



Running the show has meant remembering what his father taught him and putting his own stamp on the ethics practice.

Age: 38

Address: 77 N. State St., Westerville, Ohio 43081

Phone: 614-436-2750

Website: legalethics.pro

Best Lawyers category: Ethics & Professional Responsibility

Education: Bachelor of Arts, Sociology/Criminology, Ohio University, 1996; Juris Doctor, Capital University Law School, 2000

Associations: ABA Center for Professional Responsibility, APRL, Central Ohio Association for Justice, and the Ohio State and Columbus Bar associations.

Interests: Spending time with my wife and son, playing guitar and piano, singing, songwriting, writing children's books, leisure reading, travel, chess, boating, wake boarding, mountain biking.

First car: 1981 Diesel Rabbit

Best job outside of the legal system: Lead singer in a band/weekend; wannabe rock star.

Recall the specifics of your first case: Getting the opportunity to argue before the Ohio Supreme Court to appeal an attorney's disciplinary case because his original attorney was scheduled to be out of the country during oral argument. I'd been in practice for less than a year and had never tried a case before any lower court. I was naïve enough to not be completely nervous before the Supreme Court and was successful in getting the Court to reduce the attorney's indefinite suspension to a two-year suspension with one year stayed

Bengals or Browns: Neither, Buckeyes

Seafood or steak: Seafood

Hidden treasure in Central Ohio: Innis Wood Gardens

Like or dislike lawyer jokes: Depends on the joke

Charles John Kettlewell

Charles J. Kettlewell LLC

▶ People, organizations and companies hire lawyers when they need advice about a legal issue or find themselves in hot water for something they've done or might be thinking about doing.

Lawyers hire other lawyers for the same thing, and oftentimes they turn to attorney Charles J. Kettlewell, who was named to the 2012 Best Lawyers in America list in the category of ethics and professional liability law.

His Westerville-based solo practice represents other attorneys on ethics and disciplinary issues – for example, those called before a disciplinary board – which he said was a tiny slice of the legal pie. “It still is sort of a niche practice; it's a pretty specialized area.”

In addition to discipline defense, Kettlewell provides risk management preventative consultations, represents bar applicants, counsels nonlawyers about the unauthorized practice of law, provides expert witness testimony in malpractice actions, and occasionally provides legal malpractice representation.

One might think lawyers didn't need assistance knowing the law, but Kettlewell said not everyone has the time to immerse themselves into the minutiae of the Rules all attorneys must adhere to like he does. And, not everyone who seeks Kettlewell out is in trouble, many are just looking for a sounding board.

“They don't practice in the area day in and day out, and so they may not be aware of changes and nuances in this area of the law.”

It's been somewhat of an arduous journey for Kettlewell, who got his law license in 2000 and joined his father's law firm. Chuck Kettlewell died in 2005, leaving the younger Kettlewell without a dad and business partner.

“The two years after were the most nerve wracking time that I hope I don't have to experience again,” Kettlewell said.

One of his concerns was the real possibility of losing clients his father had nurtured and served over many years.

Kettlewell said he was pleasantly surprised when that didn't happen. Running the show has meant remembering what his father taught him and putting his own stamp on the ethics practice.

“I've tried to utilize a combination of what he brought to the table which was the ability to say, ‘Here's what the rules say and here's what common sense says to resolve a problem,’ with what I have done in harnessing technology and making myself more accessible to my clients, who not only still want the ‘right’ answer, but often want the right answer right now.”