

Outstanding!

Twenty-five

People

FOR

Twenty-five

Years

MONTANA MAGAZINE IS PROUD TO PRESENT 25 PEOPLE WHO WE BELIEVE HAVE MADE MONTANA A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE THIS PAST QUARTER CENTURY. THEIR LEADERSHIP AND VISION HAS BEEN DIVERSE: LITERATURE, POLITICS, EDUCATION, COMMUNITY SERVICE, ENVIRONMENT, BUSINESS, AGRICULTURE. ALL HAVE IN COMMON A LIFE OF HONOR AND INTEGRITY, A WILLINGNESS TO WORK FOR THE BETTERMENT OF THIS STATE, A COMMITMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY OF MONTANA.

PLEASE JOIN US ON THESE NEXT PAGES, AS MONTANANS WRITE ABOUT OUR FELLOW MONTANANS. WE ARE PLEASED TO PROFILE THESE INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE VALUED NEIGHBORS AND FRIENDS TO SO MANY OF US.

—Beverly R. Magley, Editor

Jim Goetz

BY JAMES P. MOLLOY

Maybe I have started a few brushfires here and there, enabling others to come after me and fan the flames. I hope my work has had a positive impact on the lives and work of others."

Those were the understated comments of Jim Goetz, when I asked him to reflect on his 25 years of work as a lawyer in Montana.

Jim grew up in Ennis and graduated from Montana State University and Yale University Law School. He returned to Montana in 1968 and joined the faculty at



PHOTO COURTESY OF JIM GOETZ

MSU. He taught full time and practiced law on the side until 1972, when he started his full-time law practice in Bozeman. He continued teaching until 1988. Through those 20 years, he taught many students who are now, themselves, lawyers.

Goetz's contributions as a teacher are noteworthy. They pale, however, next to his contributions as a lawyer. Without exaggeration, his work has affected all Montanans; as the *Great Falls Tribune* has suggested, the impact of his work may be unmatched by even our governors and senators.

Jim pioneered the development of environmental law in Montana and helped draft the first proposed conservation easement legislation. He was also among the first

lawyers in the state to handle civil rights cases. He helped form the Montana affiliate of the American Civil Liberties Union, and he served on the organization's national board.

He is Montana's leading constitutional lawyer, having handled such cases as challenges to the school finance system, welfare legislation, and limits on legal remedies. Through these and other cases, he has left his mark on the Montana Supreme Court's construction and enforcement of Montana's 1972 Constitution.

Jim established Montana's stream-access doctrine. He has handled significant cases in employment law, criminal law, securities, business and commercial litigation, and water law. Approximately 100 of his cases have resulted in published opinions in state and federal courts, including two cases in the United States Supreme Court.

Not coincidentally, Jim did these things while helping to create and build one of Montana's most successful

and recognized law firms. In 1980, Bill Madden and Russ Dunn, also highly accomplished and successful lawyers, joined with Jim to create Goetz, Madden & Dunn. The firm now includes seven lawyers, with an eighth to join this fall. Jim takes pride in the fact that his work and the firm show that public-mindedness and commercial success are compatible in the practice of law.

In describing the breadth and quality of Jim's professional accomplishments, I can only hope his qualities as a person show through. His character, fierce dedication to the rights and dignity of all, humor, unflappable manner, refreshing bluntness, and plain decency are evident to all who know him. (I could also mention his leg-

endary dedication to noontime basketball, but—fortunately for him—space constraints do not allow.)

Yes, Jim Goetz has started a few brushfires and positively influenced the work and lives of Montanans these past 25 years. We hope he will be around for the next 25, to continue benefitting Montana with his vision and talents.

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