

# Chuck Martin (Charles E. Martin)

BAR NUMBER: 40084

I was born and raised in Kansas City and earned a B.A. in history from the University of Kansas. I served as an officer and pilot in the Marine Corps. I then used the GI Bill to attend law school. My first job was trial prosecutor in the Harris County Texas (Houston) District Attorney's Office. After four years I started my own firm handling mostly criminal and family law cases but soon learned that personal injury law was what I loved the most. I've now specialized in personal injury for 40-plus years. My wife and I discovered beautiful Bainbridge Island through our Seattle relatives and moved here 15 years ago. I then established a new personal injury practice.

### How did you become interested in your practice area?

What I love about personal injury law is you never have to bill your clients; you get paid from the settlement. "You eat what you kill."

### How do you define success as a lawyer?

Many of my clients are part of the 20 percent of Americans who are one paycheck away from the street, which means they are often one car wreck away from the street. I consider it my job to make sure that doesn't happen, and that I help them restore their life to what it was before the accident, or even better.

### At the end of your career, how would you like to be remembered professionally?

That I always put my clients first.

### What is your best piece of advice for someone who's just entered law school?

It is going to be hard. Don't do it if you aren't super motivated. **BN**

### If you had to give a 10-minute presentation on one topic other than the law, what would it be and why?

The American Revolution, I love history. Also aviation. I have a commercial pilot's license and love to talk flying.

### What is one thing your colleagues may not know about you?

In high school I scored three touchdowns in one game as a defensive lineman, which made *Sports Illustrated*, "Faces in the Crowd."

### What is your favorite word?

Case settled! I know, that's two words, but I'm sure you see my point.

### What is the best fictional representation (TV, movie, book) of a lawyer?

In the movie *The Verdict*, Paul Newman plays a down-on-his-luck lawyer who gets one last case to redeem himself. I also love *My Cousin Vinny*. Although it's a comedy, the courtroom scenes are realistic and follow the actual rules of evidence and procedure. Vinny's cross examination of a so-called eye witness is brilliant and the prosecutor's opening statement is so good it should be shown at trial seminars.

### What did you think was cool when you were younger that makes you cringe to think about now?

As teenagers, my older brother, two friends, and I would sneak into a nearby elementary school every weekend to play basketball in the gym. The school was always fully locked, but we were usually able to find an unlocked window to crawl through. We finally got caught by the police and are lucky they had mercy on us and didn't file charges.

