

UpFront

By Naseem Stecker and Mike Eidelbes

50-Year Members Recognized



Fifty-year honorees at the recent State Bar Golden Celebration in Plymouth were recognized for their contributions to the legal profession. These honorees, some who are still practicing law, were admitted to the Bar in 1957. The list of honorees was published in the March 2007 *Michigan Bar Journal* and is available online at <http://www.michbar.org/journal/pdf/pdf4article1132.pdf>. ■

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The news, people and events featured on this page attract notice. If you'd like to share news of an interesting event or law-related news, send us a few lines (not to exceed 150 words) and include a photograph or high-quality digital image. We reserve the right to edit all submissions for clarity, and the right to decline to publish. Please submit your news to:

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Nearly 300 people attended the May 15 State Bar Golden Celebration at The Inn at St. John's. A quiz show, door prizes, and musical entertainment were among the event highlights. The SBM Young Lawyers Section and Senior Lawyers Section helped organize the program. ■

Photos by Doug Elbinger

George A. Cooney, Jr. is 2007 Michael Irish Award Winner

Photo by Cameron A. Cooney



The State Bar of Michigan Probate and Estate Planning Section Council has awarded the 2007 Michael Irish Award to George A. Cooney, Jr., longtime member of the council and its former treasurer. The award is given in honor of the late Michael Irish to the member of the section who best epitomizes service to the section, to the trusts and estates practice generally, and to the community.

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A talented and prolific writer, Mr. Cooney authored four books for The Institute of Continuing Legal Education, including the first edition of *Michigan Will Drafting*, and almost 50 chapters or supplements of other publications. A Fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Council, he has been a speaker or moderator for over 60 presentations for various organizations on elder law, probate, and estate planning. He is also a past chairperson of the Elder Law and Disability Rights Section.

He has been active for many years in the Child International Summer Village, a peace education organization that operates programs for 11-year-old children to teach mutual respect. He has served on the national board of the organization and has been the national risk manager.

Mr. Cooney graduated from Notre Dame University and the University of Michigan Law School and has been a member of the adjunct faculty of Wayne State University Law School. He has been married to Mary Cooney for over 20 years, having met her through the Michigan Opera Theater when she was producing Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*. George was a performing member of the Michigan Opera Theater from 1979–1984, where he performed in *La Traviata*, *Turandot*, *Faust*, and *Aida*. The Cooneys have four sons. ■



Courtesy photo

Kimble Honored for Rewrite of Federal Civil Court Rules

A beaming Joseph Kimble, chair of the Thomas M. Cooley Law School's Research and Writing Department, accepted the prestigious Burton Award June 4 in Washington, D.C. The award was given for his work as a drafting consultant for the newly rewritten Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. He was part of a team of federal judges, lawyers, and professors who had worked on the project for four years to clarify rules used in federal trial courts. The rules were approved by the U.S. Supreme Court and sent to Congress on April 30, and are scheduled to take effect on December 1, 2007. There are more than 300 pages of civil rules. Originally written in 1937, the rules

have never been completely rewritten until now. They govern the procedure in all federal trial courts (U.S. District Courts) and are relied on daily by countless judges, lawyers, and students. In his acceptance speech, Kimble said, "No reform is more important to our profession than learning to use plain language. The costs of legalese are enormous—in time and money and frustration and disrespect. So, I'm proud of our effort and very proud to receive this award." The Burton Awards program, which is devoted to recognizing and rewarding significant achievement in the legal profession, is run in association with the Library of Congress and the Law Library of Congress. ■

Googasians Receive Cooley Honor

The *Thomas M. Cooley Law Review* has selected George A. Googasian and Dean M. Googasian of the Googasian Firm in Bloomfield Hills as recipients of a 2007 Distinguished Brief Award. The Googasians were honored for their brief, titled "Brief Amicus Curiae of the State Bar of Michigan in Support of Plaintiffs-Appellants' Cross-Application for Leave to Appeal."

The award is presented annually in recognition of the most scholarly briefs filed before the Michigan Supreme Court. Briefs are judged by a panel of jurists on seven criteria: the question presented, point headings, statement of the case, argument and analysis, style, mechanics, and best overall brief.

This year's Distinguished Brief Award winners will be honored at a July 21 dinner at the Country Club of Lansing, and the winning briefs will be published in their entirety in the *Thomas M. Cooley Law Review*. ■