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INSIDE

4 Applying for the bar

Don't forget the parking violation: The Committee on Character and Fitness wants to know *everything* about you, but law students should take heart – few applicants are turned down.

6 From matrimony to acrimony

A small number of contentious *pro se* litigants present one of the toughest and most time-consuming problems in the Domestic Relations Division of Cook County Circuit Court.

8 Meet the new corporation counsel



Brian L. Crowe (*above*), the new Chicago Corporation Counsel, is a trial lawyer and former judge who will bring a hands-on approach to running the city's law office and supervising its 252 lawyers.

12 Partnership agreements

An appellate court decision may change the way many law firms structure their partnership agreements and deal with partners who leave the firm. The suit against Rooks, Pitts & Poust was brought by former partner William M. Stevens.

76 Challenges for mid-sized firms

Mid-sized firms from across the country compared notes on management problems during a Defense Research Institute seminar, and some firms lined up in favor of a "benevolent dictatorship."

81 Life is a roller coaster

Martin Moltz, acting deputy director of the Office of the State's Attorney's Appellate Prosecutor in Elgin, travels worldwide in search of roller coaster thrills.

APPELLATE SUMMARIES

Summaries of recent federal and state appellate court opinions in an easy-to-read, pullout section.



Curt N. Rodin (left), lead counsel, and Bruce M. Kohen, both of Anesi, Ozmon & Rodin display a picture of an ironworker. The two lawyers posted a \$24.25 million settlement for an ironworker seriously injured in Bloomington to win honors for the top personal injury settlement in Cook County in the Chicago Lawyer 1997 Settlement Survey. On the table in the picture's reflection are parts of broken bolts from another case.

SETTLEMENT SURVEY

\$24.25 million settlement tops survey list

by Carol McHugh Sanders

(For a complete chart of all 119 settlements involving \$1 million or more, see pages 20-29. For two lists – top firms and leaders by case categories – see page 30; for a scorecard of individual lawyers with multiple big settlements, see page 31.)

The top settlement in the fourth annual survey of Cook County personal injury settlements surpassed last year's largest accord by more than \$10 million. And last year's was not small change.

Curt N. Rodin, lead counsel, and Bruce M. Kohen of Anesi, Ozmon & Rodin posted a \$24.25 million settlement for a seriously injured ironworker, an Olympic leap over the largest single settlement counted last year, when Patrick A. Salvi obtained \$13.102 million on behalf of an injured tuckpointer.

Rodin, a former president of the Illinois Trial Lawyers Association and PI practitioner for 22 years,

also claimed the most settlements greater than \$1 million.

Rodin was the lead plaintiff's counsel on six of the 119 settlements tallied in this year's survey, totaling a whopping \$40.99 million for an individual attorney. Bruce M. Kohen, also a partner in the 28-lawyer Anesi firm, was Rodin's co-counsel on all but two of the large settlements.

Robert A. Clifford of Clifford Law Offices, who settled three cases worth \$18.975 million, was the closest to Rodin (see box, page 31).

John D. Cooney of Cooney & Conway trailed Clifford in settling three cases worth a total \$16.033 million, while Todd A. Smith of Power, Rogers & Smith ended up just slightly behind Cooney in settling four cases worth \$15.2 million.

Keith A. Hebeisen of the Clifford Law Offices settled more cases than either Clifford, Smith or Cooney but did not come near their total dollar value. He obtained five

million-dollar accords – all on medical-malpractice cases – that added up to \$7.4 million.

The survey counted only settlements of \$1 million or more that were published between July 1, 1996, and June 30, 1997, in either the Cook County Jury Verdict Reporter, the Chicago Daily Law Bulletin or the Chicago Lawyer magazine during the survey period. All three are publications of Law Bulletin Publishing Co.

In total, the 119 cases yielded \$317.45 million in out-of-court published settlements in this year's survey, compared to 81 cases last year that totaled \$182.34 million.

Beyond the nearly 50 percent increase in published settlements in the one-year period, there were far more settlements at the high end of the spectrum. This year three settlements greater than \$10 million were published in the survey period, compared to just the one that Salvi had last year.

Likewise, accords of \$5 million or

Please turn to page 29