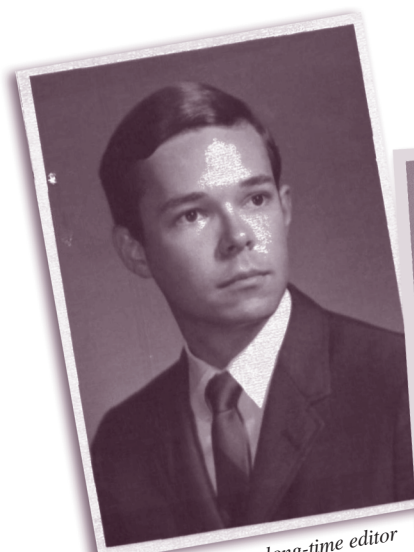




KEITH B. NORMAN



*Robert A. Huffaker, long-time editor of The Alabama Lawyer, in photo accompanying his application to sit for the bar exam...*



*...when he took over editorial duties in 1983...*



*...and today, after volunteering for over two decades.*

## Robert A. Huffaker: A Quarter-Century of Dedicated Service

It is fitting that the new state bar president, Mark White, appears on this month's cover of *The Alabama Lawyer*. In 1981, Mark chaired *The Alabama Lawyer* Survey Committee that recommended publishing the *Lawyer* six times a year instead of four times and changing the publication's format from a journal to a magazine. The new format of *The Alabama Lawyer* made its debut 25 years ago this past January. Starting with that issue, we have been fortunate to have one editor, Robert A. Huffaker.

The Alabama State Bar began publishing *The Alabama Lawyer* in 1940. Judge Walter B. Jones was the first editor and served until 1964. Robert has now eclipsed Judge Jones's 24-year tenure as editor. Along the way, Richard Neal (1964-1968) and J.O. Sentell (1968-1983) edited the *Lawyer*.

For these past 25 years, Robert has worked as chairman with many different members of *The Alabama Lawyer* Board of Editors. (I had the good fortune to serve on the board of editors with Robert when I was in private practice prior to joining the state bar staff.) As volunteers, the board of editors does a remarkable job of publishing a high-quality, attractive and useful professional

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Continued from page 311

magazine. State bar staff member Margaret Murphy has done an excellent job for almost 24 years for the magazine in her position as publications director. But, the consistently high marks which the *Lawyer* receives are due largely to Robert's leadership and devotion to the magazine. I am sure that Margaret would agree.

To appreciate the labor of love that the *Lawyer* is for Robert, just consider the following. Since 1983, there have been 150 issues of the magazine totaling more than 10,000 pages! Even though the magazine is published every two months, Robert has worked almost daily with Margaret and the board of editors for the past 25 years to prepare each issue for publication. Robert's commitment of time in reading all the articles and making editorial decisions for each issue is nothing short of incredible.

Having a professional publication the caliber of *The Alabama Lawyer* requires many things, including: quality articles; a hard-working board of editors; diligent staff support; generous advertising sales; a talented graphic designer; and a skilled printer. We have been fortunate to have all these things which have helped make the *Lawyer* a model publication. The most important ingredient, however, has been the long labors of its devoted editor—Robert Huffaker.



Visiting at the reception honoring the 2008 Award Winners are Professor Pam Bucy (front), Anne Stone Sumblin, Wade Baxley, Robert Huffaker, and Sam Franklin.



*This is where it all began and we have come a long way! This is the cover of The Alabama Lawyer magazine, dated January 1983, which is the first issue Robert Huffaker was able to put his indelible imprint on as editor. His craftsmanship as a lawyer, editor and the "voice" of the publication is easy to trace over the past quarter of a century.*

## Education Debt Continues to Increase

The student debt-load of applicants for the July 2008 bar examination increased over last year. Of the 400 first-time applicants for the July exam, 72 percent had student loans. The average debt for all applicants with student loans was \$81,690, an increase of 3.4 percent over last year. The average debt for graduates of the five Alabama law schools and the graduates of out-of-state law schools who applied to take the July bar exam was: University of Alabama, \$62,515; Birmingham School of Law, \$30,733; Cumberland School of Law, \$100,072; Jones School of Law, \$69,289; Miles Law School, \$25,000; and out-of-state law graduates, \$94,397.