

Doroshow law celebrates 20th anniversary

TWENTY YEARS AGO, Wilmington attorney Eric M. Doroshow opened his law office in a different way: with a TV crew and a newspaper reporter. It was Delaware's first legal clinic: a private law firm dedicated to serving middle income persons. He had just put in an ad in the *News Journal* and became the first Delaware attorney to advertise. Disaster struck only a few weeks later when his office burned down in a shopping center fire. He lost many of his files in the fire so he petitioned the Delaware Supreme Court to permit him to notify his clients on the radio. His request was denied. It was an auspicious start for the young lawyer and his firm.

The firm quickly rebuilt and became one of the area's fastest growing law firms. Today, twenty years later, the firm has 17 lawyers and offices in Elsmere, North Wilmington, Bear, Dover, and Pennsylvania. Since opening in 1978, the firm has represented thousand of clients in a broad range of services including securing insur-

ance settlements, purchasing a house, filing bankruptcy, and getting divorced.

Doroshow states, "When we first opened, advertising was unheard of by the Delaware Bar. Now, the Yellow Pages are full of lawyer ads and it has become so routine that we see even the large corporate firms doing it. Advertising has been an important way to reach consumers about the availability of legal services.

The legal landscape has radically changed since 1978 when Doroshow turned the keys to his office. Many firms in existence then have long since closed their doors. There were few women attorneys in the Bar. Today, the firm has seven women lawyers, 3 of whom are partners.

Doroshow states: "I always felt that the legal profession was overlooking the needs of middle income persons. The poor have legal aid and the rich can afford any lawyer they choose. But middle income income persons never seemed to get the service they needed or deserved. We meet that need though being as efficient as possible.

We pioneered the use of computers to track personal injury cases. Some of the software we designed ourselves." Doroshow was named one of the "Best Lawyers in America" by a national publication and was President of Delaware Trial Lawyers Association from 1994 to 1995. He hosts a weekly TV show called DE Law since 1983 and is a legal commentator on a local radio station.