



Alice Plymell

Photo By Calvin Jones

Female attorney Alice Plymell: 'Few accuse me of being a lady'

By PAULA ROSS
Of the Emerald

The office is small, two rooms. The reception area is divided from the receptionist's desk by a counter. Sitting at the reception desk is a small, bright-eyed woman, who, it turns out, is Alice Plymell, Attorney at Law.

She speaks haltingly and with a little difficulty, but it isn't until she gets up from the desk to lead to the second room, her office, that it becomes obvious she is badly crippled.

Alice Plymell graduated from the University School of Law in 1963. She was the only woman in her graduating class. She is now the only woman in Eugene with a private law practice. Despite this singular position, Plymell says she "thoroughly enjoyed" her years in law school.

She felt no different from the rest of her classmates and says she was treated no differently by her instructors.

She grew up always with the idea of becoming a lawyer. Discouraged by her family, she became even more determined to achieve her goal of a general law practice. And that's exactly what she has today.

She describes the first five years of practice on her own (she had previously been an associate of another lawyer before opening her office) as "rugged, making a starvation wage."

She now has clients, from all kinds of social backgrounds who have heard of her, or who have been referred to her by other attorneys.

There still lingers with the general public, however, the stereotype that women cannot succeed in law because they aren't fighters. The same attitude, she says, exists about handicapped people. And Plymell is both female and handicapped. But no matter, Plymell says, her eyes twinkling, "Very few people accuse me of being a lady."

She has no particular association with other women in law, partly because there aren't that many women practicing. Her identification with the women's movement consists largely of her feeling that equal

payment for equal work is vital. She feels it is important to convince the public that, given the proper training, a woman in law can do a job as well as a man.

Adamantly against the preferential admission of women to law schools, Plymell feels she was given no special treatment or attention because of her sex or physical disability. All she asked for and received was equal treatment; that, she says, should be adequate for anyone.

Though disavowing any strong ties to the feminist movement, it is obvious that Plymell is aware of resistance to women in professions, particularly in hiring practices. And she has on occasion encountered overt male disapproval of females pursuing independent careers.

She related one incident about a lawyer who told her that he felt women belonged in the home being wives and mothers. What, she indignantly wanted to ask him but refrained from doing, was a woman to do then if she one, was not married and two, had not children?

Her law practice keeps her very busy. She does the research for all her own cases, and is in her office by 7:30 or 7:45 a.m. In addition, she was just recently elected a member of the board of directors of the Lane County Council on Alcoholism (L.C.C.A.). She also serves as the chairman of Behanna House, a rehabilitation center for women alcoholics.

The involvement in programs for alcoholics is a direct result of some of her legal work. She saw many of her clients' problems as consequences of drinking, either their own or someone else's. And that indicated to her the need for some kind of program that dealt with those issues.

It's hard to imagine anyone not having confidence in this spunky woman. She sees herself as capable and competent and she's full of unexpected humorous jabs at herself and the often times stodgy legal world in which she obviously feels at home. She is totally convincing about her ability to deal with the man's world of law on her own individual terms.

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Area drivers beware--more radar traps signal increased traffic enforcement plan

By SCOTT DALTON
Of the Emerald

You can expect to see an increased number of radar traps in the Eugene — Lane County area over the next four months.

Lane County Sheriff David Burks and Eugene Assistant Chief of Police John Rutledge announced the start of a federally funded program of increased traffic enforcement at a Monday morning news conference.

"While our officers will be watching for all hazardous traffic law violations, their main concerns will be to slow down the speeder and to watch for and arrest drivers who are under the influence of alcohol or drugs."

The program is called Fatal Accident Reduction Enforcement (F.A.R.E.).

Burks explained that the money was granted to the Oregon Traffic Safety Commission by the

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The state commission appropriated grants of \$30,000 to both the city and the county.

The funds will be used to pay overtime to officers who will have extra patrols in high accident areas during the next four months. Included in the areas of increased concentration are River Road and McKenzie Highway.

The money was given to Lane County and Eugene because they rate among the six top areas in traffic accident occurrence in Oregon.

"We expect to have approximately 158 man-hours of overtime in the Police Department each week," said Rutledge. The county will add about 110 man hours of overtime per week.

The departments will use radar in high accident areas during the most hazardous hours

of driving. Burks stated that studies indicate peak accident hours run from 7 to 10 a.m. and 4:30 to 7 p.m.

"The next four months are the worst accident period during the entire year for Lane County," said Burks.

Police Sergeant Larry Spencer will be the F.A.R.E. Field Supervisor in Eugene.

"We'll be working mostly early morning and evening hours," said Spencer. "I don't know why, but Wednesday night is the worst night of the week," he added.

Neither department intends to hire new patrolmen as a result of receiving the funds. "Our training program runs four months," explained Rutledge, "we would not be able to use a new man after the funds ran out anyway." Neither Rutledge or Burks anticipated the grant being renewed.

Spencer was asked how the hours of overtime would be assigned. "The men sign up for it on a voluntary basis. The overtime is granted according to seniority," he said.

Police Chief Dale Allen was away on vacation and did not attend the announcement.

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