

PATRICK MOTLEY
TRI-COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION
MEMORIAL

"The day you lose a case and don't feel bad when you leave the Courtroom, that is the day you are through as a lawyer." Those words of Pat Motley to a young lawyer demonstrate the love, respect and personal dedication Pat shared with the law, his clients and the matters in life important to them.

Patrick Motley was born on August 16, 1907 in Menominee, Michigan. An only child, he was raised by his grandmother. In 1929, he married his high school sweetheart, Rosemary Picard, with whom he raised four children: Patrick, Faye, Thomas and Kathleen.

Pat wanted to be a lawyer his entire life. During high school, he skipped classes in order to sit in the Courtroom in the County Courthouse to watch cases being presented. He attended undergraduate and law schools at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, graduating in 1935.

The County Judge in Marionette, a friend of Pat's, recommended Alma as a town with a promising opportunity. Upon law school graduation, Pat took a train to Winona, Minnesota and walked the last thirty miles to Alma. Pat found four other attorneys already practicing. Theodore Buehler practiced with his son Emil. James Gleason had a separate office. In addition to his judicial duties, Judge Patteson also maintained the most thriving legal practice in town.

Pat opened his office without knowing anyone in town and immediately out of law school. Rose Motley joined Pat's office as his secretary in 1955 and continued to work with Pat until his

office closed in 1975.

Money was scarce in the post-depression years for a new lawyer and Pat often was paid with chicken, hogs, wood or potatoes. Pat built his own house in the City of Alma, digging the basement by hand. It is furnished with solid wood paneling given to Pat by a client in exchange for legal services. He also maintained office hours in the Village of Pepin, 16 miles north of Alma, and walked from Alma to Pepin until 1940 when he first purchased a car.

Pat frequently said that he was a lucky man, because he loved his work as an attorney and felt himself blessed to be able to earn a living doing what he loved best. Pat accepted anyone who needed help and was noted for his aid to the elderly and the less fortunate. He had a reputation for never turning anyone away. His philosophy for those clients he did bill was to send the bill once. Both Pat and the client would know that the amount was owed, and Pat trusted the client to pay when able.

Pat always was known for and loved representing the ordinary person. Justice Court frequently saw James Gleason on behalf of the creditor pitted against Pat Motley representing the ordinary person going through a rough spot in his or her life. There may not have been as much money in representing debtors over creditors, but Pat was often paid by his client's gratitude and Pat's own personal satisfaction.

Always civic minded, Pat Motley served in many public roles. He was a long time member of the City Council and served many years as a leader for Boy Scouts. He served on the Board of Directors of Tenney Telephone Company and was a charter member of the Alma Lions Club. A vocal Democrat, Pat held all of the County offices

with the Democratic Party. Pat and Rose also served as delegates at State and National Democratic Conventions.

The Spring 1959 election for County Judge saw Pat Motley squaring off against a young Gary Schlosstein. Pat's campaign signs throughout the County pronounced "a few grey hairs make a better County Judge." Pat was leading by thirty votes with one township remaining, narrowly losing to Judge Schlosstein in the Town of Buffalo and in the election.

Lively debate always brought out the best in Pat. At Lions Club, he was known as the great dissenter, always voting "no" on otherwise unanimous votes, just to keep things interesting. When the new school was being located, Pat promoted filling the area at the intersection of Beach Road and STH 35 for the school, which for many years became known as "Motley's Pond".

He loved to fish, particularly trout, and for many years maintained a trailer cabin at Herbster. He enjoyed hunting and fishing trips as much for the companionship of his many friend as for the catch.

Pat was appointed District Attorney for Buffalo County after the resignation of James Blum. He ran successfully for re-election against Dane Morey in 1963 but did not seek re-election at the completion of the 1964-65 term due to low pay as District Attorney and the time demands of the job.

Pat served as Family Court Commissioner for many years, advised the City of Alma as City Attorney and the County of Buffalo as Corporation Counsel. Although now humorous, Pat had substantial responsibility for the passage of the ordinance removing the last outhouses in the City of Alma, a hotly contested issue of the time.

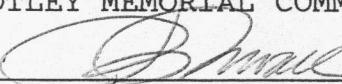
"If Pat made a deal on the phone, you knew it was good," remembers one lawyer. He was always known as an honorable man by the Bar Association. Pat treasured his relationship with his fellow lawyers, and was active in and served as president for the Tri-County Bar Association. Pat was one of the loudest voices in support of the purchase of "Patteson's Radisson", the Tri-County Bar's Deer Island cabin, and received Housing Certificate #1 on January 7, 1967. Many attorneys recall Pat throughout the years, sitting on the porch of the cabin and revelling in the war stories and companionship of his fellow lawyers.

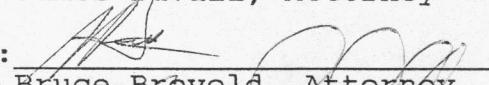
A stroke in 1971 began an era of slowly failing health for Pat. In 1975 he closed his private office, but continued to have an office at the Department of Social Services for his work as Corporation Counsel. In 1978 he joined offices with Roger Hartman and ended his practice of law in 1979.

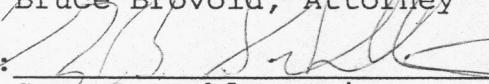
Pat Motley died on January 29, 1990. In his honor and memory, the Courts of the Counties of Buffalo, Pepin, Trempealeau and Jackson closed on the day of his funeral. Attorneys representing the legal profession from those Counties, the profession loved and honored by Pat Motley, gathered together in his memory.

Presented at the Mid-Winter Meeting of the Tri-County Bar Association on January 11, 1991 and filed with the Buffalo County Circuit Court in honor of the memory of Patrick Motley.

MOTLEY MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

BY: 
James Duvall, Attorney

BY: 
Bruce Brovold, Attorney

BY: 
Gary B. Schlosstein
Retired Circuit Court Judge