

THE FLORIDA

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# BAR JOURNAL

ADVANCING THE COMPETENCE

PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY

KELLY OVERSTREET  
JOHNSON

President of  
The Florida Bar





## A Year of Challenge: To Sustain, Examine, and Defend

I am honored to have been sworn in as the 56th president of The Florida Bar. There have been in the past and will continue to be many difficult issues we face as lawyers. None may be as important as the threats and incursions that continue against the time-honored American concept of an independent judiciary.

After more than 200 years of practicing our particular brand of constitutional democracy, we as Americans must still protect our courts and court system from politicians who want to weaken the resolve of our judges and curtail access to the courts. When I say "politicians," I do not mean that this is a partisan issue. From the most liberal president and governor to the most conservative Congress and legislature, the politicians of this country rightly pursue what they believe is the will of the people. In so doing, they are bound from time to time to run afoul of the state's constitution or the U.S. Constitution.

When the courts step in, the political will behind legislative or executive acts is important to consider, but should never color a judicial decision. And the threat of legislative or executive authority to strip or control court funding, remove the Bar from the process of selecting jurists, or attempt to coerce judicial subservience must be held at bay. Our constitutional order and our oaths of admission demand that we vigorously defend the independence of our judiciary.

### Independent Judicial Nominating Commissions

One very important way to ensure the independence of the judiciary is through nonpartisan, independent nominating commissions. In 2001,



the legislature gave the governor all of the appointments to Florida's judicial nominating commissions. This change has resulted in a strain on judicial independence and an increase in political appointments—from the commissioners to the judges themselves.

In confronting this issue, the political party to which you belong is irrelevant. Protecting the judiciary from political influence allows the United States to have a robust political debate and activity. Nonpartisan voices must be returned to our judicial nominating commissions to preserve the independence of our judiciary, the most important component of our system of justice.

### Court Funding

When Floridians amended the constitution to shift the funding of our court system from the counties to the state, the purpose was to add uniformity and fairness to the way courts are funded and administered.

The plan was to avoid creating a court system that divides jurisdictions into the haves and have nots. Although that plan was a good one, its purpose has not been reached. Instead, many of Florida's smaller and more rural counties are worried that essential and important legal services, as well as fundamental access to the courts, will have to be seriously curtailed.

Due to the leadership of many fine lawyers serving in our legislature, including Senators Smith, Villalobos, and Campbell, and Representatives Kottkamp, Negron, and Benson, the ground given by the court system was minimized. In the end, though, the legislature failed to maintain current levels of funding and did nothing to improve upon existing deficiencies. Politics became the name of the game, resulting in no funding for many judges needed around the state. We must send a clear message to the House and Senate to create a funding mechanism for our courts that removes political influence from the process.

### Three Initiatives

There are three other initiatives that I would like to accomplish during my term as president: a review of our lawyer advertising rules; increased funding for our most vulnerable members of society—our children; and a commitment to welcome and encourage diverse members of our Bar family to get more involved and help make our Bar stronger by virtue of our differences.

#### • Lawyer Advertising

Surveys have shown that the single reason most people cite for our negative public perception is lawyer advertising, in particular,



television advertising. They say this despite the fact that less than four percent of lawyers or law firms advertise on television.

The rules surrounding attorney advertising in Florida are like a decades-long wrestling match between an attorney's right to engage in commercial free speech, better known as advertising and marketing to the rest of the world, and the Bar's obligation to protect the public and our profession.

That we have multitudes of laws, rules, and regulations is evidence of the issue's complexity, for they show just how ingrained and important the competing interests are.

Many believe all these rules and regulations regarding lawyer advertising unfairly restrain competition and therefore trade, a concept as near and dear to American capitalism as free speech is to American democracy. But this is where lady justice steps in to remind us that the overriding concern is protecting the public interest. Restricting attorneys from using puffery in their ads, or dramatizations, even when these methods are available to other advertisers, is the right thing.

I am committed, as Bar president, to maintaining what I think is the proper balance between a lawyer's right to communicate with the con-

suming public and the Bar's duty to ensure a fair, dignified, and impartial legal system.

#### • *Needs of Children*

Miles McGrane made his year as Bar president the "year of the children" and did an outstanding job. I would like to continue the strides he has made in bringing greater access to the courts for Florida's lower-income, disabled, abused, and neglected children. Because they have no way into the judicial system and there is no money to ensure they have legal representation, the rights of our children are neglected.

Working with many members of the House and Senate, and particularly with Representatives Mahon and Kottkamp and Senators Webster, Sebesta, and Smith, The Florida Bar was able to secure a continuing source of funding for children's legal aid through the creation of the specialty license tag "Kids Deserve Justice."

Funds generated by the "Kids Deserve Justice" license tags will be administered free of charge by The Florida Bar Foundation. This means 100 percent of the funds generated through tag sales will be used to provide grants for children's legal services. Without this program many of these services would be unavailable.

#### • *Inclusiveness*

Not too long ago, women presidents of The Florida Bar were an unheard-of phenomenon, and we have yet to elect a president of color. Nevertheless, I stand before you as evidence of a profession that can and continues to embrace inclusiveness. Our courts, law schools, and law offices must continue to include any who choose to pursue a legal career. The best way to accomplish this is by finding ways to include rather than exclude each other in our legal and professional activities. I urge all Bar members to reach out to someone who is not like you to begin a dialogue about improving Florida's legal profession and making our system more inclusive for all attorneys. In the end, our efforts will be reflected in a stronger, more representative legal system through which we can all thrive.

From ensuring judicial independence to broadening our profession through greater inclusiveness, I hope you will be motivated to join me in confronting these issues. Together we can accomplish these goals.

*Kelly*

KELLY OVERSTREET JOHNSON

**The Florida Bar Journal**  
since 1927

## **The Florida Bar Journal Editorial Board encourages submission of articles for publication consideration.**

### **Read the guidelines below and pull out that laptop.**

The primary purpose of articles and columns is to educate or inform the reader on issues of substantive law and practical concern to lawyers. Analysis, opinion, and criticism of the present state of the law also are encouraged and should be clearly identified by sufficient legal authority on all sides of an issue to enable the reader to assess the validity of the opinion. When criticism is voiced, suggestions for reform should also be included. Criticism should be directed to issues only.

Articles submitted for possible publication should be typed on 8 & 1/2 by 11 inch paper, double-spaced with one-inch margins. Only completed articles will be considered. Citations should be consistent with the Uniform System of Citation. Endnotes must be concise and placed at the end of the article. Excessive endnotes are discouraged.

Lead articles may not be longer than 18 pages, including endnotes, and will be reviewed by members of The Florida Bar Journal Editorial Board. The board, which is composed of lawyers practicing various areas of law, has discretion over the acceptability of legal articles. The board prefers not to review articles submitted simultaneously to other publications and requests notification from the author that the article or any version of it has ever been published or is pending publication in another periodical.

Columns may be submitted directly to section column editors. Length of columns is 12 pages including endnotes.

Unsolicited manuscripts are invited and may be submitted to Editor, *The Florida Bar Journal*,  
651 East Jefferson St., Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2300.

# KELLY OVERSTREET JOHNSON

## President of The Florida Bar

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"A woman of her word,  
a builder of consensus"

by Jan Pudlow

**O**n an outing to Deer Valley in Utah, a ski instructor asks Kelly Overstreet Johnson: "What do you want to get out of these private lessons?"

Just then, a woman zig-zags down a snowy slope with dazzling, perfect form.

"I want to ski like that," Johnson answers matter-of-factly.

The instructor retorts with a grin: "That's good. Her name is Heidi Voelker, and she's a member of the U.S. Ski Team and is a World Cup competitor."

Wendy Mitchler, a Ft. Lauderdale lawyer who was at that ski lesson too, tells that story to underscore that anything her good friend Johnson takes on, she is driven to excel—whether it's downhill skiing, litigating a huge class-action case, managing delayed motherhood of three-year-old twins, or serving as the new president of The Florida Bar.

"She is not a mere mortal like the rest of us," says Mitchler with a laugh. "Kelly is so organized and focused. She always carries these three-by-three notepads, where she writes everything down in her nice, little neat script."

Nina Ashenafi, president of the Tallahassee Bar Association, marvels: "She will respond to an e-mail at a dizzying speed. I am in awe of that. Kelly considers herself late if she is five minutes early."

Hal Johnson, the self-described "calmer, more laid-back" partner in a marriage of two dozen years, says of his wife: "She has a double-A personality. She is a perfectionist. She expects people to meet expectations, and she is very forceful if they don't."

Such meticulousness comes naturally.

Once, Mitchler got a peek at Johnson's grade-school report cards. Besides the expected straight As, a teacher's handwritten comments revealed: "Kelly is such a little per-

fectionist. We worry about her. If she doesn't get everything right, she gets upset."

Flash forward to the present: M. Stephen Turner, managing partner at Broad and Cassel's Tallahassee office, where 46-year-old Johnson has worked for 14 years, puts it concisely: "There is nothing that Kelly can't do, and she always does it right."

As for leading the Bar, Turner predicts: "She will do a magnificent job. She is a top-drawer person and a top-drawer lawyer."

Kelly Overstreet Johnson serves as a role model for those who want to have it all: high-powered careers, yet time and energy to spend on family, friends, and fun.

"She really understands the struggles women and men have as they balance the demands of family and career," said Mary Sweet, a Tallahassee friend and lawyer who has enjoyed accompanying the Johnsons on international trips.

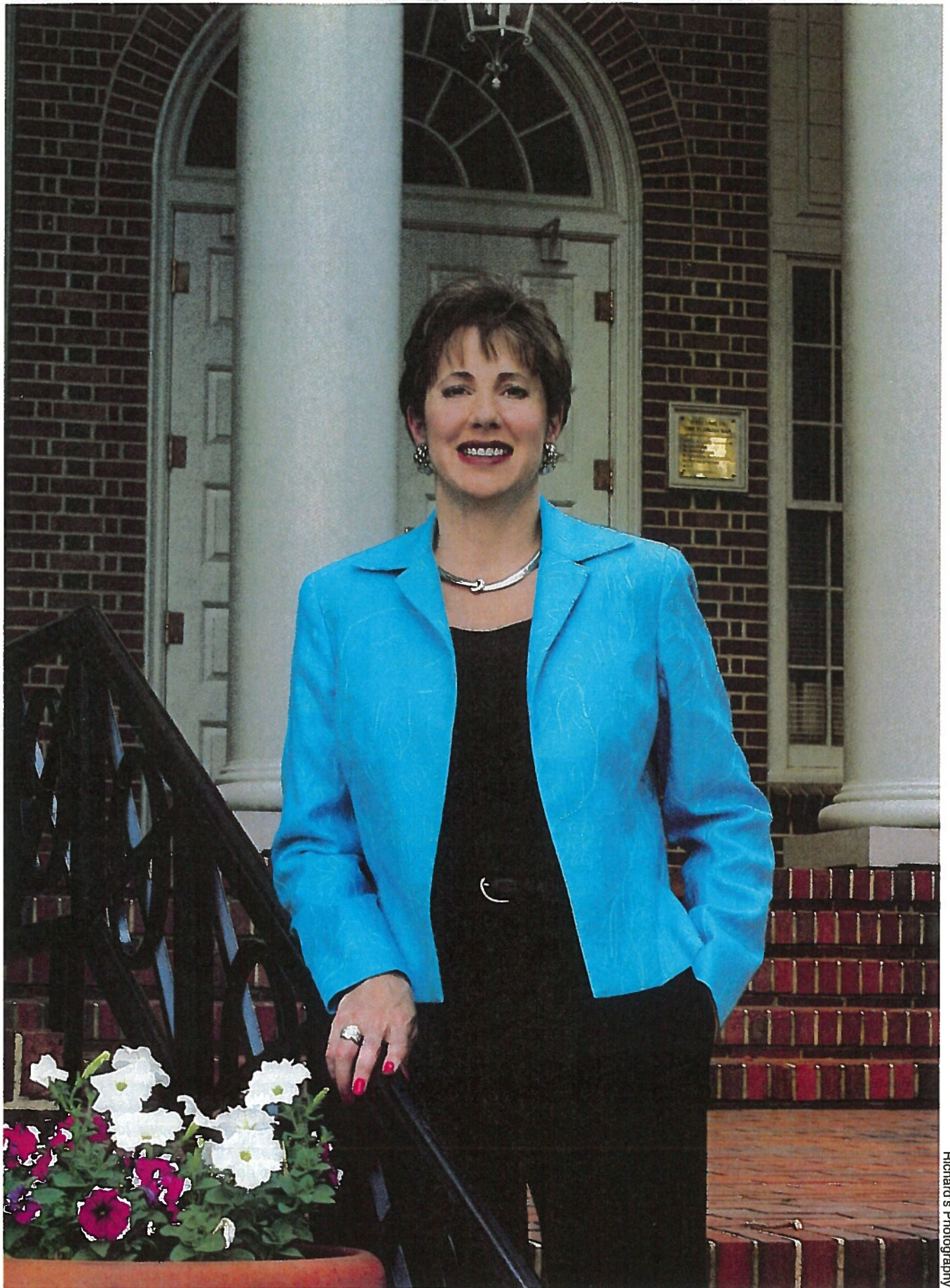
Kathy Overstreet, a Realtor in Atlanta, describes her older sister as "a very politically active person and so social, loving to be front-and-center. She has the knowledge and energy to be an absolutely perfect fit for the position of Bar president. Instead of juggling 27 balls in the air, she'll have 28, and she will handle it beautifully."

### A Balanced Life

At Johnson's law office, the wall the client sees is full of diplomas, certificates, awards, and plaques. It's clear that a highly qualified lawyer, a partner in the firm, is at the helm.

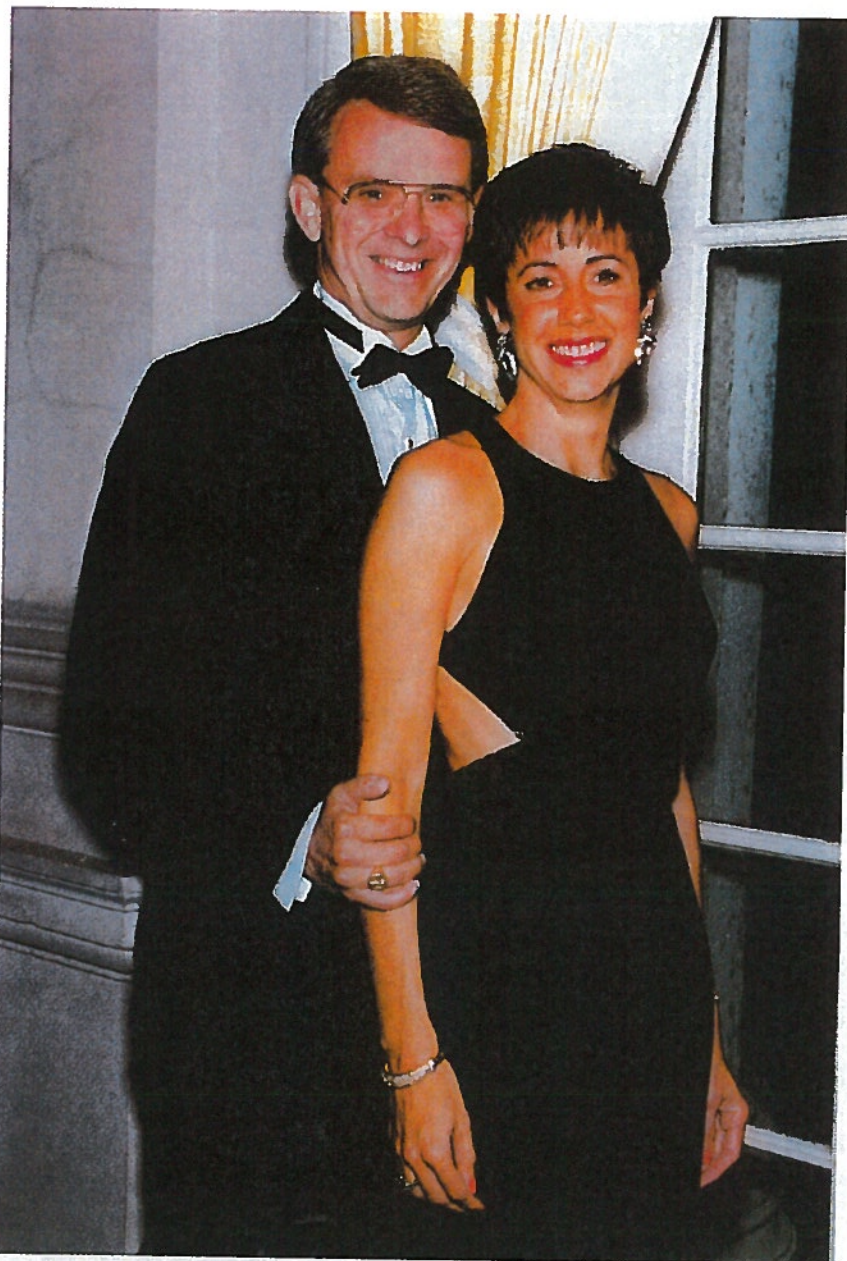
But the wall that Johnson gazes at, glancing over a client's head, is a LeRoy Neiman serigraph titled "California Cuisine." An elegant woman in black dress and black hat sits at a long table filled with a vase holding splashy flowers and a group of wine bottles. A waiter is pouring





Richard's Photography





Hal and Kelly Johnson first met when she was a legal secretary just out of college and he was a lawyer. Now married two dozen years, here they attend a Palm Beach County Bar Association party, when friend Carol Brewer was sworn in as president.

the lady a glass of white wine.

It's a "feel good" picture, says Johnson, who daydreams of relaxing by choosing a crisp Chardonnay from her 850-bottle wine cellar, set at 55 degrees, the perfect French climate. In her own backyard retreat from a bustling career, she will finally put her feet up on her teak steamer chair with the latest bestseller under the whirl of bamboo-paddle ceiling fans on a covered porch overlooking a waterfall tumbling into a pool.

Ah, serenity at last—that is, until her toddler twins, Haley and Alex, come running over wanting to play.

Johnson's friends say she is one of the best at organizing her bustling life into manageable compartments: driven, focused lawyer, partner in a firm, over here; independent, stylish woman, art and wine connoisseur, avid reader, world traveler over there.

Toss into the mix the demands of motherhood, and no wonder this dynamic Tallahassee hometown girl in-

spires amazement. How does she do it all?

"You just get it done," Johnson answers nonchalantly. "Somebody told me one time, 'The busier people are, the more they can get done.' I've always handled a bunch of things, and so it's just one more thing to get done. Plus, I have a lot of help. I have a live-in nanny, and both grandmothers live in Tallahassee and are frequent visitors and playmates for the girls. That helps."

It also helps that she enjoys an equal-partner marriage with Hal Johnson, general counsel of the Florida Police Benevolent Association. When Kelly Johnson said she wanted to go for the Bar presidency, he responded: "If it's important to you, I'm behind you 100 percent."

"And he has been," Kelly Johnson says with a smile.

As Ashenafi observes: "She has married a very strong man who doesn't limit her."

When his wife asked what he thought of her becoming Bar president amid the challenges of parenting twins, Hal Johnson bought her selling argument that the girls are more portable at this age, and juggling motherhood and the Bar presidency would be tougher once they are in kindergarten. This was the year to go for it.

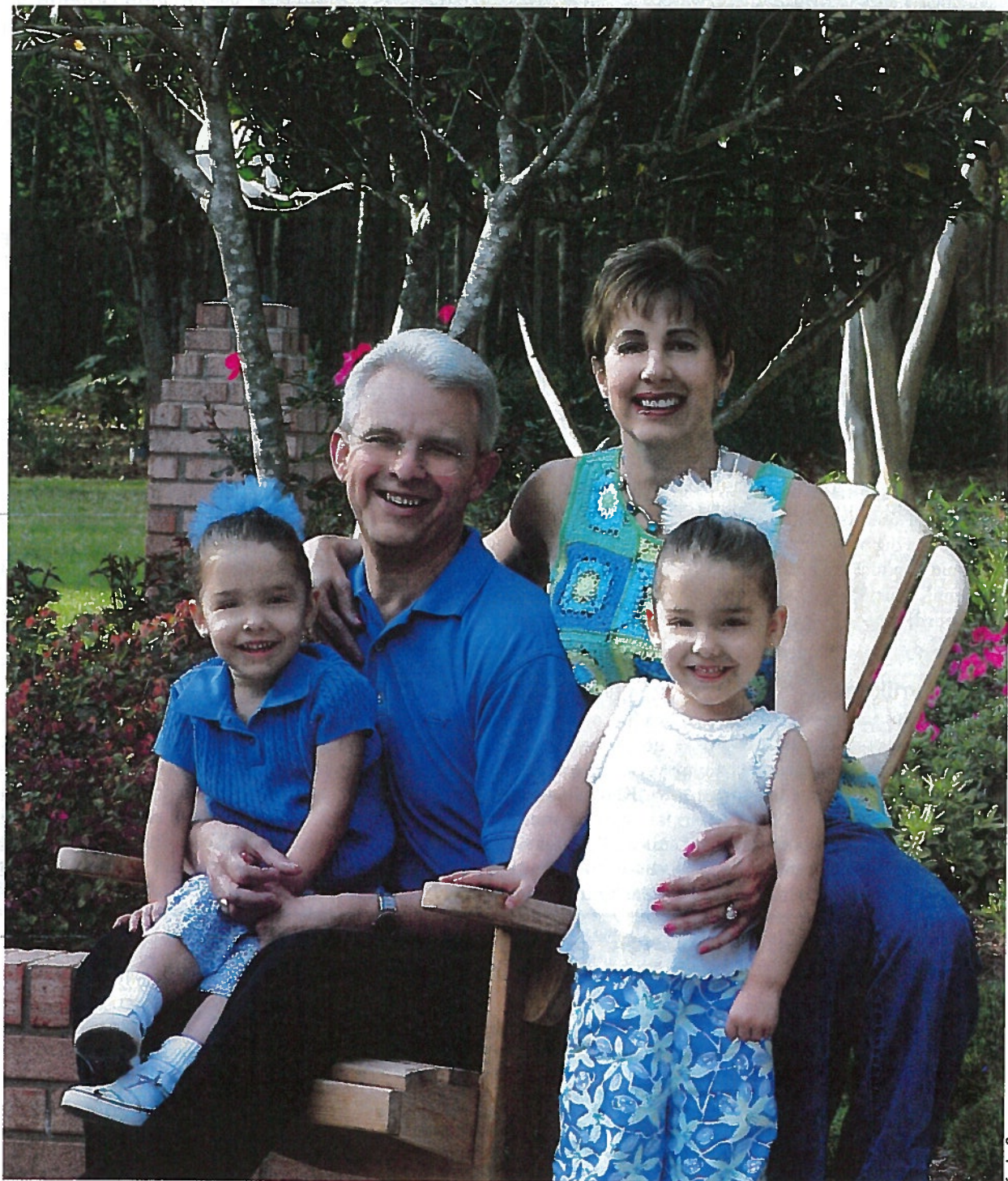
"Obviously, Kelly is not one who is easy to say 'no' to, because of that persistent nature. She makes up her mind, and she is very strong-willed and has strong opinions," Hal Johnson says.

Among her strong opinions as Bar president will be emphasizing the checks and balances needed between the Bar and the executive branch on judicial nominating commissions to ensure the independence of the judiciary, and revamping the current cumbersome process of approving lawyer advertising. (See sidebar)

No one who knows Johnson is surprised that she aspired to lead Florida's 74,000 lawyers, and won this prestigious post without opposition.

"I probably could have predicted this in the ninth grade," said Janet Joanos Pung, childhood friend and





Richard's Photography

Kelly was 43 and Hal 52 when they embarked on the great parenting adventure of bringing identical twin daughters, Haley and Alex, into the world on May 17, 2001.

daughter of retired First District Court of Appeal Judge James Joanos.

"In high school, I would have voted Kelly mostly likely to succeed. She was very ambitious, driven, and had a clear eye on her goals, whereas a lot of us in high school were just looking forward to the Friday night football

game."

Johnson rises to the top of any organization she joins, serving as president of both the Tallahassee Women Lawyers (1984-85) and Tallahassee Bar Association (1990-91).

"She doesn't have a personal agenda," Hal Johnson says of his

wife's ascension to The Florida Bar presidency. "Serving as Bar president is not done so that at some point in time she can become a judge or run for office. This is simply something she wants to do."

Hal Johnson describes his wife as "a big believer in professionalism.





When John DeVault, left, served as Bar president in 1995-96, he chose Kelly Overstreet Johnson to chair the annual meeting because he knew she had "great organizational ability and she likes to have a good time." People still talk about the Friday night party featuring the Beach Boys with Mike Love, right. In the center are former Bar President John Frost and Johnson.

That term gets bantered about so much, it sort of loses its meaning. But I mean she is a big believer that lawyers should conduct litigation on a professional, courteous, I-take-you-at-your-word, you-take-me-at-my-word level."

### Kelly's Kamikazes

Don't get the impression Kelly Overstreet Johnson is so totally consumed with career, so driven to achieve perfection, that she has lost her playful spark.

Those who know her best describe her as a quick-witted, fun-loving, kick-up-her-heels partier, who is also

a generous and loyal friend.

When John DeVault of Jacksonville served as president of the Bar in 1995-96, he chose Johnson to chair the annual meeting. People are still talking about the Friday night party featuring the Beach Boys and the fountain that flowed with "Kelly's Kamikazes," a potent libation of vodka and lime juice that helped nudge even the most reluctant lawyers to the dance floor.

"Kelly has great organizational ability, and she likes to have a good time," DeVault said of his decision to choose her to organize the Bar's premier annual convention. "Indeed, I

wasn't disappointed."

Michael Kranz, a Board of Governors member from West Palm Beach, lets out a big belly laugh telling this story: He was attending a black-tie event at the Flagler Museum, for the swearing-in ceremony of friend Carol Brewer, when she became president of the local bar.

"Someone walks up behind me and puts their hands over my eyes. I thought it was a buddy of mine, and I reached behind to grab him. All I get is a handful of silk. I turn around to see it's Kelly. She looks me straight in the eye, and without missing a beat, says: 'I just love those Palm

## Biography – Kelly Overstreet Johnson

### EDUCATION:

- Bachelor of Science degree in Real Estate and Pre-law, Florida State University, 1979
- Doctor of Jurisprudence, with honors, FSU College of Law, 1982

### PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Broad and Cassel, partner (1990-present)
- Kelly Overstreet Johnson, attorney at law, solo practice (1988-90)
- Ervin, Varn, Jacobs, Odom & Kitchen (1985-88)
- Florida Attorney General Office, civil litigator (1983-85)
- Admitted to practice law in Florida (1982)
- Academy of Florida Trial Lawyers
- American Bar Association
- ABA House of Delegates, member (1992-94, 2004-2006)
- American Bar Foundation, fellow
- Florida Association for Women Lawyers, treasurer (1988-89)

- Florida Bar Foundation, fellow
- Florida Council of Bar Association Presidents
- Florida Government Bar Association
- Inns of Court
- Tallahassee Bar Association, board of directors (1987-89 and 1991-92); president-elect (1989-90); president (1990-91)
- Tallahassee Barristers
- Tallahassee Women Lawyers, treasurer (1982-84); president (1984-85); board of directors (1985-86)

### FLORIDA BAR ACTIVITIES:

- President (2004-05)
- President-elect (2003-04)
- Board of Governors (1997-03)
- Young Lawyers Division Board of Governors (1986-90)
- First District Court of Appeal Judicial Nominating Commission (1994-98)
- Second Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission (1990-94)

- Annual Meeting Committee, chair (1996)
- Board Liaison to Administrative Law Section (2000, 2002-03)
- Board Review Committee on Professional Ethics (1997)
- Budget Committee (1998)
- Certification Plan Appeals Committee (1997)
- Communications Committee (1998-2000), chair (2000)
- Disciplinary Review Committee, co-chair (1999), chair (2001)
- Executive Committee (1999-2004)
- Legislation Committee (2002)
- Program Evaluation Committee (1998-03)
- Committee on Professionalism (1996)

### CIVIC ACTIVITIES:

- Guardian ad Litem Program
- Junior League of Tallahassee
- Legal Aid Foundation



# A Pair of Pressing Presidential Goals

**Vexing discussions** among the Board of Governors have lasted more than an hour about whether an individual lawyer's single ad violated Bar rules.

"Well, if you have 52 people who can have an hour-long debate on whether an ad violates a rule or not, there's something wrong with that rule," said Kelly Overstreet Johnson.

That's why Johnson has created The Florida Bar's Advertising Task Force 2004, chaired by Miami lawyer and former BOG member Manny Morales, and is making the review of advertising rules a priority of her presidency.

Johnson doesn't particularly like lawyer advertising, noting surveys point to it as hurting the image of the legal profession, but Johnson acknowledges there is a First Amendment right to advertise.

"While I've been on the board, we've had lawyers who say, 'I don't understand why this ad doesn't comply. Tell me what I can do to make it comply.' We couldn't even tell them that. It's hard to articulate. There's got to be a level of frustration among the lawyers who are trying to do the right thing by complying with our rules and can't even figure out how to do that."

**Why are the rules so fuzzy?**

"Because we are lawyers. We can make an argument or interpretation about anything," she said.

"One of the things I tried to do on the advertising committee was to make sure I appointed people who advertise and are used to dealing with the rules."

She would like to see some kind of pre-approval requirement.

Currently, it's not unusual for a lawyer to run a problematic ad, even though the ad has been declared in violation of the rules, while the lawyer appeals. The lawyer must file the ad before it is run, but doesn't have to have it approved before the ad runs. However, the lawyer runs the ad at his or her own risk. By the time the appeal process is completed and the lawyer loses the appeal, the ad has often run in the public domain for six months or more, and the lawyer is ready to start running a new ad anyway. The process then begins anew.

This is not satisfactory to Johnson.

She would like to tighten Florida's rules—already in the forefront nationally—to avoid what she personally considers "horrible ads" she has seen in Florida, but more often in other states. While she wishes there were a "good taste rule," she knows the Bar can't do that.

**The main mission**, she said, is to "make our rules workable for those who do advertise, and also structure them as tightly as we can to protect the public and preserve our image."

"Let's see what we can do with the rules to tighten them up, so if you want to comply, you know what it is you need to say. And if you don't want to comply, then we, the Bar, need to go out and discipline lawyers who choose not to follow the rules. It's not fair to

the lawyers who are trying to comply not to take action against the ones who aren't."

**Johnson has witnessed** the inner workings of judicial nominating commissions and cares deeply about preserving the integrity of the process in order to protect the independence of the judiciary.

She has served on both the Second Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission (1990-94) and the First District Court of Appeal Judicial Nominating Commission (1994-98). And she is very concerned about the change in law that took away the Bar's direct appointments and gave the governor all nine commissioner appointments.

"My concern is not for any reason other than no governor, regardless of who that person is and regardless of party affiliation, should have, in my opinion, the appointing power for the nine members who are supposed to screen the candidates for him or her. The governor is going to make the ultimate appointment, so the procedure currently doesn't have the checks and balances it was designed to have," Johnson explained.

The Florida Bar fought that statutory change in 2000-01, but a compromise was reached to avoid being counted out of the process altogether.

"I thought that was a bad deal for us," Johnson said in characteristic straight-talking style. "What really should have happened—and this is everybody's fault that we didn't think of it—was when the CRC did all the Article V revisions in 1998, they should have constitutionalized the composition of the JNC in the revision. We wouldn't even have this issue, if that had been done. But nobody thought about it at the time."

When the Board of Governors took the position to support merit retention and selection over elected trial judges, Johnson said, "I was on the losing side of that issue. I thought we should keep the system the way we have it. My point was the JNC process is only as good as the JNC. If you change the JNC, the makeup of the appointment authority, or if you have JNC members who are not committed to nominating the most qualified applicants, it's going to be a very bad process. If you have nine great people, it's going to be an outstanding process."

But currently, the situation is ripe for infusing politics into the process, or sparking inappropriate questions from JNC members, such as the recent controversy surrounding the 17th Circuit JNC.

**"Ideally, I'd like to change** it back to either the way it was or some modification of it, where the appointing authority for the JNC is not the same as the appointing authority for the judge," Johnson said.

"I've been told, basically, to shut up about this. Don't talk about it, because the governor will think you don't like him. You know what? You've got to talk about it. Because if you don't talk about it, you'll never change it."

"And this issue ties right in with the independence of the judiciary. To me, if you don't have that, you don't have anything."





Kelly shared a special bond with her father, Tom Overstreet, whom she describes as "an incredible person and a more incredible dad. He thought I could do anything."

Beach welcomes.'

"She loves to have a good hard laugh," says Kranz, known to cut the rug with Johnson.

Hal Johnson grins about his wife's social side: "I wouldn't call her the life of the party. I would call her a good instigator."

She's good at making sure those around her are having a ball.

Says Jacksonville lawyer Christine Milton: "Kelly is a truly multifaceted person. She has that very serious side that she uses in her professional life. She then has a personal side where she gives enormous amounts to her family and friends. And she definitely has a fun side, and enjoys good food and good wine."

## A Reputation Well Earned

That gregarious nature, coupled with outstanding legal abilities, helped propel Johnson to win the election in 1989 as the first woman president of the Tallahassee Bar Association.

"Of course, the Tallahassee Bar Association, up until that time, was known as a good old boys network," DeVault says. "For them to select a

woman, fairly early in the women's movement (of women lawyers), said volumes about the respect they had for her. I think she fits in, and she doesn't have a chip on her shoulder. She has attained what she has attained because she has earned it. She looks at everyone in the same way. It doesn't matter what your gender is. If you earned it, Kelly will respect you."

Of that hometown honor, Johnson said: "There was a lot of pressure to have a woman president. There was a big push for the association to change its reputation, which for a long time was sort of a good old boys club. Well, I'm probably one of the good old boys myself."

Electing the first woman president, Johnson said, "truly had more impact on other people than it did on me. That was not why I was doing it. But a lot of women said, 'We'll start going to meetings because we elected a woman president, and we need to support her.'"

Judith Hawkins, the first black lawyer elected to serve as a Leon County judge, credits Johnson for her success in winning the seat out of a

field of 10 candidates.

Hawkins will never forget a casual conversation she had with Johnson in a law library in 1988 that paved her way to the bench. Sitting amid stacks of statute books, Johnson invited Hawkins to join the Tallahassee Bar Association. Hawkins candidly shared that she did not find that organization friendly to either minorities or women. Johnson didn't let that comment slide.

"She basically told me, 'Maybe your perceptions are a little biased, maybe you own some of the problem,'" Judge Hawkins recalls.

"As a result of that, I reached out. I stuck my toe in the water, and the rest is history. My desire to become a judge grew as a result of being in that law library with Kelly."

At Johnson's urging, Hawkins ran for a seat on the TBA board and won.

When a county judge seat opened in 1996, Johnson's loyalty to Hawkins outweighed her self-described "good old boy" background to campaign for more well-known candidates.

"She experienced negative feedback for casting her lot with my candidacy, but cast her support for me she did," Judge Hawkins said. "A woman of her word, Kelly had promised to help me if I ever ran for a judge position. She kept her bargain, that if I want to sit at the table, she would make sure a chair is available for me. It's not a broken chair, not a leftover chair. It's a real chair. When you look at my resume, almost everything I've done bar-related is because Kelly was opening doors for me."

From the beginning of her legal career as a civil litigator with the Florida Department of Legal Affairs, Johnson has been involved in several bar associations.

"I've always thought there is a place for the women's bar, the minority bar, in addition to the overall Bar, because I think you meet different people. It's a good way to interact, and it will help your practice in the long run," Johnson says. "I think you benefit from being a part of these different organizations."

Noting that Johnson finds time to attend meetings of the Florida Government Bar Association, Tallahassee



Women Lawyers, Tallahassee Bar Association, Tallahassee Barristers Association, and still be intensely involved in The Florida Bar, lawyer and friend Mary Sweet says: "She has her ear to the ground. She is in touch with a lot of different people in the legal community. In particular, she has never forgotten she started out as a government lawyer."

And she has never forgotten to reach out to include newcomers.

Laureen Galeoto was still a student at FSU's College of Law when Johnson was one of the first lawyers she met during a TBA membership committee meeting, where Galeoto successfully pushed to have law students welcomed as members of the local bar.

"She was very welcoming and gracious, and she made a point to make herself available to assist me in my goals," said Galeoto. Johnson took a chance on Galeoto, hiring her as a clerk at Broad & Cassel while still a student, and she later became a lawyer in the firm.

"She took me under her wing, mentored me, and has always been there as a source of support and encouragement to be a good lawyer," said Galeoto, dubbed "Little Kelly" by mutual friend Larry Sellers and others. "We are both very determined in whatever we decide to do. We don't take 'no' for an answer and failure is not an option."

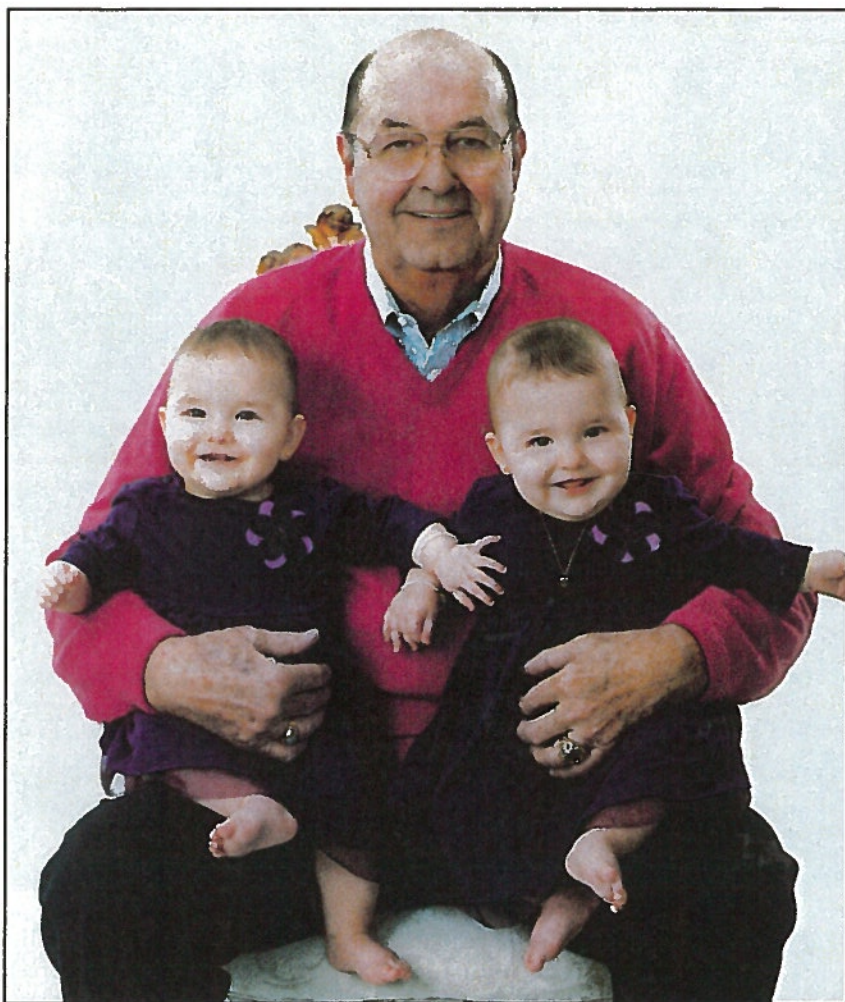
It was difficult for both Galeoto and Johnson when Galeoto recently was lured away to join Greenberg Traurig, but she will never stop admiring the woman who helped her as a law student and shined as a role model.

### Daddy's Girl

Johnson wants to raise her daughters, Haley and Alex, to grow up believing they "can do anything they want in the world."

And it was Johnson's father, Tom Overstreet, an insurance executive who seemed to know just about everyone in small-town Tallahassee, who instilled that confidence in her. Johnson said her father is the most important person in her life, "with the possible exception of my husband."

Eyes tearful at the memory of her



Tom Overstreet was delighted to be the grandfather of twins, shown here at seven months old. He died of cancer in July 2002.

special relationship with her father, who died of cancer in July 2002, Johnson said: "He was an incredible person and a more incredible dad. He thought I could do anything and was the best at everything, a very proud (and prejudiced) dad."

He was always there for her.

When she ran for president of the TBA, she didn't want to tell her father she was running unless she won the election. But as soon as the votes were tallied at the meeting at the Silver Slipper restaurant, to her surprise, she turned around and there was her dad.

"He had his connections in the legal community and knew all about it," Johnson remembers. "He had arranged for someone to call him with the results. I was so excited when I won, and within a matter of minutes,

there he was."

His death has left a tremendous void in Johnson's world.

"My biggest regrets are that he won't be there when I'm sworn in as Bar president and that my girls won't get to know him. He died shortly after they turned one year old. I continue to point him out to the girls in pictures, as I want them to know him through me, since they won't remember him any other way."

Johnson's brother, Jeff Overstreet, vice president of special marketing at Capital Insurance Agency where their father once worked, said their dad grew up in poor Gadsden County, raised by his grandparents and mother.

"He was self-made, very successful, and well-liked," Jeff Overstreet said of Tom Overstreet. "Kelly definitely





The Overstreet home was frequently the hub of activity, the scene of many high school parties. Father, known as Big Tom, was "Mr Magic to the kids." From the left, standing, Jeff, Tom, Sr.; Sally, Tom, Jr.; and seated, Kelly and Kathy.

followed Dad and saw the respect he commanded and what hard work would do. He instilled a lot in Kelly."

Pung, Johnson's childhood friend growing up in Tallahassee, will never forget full-of-life Tom Overstreet who had everyone laughing.

The Joanos family and the Overstreet family had beachhouses nearby on Alligator Point, less than an hour from Tallahassee.

The three Joanos children and the four Overstreet kids became a frolicking pack of seven, trailing between the two cottages.

"There were a lot of dinners and a lot of spending the night between the houses," recalls Pung. "And Tom Overstreet, the dad, was the big fun kid in the group."

Judge Joanos, who went to FSU with Tom Overstreet in the '50s, remembers Tom building bonfires on the beach.

"Somebody in the family played a banjo and a guitar, and they used to try to sing. They were just a wonderful family. And Tom was always involved in what the kids were doing," Judge Joanos said.

Joanos' other daughter, Julie Crump, remembers: "Mr. Overstreet drove a big station wagon, and it was always 'the more the merrier.' He would cook for however many. I have a vision of him in the beachhouse peeling potatoes for an army. Anyone who wanted to come on in and have a good time was always welcome."

At Florida High, FSU's developmental research school then situated on the FSU campus, Crump remembers that for Kelly's sweet sixteen birthday, her dad had a florist deliver roses to the front office.

"Back then, that was unheard of! My goodness, if you got a carnation from a boyfriend on Valentine's, that was a big deal," Crump observes.

Sally Overstreet says of her late husband: "I think he was Mr. Magic to the kids. They followed him like the Pied Piper."

Big Tom, as he was known, coached baseball from Atom League to Cub League, all the way through to semipro baseball, and his funeral overflowed with all of the boys, now men, he had coached through the years.

## Growing Up Fast

By their third wedding anniversary, the Overstreets already had three children.

"Just like triplets, I called them my little stairsteps," coos Sally Overstreet.

First came Kelly, then Tom Jr., 11 months later, then Jeff, 15 months after that. A few years later there arrived Kathy, the fourth child.

"Kelly was the one I could depend on. She was the easiest child to raise. She always helped with the other children," Sally Overstreet says with pride.

"Being the oldest, she was kind of like a second mother to the kids," Jeff Overstreet agrees. "Kelly was taking us to school in her car and always responsible for getting us home."

Tom Overstreet, Jr., vice president and co-owner of Kelly Sheet Metal (named after in-laws, not his sister) agrees: "She was like a little mother. She's the one who cleaned the house. She was always the teacher's pet."

Kathy Overstreet says she is very different from her sister.

"As my mother tells it, at two years



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Kelly and Hal celebrated their 20th wedding anniversary by taking a trip to Russia. As part of that trip, they cruised out of Edinburgh, crossing the North Sea into Copenhagen.

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old Kelly knew exactly what she wanted to do. She had a job at 13 and was making her own money. I just wanted to be in holey blue jeans in the dirt," Kathy Overstreet says with a laugh.

This childhood report from Mom will come as no surprise: "Kelly was a perfectionist, and her room was always so neat. She was very prissy, wearing these dresses with crinolines and wanted her hair just-so for school."

Her dad called her Sissy, but Kelly wasn't so prissy she wouldn't climb on a horse and canter away. As a young girl, Kelly had a Tennessee Walker, sorrel with a white blaze, and aptly named her Blaze, that she rode in English riding competitions. Blaze was bred, and Kelly raised her foal, Brandy.

One day, an aunt's boyfriend pulled Kelly off the back of the horse, which scared Blaze into kicking, landing a swift blow below Kelly's knee.

"She was really hurt. And I remember my dad breaking his hand on that horse," Tom Overstreet says.

"It really wasn't Blaze's fault," Kelly

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The reward for working hard is taking great trips. Time to go casual at a cafe in Mykonos, Greece, 1995.

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Johnson recalls. "I got back on her after I went to the emergency room. But I haven't ridden since college when I sold both horses, primarily because I didn't have the time, and it was a very expensive hobby. I was working 30 hours a week while also taking a full load of classes, so I just didn't have any time to fit it in."

The Overstreet home on the edge of Lake Jackson was always the hub of activity, its game room the scene of high school parties. Kelly's bedroom, with hot-pink shag carpet and white canopy bed, was in a tee shape, and the alcove festooned with hanging pink and purple beads was a ha-

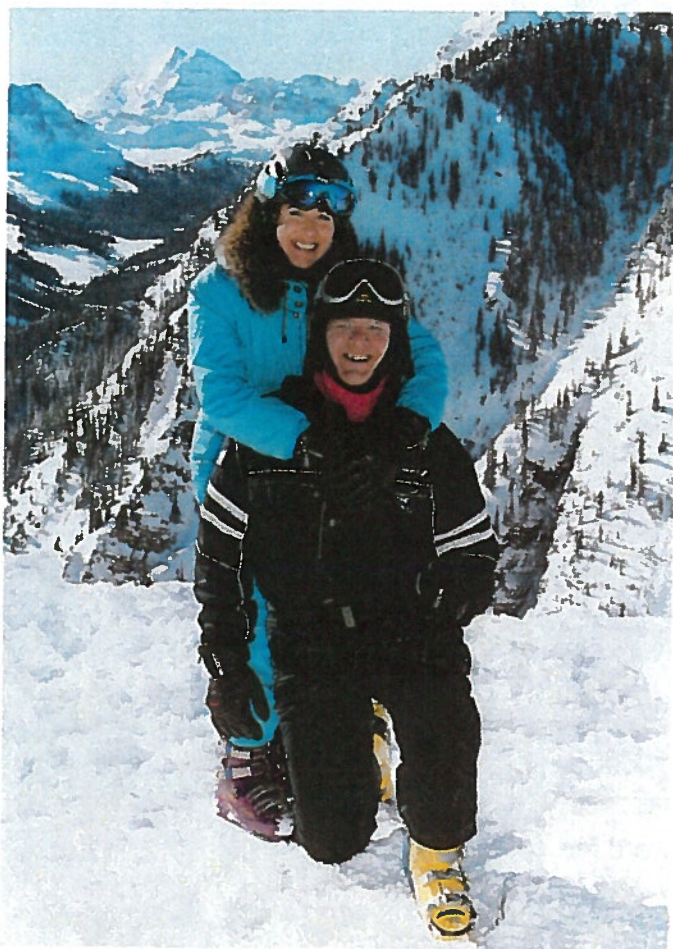
ven for slumber parties.

One of those pajama party girls was Diane Roberts, now a writer and English college professor at the University of Alabama.

"When we were little kids, Kelly was very good at everything that I remember. When we would accessorize our Barbie dolls, she not only had more Barbie shoes than me, she didn't lose any of them! Whereas, I had a great collection of just one Barbie shoes," Roberts remembers with a hearty laugh.

"I'm trying to remember if she did anything the least bit naughty, and she did not. She didn't just get gor-





Even at play, Kelly Overstreet Johnson is driven to succeed, becoming a pretty good skier for a Florida native. Kelly and Hal are on the slopes at Snowmass, Colorado, in January 2002.

geous, smart, and efficient. She has always been that way."

Johnson was so smart that high school bored her.

High school classmate Benson Green, owner of Benson's Heating & Air Conditioning, who currently works out at the same gym as Johnson, remembers Kelly Overstreet as "the smartest kid in school."

"All the boys in school were scared of her," Green admits. "I don't want to say bossy, but she knew what she wanted."

What Kelly wanted was to finish high school early and get on with college life.

Sally Overstreet recalls the

evening her daughter came home from school and announced: "I need to talk to you and Dad. I decided I want to skip my senior year of high school."

Mother's first reaction: "Oh, honey! Your senior year is your most fun year."

And Kelly responded: "Maybe for you, but not for me. There's nobody I want to date in high school, and I am so totally bored."

When her parents wondered how to accomplish such a thing at such a late date, the ever-organized Kelly was a step ahead: "I've already been accepted at Florida State. The principal has called and I'm already accepted."

## A Real Go-getter

Now, Sally Overstreet has to admit that decision was right for her daughter: "She just sailed through college. I was amazed."

Patty Radney was Kelly's sorority sister at Zeta Tau Alpha at FSU, and they've remained good friends through the years.

"You know how you just connect with some people? We just had a connection. Kelly was always real sure of herself and confident," Radney says. "She was not one of those silly sorority girls. She was working and already well on her way. She was serious-minded and a real go-getter."

Radney was with her good friend at Clyde's and Costello's, a favorite watering hole for legislators in the shadow of the Capitol on Adams Street, when Kelly first met Hal.

Actually, Kelly had been typing Hal's name and address and phone number on legal correspondence before she saw his face, as she was a legal secretary at Smith, Young and Blue while finishing college, and he was a lawyer.

Here's how Kelly remembers that night: "I had a real good friend trying to set me up with him, trying to get me to meet him on a blind date. I had recently broken an engagement, and I was about to go to law school, and I said, 'I don't need this.'"

Well, as fate would have it, Patty, Kelly, and her other friend went to Clyde's for a drink after work, and the friend goes, "Oh, there's Hal!"

"We met; we went to dinner; we hit it off. We saw each other for the first 63 days every day. He started sending me a dozen red roses every week. He was bound and determined to sweep me off my feet. I tell ya, a dozen roses every week is pretty impressive."

Now, it's Hal's turn to tell the story: "First off, she was a beautiful woman. That's for you, Kelly."

Hal Johnson laughs, then continues: "She was articulate and obviously career-oriented, and we just sort of clicked. And we were together every night until she went off to law school."

At first, Johnson the math whiz had a plan to move to a bigger city,



like Dallas or Atlanta, and become a real-estate appraiser. It was her grandmother from Chicago who first urged her to go to law school, once she learned Kelly had loved her pre-law classes at the FSU College of Business.

"I loved law school; I really did. I loved it from the beginning," Johnson said.

Her first year of law school, Johnson attended Cumberland School of Law in Birmingham, Alabama. She returned to Tallahassee to get married and finished her legal studies at FSU, where she graduated with honors.

Judge Joanos said he was honored to preside at their wedding.

"It was almost like marrying off one of my own. I had seen her grow up," Judge Joanos said.

Of her calling to serve as Bar president, he said: "It's wonderful she realized her dream. In those days, we weren't dreaming of our daughters being lawyers. She was definitely one of the early ones. And I wasn't surprised at all when I heard she would be Bar president. It was more like, 'Good for her!' She'll be good at it."

## Master Organizer

Tallahassee lawyer Ed Stafman landed a huge class-action case involving several hundred blind vendors who run various concession stands at public buildings. For many years, instead of fully funding their retirement benefits, the State of Florida was wrongfully appropriating money from their trust accounts. For decades, the state had sent infrequent reports that weren't even in braille. Stafman needed help, and he knew just who to call: Kelly Overstreet Johnson.

Johnson calls that victory for the blind vendors—a \$26.2 million settlement after winning liability on summary judgment—a real "feel good" case that she is most proud of in her entire legal career.

"I knew immediately that there would be tens of thousands of documents that would have to be organized and put together in an effective way. This was reason No. 1 for choosing Kelly. She is extremely



Hal and Kelly Johnson traveled with good friends Ken and Mary Sweet to Russia, pictured here at the Cathedral of the Resurrection in St. Petersburg.



A ski trip to Deer Valley, Utah, brings good friends together in 1998. From the left, Cathy Sellers, Hal Johnson, Kelly Johnson, Wendy Mitchler, Andy Ogilvie, Carol Brewer, Larry Sellers.



well-organized," Stafman says.

The second reason Stafman chose Johnson, he said, is she shares his commitment to a case. Thirdly, she had connections to experts and others who would strengthen their case.

"I consider myself a very good litigator, but, some would say, I am a bit rough around the edges," Stafman said. "Some see me as a bit of an outsider. Kelly was the perfect complement to me because she is a master at networking and is widely respected in so many circles, whatever their political or social agenda may be."

Those attributes will serve her well as Florida Bar president, Stafman says.

"Organization, networking, commitment. What more can you ask for?"

Add to that mix Johnson's talent for consensus-building and her courage to make tough calls:

- "She doesn't take positions and draw a line in the sand," says former Bar President DeVault. "She tries to bring people together and build consensus."

- "She doesn't argue loudly; she argues intelligently," adds Jerry Beer, a member of the Bar Board of Governors.

- "She is decisive. She is not afraid to make a call and deal with it," says Board of Governors member Mike Glazer. "The lawyers of Florida can expect someone who will be a pragmatic, sensible leader for the Bar at a time when we all need to be practical about the future of the profession, from both a legislative and personal standpoint."

Ask her brother, Tom, what the lawyers of Florida should know about his sister, and he is quick to answer: "Don't be on the other side."

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*Jan Pudlow is associate editor of The Florida Bar News.*

## Born to Shop

**Kelly Overstreet Johnson** rummages in her purse for a scrap of paper to jot down a phone number. Perfectly manicured fingers retrieve a business card from a sales associate of Nelman Marcus in Chicago.

How fitting.

To know Kelly is to realize this merchandise maven has turned shopping into an art form. She's an accessorizer extraordinaire, a shopaholic who wants no cure. Born to shop, Kelly is on a mission to find the perfect outfit to die for.

What's the big deal, you say? Most women like to shop; many are skilled bargain-hunters. No, you don't understand. Kelly's extravaganzas take on epic proportions.

"Oh, everybody at The Florida Bar talks about Kelly and her shopping trips," agrees Jacksonville lawyer and good friend Christine Milton.

"Kelly applies the same focus and attention to detail on a shopping trip that she does on the serious and professional side. She does her research. She knows the shops. She knows where she wants to go. She knows what she wants to get. And if she goes with someone like me, she is a fabulous scout. She is relentless."

Kelly doesn't just find it relaxing fun to spend her own hard-earned money; she delights in spending her friends' bucks, too. Hal Johnson likens his wife's volunteer work as a personal shopper to a little girl loving to dress up dolls. While these grownups may not need extreme makeovers, Kelly is ready to give them a little shove toward higher style.

As though hypnotized by the *cha-ching!* of cash registers, friends gladly blow their budgets, because Kelly is so masterful at suiting them up with pizzazz.

**Just ask** Board of Governors member Jerry Beer of West Palm Beach.

"My credit card has been declined twice, and both times I was with Kelly Overstreet Johnson on a shopping trip," Beer says with a laugh.

**He'll never forget** the time Kelly took him cruising the men's warehouse district of New York City, and they went wild buying three or four suits, jackets, and slacks. Who could keep count?

"At one point they are ringing stuff up, and they said they wouldn't accept my card. And this is American Express, with no limit. I said, 'What do you mean? They did two floors up.' And they said there was unusual activity on the card," Beer recalls.

To that Kelly retorted: "He apparently doesn't spend enough. We are going to remedy that."

"I was a very poor, well-dressed man after that. Kelly

has wonderful taste. She does know how to shop for bargains, but she'll say, 'You need one in blue and one in brown.' And how many people do you know who have survived saying 'No!' to Kelly?"

In Chicago, Kelly sized up Beer with her well-trained eye for the easy guy, took one look at the rack, zoomed in on a leather jacket, insisted he try it on, and, sure enough, it fit like a glove.

"It's just a coincidence, but when my wife went shopping with Kelly, we took out a second mortgage. I gave my wife an unlimited budget, but she exceeded it," Beer quips.

**Kelly is driven** to spend friends' money when they least suspect it, minding their own business, hundreds of miles away.

Patty Radney, an old friend forged during college sorority-sister days, was home in Atlanta when Kelly called from New York with this direct order: "Give me your Visa number!"

"Why?"

**"Because I found** the perfect watch for you."

And so, Radney dutifully did as she was told.

"She is very persuasive. I just kind of do what she says. It usually turns out good," Radney says.

The watch, by the way, was perfect.

When they shop together in Atlanta, Kelly is always good-naturedly bossing: "Get in here and try on this! You need to get that." Radney, a C.P.A., is notoriously tight with her money, according to Johnson.

While Radney complies at the check-out counter, she confesses: "Sometimes, I just wait till she's gone and I take it back."

Good friend and Tallahassee lawyer Mary Sweet recalls the time she and Kelly covered an outlet mall near Destin from "stem to stern," an eight-hour Christmas shopping spree that required moving the car three times to make it easier to load the bags.

**Not everyone** has such endurance.

Hal Johnson admits he is one of those forlorn-looking guys sitting alone on a chair in the middle of a department store, waiting, waiting, waiting.

"She has always known that I am about an hour to an hour-and-a-half shopper. Don't push it. After that, I'll wander around a little and then say, 'See ya!' I go do my thing, and she'll meet me back at the hotel laden with bags," he says.

**How does Hal** possibly buy gifts for the woman who knows exactly what she wants and has a passion to purchase?

"I don't," he says, with the weary tone of a spouse who surrendered long ago. "She just brings it home, hands it to me, and says, 'Wrap this for me.'"



# Two Kids Are Better Than One

**A cartoon shows** a woman resting her head in her hand, and with tears flowing, she bemoans: "I can't believe I forgot to have children!"

That caption of mock anguish reminds former Florida Bar Board of Governors member Carol Brewer of her friend Kelly Overstreet Johnson, a stellar career woman who delayed motherhood until her 40s.

Hardly anyone saw it coming.

"Shocked" is the word her friends and family use to describe their reactions, because, as BOG buddy Mike Glazer says: "It was simply that we just thought she and Hal were content in the life they were leading, and children were not part of the program."

"It just blew my socks off," says Mary Sweet, who with husband Ken were chosen as godparents. The news was "the talk of Tallahassee's legal community. People's reaction was, Kelly? Kelly Johnson? Kelly Overstreet Johnson? Are you sure? And twins?"

After Alan Bookman, BOG member and president-elect of the Bar, read the humorous e-mail from Mike Glazer announcing the double pregnancy, he dialed Johnson's office and told paralegal Connie Aldrich he was just calling to congratulate Kelly.

**"For what?"** asked Johnson's long-time assistant.

"For being pregnant with twins," Bookman responded.

"Somebody is pulling your leg," insisted Aldrich, who still hadn't been let in on the big secret.

Kelly's mother, Sally Overstreet, says she had pretty much resigned herself to not having any grandchildren from her oldest child, who was content with her busy career

and travel.

On Christmas Day, 2000, Hal announced to his mother and mother-in-law: "You have a couple more gifts to open. But they



The twins, Alex and Haley, are "wonderful friends to each other."

won't be here until May."

Sally Overstreet recalls with a laugh: "All I could think of was puppies! But Hal said, 'No, not puppies. There will be a baby for you and a baby for my mother.' Well, I just jumped up and down, and Arlene, Hal's mother, her jaw just dropped to the floor."

**The only person** to catch on to Kelly's condition without being told was Bar Executive Director Jack Harkness.

"He knows me too well," Kelly Johnson says.

"I remember one of the last Board of Governors meetings before I announced to everyone, and he intentionally stood around and waited for me to order a drink. I, of course, ordered water or a soft drink, and his comment to me was, 'What are you, pregnant?' I knew he knew something was up, but I just ignored him."

Kelly Johnson even surprised herself.

"I didn't think I really wanted to have kids," Johnson agrees. "That was not on my radar screen."

But when she turned 40, that big birthday was a turning point reminding her of the ticking clock.

So Kelly was 43 and Hal was 52 when they embarked on the great parenting adventure of bringing identical twin daughters, Haley and Alex, into the world on May 17, 2001.

**That amazing moment** in the doctor's office during the first ultrasound test was stunning.

"The doctor did a double-take and said, 'Let me check this spot here. Oh, you're going to have twins,'" Hal Johnson recalls.

Kelly Johnson says Hal got the "deer in the headlights look. It was pretty priceless."

Then, the doctor says, "Let me go back and check real close."

At that point, Hal is wondering: "Oh, please! Check for what? Triplets? I'm thinking, boy, if you've got three, there aren't enough arms to take care of things."

In an instant, fears of spoiling their only child vanished. Suddenly, the Johnsons were a family of four.

"It's been a substantial change in our life, but it's all been good," says





Closer to home the whole family enjoys the sand and surf at their Panhandle beach house.

proud Daddy Hal. "It's a challenge every day. But as anyone who has kids will tell you, it's the wonderful things about coming home and getting hugs and kisses. Right now, they are at that adorable stage where they can be argumentative and pouty, and all those things that at age 7, 8, 9, or 12 starts grating on your nerves. But at age 3, it's like, 'Oh, that's so cute!'"

**The twins, Hal says,** "are wonderful friends to each other. They are so bonded. Like this morning, they got up and one was lying on the bed, and the other came up and they gave each other a hug. It certainly makes everything worthwhile."

Kelly acknowledges that motherhood is precious, but a lot of work.

*When Mike Glazer found out his friend and colleague Kelly Overstreet Johnson was pregnant with twins, during the time Tallahassee was at the center of the Bush v. Gore election challenge, she told him she wasn't sure how to best break her big news to the Bar Board of Governors.*

*No problem. Glazer volunteered to send out the following e-mail the next morning:*

Recently, Tallahassee was the focal point for the election of the leader of the free world. You probably thought that was big news. Well, compared with what I'm about to tell you, that was NOTHING.

Because you're reading this on the computer, you are probably already sitting down. But, if you aren't sitting down, you need to. I MEAN IT, SIT DOWN!!!

In fact, if you have a heart condition, please read no further and consult your physician before you finish the rest of this e-mail. Kelly Overstreet Johnson is pregnant.

Yes, I said pregnant.

Now get up off the floor, because I'M NOT DONE!!!

Because Kelly was concerned that recent events in the news might overshadow such an announcement, she felt that one baby was not enough and so she decided. . . to have TWINS.

Yes, I said twins.

Naturally, my first reaction, as it should be, was, "How's Hal doing?"

(For some reason, my wife thought that should not have been the first question.)

Having confirmed that Hal was doing just fine, I asked how she was doing, and if she had completely lost her mind.

She assured me that she was doing just fine, but was not sure about the answer to the second question.

She is about 14 weeks along, and, as you might expect, is having some serious wardrobe trauma. (For those of you looking for a hot stock tip, I would suggest investing in maternity clothing retailers.)

All kidding aside, she is doing just great, and they are both very excited.

We don't yet know if they are boys, girls, or one of each. We (like I have anything to do with this) also haven't picked out any names, but have completely ruled out "Manny," "Hank," and "Alan." Don't even think about "Dude."

Other suggestions should be sent to Herman since these babies are due near the end of his term. Herman will be appointing a blue ribbon panel to address the issue.

The Communications Committee will immediately cancel all other activities in order to allocate adequate resources to address these developments.

Courtney and I are very happy and excited for Kelly and Hal and wanted to share this news with all of you.

Mike

P.S. Don't tell her I told you.



"I say this with all sincerity: I have a new appreciation for women that stay home. I went back for my six-week checkup with the girls. As soon as they said I was released, I was back at the office to get some rest. I was exhausted!"

Her college friend, Patty Radney, coincidentally, had twin boys five months later.

**"I thought, oh my gosh,** I don't even want to tell Kelly because I don't want to steal her thunder," Radney says with a laugh. "Here we go through life, at our age, boom! Twins. Too unreal!"

As Tom Ervin, who worked with Kelly Johnson from 1985-88 and considered her his "right arm" during four terms on the BOG, observed: "Kelly does *everything* with excellence. She does nothing halfway—nothing! She and her husband Hal decided to start their family. Of course, Kelly had twins! Nothing halfway!"

Cathy Sellers, a childless lawyer married to BOG member Larry Sellers, comments: "Frankly, I thought Kelly and I were going to be the two holdouts. . . . One of the things Kelly has been able to do well is integrate her daughters into her life, as opposed to completely reshaping her life around them."

But sometimes, the twins have all the power.

Wendy Mitchler can't help but laugh telling this story from last year's Bar Annual Meeting in Orlando, when the twins were two.

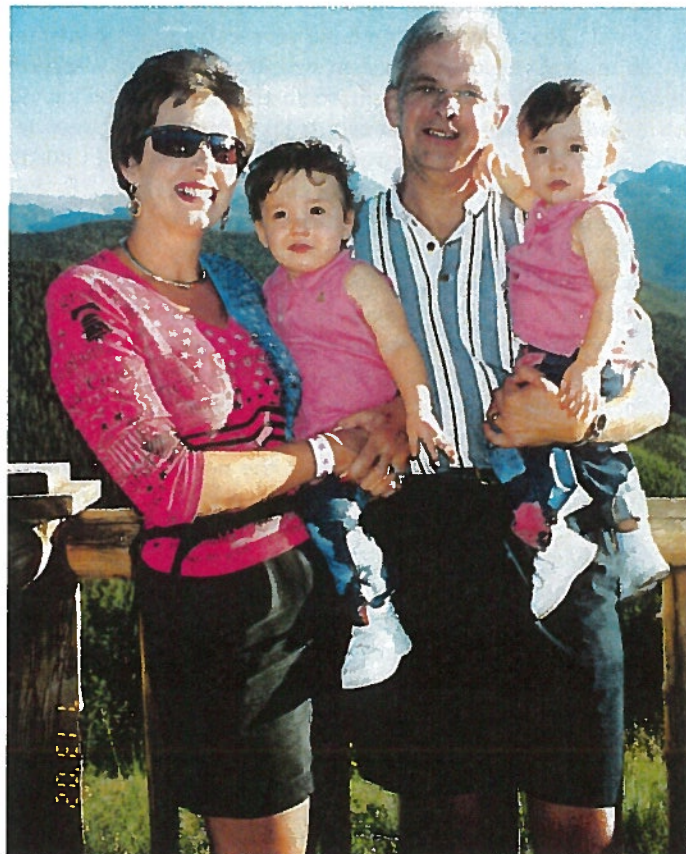
Kelly was to give a keynote speech at one of the luncheons. But she didn't show up. Mitchler ran out into the hallway looking for her friend who is never late for anything.

**Finally, Kelly comes racing** down the hall, breathless. The twins had locked her out of the hotel room, where her notes for her speech were held hostage behind the door.

"She is so totally organized," Mitchler says. "It was funny to see how her children affected her life. Her kids have no respect for the fact that she is this very successful lawyer."



In one of life's amazing coincidences, Kelly Johnson and her college sorority sister, Patty Radney, both had twins in 2001. Patty's twin boys, Jonathan and Alex ("named for my grandfather, not to copy Kelly," she laughs) turn three in October. Kelly's twin girls, Haley and Alex, turned three in May.



The Johnsons take their first trip with the girls to Colorado, proving toddler twins are portable.