

# FAWL to Publish a 50-Year History Book

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FAWL Assistant Historian

It's been a labor of love, but **Judge Mattie Belle Davis**, FAWL's Historian for Life, has nearly completed the manuscript for *A History of Florida Association for Women Lawyers, 1951-2001*. The manuscript, which is currently 180 pages, documents FAWL's history from its founding convention in June 1951 to its 50th anniversary celebration on June 22, 2001. On the pages in between, you'll find the names of the elected officers, reports highlighting each president's term, and historical text written by Judge Davis that outlines the events and activities of FAWL, as well as the issues that were at the forefront, complete with photographs.

FAWL has come a long way from the fledgling group of 27 women who gathered in Miami Beach on June 30, 1951, and passed a resolution to form the Florida Association for Women Lawyers for the purpose of fellowship and comradeship among the small group of women lawyers who had chosen to enter the male-dominated profession. The history tracks the growth of the association, from its biannual meetings during the early years; to its public legal forums in the 1960s; its efforts to pass the Equal Pay for Equal Work Bill and the Equal Rights Amendment in the 1970s; the inclusion of male members with the name change to the Florida Association for Women Lawyers, instead of "of Women Lawyers," in 1980; the addition of "local" or "regional" chapters, the blossoming of women's voluntary bar associations throughout the state, and the tremendous growth in membership in the 1980s; the organized effort to get more women into positions of power within The Florida Bar and the legal profession, particularly the judiciary, in the 1980s and 1990s; to its focus on promoting

diversity in the profession and working in conjunction with The Florida Bar and other bar associations on gender bias and legislative issues in the 1990s.

The history not only documents FAWL's growth, but it also provides information and insight into the overall advances of women lawyers within the legal profession. The history also celebrates the accomplishments of women lawyers, recognizing the women lawyers centennial in 1969, and "firsts," such as the appointment of **Justice Sandra Day O'Connor** to the United States Supreme Court in 1981, the investiture of **Rosemary Barkett** as the first woman on the Florida Supreme Court in 1985, and the election of **Patricia Seitz** and **Edith Osman** as the first and second female presidents of The Florida Bar in 1993 and 1999, respectively.

The manuscript lacks nothing for the first 40 years of FAWL, and efforts are under way to incorporate information for the past decade so as to complete the book this fall. Judge Davis has arranged for the *Miami Review* to publish the book, and the manuscript will be turned over for typesetting soon. Proofreading and editing of the galley proof will necessarily follow, then 2,500 copies of the soft-cover history will be printed under FAWL's name, with Judge Davis and **Henrietta Biscoe** as the editors and compilers. Funds bequeathed to Judge Davis by her dear friend **Emma Roesing**, one of FAWL's founding members who died in 1989, will be used to cover the cost of publishing the book.

*A History of Florida Association for Women Lawyers, 1951-2001* is a book everyone will want to have, not only for its historical value, but also for the inspiration, encouragement and pride that emanates from its pages. Watch for further publication and distribution information in future *FAWL Journal* issues. ■

## Meet FAWL's New Executive Director



Prior to accepting the director's position for FAWL, **Patricia H. Stephens** served as The Florida Bar's staff liaison to more than 170 statewide voluntary bar associations and the American Bar Association's Field Services Department, providing administrative support to the Florida Council of Bar Association Presidents and the Florida Council of Bar Executives. She was responsible for The Florida Bar's annual Bar Leaders Conference and All Bar Conference.

Before moving to Bar's Public Information office, Pat served in the Professional Development Department as the administrator of the Government Lawyer Section, the Elder Law Section and the International Law Section, as well as the Out-of-State Practitioners Division. She was also responsible for staffing the implementation of the Florida Supreme Court's Foreign Legal Consultant Rule.

From 1987 until 1990, Pat served as Executive Director of the Leon County Unit of the American Cancer Society.

She has served on numerous boards and committees and as Kate Sullivan Elementary School PTA president (1984-86); LeMoyné Art Foundation (1991); Museum of Art Tallahassee [now known as the Mary Brogan Museum of Art and Science] (1993); and 621 Art Gallery (2001). In 1994 she was campaign manager of Say Yes to Art, a successful non-partisan referendum to release matching city funds to secure a \$1.5 million grant from Florida's Department of Cultural Affairs.

Pat is the recipient of the Out-of-State Practitioner's Division of The Florida Bar's President Award (1996) and has served as a docent of the Florida Governor's Mansion since 1982. She and her husband, **Dick**, are facilitators for the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill's Family-to-Family program.

She was a studio art major at Florida State University and in 1979 served on the Administrative Task Force on Child Care Facilities while a student. ■