

John R. Owen

Harman, Claytor, Corrigan & Wellman, Richmond

Owen, a past president of the Virginia Association of Defense Attorneys, has successfully defended numerous businesses and manufacturers against product liability actions. His service to the legal community includes a leadership role on the Lewis Powell Inn of Court.

Looking back:

I grew up in the village of Columbiana, Ohio. As a high school senior, I was "arrested" for truancy during a teacher strike. I got to visit the town jail for a bit with some of my closest friends. Turns out, the officer missed the mark and when the sheriff arrived we were given our freedom.

An important mentor:

There are two – Frank Cowan and John O'Brien. They taught me what it means to be a trial lawyer. They were respectful to all, treating the person they were speaking with (whoever it was) as the most important person in the room.

Personal accomplishment:

Simple. A wife who loves me and a wonderful son (age 11) who still looks up to me.

Surprising advice:

My great friend, Elliott Buckner, and I

coach a youth soccer team. We have some team rules that we lay out to the kids before every practice: 1. sportsmanship, 2. teamwork, 3. play hard, 4. listen to your coaches and parents and 5. have fun. Two years ago, nine-year-old Bo Bittner added No. 6, which has certainly stuck – "Don't be a fool."

Biggest career challenge:

My mother was a successful car dealer in Northeast Ohio. In college, I worked myself into a sales position. So, become a lawyer or be a car dealer? No second thoughts, I chose the correct path.

Best tip for balance:

I work very hard. I often stay up late and often get up early. But, I coach my son's sports teams, I attend school functions, I meet my wife for lunch, I play too much golf and I take too many vacations. But I never apologize for any of that, because that's the priority.

I might have been:

Doing some silly television commercial trying to sell you your next Ford pick-up truck.

Guilty pleasure:

I really enjoy playing golf. Four hours on a golf course with a buddy or my son is priceless.

Favorite get-away:

We have really fallen in love with St. Croix. The water, the food, the people – it



provides exactly what the Owen family is looking for.

You didn't know:

My son is the only Owen family member with a hole-in-one. Playing the Robert Trent Jones Course, 8-year-old Nicholas Owen hit a 3-hybrid over a pond and three bounces later, we saw it fall in the cup.

Education:

BS, Bowling Green State University
JD, Washington & Lee University

My father used to have me make 10 free throws in a row every night before bed. Thanks to him, I believe I maintain my high school's free throw percentage record, hitting over 85 percent from the line.