

A lawyer for the little guys

Jay Kirksey, 34, has been racking up an impressive resume in civil cases.

By Ron Davis News Leader

This has been Jay Kirksey's summer.

First, the attorney from Bolivar sued two Division of Family Services workers and a juvenile officer in Springfield on behalf of a woman with epilepsy who had her son taken away by the state.

Next, he sued the Barry County prosecutor for Johnny Coffey, mother of Josh Carlisle, the boy with Down syndrome who was lost in the woods near Cassville in March 1996.

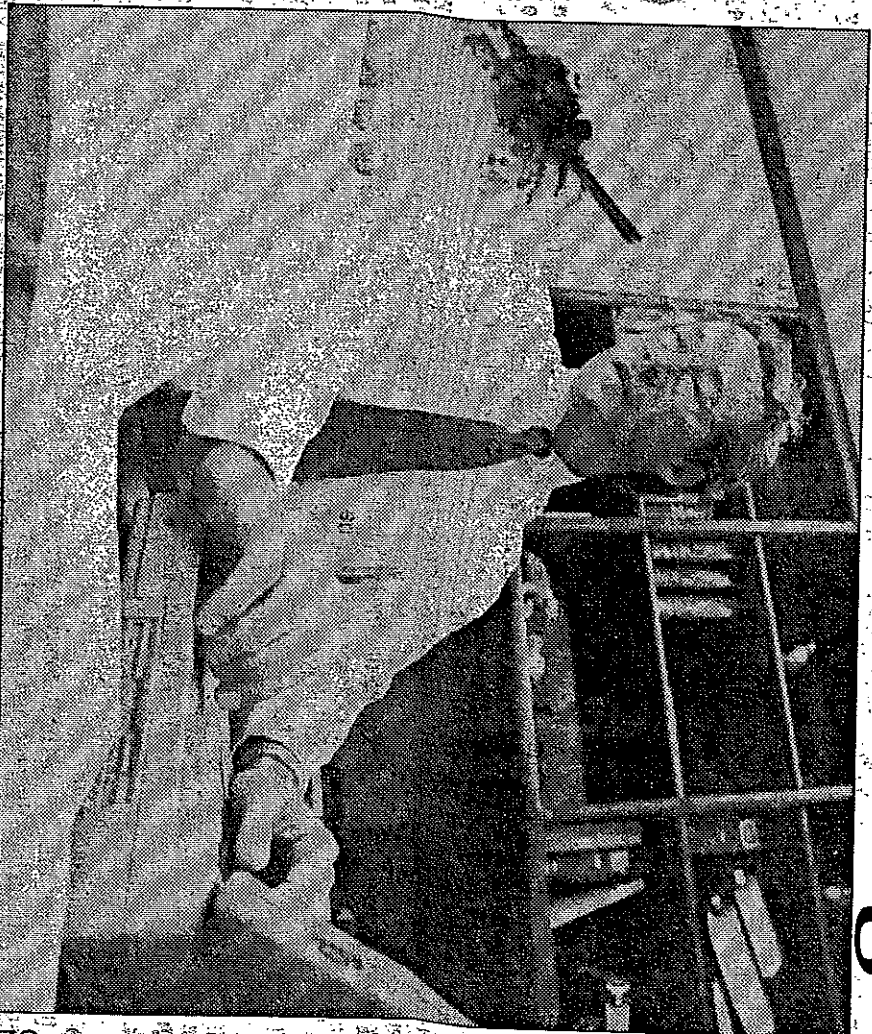
And then Kirksey was hired by a southwest Springfield church to sue the city and the owners of Remington's, a huge country-western nightclub now under construction.

In the local legal world, where criminal-defense lawyers usually get the lion's-share of media attention, civil attorney Jay Kirksey is fast becoming a standout. But his "overnight success" has been more than seven years in the making.

Kirksey used to be with Woolsey, Fisher, the once-mighty Springfield firm that dissolved a couple of years ago. While there, Kirksey worked on cases against Remington, the weapons manufacturer.

"They had a bolt-action rifle, Model 700, that had a slight problem," Kirksey says. "The gun would fire without someone actually touching the trigger."

The lawsuits took Kirksey to far-flung places; he recalls a five-week



The Jay Kirksey file

- Born June 30, 1963
- Married to Kathryn; children, Tanner, 2, Emma, 10 months
- Attorney with Douglas, Lynch, Hahn & Kirksey in Bolivar
- Professional motivation: "Doing the best I can. Cleaning the bathroom was my job as a kid."
- Personal observation: "Now that I have children, I think I'm getting goofier."

dominant law firm.

He had a local connection: His father, Jerry, was a longtime area

and I hated it, but even cleaning a bathroom, you have to ask if you've done the best you can do. As long as you have, that's all you can ask.

Personal observation: "Now that I have children, I think I'm getting goofier."

north by two things: the reputation of Douglas, Lynch, and Bolivar's

Lawyer Jay Kirksey of Bolivar is making a name for himself by working a number of high-profile civil lawsuits. Kirksey expected to

continue in Little Rock, but he was lured back to the Ozarks, where his father lives, by the reputation of the law firm he would join and by Bolivar's quaintness.

Christina Dicken News-Leader

this went "and I just started cracking up." Kirksey says. "All I could think of was, if only my friends from Little Rock could see me now."

If they could, they would see this: a 34-year-old litigator considered even by his courtroom antagonists as a real comer.

Jay's an honorable fellow," says Ransom Ellis III, who has been Kirksey's opponent in several employment cases. "He's all right. Kirksey attributes his emerging public success to his life growing up as a coach's son. "I loved the compe-