

# Jackson Law Group wins landmark case against VA

Staff Report

A Wytheville law firm has won a landmark court case against the Department of Veterans Affairs in Roanoke. The Jackson Law Group won more than \$793,000 on behalf of the estate of William Lovell, of Max Meadows, due to medical malpractice that stemmed from a routine surgery.



**Jackson**

Lovell was a Vietnam veteran whose helicopter was shot down three times while serving our country in the line of duty; he survived each time. But when he went in for gallbladder surgery on January 30, 2012, his life would change in ways he and his family never expected.

“He went in for surgery at the VA hospital in Salem, Virginia,” explained attorney Tom Jackson. “There were no indications anything went wrong, and he was discharged.”

When Lovell arrived home, he began having problems. He went to the hospital twice, and medics transferred him to Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital. He died 10 days later from what doctors there say were complications from the surgery he’d had in Salem.

“His female companion, Joyce Wertman, was devastated,” Jackson said. “She came to us and asked what could be done. She wanted the VA’s doctors to be responsible for what happened.”

Joyce sued the VA on behalf of Lovell’s estate. He has two surviving sons.

After four years of litigation, the family got the closure they’d been looking for on January 24, 2017, when U.S. District Judge Michael Urbanski issued an opinion in Roanoke federal court in favor of Lovell’s estate. Judge Urbanski held the United States liable for medical malpractice in the amount of \$793,428.78—the amount requested by the plaintiff. The court ruled that the VA’s surgeons violated the standard of care in causing the injuries that were the proximate causes of Lovell’s death.

“It’s vital our veterans receive quality healthcare

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