

### No Prince Charming

"He swept me off my feet. My home was filled with roses. We had a fairy tale wedding. Then it started. I almost never had a day where I did not have bruises. When they were on my face, he bought me special make-up to cover them," said "Jill," a recent client of Fred Soucie's, whose identity is confidential.

It took Jill 15 months to leave her wealthy and successful husband. Like many abusive spouses, he would have cycles of promising to be better and cycles of anger and abuse. He isolated her from friends and tried to get her to quit her job. Pinching, pushing, and hitting were a normal part of his behavior.

Fearing for her safety, Jill obtained an Order for Protection and moved into a secure apartment building. She had sold her home and given up most of her work when she married and was emotionally and financially drained by her experience.

A friend recommended she talk to Fred Soucie. At first she was not sure what a personal injury attorney could do.

"From the start, Fred was totally honest with me," said Jill. "He invited me to tell my story and I could tell he was very upset that someone could do that to a woman. Fred is very protective. But he knew very few of these abuse personal injury cases are successful and they can be painful for women. He told me he would research the case, think about it and get back to me."

Fred could not resist helping Jill obtain justice. It was not an easy case and Jill needed a lot of support during the depositions. Fred and Christopher Hoffer, another attorney at Soucie & Bolt, were with her during every step of the way.

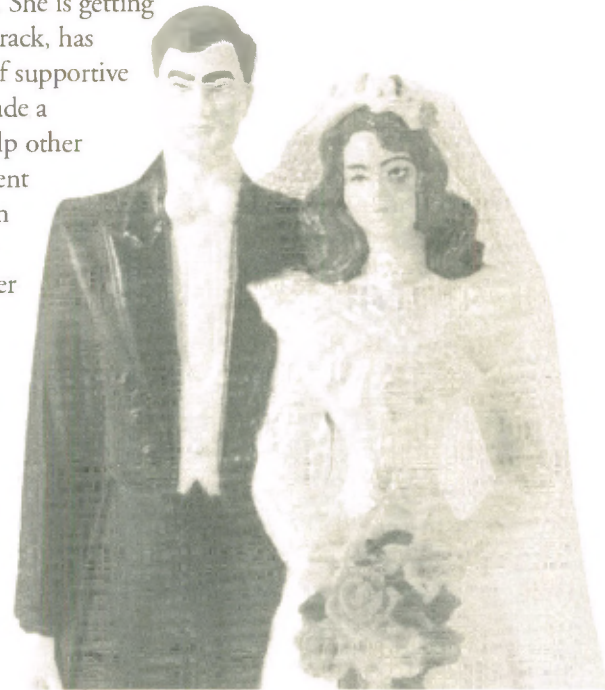
"The staff is incredible," Jill said. "They could not do enough for me. Even when I was totally tongue-tied or embarrassed trying to explain some of the things that happened, Fred would walk with me down the halls or someone would get me some water and we would take a break. They could not have been more supportive."

The case ended up settling just before it went to trial. Jill received a settlement that helped her get back on her feet financially and replace the home she had sold. She is getting her work back on track, has rebuilt a network of supportive friends, and has made a commitment to help other women escape violent relationships. When asked about advice she would give other people in abusive relationships, Jill said, "I know they are scared. But they can get out. There is support and help out there."

### Accolades in the office

We are delighted to announce that both Fred Soucie and Dave Bolt have been named Super Lawyers™ by Minnesota Law & Politics and Mpls St. Paul Magazines yet again. This honor is awarded to a small group of attorneys in various practice areas, nominated by their peers and selected by a blue ribbon panel.

Fred Soucie was also selected as one of the "Top 100 Lawyers," in Minnesota by the same panel.



*...because bad things happen to good people*

# SOUCIE & BOLT

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## **We Support: Alexandra House**

The Alexandra House is one of 13 shelters in the metro area and is the only battered women's shelter in Anoka County and the north metro area. Their mission simply stated is "to end domestic violence." We support this organization for many reasons but mostly because we have seen first-hand the great work they do. We've worked with clients who have needed the shelter and were able to get the help they needed from Alexandra House.

Anoka County women and families receive priority with a guarantee of shelter regardless of bed space availability. The average length of stay is 16 days, yet many women and families remain in shelter for up to 30 days due to lack of safe, affordable housing and other barriers they face. The families served by Alexandra House represent every

economic, cultural, educational and lifestyle diversity.

Alexandra House became the first domestic violence service provider in the state to offer an on-site school for children and youth. Certified teachers with Anoka-Hennepin School District #11 teach the children and youth in a classroom setting. By providing this service, children and youth are able to maintain a daily routine and stay current with class work while remaining in a safe, secure environment.

One of the other programs they offer is the Community Program which serves women and families who may not need shelter, but need assistance with the legal system, filing an Order for Protection, support groups or intervention services after a police call or hospital stay. This program served over 1700 clients in 2004, in addition to the

766 women and children who received shelter. Through the Community Program, they also provide youth/teen violence prevention services in the Anoka-Hennepin and Spring Lake Park school districts. This includes classroom presentations and one-on-one support services to youth who are dealing with violence in their lives whether at home or in a dating relationship.

To make donations to Alexandra House, checks can be mailed to P.O. Box 49039, Blaine, MN 55449-0039 or call (763) 780-2330. The 24-hour crisis line is (763) 780-2330.

*As always, if you know of someone who has been injured or killed in an accident, car collision, electrical or power line incident, or other circumstance that requires expert legal help, please call us at 763 427 8888.*