

Harold A. Boire (1914-2009)



Inaugural Inductee into the Labor and Employment Law Section Hall of Fame June 2012

Mr. Harold A. Boire, a former regional director of the National Labor Relations Board, was born May 21, 1914, the son of the late Charles and Eva Boire of Mooers, N.Y. After graduating from Mooers High School in 1933, he furthered his studies and earned Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Law, and a Master of law degrees. Harold was a member of The Florida Bar

After his discharge from the U.S. Coast Guard during World War II, Harold was employed for five years as executive secretary to a Florida Congressman in the U.S. House of Representatives. In 1947, he was employed as an attorney with the National Labor Relations Board, in Washington, D.C. and worked for the agency until his retirement in 1985. President Dwight D. Eisenhower appointed him regional director of the newly formed NLRB Region 12 in Tampa in 1957. Harold later opened offices in Miami and Jacksonville, Fla.

Harold led Region 12 through tumultuous times. Shortly after the opening of the Region 12 Tampa office, Harold paid a courtesy visit to the local newspapers and Chamber of Commerce, where the latter commented that “they hated to see us come to town because it would just increase union activity.” The Chamber was not wrong; Region 12’s case load rose from 324 in Fiscal Year 1956 to over 1,000 cases in Fiscal Year 1959.

From the beginning, the newly formed Region 12 was squarely in the middle of determined union organizing efforts opposed by ultra-conservative Southern employers. The Hoffa Teamsters Union was determined to establish a firm foothold in Florida, and the fight began over the newly built Schlitz Brewery in Tampa. The Teamsters gained that foothold after Harold ruled in favor of the Teamsters in a dispute with the AFL-CIO Brewery Workers Union over claimed false union propaganda by the Teamsters on the eve of the election. Region 12 under Harold’s leadership was also acknowledged as instrumental in facilitating harmonious labor relations and curtailing work stoppages in the 1960’s at NASA’s John F. Kennedy Space Center location, thus helping in a small way with the first mission to the moon.

In the 1960’s under Harold’s leadership, Region 12 also embarked on an extensive educational program throughout the state. The effort was not without some controversy. In particular, a

course for the public in labor law in 1962 at a local university made headlines when the university refused to register Perry C. Harvey (President and local Business Manager of the Longshoreman's Local) and his staff, all of whom were African American. The program was moved, and all were allowed to both register and participate.

Harold also exhibited leadership in his appointment of one of the first female NLRB Regional Attorneys in the country. In 1965, Rose Mary Filipowicz was appointed Regional Attorney for Region 12. Filipowicz has been part of the Region 12 staff since its opening in 1957, advancing from field attorney to supervisory general attorney and then Assistant Regional Attorney before receiving the Regional Attorney appointment.

In 1957, when the Region began, only three private practice lawyers in Florida handled labor law cases. Over the years following Region 12's opening, this changed and the practice grew so much that by the early 1970's, a Labor Law Committee had been formed by The Florida Bar.