his business background—a degree in commerce and an early career as

a CPA—and because of the element of risk-taking. The skills of persuasion helpful to a lawyer were honed early in life—kindergarten, in fact. Little Steve convinced his mother that he needed to attend both sessions of half-day kindergarten, and then convinced the teacher, upon whom he had a crush, that his mother wanted him in class all day.

Farrar has served as President of the Federation of Defense & Corporate Counsel and been recognized since 2013 as one of the state’s top 25 lawyers. That is a long way from his first few jobs in high school: washing dishes in a restaurant, working on the loading docks at a hospital, and hauling trash for the city of Greenville.

But the service he seems most proud of is his stint as president of the South Carolina Special Olympics early in his career.

“I truly believe I benefited from the experience more than the athletes winning the medals,” he said.

He benefits from practicing law, he says, because it’s just fun for him. “Even on days when I knew it would be a troublesome issue or potentially tough day, I felt positive about what I was doing,” he says. “I have seen friends who tired of practicing law and I am happy that feeling never hit me.”

Joel W. Collins Jr.



Collins & Lacy
Columbia

Joel Collins’ accomplishments both within and outside the legal profession require eight pages to list. Over a 50-year career he has appeared regularly on lists of America’s best lawyers, earned numerous awards, and founded scholarship funds at Clemson, Wofford, Radford, and The Citadel.

His proudest professional accomplishment, he says, is leadership of the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA).

He served in a variety of roles, including trustee of the ABOTA Foundation and president of the foundation trustees in 2008. In 2015, he was elected national president of ABOTA.

Collins was born in Denmark, South Carolina, and raised in Chester, one of six children. “When I was a small boy, my father was the head football coach of Chester High School and I served as the team mascot,” he remembers. “I had a little football uniform and ran out on the field with the team for warm-up exercises. The players thought I brought them luck, so they would come to my elementary school class and get me so that I could be on the bus for all the away games.” The family was named Chester’s first Family of the Year.

A Clemson graduate, Collins’s three children followed in his footsteps, and his granddaughter Abigail began her Tiger journey this year. A USC Law School graduate, he became a JAG in the Army in Vietnam upon graduation and then went to work for a German law firm in Frankfurt before settling down to start his own firm in 1982.

He has spent the last 10 years teaching a course on the Constitution at SC Honors College and recently helped draw up plans for England’s celebration of the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta.

Tom J. Ervin



South Carolina Public Service
Commission
Columbia

Plenty of lawyers, even lawyers in the Hall of Fame, aren’t exactly Boy Scouts. But that is exactly what Tom Ervin is.

Ervin began his Scouting career in his hometown of Honea Path, and rose to the rank of Eagle Scout, with three Palms. He subsequently earned the God and Country

Award and the BSA Medal for Meritorious Action after he used his first aid skills to rescue a motorist in Anderson County.

By age 28, he was elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives representing his hometown and an area south of Greenville. At 32, he was elected by the General Assembly to serve as circuit court judge for Anderson and Oconee Counties, the youngest elected circuit court judge in state history.

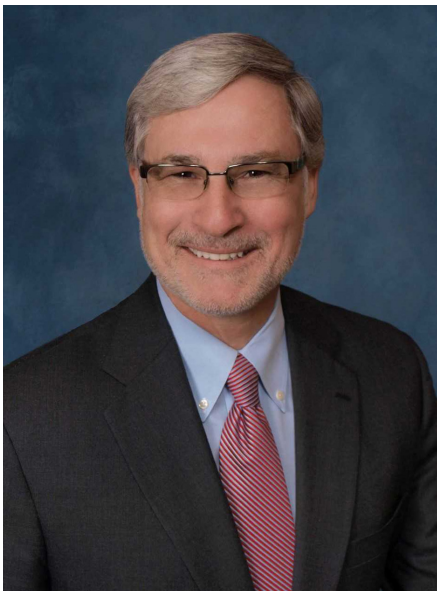
While serving as circuit court judge, he mentored 16 law clerks and published a two-volume set of jury instructions, Ervin’s Request to Charge – Civil and Criminal.

In 2014, Ervin ran for Governor of South Carolina as an independent and won 11,496 votes despite dropping out of the race. He was elected by the General Assembly to a four-year term on the Public Service Commission this year to help clean up the mess caused by the V.C. Summer nuclear plant debacle.

The former editor of his college newspaper and employee at the Anderson Mail while in school, He says he would be a journalist today if he hadn’t attended law school at University of South Carolina, graduating in 1977. When he retires, he says he would like to write “several” novels. His own life might serve as a model for one of his characters.



Raymond W. Godwin



**Raymond W. Godwin,
Attorney at Law
Greenville**

Men are from Mars, women are from Venus, and adoption attorney Ray Godwin is from Neptune. Neptune, New Jersey, that is, the real Jersey Shore of ordinary families who work hard and love each other—nothing like the infamous TV show.

In fact, this real Jersey Shore native learned the value of hard work and a good education in his first job, at Perkins Pancake House. The humbling and non-re-

munerative job of busboy convinced him it would be a good idea to graduate from college and find a career that paid better and didn't hurt the feet.

Literally hundreds of families in the Palmetto State owe Godwin a small debt of gratitude. As one of only a few adoption lawyers in South Carolina, he has helped place hundreds of children with their adoptive families over his 30 years.

One of his adoption cases made national headlines. Baby Veronica was given up by her single mother to a Charleston couple in 2009. The father, an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation, invoked the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 to claim custody of the little girl. During a torturous two-year custody fight, Veronica was removed from her adoptive parents and handed over to her biological father. The case went to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled the Act didn't apply and invalidated several of its components, remanding the case to the South Carolina Supreme Court. After more legal maneuvering and court rulings, Veronica Capobianco was returned to her adoptive parents, with whom she lives, now nine years old.

When Godwin was growing up, he thought he would be teaching history, not making it. A business law course in college changed his mind and paved the way for a career he has now plans to retire from. "However, I would like to write articles and create podcasts helping educate people about adoption issues and topics," he says.

Richard A. Harpootlian



**Richard A. Harpootlian
Columbia**

Dick Harpootlian's name might not be easy to spell, but it's known across the state. A member of the Richland County Council, one-time Fifth Circuit Solicitor, and longtime chair of the state Democratic Party, Harpootlian is a seasoned political professional.

He's going to need that name recognition as he runs for State Senate in his Columbia-area district. He says legislators have perpetuated a good-old-boy

system, more concerned with "their own re-election, free parking spot, special license plate," and other perks rather than on the state's needs, and points to the failed V.C. Summer nuclear power project as evidence.

In his legal career, Harpootlian has 30 years of experience as a prosecutor, and in civil litigation and criminal defense. As Solicitor, he prosecuted hundreds of murder cases, including 12 death penalty cases. His most famous conviction sent serial killer Pee Wee Gaskins to the electric chair in 1991.

He says his first job out of law school as assistant solicitor taught him the importance of the opening argument.

His biggest civil case triumph occurred last year, with a \$280 million judgment against drug maker Celgene Corp. for fraudulently promoting two cancer drugs for off-label uses. Harpootlian represented the whistleblower in the case, former sales representative Beverly Brown, whom published reports said could receive as much as \$84 million personally.

Being a Democrat in South Carolina is an uphill battle, but during his first tour as chair of the party, Harpootlian helped Democrat Jim Hodges win election as governor of the state. It was the first time in Palmetto State history that an incumbent governor had been unseated.

Elizabeth Van Doren Gray



**Robinson Gray Stepp & Laffitte
Columbia**

Betsy Gray is a pioneer in the law for women across South Carolina.

Graduating college with an international studies degree into the teeth of employment discrimination in 1970, she enrolled in Katherine Gibbs Secretarial School and went to work as a secretary in Boston. Driven back to South Carolina by the cold, she spent two years demonstrating her value in the trust investment department at C&S National Bank, but ran headlong into an overt policy against promoting women.

So she went to law school.

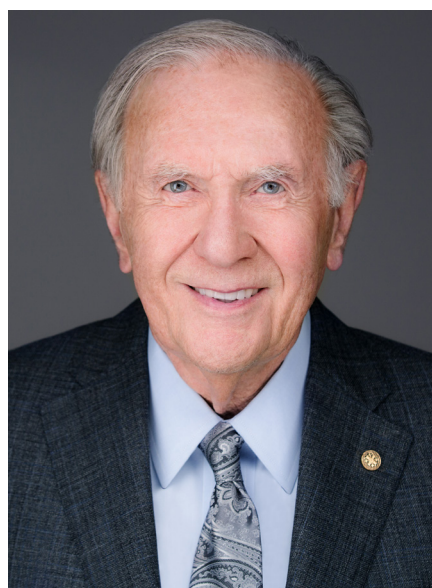
She was the first female lawyer hired by the law firm founded by former Governor Bob McNair and became their first female partner. She later became the second woman to be president of the South Carolina Bar.

Being the first means there aren't many ahead of you to mentor and support you. "I was not really privileged to have women mentors, except for Chief Justice Jean Toal, who not only mentored me, but encouraged me ... to help the other women coming behind us," she says. "I took that charge seriously, and did everything I could to mentor women lawyers as they developed their careers.

Five years ago, Gray, lawyer Rebecca Roser, and Bonnie Montgomery, a psychologist and career coach, formed a mentoring group for women in the early years of their careers. The group has grown and evolved and is now on its fourth group of young lawyers, with Gray's early mentees now in her former role as mentor, passing on what they have learned from her.

Gray remembers how much help she had when she attempted the difficult balancing act of being a full-time professional and raising a family. "I had two children, and maneuvered the minefields of being a professional along with raising my children," she says. "I had a lot of help—a village—and I'm proud to say my children thrived."

John A. Hagins Jr.



**Covington, Patrick, Hagins,
Stern & Lewis
Greenville**

When you look up the words 'South Carolina' in the dictionary, you just might find a picture of John Hagins. Born and raised in the horse country of Camden, he graduated from Camden High School, where he was president of the student class and captain of the football team that won the

state championship. He went on to the University of South Carolina, where he earned an undergraduate degree in economics, a master's in law, and a J.D.

His first job was back home in Kershaw County, working as a sales clerk at Belk—with his father as his boss. Another summer he "graduated" to lifeguarding in Myrtle Beach. "With each of these jobs," he remembers, "I learned to relate to and assist people."

Though Hagins has traveled the world—he especially loves European river cruises, visiting Africa and the Orient—he always returns to the Palmetto State, where he is partner in the Greenville firm that includes his name.

Over the course of his long legal career, he has tried some of the most complex product cases, including one involving the flameout of a turbo prop plane that crashed and killed its occupants. But, he chuckles, he's flummoxed by simple things, like doors that don't indicate whether they should be pushed or pulled.

Two things that don't flummox him at all, besides the law, are massive, black diamond ski slopes and Klondike bars. He has skied all over the world, from Colorado to Austria and Switzerland. And he'll eat a Klondike bar anywhere.



Ben Johnson



**Robinson,
Bradshaw & Hinson
Rock Hill**

If you're a big fan of low-level radioactive waste, Ben Johnson is not your man. Appointed and re-appointed by two governors to chair the Atlantic Interstate Low-Level Radioactive Waste Compact Commission, Johnson led the shuttering of the Barnwell nuclear waste landfill to all but three states and spearheaded a bipartisan effort to defeat aggressive efforts by the nuclear waste lobby to re-open it. For that, he was honored by the South Carolina Wildlife Federation with its Con-

servation Award.

That's the work of a lawyer who says he entered the legal profession because nothing else was obvious to him when he was graduating from college, Phi Beta Kappa from Winthrop University. Operating in a variety of business law areas, Johnson has been named to Woodward/White, Inc.'s The Best Lawyers in America list for commercial litigation and employment litigation and has been recognized as AV Preeminent in Martindale-Hubbell's peer review ratings.

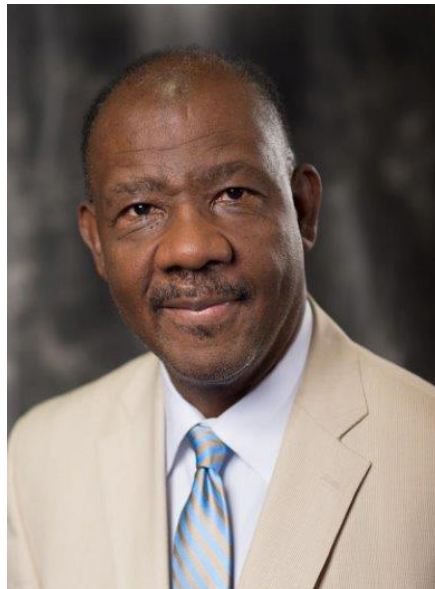
Johnson is a Rock Hill native who says he was raised at the YWCA because that's where he spent his afternoons growing up, playing whatever sport was in season. His first job was at the YMCA too, as a camp counselor at Kings Mountain State Park. In that job he learned to solve problems.

"When it rains all day, just put on swim trunks, declare a 'rain hike' and keep going," he said.

Johnson did give engineering a try while attempting to make the football team at Clemson. Neither venture got very far, leading him back to Rock Hill and his alma mater. "It's hard to know which adventure was least successful," he says. "Probably football."

Asked what he would like to do in his next act of life, he says he's pretty absorbed in the current act, but does allow that as the stable of grandchildren from his four sons grows, he would like to dedicate more time to them.

Judge Clifton Newman



**South Carolina Circuit Court
Kingstree**

Judge Clifton Newman of the South Carolina Circuit Court owes his legal career to Brown v. Board of Education, but not the way you think. Back in high school in his hometown of Greeleyville, Newman played the role of an attorney in a play centered around the famous 1954 Supreme Court decision on school desegregation.

Ironically, his law school alma mater, Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, is named not for Thurgood Marshall, the famed attorney in that case who went on to become the first African-American

Supreme Court justice, but for John Marshall, an early chief justice of the Supreme Court, and a slave-owning Virginian his whole life.

Newman has dedicated most of his legal career in public service. He began his career providing legal services to the indigent, an experience he says taught him "that all parties deserve competent and equal representation."

He spent 17 of his 24 years as a practicing attorney working as Assistant Solicitor in Williamsburg County before he was elected Circuit Court Judge by the South Carolina General Assembly in 2000.

Newman may be best known recently for his role in the case stemming from the fatal shooting by a North Charleston police officer of Walter Scott, an unarmed black man. Before sentencing Officer Michael Slager to 19 to 24 years in prison, he was praised by Slager's attorney. "A more competent member of the judiciary could not be found," Andy Savage told the Charleston Post and Courier.

When Newman isn't on the bench, he's happy with the simple things in life, including restoring historic buildings in Kingstree and Columbia. He has been recognized with historic preservation awards for his work.

Newman has his eye on public service through his career and beyond. In the end, he says, he "would like to serve as one of God's angels."

Nancy Olah



**Nancy Olah Law
Fort Mill**

Nancy Olah took the legal path for practical reasons: having grown up in inner-city Cleveland, her father's untimely death left the family unprepared financially. She knew she would have to make her way without family financial support. But it turned out to be the right path for her. Her career has taken her abroad, allowed her to work with exceptional lawyers, and given her a platform to advocate for women in the profession.

Olah has had the opportunity to mentor

one young woman in particular, from the time she entered Charlotte School of Law in 2008 as a night student working full time. She introduced the young woman to her colleagues and helped her make valuable connections that influenced her success in law school and beyond. Now a lawyer with some experience under her belt, Nancy's mentee has established herself in the legal profession.

"It's been so gratifying watching Crystal become a confident and skilled public speaker and top-notch advocate. When I see how far she has come from the young woman I met ten years ago, it makes me so proud to have served as one of her mentors," Olah says.

You might know all that if you're Nancy Olah's friend or colleague, just as you might know that she began her career doing legal research in a firm's litigation department and hated it, or that she helped execute three complex sales in a bankruptcy case in under two months to preserve Hilton Head Island's reputation as a premier destination resort.

But did you know this? At 24, she created a Space Invaders necktie and sold it through Rolling Stone magazine.

Or this: for 30 years she has played the piano during Sunday mass at Our Lady of Consolation, a predominantly African American Catholic Church.

Joe Rice



**Motley Rice LLC
Charleston**

Joe Rice entered the legal profession to redeem a granddaddy who dreamed of the law while working his fingers to the bone in a textile mill in Anderson. Young Joe entered the University of South Carolina Law School through the back door, but would make Law Review and go on to negotiate the largest settlements in U.S. history—the quarter-billion dollar tobacco settlement.

In a profile published by the Post and

Courier a decade ago, Rice is described as a frustrated cowboy who kept horses at a 200-acre equestrian estate in Awendaw and spent his vacations driving cattle across Oklahoma, Wyoming, and New Mexico.

But he would rather be remembered as a lawyer who did right by his clients. "When people review my work and cases, I'd like them to see that I didn't shy away from difficult cases and always believed in justice, the law and my clients," he says.

Hard work has always been the cornerstone of Rice's career. He started with a paper route in Clinton at the age of 10 and never stopped, working for a spell in a textile mill during high school and bagging groceries at the A&P and bartending in college.

"All of these jobs taught me that hard work always paid off," he says.

Though Rice has hit the big time with partner Ron Motley, he is at heart a simple man. Sure, he flies around in his private jet, owns second homes in the Bahamas and Colorado, and works out of a gleaming office overlooking the Cooper River. But his favorite foods are good ol' boy South Carolina—sweet tea poured into plastic tumblers, fried pork chops, fish and shrimp, and candy corn and Red Hots mixed together.



Frank E. Robinson II



**Richardson Plowden & Robinson
Columbia**

Having practiced law since the Johnson Administration, Frank Robinson knows a few people and has done a few things. Many of the people he knows as clients in his business and commercial law and real estate practice have become lifelong friends as well.

Continuity is Robinson's middle name. He grew up in Columbia, went to college in Columbia, and went to law school in Columbia after a stint in the U.S. Navy. His paralegal, Pam Lawrence, has worked with

him for 40 years. He attributes much of his success to her.

When asked what his next act in life will be, he opts for more continuity. He says he's enjoying life, family, friends and travel, and would like to continue doing that. If he hadn't become a lawyer, he would have continued doing what he was doing at the time, serving as an officer in the Navy. He continues to serve as a Lieutenant Commander in the U.S. Naval Reserve. Or, he says, he might have gone into the family wholesale grocery business. Either way, more continuity.

The legal profession is glad he didn't remain in the Navy or bolt for the family business. Over his long legal career, Robinson has represented both lenders and developers in various aspects of real estate finance and development. He has been involved with every kind of real estate transaction you can imagine, from residential to shopping centers and from motels and condominiums to industrial parks.

Along with seven other Richardson Plowden Robinson attorneys, Robinson has been recognized in Best Lawyers in America for 2019 in the real estate field.

If you want to find Robinson when he's gone away, look for an island in the Atlantic Ocean. His two favorite getaway spots are Pawley's Island, and Southwest Harbor, Maine.

Pamela DeFanti Robinson



**University of South Carolina
School of Law
Columbia**

Don't ask Pam Robinson about mentoring: that's her job. In her 29 years at USC Law School, hundreds of law students have passed through her office. Some of them continue to seek her counsel, even after graduation.

"Two of my favorite things are to have an alumnus ask me to be a reference for a new job or to run into them at a meeting and hear about how happy they are in the

practice of law and the impact they are making," she says.

Robinson can take credit for some of that impact. She built and sustains the USC School of Law Pro Bono Program, inculcating two generations of young lawyers with the spirit of public service. Those lawyers are now spread across the state offering themselves to those who can't afford to pay for needed legal services. Pro bono is also now an accepted part of legal education.

She has applied the pro bono principle to her own life as well. She has held leadership roles on numerous non-profit boards in the areas of abuse and neglect, civil liberties and neglected children. She has served abused and neglected children for 30 years as a guardian ad litem, and has won a slew of honors and awards for her volunteer work.

Robinson grew up all over the world but spent her summers on the Rhode Island shore with her grandparents. She learned to love the ocean, to recognize the value of sitting by it and reading, to knit, and to appreciate life in all its forms. Then her first job, as a first-grade teacher in inner-city Atlanta, taught her to appreciate life in another form.

"I learned patience, lots of patience and an ability to listen not only to what someone is saying but what they are not expressing," she says.

Ronald "Ron" Charles Scott



**Scott & Corley
Columbia**

On Scott's entire career, indeed his whole life, has been one giant effort to take his parents' lessons and pass them on to others. Imbued with the spirit of public service by his educator mother, a Ph.D. who worked to make education accessible to all, and lawyer father, a highly-decorated soldier during World War II, he has mentored young lawyers, spawned his own two public-service-minded lawyers, and spends each day admiring the spirit of

public service in his law partner.

"I could not talk my two sons ... out of entering the profession of law. They are both outstanding young civil litigation lawyers with excellent reputations of professional accomplishment and client service down in Florida," he says. "I am particularly humbled and grateful that they focus on being fierce advocates for their clients as well as constantly reaching out and serving their profession and community as a whole."

Scott harbors a secret desire to be a football coach, having observed firsthand the lasting impression coaches can make in the lives of their young charges.

Even his post-retirement plans revolve around public service. "For the days I am given I sincerely wish to 'pay it forward or give back daily to others.' My amazing and incredibly talented law partner, Reggie Corley, and I are professional and philosophical soulmates and we have dedicated ourselves and our firm do 'giving back' to others every chance we can as set out in the good book in Micah 6:8 and Galatians 6:9."

When Scott takes a break from all the giving back, he enjoys going back—back to the place he and his wife Debbie honeymooned 45 years ago, Sea Island, Georgia. He shares the pleasure with children, grandchildren, and friends as much as possible.

Mark W. Weeks



**Weeks & Irvine Law Firm
North Charleston**

Respected real estate attorney Mark Weeks is not the kind of guy to blow his own horn. His LinkedIn page has nothing on it, and his firm's website manages not to mention that he has been inducted into the Newberry College Hall of Fame, or that he works with the non-profit Origin SC to help people of modest means purchase houses, or that he pours his heart into raising money to fight cancer, or that real estate agents

love working with him.

"Still the hardest working attorney in Charleston, a real estate agent's best bet to get it done," says one agent on Facebook.

Weeks's younger brother Scott was diagnosed with cancer at the age of four. "That experience affected me deeply," Mark says. "When cancer knocks on your door, it challenges your faith, your family, and your friends. I will never forget how tough that fight was, how so many people rallied to help, and how that terrible experience bonded friends and family forever."

Weeks has dedicated his time—at least the time outside of the 80 hours he works each week—to raising money to fight the disease. This past year, he spearheaded a fundraising campaign that helped raise nearly \$1 million locally for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

A James Island native, he loves the simple pleasures—travelling with his three children, spending time on the South Carolina coast or the Blue Ridge Mountains, a bottle of red wine, and curling up with his dog and a good book. If he hadn't been a lawyer, he says he would have found a way to help people through the medical field.

Oh, about his brother, Scott: 38 years cancer free.