

## 2016 Citizen Lawyers: James R. Van Camp

**By Rick Parrotte**

PINEHURST – Golf, horses, sand hills and James Van Camp are synonymous with Moore County. Van Camp has practiced in Moore County and the surrounding area his entire career. Throughout that time he has represented countless individuals, local businesses, nonprofits, and other organizations. Each client has received his utmost attention and diligence no matter the size or nature of the case.

After even a brief conversation with Van Camp it is evident that he loves being a lawyer. He embraces the fact that it is a job title that follows you to and from work and he has endeavored to embody everything that a lawyer should strive to become. The responsibilities and duties that come with being an attorney are things that Van Camp relishes and his enthusiasm for the job has not waned after his decades of practice. He recognizes that a lawyer possesses a special skill set to solve problems. Thus, he has graciously offered his services to everything from top state commissions, such as the Governor's Crime Commission and the drafting of criminal legislation, to his local animal clinic and shelter.

Van Camp does not see his service to his state and community as a burden or additional uncompensated work, but instead as a way for him to give back and positively affect his fellow citizens' lives. He calls the practice of law a "wonderful profession" and possesses a desire to help each and every client. This desire has not waned over the years and he is proof that an effective lawyer cannot fully do his job unless he is 100 percent committed and invested.

The truth is that folks need help when they walk through his law firm's doors. While it is often easy to lose sight of this reality or to become complacent, those that practice with and against Van Camp are quick to point out that he handles each and every case as if it were the biggest case he had ever handled.

One of Van Camp's past triumph that is often shared by his peers involves his successful representation of the concerned citizens of Pinehurst back in the 1970s. The then owners of the Pinehurst resort wished to place condos along the world famous "Pinehurst No. 2" Course. Using his "country lawyer" set of skills and a small team of just out of law school associates, he was able to prevail against the Resort's much larger law firm who felt the proceedings were merely a formality that would ultimately go their way.

It is impossible to quantify the negative impact that Moore County and the surrounding area would have suffered had Van Camp and his team not thrown everything they had against seemingly insurmountable odds. However, the local country lawyer was able to preserve the "No. 2" for future generations.

The practice of law is truly a calling that Van Camp has enthusiastically answered. While it is true that the legal profession has provided him with many blessings, it is indisputable that he has shared his time and talents with his fellow citizen on both the local and statewide level. It is because of his thoughtful actions that span decades and continue today, that James Van Camp epitomizes the NCBA's Citizen Lawyer Award and he is a deserving recipient.

*The Citizen Lawyer Committee of the NCBA Young Lawyers Division, in conjunction with the NCBA Citizen Lawyer Committee, provides expanded coverage of the 2016 Citizen Lawyer Awards in recognition of their volunteer service and leadership in their communities and beyond.*

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