

Hackett New Farr President
Partner heads 81-year-old law firm

PUNTA GORDA -- Jack O. Hackett II has succeeded Guy Emerich as president of Farr, Farr, Emerich, Hackett and Carr, Charlotte County's oldest and largest private legal practice, the firm announced Wednesday.

Both men are partners in the 81-year-old firm, and Hackett is its fourth president. Emerich served as president for nine years.

Known as the "big dog" among area legal firms, Farr has handled many high-profile area cases and continues to represent prominent businesses and individuals. Hackett served as counsel for the Babcock family in its negotiations to sell the 91,000-acre Babcock Ranch to Kitson & Partners.

A past president of the **Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce**, Hackett was a governor's appointee on the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council. He has served as president of the Charlotte County Bar Association, chairman of the executive council of the Florida Bar General Practice Section, a member of the Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division Board of Governors. He is also a past chairman of the Florida Bar's 20th Circuit Grievance Committee C.

"I am deeply honored that the firm has selected me to follow in the footsteps of Earl Farr, Drayton Farr and Guy Emerich as the leader of the Farr family," Hackett said in a press release. "They are certainly large shoes to fill, but I still have Drayton, Guy, and the rest of my partners to help guide the firm."

Emerich, who was named one of "Florida's Legal Elite" in a 2004 Florida Trend magazine survey, will continue to serve as a director on the firm's executive committee and "will continue to practice full time to service the legal needs of our firm's clients," he said.

"Jack is very well respected inside the firm and outside in the community. I believe he will be an outstanding president as the firm continues its growth," Emerich said.

Hackett joined the firm in 1979 after earning his Bachelor of Arts and Juris Doctor degrees from the University of Florida. He is board certified in real estate law and also focuses on corporate and business law. He is admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court, U.S. Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals, U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida, and Florida state courts.

He served as a Republican State Committeeman in 2000, when he helped settle a dispute over some overseas ballots filed in Charlotte County during the presidential election. In 1996, he served as one of two Charlotte County delegates to the Republican National Convention in San Diego.

Founded in Punta Gorda in 1924 by the late Earl D. Farr, the firm has 16 attorneys and offices at 99 Nesbit St. in Punta Gorda and 1160 S. McCall Road in Englewood. Its legal services focus on personal injury and wrongful death; commercial and civil litigation; marital and family law; real estate and title insurance; estate planning; business; land use/environmental law; taxation; elder law; and asset protection.

The firm also participates in the development of the business, social and cultural climate of the region. After Hurricane Charley in 2004, for example, it donated 80 books to each of the 10 elementary schools in the district.

"The success of the firm has always been built on great lawyers, great staff, and great clients," Hackett said. "I intend to continue that tradition on my watch."

For more information, visit the firm's Web site at www.farr.com.

By DAN MEARNS

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