



Arthur Johnson . . . Plans methodical changes

Leader of State Bar outlines year's goals

By **LISA STRYCKER**
Of the Register-Guard

Arthur Johnson, the new president of Oregon's 7,000-lawyer bar association, says he doesn't plan big changes or bold new programs for the group.

But Johnson, who was installed Friday as the bar's 1981-82 president, says he will continue efforts to streamline the bar's often-sluggish lawyer discipline procedure, and to improve pay and retirement benefits for judges. He replaces Ashland attorney Tom Howser as president.

Johnson, 53, senior partner of the Eugene law firm of Johnson, Harrang & Swanson, says some lawyers are incompetent and others denigrate the profession. But the numbers of these lawyers are small, he says, despite the public perception that many are unethical or incompetent.

Johnson says a statewide peer review assistance program is being created to help

lawyers with personal problems that affect their practices, such as alcoholism.

He also said the bar is trying to shape a faster disciplinary procedure. It sometimes takes years to discipline a lawyer for unprofessional behavior now, Johnson says.

He says judicial pay should be improved because, "In a society where law and the courts play such a big role, you have to attract first-rate people to the bench." He adds, "Judicial salaries, compared with lawyers in private practice, are too low."

Noted for his thorough preparation and organized approach in court cases, Johnson has spent most of his career defending constitutional rights and fighting battles for consumers.

Johnson has won product-liability cases

Turn to **STATE BAR**, Page 2B

State Bar

Continued from Page 1B

involving allegedly defective tires, automobiles, cranes and flammable children's nightware. His law firm recently filed 35 lawsuits for women in Lane County against the manufacturer of the Dalkon Shield intrauterine device, claiming the device was inferior, dangerous and inadequately tested.

Johnson also is known for defending former University of Oregon student editor Annette Buchanan in the late 1960s. Buchanan was fined \$300 for refusing to identify students who gave her information for a campus article on marijuana.

Confirmation vote O'Connor received outshines others

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate's 99-0 confirmation of Sandra Day O'Connor's nomination as the 102nd member of the Supreme Court is a more enthusiastic endorsement than that given any of her future brethren.

Justice John Paul Stevens was confirmed in 1975 by a 98-0 vote, and Justice Harry Blackmun received a 94-0 confirmation vote in 1970.

No vote total was recorded for Justice William Brennan's 1957 confirmation, nor for Justice Byron White in 1962.

Chief Justice Warren Burger easily won confirmation in 1969, by a 74-3 vote. But the court's other conservative mainstay, Justice William Rehnquist, was confirmed in 1971 by a 68-26 vote.

Justice Thurgood Marshall, the first black named to the court, was con-

The case eventually was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, which declined to hear it.

"I enjoy representing individuals," says Johnson, who earned a law degree from Harvard University in 1953 after graduating from the University of Oregon in 1950. He was admitted to the state bar in 1953, and has lived in Eugene since 1963. "And I do care about the cases I'm involved in. If you believe in your cases, and you present a clean, intelligent case to the jury, then you'll win."

New stamp issued by U.S., Ireland

The Irish Post Office and the United States Postal Service will issue new stamps on Sept. 29 honoring James Hoban, the Irish-born architect who designed the White House.

The stamps will be identical in size, design and color except for the name of the issuing country and the denomination, which will be 18 pence for the Irish stamp and 18 cents for the U.S. issue.

The stamp features a portrait of Hoban by Ron Mercer and a painting by

Johnson has served on the state bar's board of governors since 1979. He has been on several state bar committees and has lectured for various continuing legal education programs.

He is a past secretary, vice president and president of the Lane County Bar Association, and is a member of the American Judicature Society, the American Board of Trial Advocates, the American Bar Association and the American Trial Lawyers Association.

In August, he became a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers, an

exclusive national group of trial attorneys.

Walter Richards of the White House as it was in Hoban's time. Hoban was educated in Ireland and emigrated to the United States to establish himself as an architect in Philadelphia.

In 1772, he moved to the District of Columbia and submitted plans in a competition for the design of the presidential residence. His design is said to have been modeled on Leinster House in Dublin, originally the home of the Duke of Leinster and now the seat of the Irish Parliament.

doing doesn't always get out, Johnson says, and he says he intends to stress those things during his presidency. Lawyers in Oregon do much "selfless" work, he says.

To bring fresh ideas and criticism into the bar association, three non-lawyer members were elected last week to the Bar Board of Governors, which until now had consisted of 12 lawyers, he says. The non-lawyer members will open new channels of communication between the bar and the public, he says.

The American Bar Association plans to do a study of the Oregon State Bar in October to determine areas in which the state bar is working well and areas that could be improved, Johnson says. He says he'll know better how to focus his energies after the results of the study are released.

Meanwhile, Johnson says he's mailing out "zillions of letters" and getting ready for the year ahead. A president, he says, should bring energy to all bar activities, and that's what he intends to do.

"I'm not a revolutionary," he says. "I see myself working very hard to maintain momentum."

EMPLOYERS: 20

DECEMBER 1988