

The Last **WORD**

By Edward J. Walters, Jr.

IPSE DIXIT: MIGHT BE A LAWYER IF...

So, I'm in the Wal-Mart, in Galliano, in the checkout line, in a T-shirt and shorts, and the cashier says, "You a lawyer?" Is it that obvious? It certainly wasn't because of what I was buying: fishing tackle . . . fish hooks, corks, some VooDoo Shrimp and The Deadly Dudley Mauler Shrimp.

What is it about us? Do we exude something different? What makes folks think we might be lawyers?

Well, the other night — in the middle of the night — I was flipping through the standard 500 channels, trying to find something to fall asleep to, and I landed upon Jeff Foxworthy explaining how "... you just might be a redneck . . ." You know, "If you own a home that is mobile and five cars that aren't, you just might be a redneck." Funny stuff.

I thought about why I couldn't get back to sleep and I realized it was because I was thinking about an upcoming court appearance. Then, this article came to me:

If you've ever been unable to fall asleep in the middle of the night because you're arguing, in your mind, a motion you are going to argue tomorrow morning, you just might be a lawyer.

If you've ever gotten up in the middle of the night and dashed to your office to make sure that case doesn't prescribe TOMORROW!, you just might be a lawyer.

If you've ever left your coat hanging on the back of your chair so your senior partner would think you must be just down the hall, you just might be a lawyer.

If you've ever put on the same blue pinstriped suit that your co-counsel put on the first day of a jury trial, you just might be a lawyer.

If you've ever gone from a paper calendar to a computer calendar and want your paper calendar back, you just might be a lawyer.

If you've ever sat through the judge's oral reasons for judgment and thought, "He must have attended a different trial," you just might be a lawyer.

If you've ever gotten to the end of spending an hour writing a KILLER brief and your computer freezes and won't speak to you, you just might be a lawyer.

If you've ever been in court and thought to yourself, "That is the dumbest argument I have ever HEARD," you just might be a lawyer.

If you've ever been in court and thought to yourself, "That is the dumbest argument I have ever MADE," you just might be a lawyer.

If you've blamed your new phone system for the fact that you did not return that call, not your long lunch at Galatoire's, you just might be a lawyer.

If you've ever called someone back during lunchtime because you really don't want to talk to them, you just might be a lawyer.

If you've ever thought (on Monday), "Hey! We've got time — this ain't really due until Friday," you just might be a lawyer.

If you've ever thought (on Wednesday), "Hey! We've got to get ON this — it's due Friday," you just might be a lawyer.

If you've ever thought (on Thursday), "Hey! This damn thing is due TOMORROW!!!," you just might be a lawyer.

If you've ever been on the Internet looking at the top 10 funniest news bloopers when your senior partner walks in, you just might be a lawyer.

If you've ever gone to court and realized you have NO IDEA what your client looks like, you just might be a lawyer.

If you've ever fussed at your staff for not putting that treatise back on the shelf where it belongs, only to find it under a pile of mail on your desk, you just might be a lawyer.

If you've ever corrected something that you thought was very poorly written and then found out that YOU wrote it, you just might be a lawyer.

If you've ever been in a deposition and took your shoe off and now you can't find it, you just might be a lawyer.

Well, I'm going back to sleep. Maybe next time I go to the Galliano Wal-Mart, I'll wear a coat and tie.

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The Louisiana Bar Journal is looking for authors and ideas for future "The Last Word" articles. Humorous articles will always be welcomed, but the scope has broadened to include "feel-good" pieces, personal reflections, human interest articles or other stories of interest. If you have an idea you'd like to pitch, email LSBA Publications Coordinator Darlene M. LaBranche at dlabranche@lsba.org.