

# Heroes in our Midsts



**DON JACOBS**

*Hearsay Special Correspondent*

Imagine you're a cab driver in New York City in the mid 1950's. You find yourself speeding along a street in Queens with an increasing sense of urgency. You need to get to a hospital. And you need to get there fast. Your fare is a young female who needs a doctor. The sounds coming from the back seat make it more and more urgent you arrive at a hospital quickly. If you don't, you could very well end up with another passenger in your cab that wasn't there when you started. But you'd have a story to tell. A true story. A story that you just witnessed the birth of Vancouver attorney Terry Lee. Born in motion, Terry seems to



be the happiest when wheels are spinning under him. But his passion is the two wheeled variety now. To say Terry is a bicycle fanatic is probably an understatement. Twice now he's biked across the country. His first cross nation trek was a solo trip from D.C. to Spokane. Along the way he visited law schools he might want to attend. His second cross country tour was in the early 1980's, with a partner. They took the southern route, starting in Miami and ending up in Vancouver B.C. It took three months to complete the trip. Of course he's done Cycle Oregon, the STP and many 100 mile trips. Terry likes to organize week long bike trips. One trip was with Tom Duffy and eleven others biking to Death Valley and back. They camped along the way. He's also biked in close to a dozen foreign countries. He and his spouse have done bike tours in some far away places like Austria, Czechoslovakia and Germany. Although Terry has now reached an age where his body requires a motel bed when he does his bike trips, he still puts in more hours on a bike seat than most of us could comfortably endure.

So welcome back to what might be a Hearsay continuing series featuring local heroes of the CCBA. I say "might" because there must be a finite number of CCBA lawyers who we can accurately

describe as local heroes. Granted, the Hearsay standards as to what qualifies one as a local hero are somewhat vague and flexible. Service to the profession, the community, our country or mankind in general are probably on the list. And since most lawyers go into the profession to help people, we should be able to run with this theme for quite a while. Though eventually we may work our way down to people like me, who just pay their taxes on time and don't litter. So if you know of any members who you think might fit the bill, please send me a note. The Hearsay editorial board will scrutinize each entry with our usual thorough vetting process.

This month we feature family law attorney Terry Lee. Not because of his bike riding prowess, but because Terry really does a heck of a lot of good for the community. But first, the basics. Terry attended the University of Maryland undergrad and did four years in the service of Uncle Sam before attending law school at Gonzaga. Before he arrived in the Couv he did stints as a prosecutor for the Quinault Indian Tribe and as a deputy prosecutor for Cowlitz County. He signed on with the Landerholm firm when he first hit town. Four years later, he ventured out on his own. For the last twenty years, he's been doing Dom Rel, DWI defense, estate planning and probate litigation. Terry and his spouse of 26 years have three kids. She works as a neonatal care nurse at Peace Health in the intensive care unit. She would have been handy in that taxi ride way back when.



What got Terry above the Hearsay radar was his sponsorship of the City of Vancouver noon time summer concert series in Esther Short Park. His sponsorship allows the city to put these on with little or no cost to the taxpayers. So why does he do this? Well, he says the Vancouver community has been very good to

him and his family since he arrived here in 1988. He wanted a way to say thank you and give something back. So six years ago Terry called up the City and asked if there was anything he could do. Next thing you know, he was sponsoring the noon time concert series. The crowds at these events are a mix of retirees, people working downtown and residents living around Esther Short. As part of the deal, the City offers Terry a place to set up a table to pass out materials and do some promo for his practice if

he wants. As his purpose wasn't promo, Terry passes on the opportunity and transfers it to nonprofit groups that need some way to get the word out. Bike Clark County, the Free Health Clinic, Safe Choice and Volunteer Lawyers Project have been some of the recipients handing out materials at these events.

Speaking of Bike Clark County, this local home grown nonprofit was another project Terry helped create a few years back. What started out as a group of volunteers doing things to get kids on bikes has now grown into an active nonprofit organization working with school districts all over Clark County. Bike Clark County became an official 501c3 back in the spring of 2011. Check out their website at [www.bikeclarkcounty.org](http://www.bikeclarkcounty.org). Still all staffed by volunteers, the organization encourages kids to get on bikes, learn how to ride safely and utilize helmets. Since its inception the organization has taught over 350 middle school kids about bike safety. Terry and the other volunteers provide kids with instruction, free helmets and even bikes to ride. They now have a fleet of over 100 bikes in the program. And Terry estimates they've given out over a thousand helmets as well.

Volunteering and giving back to the community are a big part of what defines Terry Lee. He's also helped his profession serving as 3rd District WSBA Governor a short time back. Terry likes what he does and plans to work at least another twenty years as a lawyer. That would put him in his mid seventies. Knowing Terry, he'll probably still be riding his bike to those noon time concerts.



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### MICHAEL SIMON

Phone: 360-696-3312 (WA)

503-283-3393 (OR)

Fax: 360-696-2122

[michael.simon@landerholm.com](mailto:michael.simon@landerholm.com)



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