

CELEBRATING A CENTURY OF SERVICE

It all began in 1907



Frundt & Johnson – 100 Years

by Charles Frundt

In 1907 Henry John Frundt arrived in Blue Earth with his license to practice law in hand and joined Harry L. Bullis in setting up practice. We do not know how long Mr. Bullis preceded him in the practice or if Mr. Bullis had joined someone earlier when he came to town. We do know that Henry ended up with the office desk of Alexander Wakefield, which may mean that the firm goes back to the origin of the town. Soon after Henry started practice he was joined by David Morse and they were partners until Henry's death in 1943.

I wasn't fortunate enough to have known my grandfather as I was only 6 months old when he died. I understand that he was a very gentle man of high moral character and was well respected for his knowledge and understanding of the law. He served as the Mayor of Blue Earth in 1913 and 1914 and was Faribault County Attorney from 1915 to 1923. I do know that he had many loyal clients who have sung his praises to me over the years. Dave Morse and Henry were very compatible and were close friends. My father, John, often told of the time when Dave came to County Attorney, Henry, and told him he was a little concerned about an upcoming meeting with a client who had a violent temper. Dave had some news the client wasn't going to like and was quite concerned that he might do serious bodily harm to him. Henry apparently told him not to worry, because if something did happen, he would see to it that the perpetrator would be properly prosecuted!

In 1937 John Frundt returned home after law school and joined his father, Henry, and Dave Morse. He had a long and rewarding career of

almost 50 years, mixing an office practice with a litigation practice. I remember with pride the day my whole law school class in appellate advocacy watched dad argue and win an important case in the Supreme Court. Dad told me that he built his practice by doing income tax returns for clients. After Dave Morse retired, dad eventually hired Bob Hibbs, who was his partner for 18 years. Bob was an excellent lawyer. He eventually moved to the Twin Cities to become a real estate specialist in the largest law firm in the state. Bob was my mentor as dad was often tied up handling major files.

I joined the firm in 1967 and I remember fondly in the early years traveling to Frost and Bricelyn where I maintained branch offices. I started building my practice doing tax returns. Early in my career I ended up in the hospital for ten days during tax season with a possible heart attack. It wasn't my heart and since I felt pretty good, I saw clients and did tax returns out of my hospital room.

After Bob Hibbs left we were fortunate to hire

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Frundt Law Office 1940's to 1973

A Career with the Firm

by Michael Johnson

In 1973 I moved to Blue Earth to practice law with John Frundt and Chuck Frundt, having graduated from the University of Minnesota Law School in 1971. I was motivated to find a great place to practice law and raise a family. My wife Peggy and I arrived in February of 1973 and first lived on West 8th Street between the homes of John and Chuck Frundt, my two bosses.

I was seeking and found a collegial, progressive atmosphere in which to practice law and earn a living. I have had the experience of practicing law with three generations of attorneys from the same family- John, his son Chuck, and Chuck's sons David and Karl Frundt.

Faribault County has been a wonderful place to raise a family and to make a living. I have been blessed to work with fine attorneys in our firm and most importantly, given the opportunity to serve the firm's clients in the most professional, competent way possible.

I have seen the legal profession change dramatically for the benefit of the clients over the last thirty years. State and Federal laws have added many protections for individuals. For example, we are doing much more paperwork today to process a real estate transaction than

we did thirty years ago, as evidenced by required documents disclosing the condition of property, existence of lead paint, methamphetamine, wells, and septic systems. None of these disclosures existed thirty years ago.

Frundt & Johnson, Ltd. is very committed to adopting technology which has included everything from the first IBM memory typewriters in the 1970's to the most modern computer servers and networks. This enables our firm to have the latest legal research tools as well as the latest methodology for producing our work product for our clients.

Frundt & Johnson has shown commitment, not only to its clients, but also to the communities of Faribault County and the public life, as evidenced by our support and participation in charitable, religious, recreational, and civic organizations.

The staff of Frundt & Johnson is outstanding in their professional approach and work ethic. We have provided professional legal services in a manner of which I am very proud and the law firm will continue to serve our clients and this area for the next 100 years.

*In 1907 when
Henry John Frundt
hung up his shingle on
Blue Earth's Main Street,
the world was indeed a
different sort of place.
Consider this...*

- **The North Pole had not been reached.**
- **There was no income tax.**
- **The Panama Canal had not been built.**
- **There was no naval base at Pearl Harbor.**
- **Slavery still existed in China.**
- **Women in Washington state could not vote.**
- **There were no neon lights.**
- **Baseball fields had no lights.**

In 1907...

- A Loaf of Bread was 5¢
- A Gallon of Milk was 31¢
- An Automobile was \$500
- An Average House was \$4,500
- A Postage Stamp was 2¢
- Average Annual Income was \$897/yr



Main Street Blue Earth 1903

The Founder of the Firm

12/25/1887 - Henry John Frundt was born, Waterloo, IA.

1905 - Graduated from St. Paul College of Law and admitted to Minnesota Bar.

1906 - Began practice in St. Paul, MN.

1907 - Arrived in Blue Earth and partnered with Harry L. Bullis. Blue Earth Post, May 7, 1907... **"He is a young man of pleasing personality and force of character and we bespeak for the new firm a full measure of success."**

1907 - Henry John Frundt served as clerk of the judiciary committee of the Minnesota House of Representatives during the State Legislative Session.

1909 - Also served as private secretary to speaker of the house, Hon. Andrew J. Rockne during Legislative session. Also served as secretary of Minnesota Working Men's Commission - visiting England, Belgium, Germany and France.



Above: Henry John Frundt 1911



Right: Henry John & John Henry Frundt 1918



Above: John Henry Frundt

Left: John Henry, Anna and Henry John Frundt

8/31/1913 - Son, John Henry Frundt born. Blue Earth Post March 31, 1955... **"It was during the formative years for John H. Frundt, that he watched his father go about his legal business and decided then and there that he was going to be a lawyer."**

1913 & 1914 - Henry John Frundt served as mayor of Blue Earth.

1914 - Partnered with David L. Morse who had practiced in Wells, MN since 1910. Wells Mirror reprinted in the Blue Earth Post May 12, 1914... **"D.L. Morse has joined a co-partnership with H.J. Frundt and will move to Blue Earth to practice. This would seem like a good move for Mr. Morse as it always seemed like five attorneys for Wells was rather excessive."**

1915-1923 - Served as Faribault County Attorney.

1938 - John Henry Frundt graduated from the University of Minnesota Law School and was admitted to the Minnesota bar.

1939 - John Henry Frundt joined the firm.

The Firm Changes



Henry John Frundt, Late 1930's

May 24, 1943 - Henry John Frundt died. Blue Earth Post May 27, 1943... Judge Julius E. Haycraft of Fairmont, judge of the 17th Judicial District paid the following tribute to Mr. Frundt in the Sentinel. **"I have known Henry Frundt over 30 years. When in the practice I tried cases with him and against him. I have heard many cases as judge when he was counsel for one of the litigants. Henry Frundt was a splendid citizen. He stood unequivocally for the things he believed to be right. He was a good lawyer. It is with extreme sorrow that I learn of his death."**

November 13, 1957 - David L. Morse died. Blue Earth Post November 1957... **"Long active in legal circles, Mr. Morse was a member of the state board of law examiners from 1921 to 1944. He served as president of the board from 1936 until his retirement. Beginning in 1944 he served on the board of governors of the Minnesota State Bar association and was a past vice president of the District Bar Association. A former city attorney, he was a charter member of the Blue Earth Kiwanis club and served as first president of the organization. In 1939 he was lieutenant governor of the Minnesota-Dakota Kiwanis division. He was also past president of the Riverside Town and Country Club."**



David L. Morse

EARLY YEARS

The Firm Grows

1955 - John Frundt partnered with Robert Hibbs. Blue Earth Post March 31, 1955... **“Long established in Blue Earth and recognized throughout this section of the state as one of the very best legal firms, specializing in personal injury, probate and tax work in addition to the general legal practice, the high standards set by those engaged in the firm in years gone by will be continued in the future.”**



Robert Hibbs



John Henry Frundt

1967 - Charles Frundt, son of John Frundt; admitted to the bar and joined the firm. Faribault County Register August 10, 1989... **“Citing a need for service. Blue Earth lawyer Chuck Frundt has become certified as a Civil Trial Specialist. According to Frundt, in answer to the public’s demand for specialization in practice, the bar association has developed specialties designed to inform the public of a lawyer’s special skills. It’s a parallel to a doctor specializing in a certain field.”**



Chuck Frundt

1973 - Michael Johnson joined the firm. Blue Earth Post February 14, 1973... **“Mr. Johnson attended the University of Minnesota for undergraduate work and also took his law degree from the University of Minnesota School of Law. During law school, Mr. Johnson clerked for the firm of Chestnut, Brooks and Burkard. He was also a Stone Scholar, tutoring first year law students while attending the second and third years of law school.”**



Mike Johnson

1982-1998 - Brian Roverud, Faribault County Attorney, was associated with the firm.



Brian Roverud

The Firm’s Recent Changes

1998 - David Frundt, son of Charles Frundt joined the firm. Faribault County Register November 30, 1998... **“Being the new fellow in the firm makes Frundt, 27, admittedly nervous, but he says the professional and intellectual aspects of the challenge excite him at the same time. “I have some pretty big shoes to step into and I hope I can fill them,” he said. “I also want to serve the area as well as my family has in the past.”**

1999-2004 - John Engels associated with the firm.

2004 - Karl Frundt, son of Charles Frundt joined the firm. Faribault County Register October 25, 2004... **“Working at Frundt and Johnson has also shown me (Karl Frundt) the dedication and strong work ethic required to practice law. This is one of the benefits and attractions of a rural community - instead of three areas of law, I’ll be working on a dozen.”** Karl Frundt is currently practicing in Colorado.

December 24, 2004 - John Henry Frundt died. Eulogy written by son, Chuck Frundt... **“Dad loved the law and the practice of law. He enjoyed his clients. He enjoyed the daily contact with people and was good at it. He wasn’t afraid of taking on a difficult or unpopular case. He was always passionate in his approach to the case and I think he was a great advocate for his clients.”**

2007 - Daniel Lundquist associated with the firm. **“I am looking forward to serving the clients of southern Minnesota. I believe my knowledge and background in agriculture will be a real asset to the firm. My wife, Jenny, and I are pleased to be putting down roots and raising our family in a community similar to Wheaton where we were raised.”**



David Frundt



John Engels



Karl Frundt



Daniel Lundquist

TO THE PRESENT

ATTORNEYS



Charles Frundt



Mike Johnson



David Frundt



Daniel Lundquist



STAFF (left to right)

1st Row - Gerry Ziegler, Amy Crosby, Carolyn Neinhaus
2nd Row - Denise Pfaffinger, Julie Davids, Mary Ehrich,
Melanie Humburg, Molly Henningsen

www.frundt-johnson.com



Blue Earth Office
Open Monday-Friday
8:00 am - 5:00 pm

100 Years continued

Mike Johnson. It was the best move I ever made. Mike has been a mainstay of the firm since 1973 and I couldn't have asked for a better partner. Mike and I decided at one point that he would take the office practice and I would concentrate on litigation. This has worked out very well, allowing each of us to gain a specialist certification in our respective fields. We were able to keep our tax practice going because we hired Melanie Humburg, a summa cum laude graduate. Melanie has been an excellent probate and estate paralegal as well as our tax practitioner for over 20 years.

In 1982 we expanded to four attorneys and hired Brian Roverud as an associate. Brian became a partner when John Frundt retired. Brian's interest in politics eventually led to his full-time position as County Attorney, which necessitated his resignation from the firm.

I was very proud when my son David joined the firm. It has been a wonderful experience to be in the practice with him and to have the rare opportunity to be part of a four generation law firm. I was doubly pleased that my son, Karl, was able to be part of the firm from 2004-2006. After Karl moved to Denver in January 2007, we hired Daniel Lundquist. Daniel grew up in Wheaton, Minnesota and graduated in 2005 from William Mitchell College of Law. Daniel spent a year and a half practicing with a litigation firm in Mankato before deciding to come to Blue Earth. I hope that David and Daniel can have a long and a rewarding practice together like Mike and I have.

I would be remiss if I didn't recognize that the work of a law office could not be done without a dedicated professional support staff. We have been very fortunate to have had long term secretaries such as Ag Doyle, Audrey Baum, Babe Hamre Toppin, Geraldine Ziegler and Denise Grant. Geraldine Ziegler has been my personal secretary for almost my whole career. She worked part-time for my dad when I was in high school and also typed my high school term papers. Nina Kriewall, followed by Carolyn Nienhaus have kept our bookkeeping department in good shape. Carolyn also helped us enter the electronic age with her knowledge and skill with computers. Denise Pfaffinger headed our real estate support staff for years before becoming a licensed abstractor. Her work and dedication have helped us provide quick and accurate turn-around service. Marlene Schaal served dad, Mike and I for many years as our paralegal for probate and tax, until Melanie Humburg took over. Julie Davids is our first and only litigation paralegal and has been with us for 12 years. Mary Ehrich has kept us all cheerful and organized as our front desk secretary for a number of years. Amy Crosby and Molly Henningsen have been valuable private secretaries. Terri Colby has been a contract media consultant and has assisted us with numerous special projects for many years. We could not have built and preserved our practice without them and the many others who have worked for us in the past.

I cannot tell you how important all of the members of the firm and the staff have been to me and to my family. We are very proud to have been able to serve generations of clients over the years and we hope that the firm will continue to be privileged to serve the people of Faribault County for years to come.



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