

By: Bill Vines



Governors' Award - 2010
Robert P. Murrian

ROBERT P. MURRIAN 2010 GOVERNORS' AWARD RECIPIENT THE HIGHEST AWARD OF THE KNOXVILLE BAR ASSOCIATION



At the Annual Meeting on December 10, 2010, Robert "Bob" Murrian was presented the highest award of the Association, the Governors' Award. Standing with Bob were his wife, Sue, and mother, Mary House. The Members of the Bar Association honored him with a standing ovation.

The Governors' Award is given each year to a lawyer whose peers believe to be deserving of special respect. While all lawyers are proud they help people navigate the complicated rules necessary in today's society, some lawyers do their work in a manner that commands special respect. Those lawyers are the role models for our profession.

Because those lawyers deserve special recognition, the Knoxville Bar Association Board of Governors created the Governors' Award as its

highest award. It is not an award that can be sought by a recipient. In fact, the recipient does not know that he/she is being considered. The award is not given for what the recipient has done... it is given for how the recipient has done it.

Bob's career is outstanding. He received an appointment to the United States Naval Academy and later served as an Officer aboard a nuclear submarine. During that service, his good judgment and impeccable character were recognized. Bob was placed in charge of the top secrets of the nuclear submarine. Bob was the designated Officer who held the key to the safe... yes, he held that key.

He graduated from The University of Tennessee Law School in 1974, Order of the Coif, a member of Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, and the recipient of a scholarship and various awards. Subsequently, he became an Adjunct Professor at the college.

Following law school, Bob was Clerk to Judge Robert L. Taylor who repeatedly indicated that Bob was his "best clerk." At Judge Taylor's funeral, Bob was asked to speak in remembrance of the Judge.

Subsequently, Bob practiced law with the firm of Butler, Vines and Babb, P.L.L.C. before being appointed United States Magistrate Judge. A trial conducted by a U.S. Magistrate Judge requires consent of both parties. Because he commanded so much respect, Bob was given the opportunity to try a very substantial percentage of cases tried in Federal Court during his tenure.

After retiring from his position as a United States Magistrate Judge, Bob practiced with the firm of Kramer, Rayson, Leake & Rodgers specializing in federal practice. Subsequently, Bob has substantially restricted his practice to mediation and arbitration. This year he was named the No. 1 Mediator and Arbitrator by City View Magazine as a result of a poll of 1,000 attorneys.

He has served as President of the Hamilton Burnett American Inns of Court and has been listed in Best Lawyers in America for the past four years. Bob is the only person to receive both the prestigious Law and Liberty Award and The Governors' Award.

Bob is proud of Knoxville. He and Sue are part of the revitalization of Downtown Knoxville. They live in a condominium in the Downtown area where, of course, Bob is treasurer of the homeowners association. Bob's daughter Kim lives in Asheville with her husband and six children; his daughter Jennifer lives with her husband and two children in Virginia; his son Albert is a 2010 graduate of Gainesville State College in Georgia; and his son Sammy lives in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania.

Bob is an avid jogger and hiker and recently returned from a hiking trip at Glacier National Park.

Bob is a role model for our profession. He is a worthy recipient of the highest award of the Knoxville Bar Association.