



2010 Distinguished Real Estate Lawyer Lifetime Achievement Award

James Noble Johnson has been selected by the Real Estate, Probate, and Trust Law Council to be the recipient of the 2010 Texas Real Estate Lawyer Lifetime Achievement Award. Jim joins a small and elite group as a recipient of this honor, initially presented to Bernard O. Dow in 2000.

Jim received his undergraduate degree from Austin, College, and his Master's (Political Science) and Law Degrees from the University of Houston. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army in 1971 and was honorably discharged in the grade of Captain in 1974 during the post-Vietnam drawdown.

Jim began his legal career as a Staff Attorney, National District Attorneys Association, in Washington, D.C., and Chicago. He then served a year as Administrative Assistant District Attorney in Tyler, Smith County Texas, before he began the private practice of law in Tyler in 1978, specializing in real estate law, and becoming certified in both Residential and Commercial Real Estate Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. In 1989, Jim left Tyler and became the Supervising Attorney of the Real Estate and Eminent Domain Sections of the City of Austin Law Department. In 1994, he entered the private practice of law in Austin, specializing in commercial real estate transactions and real estate litigation. His services as an expert witness are in high demand.

There are very few Texas lawyers who have shared their expertise with their colleagues to the extent that Jim has. To say that he has been a prolific speaker at continuing legal education seminars is a grievous understatement. For example, he has spoken and presented an article at

every Advanced Real Estate Law Seminar from 1984 through 2009 (with the exception of two years), and has twice served as Course Director. For this truly extraordinary effort, in 2003 the CLE Section of the Texas State Bar awarded him the “Weatherbie Workhorse” Award. He has also spoken at many other institutes and seminars, including the Advanced Real Estate Drafting Course and Advanced Real Estate Transactions Course, The University of Texas School of Law Mortgage Lending Institute, and conferences or courses sponsored by, among others, the SMU School of Law, the South Texas College of Law, the Dallas Bar Association, the Houston Bar Association, Austin Bar Association, the International Right-of-Way Association, the Texas Land Title Association, the Texas Society of Professional Surveyors, and Texas Society of Professional Engineers. He served on the Council of the Real Estate, Probate, and Trust Law Section of the State Bar of Texas from 1989 through 1993.

Jim is perhaps best known for his virtually unparalleled expertise in the areas of surveying, Texas land titles, and boundary line conflicts. Governor Ann Richards, recognizing a valuable resource when she saw one, appointed Jim to the Texas Board of Professional Land Surveying in 1994. Governor George W. Bush concurred in Ms. Richards’ judgment (a rare occurrence indeed) and appointed Jim Chairman of that Board in 1996, a position he held until 1999.

Jim is a prolific writer, and an acknowledged expert in his fields. A partial list of his published articles can be found at www.reptl.org. However, the REPTL website, invaluable resource as it is, does not include the contributions Jim has made to many other publications and in many other forums. Nor does it reveal the fact that Jim is the author of the four-volume set *Real Estate Transactions*, part of the *Texas Practice Guide* published by Thomson-West Group.

In addition to his published writings and his presentations to seminars and institutes, Jim is well known for his collegiality--his willingness to assist his fellow lawyers on a one-to-one basis when their peace of mind requires it (*i.e.*, when they have encountered an issue that is so esoteric that nothing short of Jim’s wise counsel will suffice to relieve their anxiety). Jim is a *credit??* to the Texas State Bar, the Real Estate, Probate, and Trust Law Section, and the legal profession as a whole. The Real Estate, Probate, and Trust Law Section takes pride in presenting Jim this well-deserved award.