

# Setting a legal precedent

Family sees Fort Wayne attorney as mentor, inspiration to join bar.

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**F**or more than a half-century, Tom Logan has been a fixture in the Fort Wayne legal community.

He's helped reshape downtown with hotels and parking, a botanical garden, and more through his legal counsel. New runways and an airport expansion through a then-new financing plan bears his legal mark.



That's not to mention his mentoring an entire generation, including several in his own family, to follow those legal footsteps and become attorneys.

Those factors are key components of a law career that's been ongoing since 1956 and remains active today, even as he nears his 80th birthday in early April.

"He's contributed to the profession in those respects and taken every job very seriously, and in that way has spread his positive influence beyond the walls of our law firm and this legal community," said Dennis Logan, managing partner at the law firm bearing his uncle's name.

Tom Logan has been a part of the law firm now known as Rothberg Logan & Warsco since 1956, serving as a leading corporate attorney for banks, the local redevelopment commission, the Fort Wayne International Airport, and community transit system. Partners Sol Rothberg, Thomas A. Gallmeyer, and Richard T. Doermer, founded the firm in 1952.

But if it wasn't for the draft in the 1950s, Indiana might not be able to claim Logan on its roster of attorneys.

Starting at the University of Notre Dame for his undergraduate work in 1950, Logan tells a story about how his roommate was planning to go to law school and so he went along with that idea. At the time, a program existed for undergraduate students to enter law school at the conclusion of their junior year. So, his roommate switched their files from the

fall of 1950 folder to the fall of 1951 folder, making it look as though they'd actually graduate a year earlier and be eligible for that program.

"When the service called, we'd have a continuous educational program and couldn't be drafted," he said.

However, after starting the special program, Logan decided to put off law school in South Bend for a year. He then enrolled at Indiana University School of Law - Bloomington for his final year in 1952-53.

After earning his LL.B. with distinction there, Logan spent a year in the U.S. Armed Forces and went overseas to the Far East for about 18 months, rising to the position of corporal. He returned to Bloomington, but ended up in Fort Wayne in the fall of 1956.

He's been a member of that firm ever since.

"I've always had a lot of fun, but have seen a lot of changes here and many people coming and going," he said. "We've had our share of famous partners, and some not so famous. But they're all friends of mine."

The most fun Logan has had was in the 1980s when he represented the Fort Wayne Redevelopment Commission, which was charged with recreating the downtown area. He served in that capacity for more than a decade, playing a part in changes that can be seen from outside his office window. The work included helping with the creation of a new botanical garden, an assembly ground for downtown hotels and parking, and other expansions that have bolstered the city's look and economy.

"It's very exciting to see things happen and be created," Logan said. "We all like

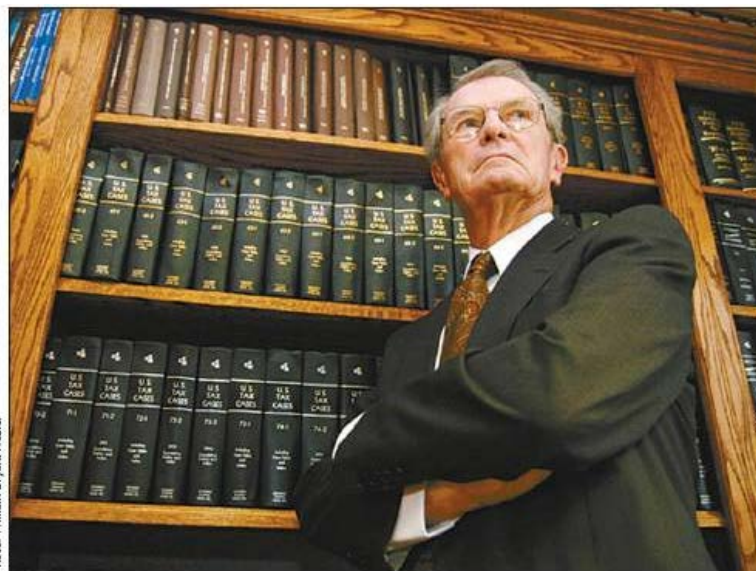


Photo: William Bryan Kester

Attorney Tom Logan stands in his firm at Rothberg Logan & Warsco.

to build things with our hands, and seeing a downtown built up like this, that goes right to what we want to be doing in our lives."

Logan served as Parkview Hospital's attorney for 40 years, at a time when there weren't any in-house counsel. He played a part in the hospital's expansion through the years.

Logan also served as general counsel for the Fort Wayne/Allen County Airport Authority for about 15 years, where he had a chance to be involved in expanding the airport now known as the Fort Wayne International Airport. That's also the client relationship that has been the most rewarding, he said.

About the time he got the job, the airport authority was trying to borrow money through bonds to pay for badly needed renovations on the airside and the terminal side, he said. The authority had tried twice, but the bond petitions were defeated by public referendum - a relatively new concept at the time. Working with Indianapolis law

and his way of just always keeping cool without ruffling feathers in negotiations, has been a pleasure for those of us able to observe him and take notes."

Through Tom Logan's career, he has mentored dozens of younger attorneys and has served on the Indiana State Bar Association Board of Managers for four years and a term as president of the Allen County Bar Association. Other leadership roles have included the American Bar Association, American Academy of Hospital Attorneys, and National Association of Bond Lawyers.

Outside of the law, Logan talked about his love for family and playing golf. Two of his sons have become lawyers, as well as two nephews, who all credit him for why they chose the profession. Regarding golf, Dennis Logan recalled a particular tale about his golfing adventures: the elder Logan was leaving the law office one Wednesday about noon to drive to Roanoke, and colleagues and staff thought he was heading to a client meeting

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Dennis Logan, Rothberg Logan & Warsco Managing Partner

firm Ice Miller, Logan said he worked out a way to sell the airport to a building corporation, which would then borrow the money rather than the airport authority to avoid the remonstrance process, he said. Renovations could then happen for the air terminal and landing field, and both were leased back to the airport authority to pay off the loan.

"What a deal, and everyone thought we were real smart," Logan said. "We did a little public relations with the real opponents of the projects, dissuading them from suing, and everyone went home real happy. Now, we have a great Fort Wayne airport converted from an old field."

That financial mechanism was later used on a larger scale to create the Air Trade Center on the southwest side of the airport property, which was part of the largest expansion and revitalization in the airport's history.

His work with the airport authority board faded through the years but was picked up by Dennis Logan, who credits his uncle for inspiring him to become an attorney.

"He clearly has been a role model and inspiration," Dennis Logan said. "His strong ethics and professional approach,

or business reception there. They discovered the true story the following morning when reading the sports page and saw that Tom Logan had shot a hole in one at the Orchard Ridge golf course.

"His cover was blown," Dennis Logan said.

Activities such as golf and family have helped him balance life and law, Tom Logan said, particularly as he's watched the practice change through the decades.

"The law business is tough these days. A problem is that just as a lawyer learns a practice, somebody comes along and makes it a specialty," he said. "But lawyers continue to assume enormous responsibilities for whatever's happening in the world, and it's demanding and challenging."

His eldest grandchild recently graduated from college this year and isn't sure what path to choose, he said. A law profession may be in the cards, but he isn't yet sure.

"I've set a bad precedent for the family, and I try to protect them against the law practice," he said. "I'm not sure if it's good or bad that they credit me, but that's the way it's happened."



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