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Industry News: B&R owner receives The Donald C. "Mac" MacDonald Award.

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B&R owner honored by NAPPS

Frederic A. Blum Recipient of the Donald C. 'Mac' MacDonald Award at the 2005 Annual Meeting in Scottsdale, Ariz

By Alan H. Crowe

Few members can match the dedication that Fred Blum has given to NAPPS in the 23 years since its founding. I remember quite vividly our first convention in Denver in April 1983. We were at the historic Brown Palace Hotel. Andy Estin was chairing the meeting and seated behind him at the head table were Mac MacDonald, Fred Blum, and Bud Herren.

Almost a quarter century later, Fred still has a seat at the head table. Born in Philadelphia in 1950, he graduated high school at age 16 and set his sights on becoming an airline pilot. That turned out to not be a good choice because the airlines had their pick of trained pilots who had started coming home from Viet Nam. Through his father, who worked in the Prothonotary's Office (Clerk of the Court) in Philadelphia, Fred got a job working for an individual who did filing for lawyers. The job lasted only a few months. He quit when Christmas came and the guy didn't have the money to pay him.

The experience he gained in dealing with the courts and lawyers was valuable. A believer in personal contact, he set out to sell himself and his business. His first client paid him \$10 week to do his court filing. That was 38 years ago and he still has that client. In 1971 they formed B&R Services for Professionals, which eventually expanded into the umbrella for a variety of legal support services—investigation, process serving, court filing and court reporting. His various companies currently employ approximately 40 office and field personnel, six of whom are NAPPS members.

The year 1975 was a turning point for Fred. He began communicating with California process servers who informed him of CAPPSS. He was anxious to join and in 1976 he traveled to Sacramento to attend his first CAPPSS convention. He estimates he has attended another 15 CAPPSS conferences in the intervening years. Fred was one of 42 process servers who met in Las Vegas in 1982 to form an association to fight a proposed change to Rule 4 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure which would permit service by mail. At that meeting he was elected secretary of the newly formed National Association of Professional Process Servers (NAPPS).

Having known Fred since we first met at that first NAPPS convention in 1983 and having worked with him on a multitude of projects, I offer my list of the accomplishments I believe more than qualify him as a worthy recipient of the coveted Donald C. "Mac" MacDonald Award.

1. His successful lobbying efforts to get the Pennsylvania Supreme Court to change PA Rule 400 so that any person over the age of 18 could serve original process in Philadelphia County. This emergency rule, applicable to Philadelphia County only, was put into effect in 1990 and made permanent in 1998
2. The success he and I had in meeting with legislators in Washington, DC, in 1994 and influencing the language in the Crime Bill that allows process servers DMV access to drivers' personal information
3. The enormous contribution he has made to establish relations with the UIHJ and be a participant in the meetings where he has influence over the decisions being made that affect our industry
4. The joint effort that we made in conceiving and getting approval for private process servers to take on the responsibility of serving documents that originate in foreign countries and are served in the U.S. in accordance with the Hague Convention and other treaties. It took almost 5 years for the DOJ to accept our idea, then another 5 years to get it implemented. Fred spent a considerable amount of his own money, not to mention political capital, in getting these meetings arranged
5. His service as an officer and director of NAPPS. He has been elected President five times, has had a seat on the board for each of the past 23 years, and during that time has never missed a convention and only one board meeting

Fred and his wife Joni, married for 28 years, have one son, Jeffrey Blum, who has recently entered the business with his dad. He attended his first NAPPS convention this year in Scottsdale. Their daughter, Remi, has blessed them with their first grandchild, Kylie. A lifelong muscle car buff, his 4-car garage usually houses at least one exotic car in addition to a muscle car and several others. Fred's interest in the genealogy of his family and ancestors has taken him throughout the United States, Canada, and various European and Eastern European countries. He has become so good at tracing ancestors that he now volunteers his time to the International Red Cross Holocaust Tracing Service in finding and reconnecting families displaced from WWII. This is the second time Fred has been honored with a prestigious award for his contributions to the process serving industry. In 1998 CAPPSS awarded him its highest award, the Bert Rosenthal Memorial Award.

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