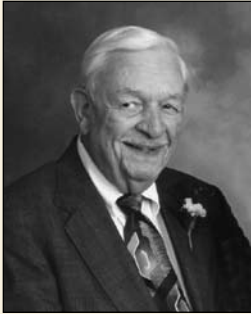


IN MEMORIAM: A TRIBUTE TO JOHN LEA, LANC PARALEGAL



JOHN LEA was an inspiration to all of us in the legal services community. He lived a very full life and was a man of many talents. John was a decorated veteran, having served as a navigator of a B-52 Bomber during WWII. He was an active community leader and

a devoted family man. After retiring from managing his own business for many years, he began a second career as a magistrate in Alamance County.

In 1979, John embarked on his third career—perhaps the one closest to his heart—when he joined the staff of North State Legal Services (NSLS) as a paralegal. As a means of surviving the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) cutbacks in 1981, he ran the Graham branch office singlehandedly until that office was closed in 1995. He then moved to the main office in Hillsborough. He then became the Private Attorney Involvement (PAI) Coordinator for the NSLS’ seven-county service area, which included Alamance, Anson, Caswell, Chatham, Moore, Orange, and Richmond Counties. John continued to recruit attorneys to do pro bono work with Legal Aid with great enthusiasm through the LSNC consolidation, the LANC restructuring, and the resulting move to Pittsboro, until the end of 2008.

To many staff members in the LANC-Pittsboro Office, John was more than just a co-worker—he was the office “Dad.” He was an insightful man of strong faith. His door was always open, and he was always ready to listen. John had an

inspirational saying for every situation, some of which decorated the walls of his office and were embroidered by the loving hands of his dear wife, Jeanne. He was a dedicated husband and raised three sons. To John, Legal Services was truly part of his family.

John Lea passed away on February 8, 2008. He always jokingly said that if he was going to stop working here, “They were going to have to take him out feet first.” He was 82 when he retired. John, we miss you greatly, and you are truly loved and remembered every day.

The first John Lea Support Staff Award was presented posthumously to John D. Lea on April 2, 2008 at the 2008 North Carolina Legal Services Statewide Conference.

John’s sons, Joseph, Johnny, and James, accepted the award on his behalf.

The John Lea Support Staff Award recognizes a non-lawyer who is working with a legal services organization and meets the following criteria:

1. *Displays dedication and commitment to his/her organization’s mission;*
2. *Has made outstanding contribution(s) to his/her organization/office; and*
3. *Exhibits exceptional involvement in the low-income community.*