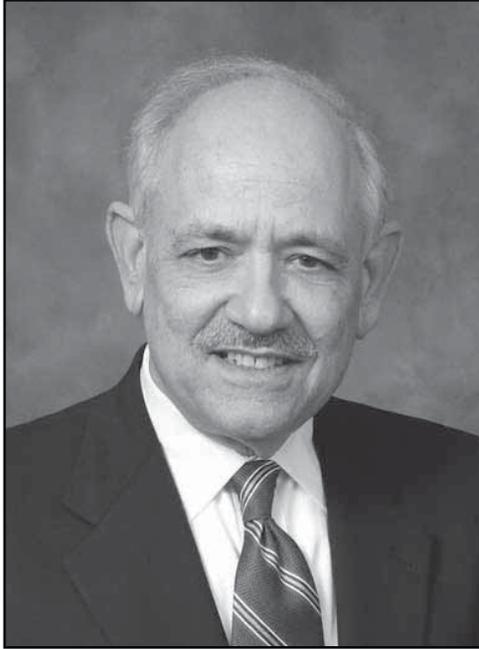


Honoring the Heroes Among Us - R. Donald Mastry

by Stephen C. Chumbris



When I heard that the St. Petersburg Bar Foundation had nominated R. Donald Mastry to be one of the 2012 Heroes Among Us honorees, I somehow knew that I would have the opportunity to write this article about him. We have practiced law together for over thirty-five years and I clerked for him for two and one-half years prior to that. Our offices have been adjacent to one another for all that time and we have shared the same legal assistant for over thirty years. So I know a little something about the man.

Don is, first and foremost, an outstanding lawyer, having practiced in his native St. Petersburg for a little over forty-six years. He received his B.S. and J.D. degrees from the University of Florida and a Masters of Laws in Taxation from New York University. He is listed in Florida Trend's Legal Elite, Florida Super Lawyers, as well as Best Lawyers in America. In 2010 he was named Tampa Real Estate Lawyer of the Year by Best Lawyers in America. He is a bulldog of a lawyer who anyone would want on their side in a tough situation. He is also a very versatile lawyer with experience in almost every area of the law.

I mentioned that Don is a native of St. Petersburg. Other than his educational years in Gainesville and New York, Don has lived in St. Petersburg his entire life. His father's family came to St. Petersburg in 1913. There is a fairly large Mastry contingent in the area and all are related in some way. I am certain that Don is very proud of his St. Petersburg roots and I don't think he ever considered living or

working anyplace else. His strong love for our city has shaped both the nature of his legal practice and his commitment to serve our community.

I believe that Don is very proud of his role in the development and growth of St. Petersburg through his work as a land use and zoning lawyer. He has obtained development approvals for so many projects that have shaped our city's landscape. They are too numerous to list all but examples include Isla del Sol, Caya Costa, Renaissance, Riviera Bay, Placido Bayou, Carillon, Eckerd College, All Children's Hospital, the St. Petersburg Yacht Club, First Baptist Church, Florencia, Ovation, and the list goes on and on. Not all of the projects were popular at the time they were approved and I am convinced that many of them would not have been approved without Don's key role in the process.

Don has always given back to our community through his participation in various local organizations. He was a member of the first class of Leadership St. Petersburg and Leadership Tampa Bay. He has served on the Board of Governors for the St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce. He was for many years a Suncoaster and Rotarian. He has served on the Board of Trustees for Shorecrest Preparatory School. He is a past Commodore of the St. Petersburg Yacht Club and served for many years on the Executive Committee and Board of Directors for that organization. He is a member of the St. Petersburg Downtown Partnership and the Golden Triangle. Don is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Tampa Bay Research Institute, an organization dedicated to the study,

"The hero is one
who kindles a
great light in the
world, who sets
up blazing torches
in the dark streets
of life for men to
see by."

~ Felix Adler

cure and prevention of chronic diseases. He has served for several years on the Executive Committee of the Friends of Weedon Island which is dedicated to preserving the historical heritage and natural beauty of Weedon Island.

Don has made significant contributions to the growth and success of All Children's Hospital. In addition to providing legal representation to All Children's Hospital for the past thirty years, he has served as Chairman and a member of the Board of Trustees for All Children's Hospital. He has also served as Chairman and member of the Board of Directors for All Children's Health System, the parent company for the hospital. He has been a member of the Board of Trustees for All Children's Hospital Foundation, the fundraising arm for the hospital. Don has played a significant role in All Children's Hospital becoming an excellent children's hospital with new state of the art facilities and a new relationship with Johns Hopkins Medicine.

Don's primary hobby is fishing. He is so good at it that at one time he held a commercial fishing license and made some pretty good money on the weekends. While he engages in all types of fishing, his real love is Tarpon fishing. When he tells you in May or June that he caught some fish that weekend, he usually means Tarpon at Boca Grande. In addition to fishing, he is amazingly knowledgeable about all college and professional sports.

Don has been married to his wife, Iris, for almost thirty-two years and they have three children. Their oldest,

Robert, is presently a student at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. Daughter, Cristina, graduated from Wofford College with a major in biology. She loves animals and presently works at wildlife rescue facility located near Kindalia, Texas, having spent some time working at Lowry Park Zoo and Big Cat Rescue in Tampa. Youngest daughter, Andrea, is a psychology major at Ole Miss who is scheduled to graduate in 2013. In addition, Don has a daughter, Robin, who is married with four children and lives with her husband on a Christmas tree farm in Portland, Oregon where she is a teacher at a Montessori School. Other daughter, Susan, is married, has two children, and lives with her husband in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Both Susan and her husband are lawyers.

So there you have a thumbnail sketch of Don Mastry, a man who loves his city, his family and the law. He has always been a good example for those of us who have had the privilege to practice with him and to work with him serving the community that he proudly calls home.

Stephen C. Chumbris joined Trenam Kemker in February 2006 and is engaged in a general practice focusing primarily on business and corporate law. He also handles a variety of real estate matters including leasing and the purchase and sale of real property.

