

Magazine recognizes Pepper Pike lawyer

By SUE REID

What makes a "super lawyer"?

Just ask David M. Ondrey, Dale H. Markowitz and David E. Lowe.

Each of the three principals in the law firm of Thrasher, Dinsmore and Dolan in Chardon was given the designation recently by Ohio Super Lawyers magazine. A joint publication of Law and Politics and Cincinnati magazines, Ohio Super Lawyers publishes the list each year.

Individuals receiving the honor are chosen by a selection committee comprised of legal professionals who take nominations from lawyers throughout the state.

Only 3 percent of all lawyers in the state are given the designation of "super lawyer," said Mr. Ondrey, a Chardon resident who was named to the list once before.

"Each person listed is in their practice group," said Mr. Ondrey, who is listed under municipal law. Mr. Lowe is under domestic relations and Mr. Markowitz under real estate.

"That's why it's a particular honor to be selected by this magazine," Mr. Ondrey said, "because we are not only being recognized for skills in certain specific areas, but we continue to maintain active practices in other areas."

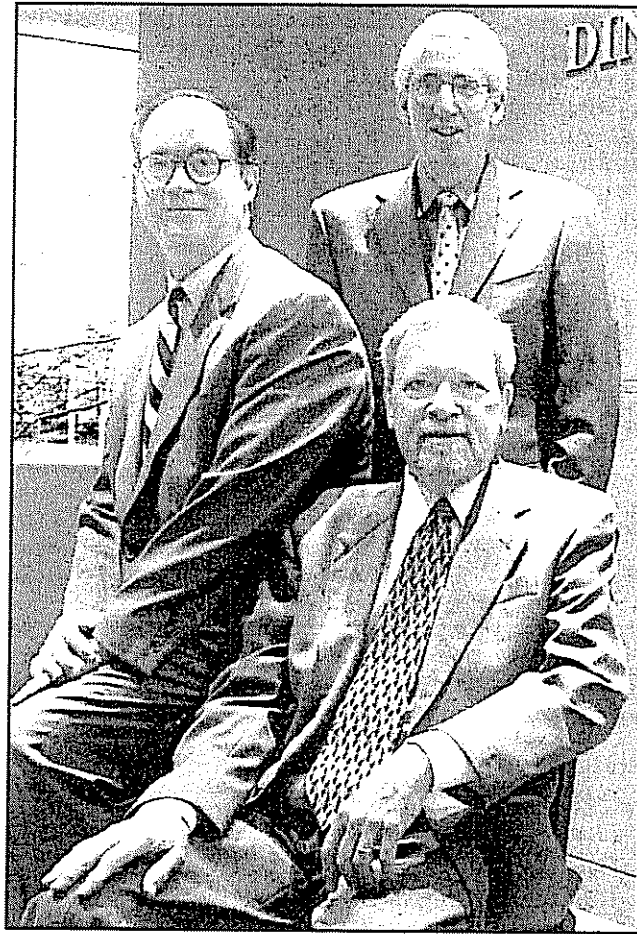
Mr. Markowitz, a Pepper Pike resident, said it's unusual to have such a high percentage of partners from a small firm make the list. "It's incredible," he said. "I think it's very humbling. We don't go around advertising that we got on the list, but we are thrilled to be on it."

"We're fortunate that our peers have looked favorably upon us," said Mr. Lowe, of Chardon.

The oldest law firm in Geauga County, with just seven principals and two associates, Thrasher, Dinsmore and Dolan was founded in 1931 by Ray Thrasher. Mr. Ondrey, Mr. Markowitz and Mr. Lowe have practiced with the firm for nearly 90 years combined. All three received law degrees from Cleveland Marshall College of Law.

"We're still a true general practice," Mr. Ondrey said. "We see the gamut of clients from this region, including a lot of small businesses in the Geauga County area."

The firm also represents about a dozen publicly trad-



David M. Ondrey (from left), of Chardon, Dale H. Markowitz, of Pepper Pike, and David E. Lowe, of Chardon, attorneys with Thrasher, Dinsmore and Dolan in Chardon were recently named "super lawyers" by Ohio Super Lawyers magazine.

ed companies, Mr. Markowitz said.

"Many areas of law have become so complicated that most lawyers are forced into some kind of specialization," Mr. Ondrey said. "Certainly to us, it is a big advantage to have individuals who have specialties in

certain areas. But we all still have a general practice, each of us doing things outside our specialties."

Mr. Lowe, who has practiced domestic-relations law for 35 years, is one of 86 lawyers in the state who have been board certified by the Ohio State Bar Association. He said domestic-relations law, mainly divorce work, has "stuck with him" since he first began practicing in Cleveland.

"I like the challenge of trying to separate property between two people, getting it evaluated and divided equally," he said. "There is a tremendous amount of interplay with divorce law and other areas, such as tax law. I like the variety that it provides."

Mr. Markowitz, who works mostly in real estate, said his "first love is zoning," because he gets the opportunity to argue constitutional issues on a very local level. Also exciting, he said, is working with other experts in various fields.

"I've been very successful in solving zoning cases, particularly in the Geauga area, without going to court," Mr. Markowitz said.

Mr. Ondrey, who serves as solicitor for the Village South Russell, as did Mr. Lowe and Mr. Markowitz before him, deals with labor law, personal injury and various other types of trial work. He said he enjoys the municipal area in particular, because it is a chance to participate in the public arena.

"I get to meet a wide variety of interesting people who are committed to their local communities," said Mr. Ondrey, who is also the solicitor in Burton Village. "It's a challenge to be in an atmosphere where you're routinely questioned on legal matters in a very public setting."

All three lawyers said that being a part of a small firm allows them "to do most of the same work as larger firms with greater efficiency and less cost."

Mr. Markowitz said the designation of "super lawyer" says something about the quality of life at Thrasher, Dinsmore and Dolan. "We all get along really well," he said. "People don't want to leave here. It's nice to work with nice people who are also recognized as being 'super lawyers.'"

Mr. Markowitz said it is not an "automatic" that their three names will remain on the list. "We'll keep working and providing quality services to our clients," he said. "That's what we intend to do."