

# JOHN W. BELL

Retired

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**Laura Malachowski**

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John W. Bell, a Shareholder and co-founder of Johnson & Bell, has retired.

Mr. Bell concentrated his practice in product liability and defense of complex/catastrophic litigation, with a focus on defense of personal injury litigation. Mr. Bell's experience is vast, including high-profile cases, now featured in many reputable law journals. *The Best Lawyers in America* has included Mr. Bell each year since 1995. *Chicago Lawyer* magazine named him one of the "Top 20 Tort Defense Lawyers in Chicago." Additionally, *Chicago Magazine's Super Lawyers* named him in 2009 as one of the "Top 10 Attorneys in Illinois." In 2016, Mr. Bell received the Defense Attorney Achievement Award at the *Jury Verdict Reporter* Trial Excellence Awards.

Mr. Bell has also been featured in the *National Law Journal* for successful defense verdicts, most notably for one of the best defense verdicts of 2000. A frequent faculty speaker to various professional associations, Mr. Bell authored articles on various aspects of trial practice. He was past president of the American Board of Trial Advocates Illinois Chapter, and was chosen as one of "Chicago's Best Lawyers of 2013." He was a Fellow of the [American College of Trial Lawyers](#), which recognizes the very best trial lawyers from the United States and Canada.

Read our profile of "[The Engineer](#)" – part of our "Originals" series celebrating Johnson & Bell's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

## **ADMISSIONS & EDUCATION**

### **ADMISSIONS**

Illinois Supreme Court  
U.S. Court of Federal Claims  
Federal Trial Bar, Northern District of Illinois  
U.S. District Court, Central District of Illinois  
U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois  
U.S. District Court, Southern District of Illinois  
U.S. District Court, Northern District of Indiana  
U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Wisconsin

### **EDUCATION**

Loyola University, J.D. (cum laude), 1971  
Northwestern University, B.S., 1968

## **AFFILIATIONS**

Fellow of International Academy of Trial Lawyers  
Fellow of American College of Trial Lawyers  
Past President of American Board of Trial Advocates Illinois Chapter  
International Association of Defense Counsel Trial Academy at the University of Colorado, Boulder, CO, faculty member, 1994  
American Bar Association  
Chicago Bar Association  
Illinois State Bar Association  
Illinois Trial Lawyers Association  
Hellenic Bar Association of Illinois  
The Society of Trial Lawyers  
Defense Research Institute (DRI)  
Illinois Association of Defense Trial Counsel (IADTC)

## **HONORS**

The Best Lawyers in America - each year since 1995  
DRI magazine feature, "Member of the Month," 2002  
Featured in the National Law Journal for successful defense verdicts, including most notably for one of the best defense verdicts of 2000  
Illinois Super Lawyers 2004-2022  
"Top 20 Tort Defense Lawyers," Chicago Lawyer, January 2003  
Chicago Lawyer magazine named one of the "Top 20 Tort Defense Lawyers in Chicago"  
Jury Verdict Reporter recipient of the 2016 Defense Attorney Achievement Award  
Leading Lawyer 2003-2022

## CLIENT RESULTS

[Bell, Geiser Secure Judgment for Defense in \\$7M Retaliatory Discharge Dispute](#)

[Johnson & Bell Scores Major Product Liability Win for Table Saw Manufacturers](#)

[Bell Receives Directed Verdict in Favor of Commonwealth Edison](#)

[Bell Receives Not Guilty Verdict For Commonwealth Edison](#)

[Bell Prevails in Direct Participation Claim Against Parent Corporations](#)

[Seventh Circuit Affirms Summary Judgment for Ladder Manufacturer](#)

[Bell and Rantis Obtain Defense Verdict in Brain Injury Case Against Major Ladder Manufacturer. Plaintiff Sought \\$18 Million.](#)

## PRESENTATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

### PRESENTATIONS

Association of Equipment Manufacturers

“Lessons Learned in the Courtroom,” Product Safety & Compliance and Product Liability Seminars, Westin O’Hare, Rosemont, IL, April 29, 2010

Chicago Bar Association:

“Cross-Examination for the Defendants,” 1983

“Proving and Disproving Damages in Personal Injury and Wrongful Death Cases,” Illinois Institute for Continuing Legal Education, March, 1985

“Defense of Crane Contact Electrocution Cases,” Continuing Legal Education Seminar, Proving/Disputing Plaintiff’s Damages, September 29, 1988

“Proving/Disputing Pain, Suffering and Disability,” Continuing Legal Education Seminars, Oct. 30, 1990

“Summer Boot Camp for Aspiring Litigators, Closing Arguments,” Aug. 19, 1994

“Deposition Strategies,” May 8, 1995

“Trends in Personal Injury Litigation/Wrongful Death,” The CBA Young Lawyers Section’s Trial

“Superstars on Presenting Your Case,” Oct. 16, 2009

City of Chicago - Department of Law:

“10 Rules for Effective Depositions,” Chicago, Illinois, November 15, 2005

Defense Research Institute:

“Fire & Casualty Seminar, Defending and Mitigation Damages in the Large Property Damages Case,” Phoenix, Arizona, 2003

“Becoming A Preeminent Trial Lawyer, Handling of the Defense Economist or Life Care Expert; Plaintiff’s Opening Statement,” Chicago, Oct. 1, 2005

“Handling of the Defense Economist or Life Care Expert; Third Defendant’s Closing Argument,” Damages Seminar, Las Vegas, Nevada, March 16-17, 2006

“Preeminent Lawyer - Superstars of Trial Seminar, Handling of the Defendant’s Economist or

Life Care Expert,” Sept. 28-30, 2006

“Empathy, Sympathy and Kindness from a Defense Perspective,” Damages Seminar, Las Vegas, March 17-19, 2010

Edison Electric Institute:

Denver, Colorado, October, 1985 Fireman’s Fund Insurance Company

Advanced Casualty Seminar, "Handling of the Defendant's Economist or Life Care Expert," Oct. 6, 2006

Illinois Defense Council:

22nd Annual Defense Tactics Seminar, "Demonstrative Evidence in Product Liability Cases," March 8, 1986

2010 Claims & Defense Tactics Symposium, "Trends in High Exposure & Complex Tort Litigation," March 25, 2010

Illinois Institute for Continuing Legal Education:

Interrogatories, 1979

Drafting Interrogatories, 1981

Defense Preparation and Trial Procedures, 1982

Preparation of a Products Liability Case-3d Party Actions, 1982

Illinois Trial Lawyers Association:

Education Seminar, Products Liability/Wrongful Death, January 11, 1992

Education Seminar, Defenses and Instructions – "Defendant's Perspective", January 9, 1993

Education Seminar, Product Liability Litigation – "Examination of Experts at Trial, Defendant's Perspective", January 8, 1994

Education Seminar, "Defenses of Misuse, Assumption of Risk, Employer Liability, Statute of Repose," Jan. 13, 1996

Mr. Bell was also a faculty member of the International Association of Defense Council Trial Academy at the University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado, 1994

National Electrical Manufacturers Association:

Crisis Management – "We've All Been There," Chicago, Illinois, September 13, 2005

SAE International: Product Liability Overview: "Claims, Defenses and Damages," Downers Grove, Ill., Nov. 14, 2005

## **PUBLICATIONS**

John W. Bell and Robert R. McNamara, "And The Defense Wins," DRI, Feb. 29, 2012

John W. Bell Section of Litigation American Bar Association Trial Practice 2008 – "A Defendant's Perspective on Settling Cases During Trial"

John W. Bell and Kevin G. Owens National Law Journal, "\$94 Million Crane-Collapse Award Erased," October 2003

National Law Journal, "Defense Wins in Brain Injury Case," September 2002

John W. Bell and William G. Beatty National Law Journal, "The Best Defense," March 2001

"Court Douses Fireman's Suit; City Wins the Same Case Twice," Chicago Lawyer, February 1998

Chapter Writer: IICLE Interrogatories, 2006 and 1998 Revisions, "Averting a Crisis in Product Liability," Illinois Bar Journal, 1977

Chapter Writer: "Illinois Civil Discovery Practice," IICLE, 1979; November and December, 1983, November, 1994

Chicago Bar Record, "Defense of Back Injury Cases," reprinted in July, August 1984 Case and Comment