

Washington State

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THE LIGHTER SIDE OF THE LAW
Math and the Law

READ IT IN DE NOVO
Art and the Law

THE BAR BEAT
A Fair Summer Evening



Tom Ahearne

WSBA No. 14844

- ▶ **I became a lawyer because** I thought from watching *Perry Mason* as a little kid that lawyers simply show up in the courtroom and talk, while other folks like Della and Paul do all the work. I no longer believe everything I see on TV.
- ▶ **One of the greatest challenges in law today is** to not lose sight of the fact that our court system's purpose is to provide justice for people — not an arena for gladiators.
- ▶ **If I could change one thing about the law,** it would be to have it all written in common English instead of any legalese.
- ▶ **This is the best advice I have been given:** “Live so that when your children think of fairness, caring, and integrity, they think of you” (H. Jackson Browne Jr.).
- ▶ **I would share this with new lawyers:** Details matter.
- ▶ **Trait I admire in other attorneys:** Integrity.
- ▶ **I would give this advice to a first-year law student:** If you simply want to make money, go do something else. Please.
- ▶ **Someone whose opinion matters to me:** My wife and two kids.
- ▶ **People living or from the past I would like to invite to a dinner party:** Teddy Roosevelt (because he energetically lived his life); post-resurrection Jesus (because I sometimes have one thing other than my first name in common with the Apostle “doubting Thomas”); and my Grampa Drezek (because there are so many questions I didn't ask him about his life after he boarded a ship in Poland at age 14 to emigrate to the United States all by himself).
- ▶ **I am most proud of this:** When I see one of my kids deliberately choose to do what's right instead of what's easy.
- ▶ **I am most happy when** I'm doing my best.
- ▶ **My favorite hobbies/interests:** Bow hunting, motorcycle racing, and snowboarding.
- ▶ **My favorite vacation place:** Anywhere my family is.
- ▶ **Best stress reliever:** Racing.
- ▶ **What keeps me awake at night:** Nothing. I fall asleep immediately and then snooze like a log — albeit a loudly snoring log, which drives my wife crazy.
- ▶ **Currently playing on my iPod/CD player/record player:** Josh Turner, Darius Rucker, and Johnny Cash.
- ▶ **I can't live without** my country.
- ▶ **The hardest part of my job:** Putting up with opposing counsel who are, well, shall we say, uh, “ethically challenged.”
- ▶ **The best part of my job:** Getting to represent folks who wear the white hat.
- ▶ **Nicknames people call me:** “Nightmare” (after one of my constitutional law cases led the *Seattle Times* to call me “Tim Eyman's worst courtroom nightmare”) and “Crash” (after a high-speed physics lesson at the racetrack gave me the opportunity to spend a bunch of quality time with the nice folks in the Emanuel Hospital Trauma Unit).



I am an attorney with Foster Pepper PLLC, in Seattle. About half my cases involve the Constitution or elections, e.g., (1) representing the Washington secretary of state in the multiple lawsuits concerning the first Gregoire/Rossi election, (2) representing the Grange in its successful defense of Initiative 872 and its Top Two Primary, (3) representing the McCleary and Venema families in their suit to enforce the state's paramount education duty under our state constitution, and (4) representing other citizens in suits over the constitutionality of assorted initiative measures. The other half of my practice involves representing policyholders in coverage disputes with their insurance companies. I can be reached at 206-447-8934 or ahearne@foster.com.

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