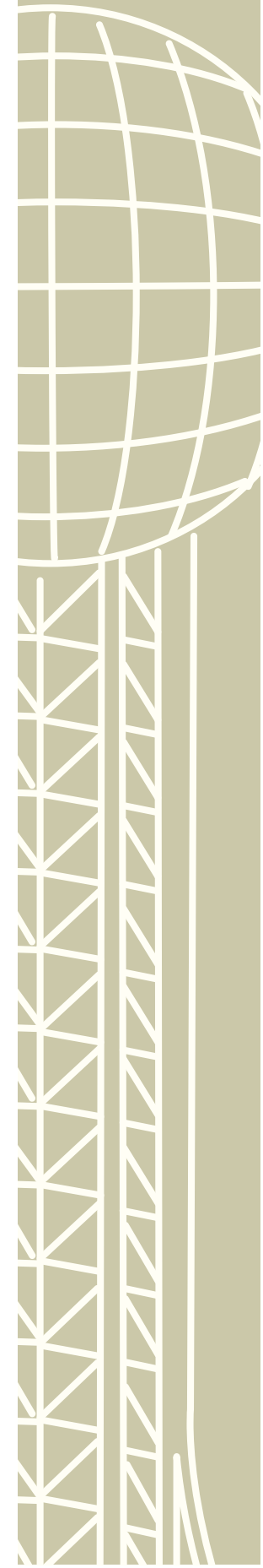


# Best Lawyers®

*A regional listing for  
Best Lawyers in  
America™ 2010*



# KRAMER RAYSON LLP

ATTORNEYS AT LAW



Seated (left to right) John E. Winters and Warren Gooch. Standing are John T. Johnson, Robert L. Bowman, and Thomas M. Hale.

## OUR GOAL

To provide outstanding service based on sound judgment, practical advice, and commitment to excellence.

## OUR CREDENTIALS

- 12 of our 26 attorneys have been listed (9) or nominated (3) Best Lawyers in America.
- Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business has recognized us as among Tennessee's leading firms, and our attorneys have also been recognized in Mid-South Super Lawyers and in the annual list of Tennessee's best 100 lawyers in BusinessTN Magazine.
- Nine of our attorneys are fellows for the Tennessean Bar Foundation.
- Three of our attorneys are past presidents of the Knoxville Bar Association.

## OUR CULTURE

- We encourage our attorneys to invest themselves in educational service, charitable and religious organizations that improve the quality of East Tennessee life.
- We have endowed two new scholarships at the University of Tennessee School of Law.
- Our attorneys have demonstrated command of legal developments by giving more than 75 Continuing Legal Education presentations.
- We are proud to have been selected as one of the Best Employers in Tennessee for four consecutive years.

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# Best Lawyers 2010

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These lists are excerpted from The Best Lawyers in America 2010, which includes listings for more than 40,000 lawyers in 80 specialties, in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

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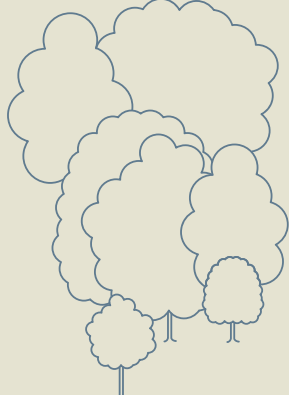
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## Methodology:

**T**his list is excerpted from the 2010 edition of The Best Lawyers in America, the preeminent referral guide to the legal profession in the United States. Published since 1983, Best Lawyers lists attorneys in 80 specialties, representing all 50 states, who have been chosen through an exhaustive survey in which thousands of the nation’s top lawyers confidentially evaluate their professional peers. The 2010 edition of Best Lawyers is based on more than 2.8 million evaluations of lawyers by other lawyers.

The method used to compile Best Lawyers remains unchanged since the first edition was compiled more than 25 years ago. Lawyers are chosen for inclusion based solely on the vote of their peers. Listings cannot be bought, and no purchase is required to be included. In this regard, Best Lawyers remains the gold standard of reliability and integrity in lawyer ratings.

The nomination pool for the 2010 edition consisted of all lawyers whose names appeared in the previous edition of Best Lawyers, lawyers who were nominated since the previous survey, and new nominees solicited from listed

attorneys. In general, lawyers were asked to vote only on nominees in their own specialty in their own jurisdiction. Lawyers in closely related specialties were asked to vote across specialties, as were lawyers in smaller jurisdictions. Where specialties are national or international in nature, lawyers were asked to vote nationally as well as locally. Voting lawyers were also given an opportunity to offer more detailed comments on nominees. Each year, half of the voting pool receives fax or e-mail ballots; the other half is polled by phone.

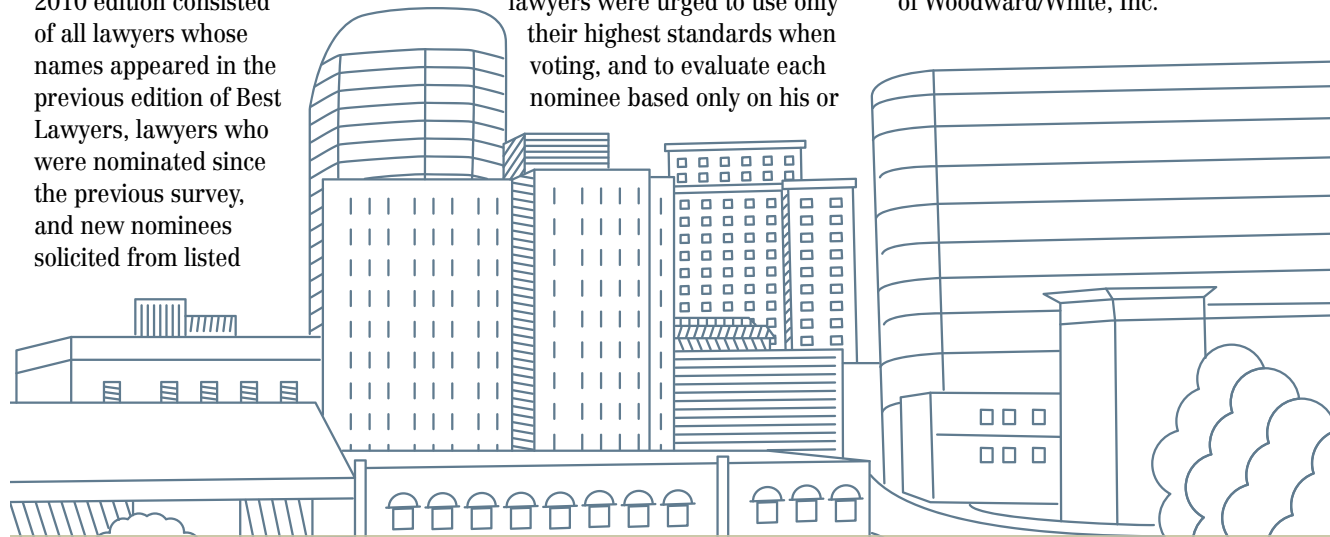
Voting lawyers were provided this general guideline for determining if a nominee should be listed among “the best”: “If you had a close friend or relative who needed a real estate lawyer (for example), and you could not handle the case yourself, to whom would you refer them?” All votes and comments were solicited with a guarantee of confidentiality – a critical factor in the viability and validity of Best Lawyers surveys. To ensure the rigor of the selection process, lawyers were urged to use only their highest standards when voting, and to evaluate each nominee based only on his or

her individual merits. The additional comments were used to make more accurate comparisons between voting patterns and weight votes accordingly. Best Lawyers uses various methodological tools to identify and correct for anomalies in both the nomination and voting process.

Ultimately, of course, a lawyer’s inclusion is based on the subjective judgments of his or her fellow attorneys. While it is true that the lists may at times disproportionately reward visibility or popularity, the breadth of the survey, the candor of the respondents, and the sophistication of the polling methodology largely correct for any biases.

For all these reasons, Best Lawyers lists continue to represent the most reliable, accurate and useful guide to the best lawyers in the United States available anywhere.

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# Legal clinic provides students with experience, public service

By Chandra Harris-McCray  
Custom Publishing correspondent

**P**racticing law in the real world with a net is how Ben Barton, University of Tennessee associate law professor and director of clinical programs, describes the UT College of Law Legal Clinic.

With the guidance of professors, law students are armed with knowledge and problem-solving skills to represent those who need legal aid the most.

It's experiential learning at its best, according to Barton, who believes law students value the real-world experience, but even more so they realize and understand what it means to give back to a community in need.

Founded by former UT law professor Charles Henderson Miller in 1947, the foundation of the clinic continues to be based in service learning and advocacy by providing legal education to students and much needed legal services to the poor.

The longest-running, for-credit legal clinic in the country ranked 16th nationally in the 2008 U.S. News and World Reports among more than 180 clinical programs, and first in the Southeast, making it one of the most successful programs of its kind.

The breadth of the legal clinic has expanded from the Advocacy Clinic, which was the first clinic formed to handle civil, criminal matters and housing cases; to the Domestic Violence, Wills, Innocence Project/Wrongful Conviction, Environment, Business and Mediation Clinics along with an



R.G. Smithson/UT College of Law

**Karla McKanders, left, a member of the UT Legal Clinic faculty, briefs a student on case.**

externship program, which allows students the chance to prosecute cases on behalf of the state.

No matter what clinic a law student experiences, Barton explained, it isn't just a core class needed to complete the law degree, since the cases are real, with real consequences.

He said the commitment to public service and experiential learning is second to none at the UT College of Law. The clinics encourage students to do pro bono work, he said, adding, "it is critical for development as lawyers and as people."

"When working with those who

face difficulties, the students learn sympathy and empathy – the main part being empathy. This is really helpful in representing them as a lawyer."

"Our clinics are one of the very best things about the law school," said Barton.

In 2008, the UT Legal Clinic was honored by the Tennessee Legislature for 60 years of legal training and advocacy in the Southeast. The joint resolution, which was sponsored by Sen. Tim Burchett, was adopted by both the state Senate and the state House of Representatives and signed by Gov. Phil Bredesen.

UT College of Law 2008 graduate Beau E. Pemberton, who worked with Burchett to develop the resolution, said, "The UT Legal Clinic serves a vital function to the bench, bar and citizens of Tennessee in training capable attorneys and legal advocates, while providing needed representation for indigent persons.

"The resolution serves to honor the work of the legal clinic and those individuals who dedicate themselves unselfishly to helping future generations of attorneys serve the greater good in all areas of law and public service."

# Kramer Rayson LLP

## 2010 Best Lawyers honors among many garnered by firm

**T**welve of the 16 active partners in the Knoxville law firm Kramer Rayson LLP, or 75 percent, were honored or nominated as Best Lawyers in America for 2010.

These attorneys represent clients in litigation and transactional matters covering a wide range of legal specialties. From administrative law to insurance, health care to

trusts and estates, corporate to government relations, and personal injury to labor and employment, the firm's honorees cover the legal spectrum with a blend of experience and creativity.

However, the honor is only one of many recent accolades the firm has received. Its attorneys have been consistently recognized America's Leading Lawyers for Business by

Chambers USA; Mid-South Super Lawyers; Tennessee's Best 100 Lawyers in BusinessTN magazine; and they have been cited among Knoxville's Top Attorneys by CityView magazine.

The firm has eight attorneys listed as Fellows of the Tennessee Bar Foundation, and it has provided four past presidents

of the Knoxville Bar Association as well as multiple Tennessee Bar Association leaders and a current member of the Knox County Election Commission.

"We are gratified to have so many of our partners recognized for their excellence in Best Lawyers in America as well as in other

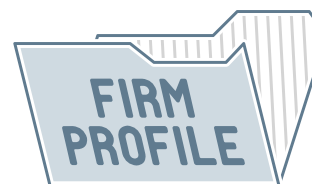


Photo provided

Kramer Rayson partners photographed recently are, seated from left, Steven E. Kramer, Edward G. Phillips, E.H. Rayson and Charles E. Young Jr.; and, standing from left, Thomas M. Hale, Robert W. Knolton, Warren L. Gooch, Robert L. Bowman and Wayne R. Kramer. All are 2010 Best Lawyers honorees except Bowman, who was selected one of the Greater Knoxville Business Journal's 40 under 40 in 2009.

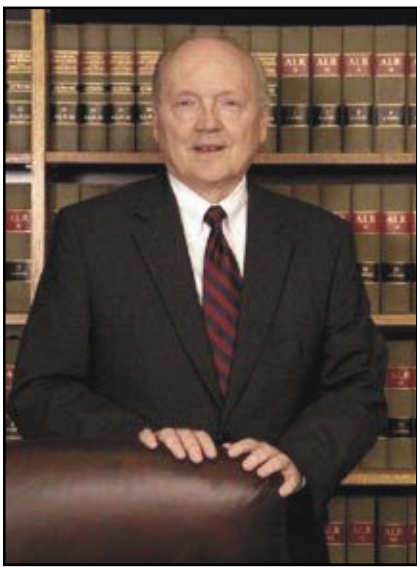


Photo provided

**John T. "Tom" Johnson, Kramer Rayson managing partner, is among the firm's attorneys named in Best Lawyers for 2010.**

publications," said managing partner Tom Johnson, who is also an honoree for personal injury and commercial litigation. "We believe all of our attorneys are exemplary, but it is a professional pleasure when our peers confirm that belief. And of course, our clients make it possible by honoring us with interesting and challenging work."

Kramer Rayson celebrated its 60th anniversary in May 2008 and has a rich history of providing legal services to clients in Knoxville and throughout Tennessee. The firm's founder, R.R. Kramer, and its current senior partner, Ed Rayson, represented federal contractors in Oak Ridge from the earliest days of the Manhattan Project and did high-profile work on behalf of both labor unions and management in other industries.

Today, the firm continues to have a strong presence in Oak Ridge as well as a leading labor and employment law practice that provides its clients with real-time daily advice, proactive planning and training, and litigation services.

Over the years, its diverse

range of clients has enabled the firm to develop a strong reputation in corporate, taxation, health care, insurance, immigration and wealth planning in addition to general litigation in all state and federal courts. The firm primarily provides defense services in all these areas of practice, but it has also enjoyed success in its representation of individuals through its personal injury practice.

Kramer Rayson attorneys have traditionally been in high demand for presentations at continuing-legal-education seminars across the state.

"We're fortunate to have many knowledgeable professionals who are also strong communicators," Johnson said. "We view their work in seminars as part of their service to the bar and community, and we encourage it strongly. It gives our younger lawyers a chance to develop expertise and experience on their feet."

The firm has a number of young lawyers who are already garnering recognition in the community for their work. Four



Photo provided

**Kramer Rayson associates who have been honored by local publications include, from left, Betsy J. Beck, William J. Carver and Kate E. Tucker. Not pictured, Shannon D. Coleman.**

include labor and employment, immigration, health care and litigation.

"We ask our associates to start out working in all areas of the law and to focus gradually over

in the community through its professionals' efforts and service. The firm encourages lawyers and staff to join and lead educational, charitable and religious organizations. One example is Kramer Rayson's commitment to the University of Tennessee, to which the firm recently endowed two scholarships – one for a minority student, one need-based – at the College of Law.

Kramer Rayson provides a professional atmosphere. Because of its commitment to its employees, the firm has been selected as one of the Best Employers of Tennessee for the last four years.

Most of the firm's 50-person workforce (which includes 26 attorneys) is located in its Knoxville offices, which occupy the top two floors of the First Tennessee Bank building. The balance works out of the firm's Oak Ridge office. Kramer Rayson LLP, First Tennessee Plaza, Suite 2500, 800 S. Gay St., Knoxville, 37901-0629, 865-525-5134, (fax) 865-522-5723, www.kramer-rayson.com

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*"We believe all of our attorneys are exemplary, but it is a professional pleasure when our peers confirm that belief."*

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**Tom Johnson  
Managing Partner,  
Kramer Rayson**

of Kramer Rayson's associates have been honored by local publications as leaders in their varied practice areas, which

time. This makes everyone more flexible and useful as they grow," Johnson said.

Kramer Rayson is also active

# KBA programs benefit community through education and service

By Mitch Moore

Custom Publishing correspondent

When the Knoxville Bar Association was established in 1948, its original purpose was – and still is – to maintain high standards within the legal profession and to provide ongoing education for its attorney members.

Over the years, however, the association's focus has expanded outside its own ranks to the Knoxville community at large. Through an ever-growing number of programs, KBA is playing a vital role by giving the public better access to legal expertise and by taking on projects that directly serve the community.

“Part of our purpose is to improve the well-being of our citizens and to provide as much community outreach as we can,” says Tom Ramsey, KBA president.

Since 1958, the Lawyer Referral and Information Service has helped the public locate attorneys who are qualified to handle all areas of law,

including wills and estates, wrongful death, personal injury, criminal defense and landlord-tenant issues. In 2008, KBA made more than 3,000 such referrals.

The association also has established a speakers' bureau to refer member attorneys to civic organization as speakers on different areas of law.

Two additional programs have been created to provide direct education to the public and to help keep local citizens in the know about their legal responsibilities and rights. In Community Law School, local attorneys teach classes on a wide range of legal topics. The one-day event takes place each spring.

“Our attendance is always great, and people love getting free advice from lawyers,” says Ramsey.

The LawTalk program is held each November, with the event focusing on two specific areas of law. This year's session featured seminars on issues related to the elderly as well as wills and estates.

Of course, KBA members also do their share of pro bono work, cases that attorneys take on voluntarily

and at no charge. Such cases typically benefit clients from low-income households who cannot otherwise afford to hire counsel.

Many of the association's efforts, however, aren't directly connected to supplying legal services and information. The Barristers, KBA's Young Lawyers Division, put in hundreds of volunteer hours each year, organizing and executing projects and events that benefit

the citizens of our regional communities.

For example, the Volunteer Breakfast Committee recruits attorney volunteers to feed breakfast to homeless people, while the Hunger and Poverty Relief Committee lends a helping hand to projects like Mobile Meals and Firms for Food. And since 1994, KBA and its Barristers have built a Habitat for Humanity house every three years.



Photos provided

KBA Members Kelly and Matt Frere speak at the LawTalk programs.



Barristers Ian Hennessey and Jamie Ballenger Holden at Second Harvest's Volunteer Breakfast in May.



Members of the Woolf McClane Bright Allen & Carpenter law firm participate in the Barristers Second Harvest project in August.



# Egerton, McAfee, Armistead & Davis

## A tradition of growth since 1932

**By Mitch Moore**

Custom Publishing correspondent

It should be no surprise that in the current economic downturn, the Knoxville firm of Egerton, McAfee, Armistead & Davis, P.C. – which was formed during the depression of 1932 – is continuing to show signs of steady growth. At a time when many large national firms are downsizing, the firm has added six new attorneys to its roster over the past two years, including one who will be joining the firm next summer upon completion of his master's degree in tax.

"This firm was founded during a time of economic upheaval, and even during the current economic crisis, we're still a stable source of business and transactional representation for the Knoxville business community," says attorney Jonathan Reed, a former naval aviator. "Representing people during difficult times is nothing new to our firm."

According to firm president Steve McSween, the business's continued growth is a byproduct of the stability of its client base.

"We've experienced a growth cycle because our client base is growing," McSween notes. "Many of our clients are not only weathering the economic storm, they are taking advantage of the opportunities in the current business climate to make strategic acquisitions of real estate and businesses. These are areas in which we can help them."

Reed and McSween are two

of the firm's three attorneys to receive Best Lawyers honors this year. The third, firm chairman Herbert Slatery, frequently counsels clients in matters of public finance, commercial lending, private securities placements, entity formations and the purchase and sale of businesses. Prior to graduating from law school, he worked in commercial lending and finance with a regional money-center bank.

According to Slatery, although transactions continue to occur, they are more difficult to finance and the margin of error is smaller.

"That's why it's important that we be involved early to help the client review all available options," Slatery says. "Sometimes there are alternative deal structure government programs available. PILOT (payment in lieu of tax) or TIF (tax incremental financing) are two examples that can enhance the financing and viability of a transaction."

Reed is heavily involved in the firm's tax and estate planning and corporate practice.

"Due to a failure to implement a long-term business succession plan, many family businesses have to be sold to pay the estate taxes that are due when the owner dies," Reed points out. "It's important to begin planning early if the family wants to successfully pass the business onto the next generation."

In addition to business succession planning, the firm provides more traditional estate planning such as wills and tax-leveraged trusts and actively



Chad Smith

**Herbert H. Slatery III, left, Stephen A. McSween and Jonathon D. Reed are the three Egerton, McAfee, Armistead & Davis attorneys to be named in Best Lawyers in America for 2010.**

represents tax-exempt entities and charitable institutions.

McSween heads up the firm's healthcare sector and has represented hospitals and physicians in mergers and acquisitions as well as contract and regulatory matters.

"From a legal standpoint, healthcare in general is becoming more complicated every day," he says.

The firm also handles Internet-related businesses and other high-tech concerns.

"We have attorneys who worked in the computer and software development industries before law school," says Slatery. "This helps us guide start-up tech companies through the growth pains that are bound to occur."

In addition to its business law practice, Egerton, McAfee, Armistead & Davis has several experienced commercial litigators who handle contract cases,

employment litigation, workmen's comp, bankruptcy and other business related litigation. It can also provide defense counsel for insurance claims. These lawyers are adept at using mediation and other non-judicial processes to achieve a quicker and less expensive resolution of claims.

"Our litigation department focuses on areas which are integral to the operation of any business, such as enforcing or defending contracts, bankruptcy and defending worker's compensation and personal injury claims," says McSween.

During its nearly 80-year history, Egerton, McAfee, Armistead & Davis has been based on Gay Street in downtown Knoxville and is currently located in the 14th floor of the BB&T building. Egerton, McAfee, Armistead & Davis, 1400 Riverview Tower, 900 S. Gay St., Knoxville, 37902, 865-546-0500, (fax) 865-525-5293, [www.emadlaw.com](http://www.emadlaw.com).



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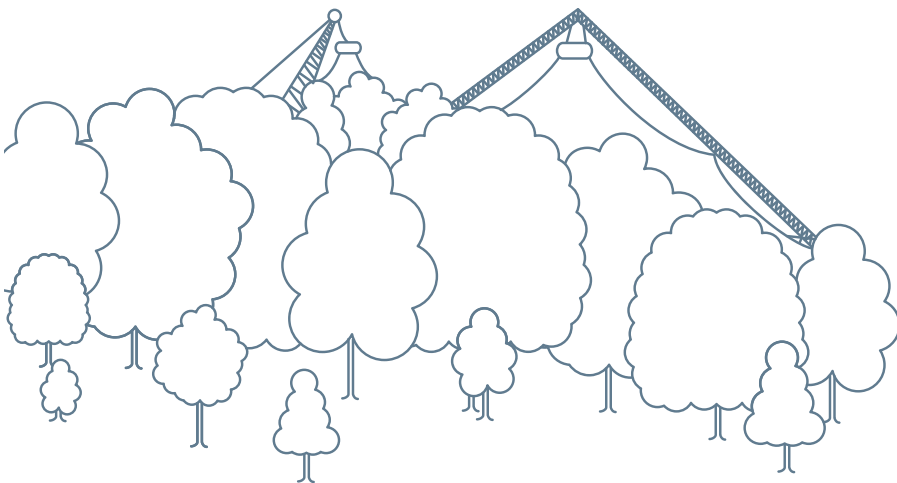
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advertising presentation

# Sid Gilreath celebrates 25 years among Knoxville's Best Lawyers

**By Mitch Moore**

Custom Publishing correspondent

**W**ith his recent selection among Knoxville's Best Lawyers for 2010, attorney Sid Gilreath is marking 25 consecutive years among the ranks of the peer-chosen group. He was first given the honor in 1985. For 2010, Gilreath reaches the quarter-century milestone in three categories – personal injury litigation, personal liability litigation and medical malpractice law.

Gilreath has been certified as a civil trial advocate by the National Board of Trial Advocacy for the past 20 years, and he has also been certified as a civil trial specialist

by the Tennessee Commission on Continuing Legal Education and Specialization.

His Knoxville-based firm, Gilreath & Associates, focuses on the practice of personal injury and product-liability law, bringing expertise to cases involving trucking, auto and aviation accidents, medical malpractice, defective products, workers' compensation and consumer fraud.

Gilreath, who has practiced law since 1962, founded Gilreath & Associates in 1973 as his professional interests became more focused on the personal injury field.

"That area involved medicine, which intrigued me, and it offered a lot of chances to help people who had had catastrophic injuries,"

explains Gilreath, who earned a bachelor's degree from Maryville College and an LLB from the University of Tennessee.

As an example, he notes a case involving a client who was left a quadriplegic after an auto accident in which the driver's airbag was deemed defective.



**Gilreath**

"He had two teenage children. A recovery that helps guarantee a family's future, and the education of their children is a great benefit to them," Gilreath adds.

Although the practice is based in Tennessee, with additional offices

in Nashville and Memphis, Gilreath & Associates handles cases through the Southeast, obtaining successful results in 12 different states.

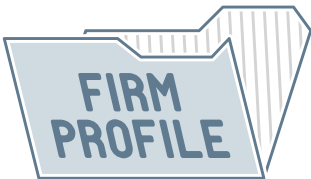
Another memorable case for Gilreath was *Sterling v. Velsicol*, a decision that found a pesticide manufacturer had polluted groundwater in Toone, TN, causing citizens of the West Tennessee community to become sick and, in some cases, develop cancer.

"We got a recovery for those people. It was an historic case in the toxic tort field," Gilreath recalls.

Gilreath says his firm is committed to devoting time and effort to each case it handles.

"We are committed to ensuring excellence by continually improving the delivery of quality legal services to our clients," he says.

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Attorneys and staff members from local law firms contributed more than \$100,000 to the annual campaign. United Way would like to recognize all members of the Knoxville legal community who contributed, and in particular, the firms in each category who had the largest impact on the campaign\*:

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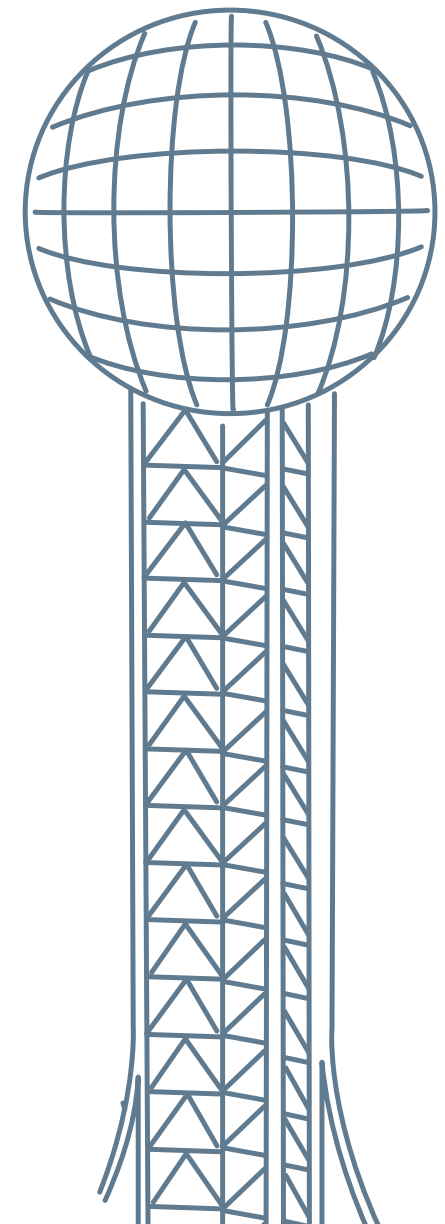
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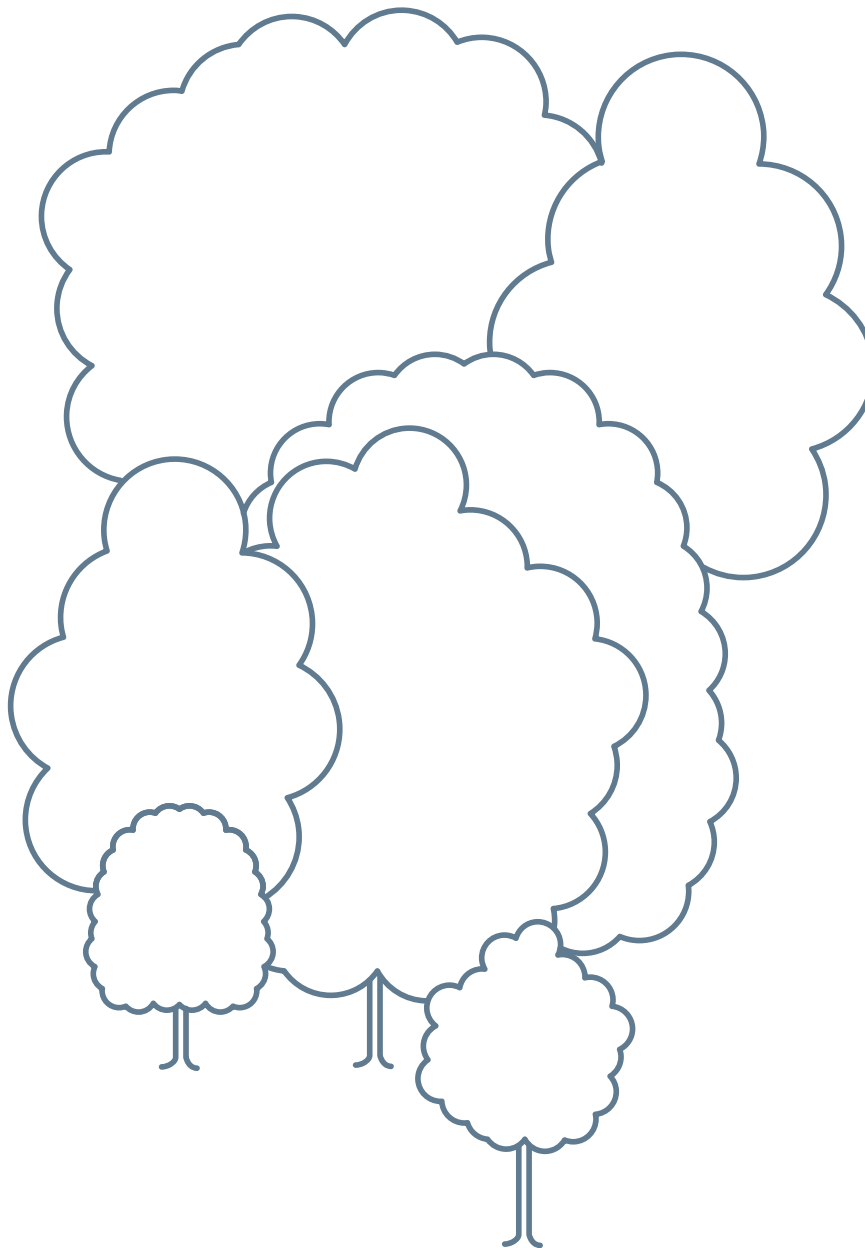
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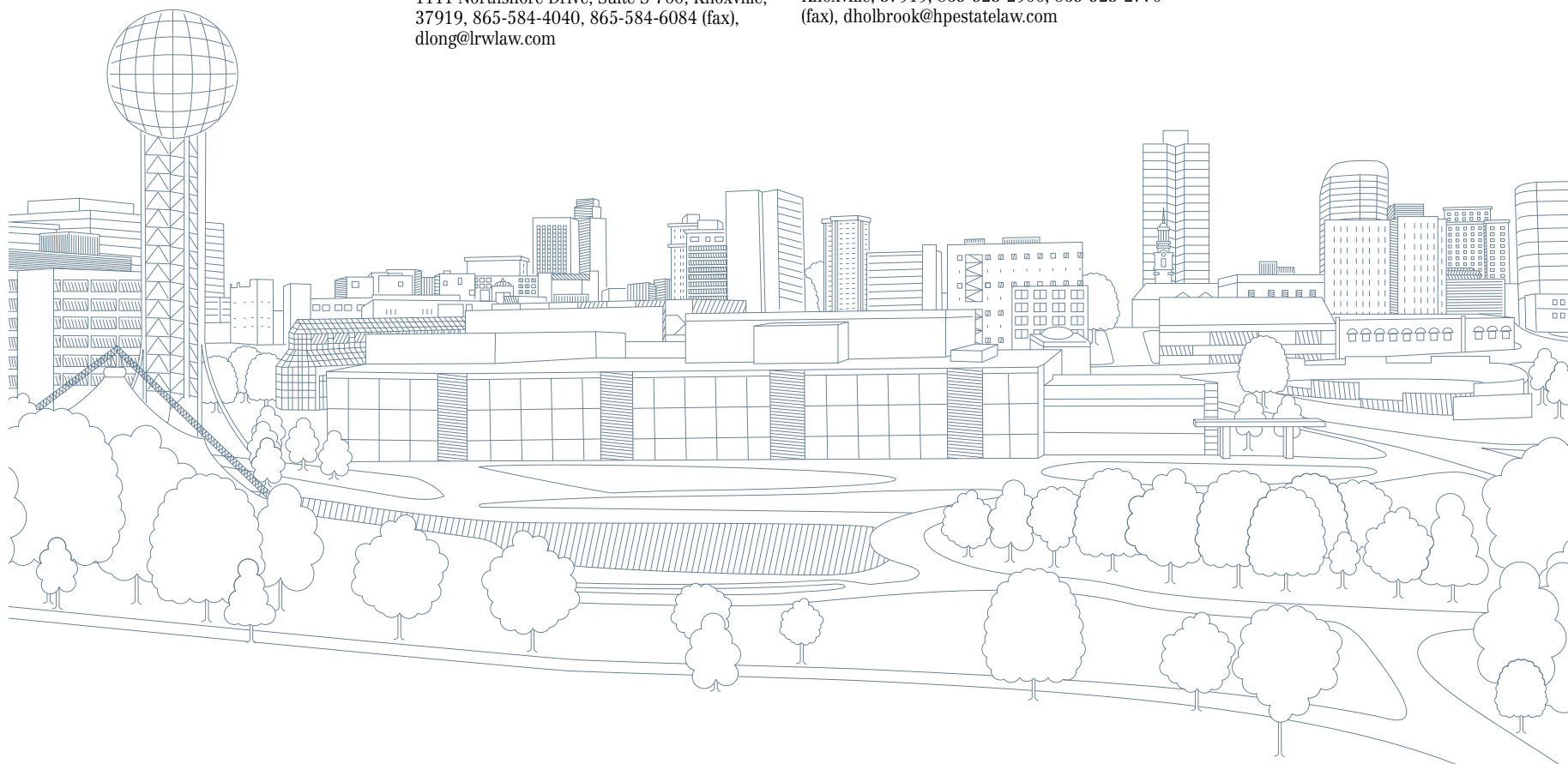
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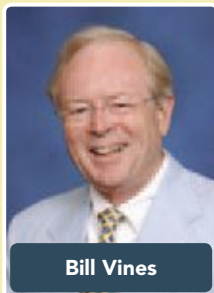
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Bill Vines

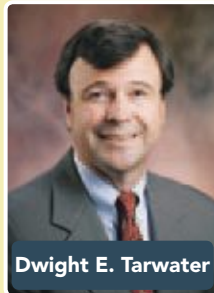
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### Practice Areas:

- ⇒ Personal Injury
- ⇒ Medical Malpractice
- ⇒ Environmental Law
- ⇒ Corporate and Banking
- ⇒ Lender Liability
- ⇒ Dispute Resolution

Bill Vines, a senior member at Butler, Vines and Babb, focuses his practice on medical malpractice and alternative dispute resolution. Vines was the 2008 recipient of the Governor's Award, the highest award of the Knoxville Bar Association. He served as president of the Knoxville Bar Association in 1986 and was on its board of governors for many years. He is a member of the state and national bar associations, Tennessee Trial Lawyers Association, American Association for Justice, Lawyer Pilot Bar Association and serves as the Master Bench Emeritus of American Inns of Court. In 2007, he was named among the Top Mid-South Super Lawyers, Best Lawyers in America and Best Lawyers in Knoxville. A fellow of the International Society of Barristers, he is listed as a mediator in both state and federal courts, Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 31. Vines, whose law firm employs a doctor and a nurse as medical consultants for reviewing medial issues, has spoken on mediation and medical malpractice.



Dwight E. Tarwater

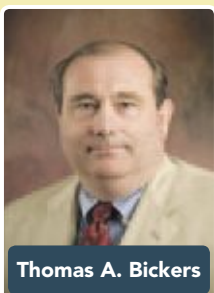
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### Practice Areas:

- ⇒ Complex Civil Litigation
- ⇒ Pharmaceuticals
- ⇒ Product Liability

Dwight Tarwater represents clients in complex civil litigation matters, including pharmaceutical, product liability and commercial cases. He received his law degree from the University of Tennessee College of Law in 1980 and earned his first Best Lawyers in America designation in 2002. For 2009, he has four Best Lawyer designations in separate practice areas. He was one of 100 Tennessee attorneys selected for membership in the Outstanding Lawyers of America in 2003. In 2009, he was named one of Tennessee's Top 100 Lawyers by Mid-South Super Lawyers. A former president of the Knoxville Bar Association, he has been active with the Knoxville Legal Aid Society, the Tennessee Association for Justice, the Defense Research Institute and the International Association of Defense Counsel. He is a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers.



Thomas A. Bickers

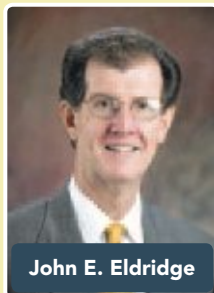
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### Practice Areas:

- ⇒ Toxic Torts
- ⇒ Litigation
- ⇒ Products Liability

Tom Bickers' practice centers on toxic torts, litigation and product liability. He has tried cases in federal and state courts throughout Kentucky and Tennessee and has served as lead trial counsel in toxic tort cases in more than a dozen states. Bickers also has represented clients at trial in matters as diverse as intellectual property and domestic relations as well as those facing arbitration by organizations including the National Association of Securities Dealers and the American Arbitration Association. In 1993, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee appointed him to a group revising the court's local rules and practices to improve effectiveness and cost efficiency. He is a member of the local, state and national bar associations and a past committee member at the local and state level. An honors graduate of Middle Tennessee State University and the University of Tennessee College of Law, he served as a law clerk for the Hon. H. Ted Milburn of the U.S. Court of Appeals.



John E. Eldridge

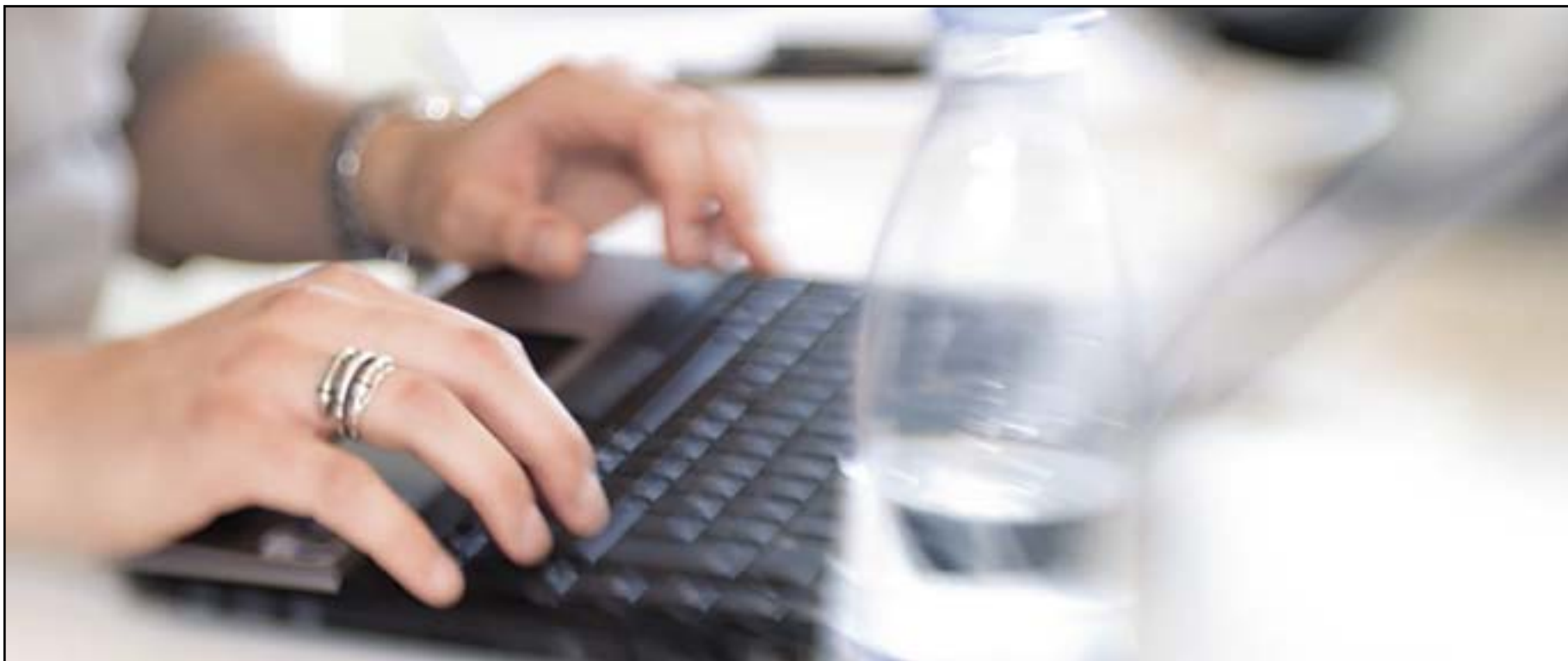
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### Practice Areas:

- ⇒ Criminal Defense

John Eldridge practices criminal defense law in both state and federal courts with an emphasis in non-white collar criminal law, and civil rights litigation. He is a Rule 31 mediator in civil and family law. In addition to being listed in the 2010 edition of Best Lawyers, he has received the Knoxville Bar Association's Law and Liberty Award, is listed among Knoxville's top lawyers in Cityview magazine and among the top 150 Tennessee lawyers by BusinessTN. He is certified as a specialist in criminal trial advocacy by the National Board of Trial Advocacy and the Tennessee Commission on Continuing Legal Education and Specialization. He has received the highest rating awarded by Martindale Hubbell Law Directory (AV). He has practiced law for 30 years, since receiving his law degree from the University of Tennessee College of Law in 1979. He is a member and past president of both the Tennessee Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers and Hamilton Burnett American Inn of Court, has served on the Board of Governors of the Knoxville Bar Association, and is a member of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers.



# Electronic document management backs up firms' records

**By Sharon Pound**

Custom Publishing correspondent

**D**espite their reputation for resisting change, law firms have embraced document management technology. They use it to scan, store and retrieve documents. They use it to protect documents from disaster, to reduce their storage space requirements and to increase productivity.

"The trend is toward electronic back-ups of documents," says Miguel Uribe, vice president of sales and marketing for Smith & Hammaker, a full-service records management company in Knoxville that works with several local law firms.

Uribe notes that his company keeps electronic copies of data in controlled environments provided by a firelock vault, one of only two in East Tennessee (the other at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory). With 50

employees, the company provides services that include records management, media and vital records vaulting, secure shredding, digital imaging and consulting.

"Document management at Smith & Hammaker seeks to control and manage documents throughout the life cycle, from creation through the active/inactive use and storage in the final disposition. We customize each records management program to the needs of our clients."

For law firms and other businesses, documents today are no longer only paper. They can be viewed as records and bands of data that include digital media such as photographs, graphic images, WAV files, e-mails, spreadsheets, presentations and movies. While paper can only be in one place at a time, digital documents are available almost anywhere and can be accessed by several people simultaneously.

Melanie Davis, a partner with Kizer & Black Attorneys, often carries client documents loaded onto her laptop when she goes into court. Having documents close at hand in such a convenient format is especially helpful on large cases or complex business cases.

She says the firm essentially keeps two sets of documents, one electronic and one paper. "We'll always have paper, for example, our historic documents," she points out.

"Each lawyer decides what to do with the data related to each case, and some utilize technology more than others," she adds.

One key to effective data retrieval is to find good software, Davis continues. Her company uses DocSTAR, which creates a searchable database that she says is extremely valuable. Buyers Laboratory recognized the software as the 2009 "Outstanding Document Management Solution."

Uribe says such technology is transforming today's business world, and he expects the trend to continue.

"When I look to the future, I see virtualization servers, which allow a client to make changes on their server while they are automatically updated to ours. If their system goes down, they just shift to ours while the problem is remedied. Then, our system updates theirs with the information generated during that period of time. It's called a fail forward. They're never down."

He also foresees a continued shift of the information technology structure off-site and away from client's locations. With available technology and band-width, it doesn't matter where the data is located, he says, and such a move saves labor costs and other overhead.

"The move can pay for itself," he asserts.