

Memorial Resolution of the
Allen County Bar Association
JEROME J. "JERRY" O'DOWD

We are here to pay our respects to the memory of our deceased colleague and friend, Jerome J. "Jerry" O'Dowd, who passed away on March 16, 2009, at the age of 90.

Jerry was a Fort Wayne resident and attorney. He is survived by his wife Ruth, three sons, Thomas, David, and Kevin, two daughters, Amy and Sally, and eight grandchildren. He was a loving husband, and a kind and proud father and grandfather.

Jerry graduated from Central Catholic High School in 1936. He was a graduate of the Notre Dame Colleges of Commerce and Law, receiving his law degree in 1942. Jerry was admitted into the Indiana Bar in 1942.

Jerry served in the Navy during World War II, completing thirty-seven months of active duty. He participated in five major invasions in the Central Pacific Theatre including the islands of Kwajalein, Saipan, Guam, Tinian, and Iwo Jima. In March of 1944 he was assigned as the Commander of an amphibious gunboat and was awarded the Silver Star Medal for action at Guam, the Navy Cross at Iwo Jima and three Presidential Citations. He retired from the Naval Reserve in 1949.

Jerry was a member of the Allen County Bar Association, Indiana State Bar Association and the American Bar Association. He was admitted into the Indiana Supreme and Appellate Courts in 1942, into the Northern District of Indiana in 1946, and the U.S. Supreme Court in 1957.

Jerry practiced law locally from 1946 until 2004. He began as an associate to Jerome B. Van Orman, then with Edwin R. Thomas and Byron Novitsky from 1946 – 1947 and with Louis F. Niezer from 1947 – 1956. Jerry spent many years as a sole practitioner. In 1993, he practiced with O'Dowd, Wyneken and Connolly. In 1998, Jerry practiced with the association of O'Dowd, Riebenack & Connolly.

Jerry served a four year term as the City Attorney, beginning in 1959, under the administration of Mayor Paul M. Burns. He also served on several local government boards including the Allen County Election Board, Fort Wayne Redevelopment Board of Trustees, Allen County Park Board and as attorney for the Allen County Public Library Board.

Jerry was a member and Past President of the Anthony Wayne Chapter Reserve Officers Association and a member and Past Commander of the Thomas Lau Suedhoff V.F.W., Post 9500. He was a Judge Advocate with his American Legion Post from 1947 – 1948 and with the Navy Club from 1958 – 1959. He was President of the Naval Reserve Association from 1958 – 1959.

Jerry was Past President and a member of the Board of Directors of Park Center, Inc., and was the Building Chairman during the development of Park Center's East State Boulevard complex. Later, Jerry served as Park Center's corporate attorney. He also was Director of the United Chest Council from 1957 until 1959 and served as Social Planning Chairman for the United Community Services.

Jerry was the President of the Jefferson Democratic Club from 1946 -1947, Secretary for the Young Democrats of Indiana from 1947 – 1949, and the Democratic Commissioner for the Allen County Election Board between 1951 and 1957.

Jerry was a member of St. Jude Catholic Church, Serra Club, Notre Dame Alumni Association, and Knights of Columbus 3rd and 4th degrees, as well as a former President of the Associated Catholic Charities. For 30 years, he served as the corporate attorney for The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Allen County Bar Association gives public expression of sorrow upon this, the occasion of the remembrance of the life of Jerome J. "Jerry" O'Dowd.


Be it further, resolved, that this Resolution be unanimously adopted by those present at this assembly upon this occasion; and

Be it further, resolved, that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted by the Office of the Allen County Bar Association to the members of the O'Dowd family; and


Be it further, resolved, that this Resolution be spread of record in the permanent records of the federal and state courts of Allen County, Indiana, to evidence the respect and admiration of the members of the Bench and Bar for their departed friend, Jerome J. "Jerry" O'Dowd.

Dated this 10th day of July.

THE ALLEN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

By: 

Douglas E. Johnston, President

By: 

The Honorable David J. Avery
Judge, Allen Superior Court