

Women shed tough professional shells to socialize with armadillos

by Briggs Adams

No dues. No officers. No rules.

"We resist all efforts for people to try to impose structure on us," said Linda A. Weaver, a charter member of the Armadillo Club.

The Armadillo Club, an informal women's social network, has only two criteria for membership: "You must be an attorney and you must practice in the insurance coverage area," said Weaver of Killgallon, Carlson & Simkus.

For those who meet the requirements, membership in the Armadillo Club provides "totally social camaraderie and networking," according to Weaver. "We have no social objectives or any kind of redeeming qualities because there are other organizations already established that accomplish that," she said.

The Armadillo Club evolved after a handful of insurance coverage attorneys gathered for lunch "four or five years ago," Weaver said.

"We started inviting other friends and they started inviting their friends," she said. "Basically, anybody who inquires can join,"

she said.

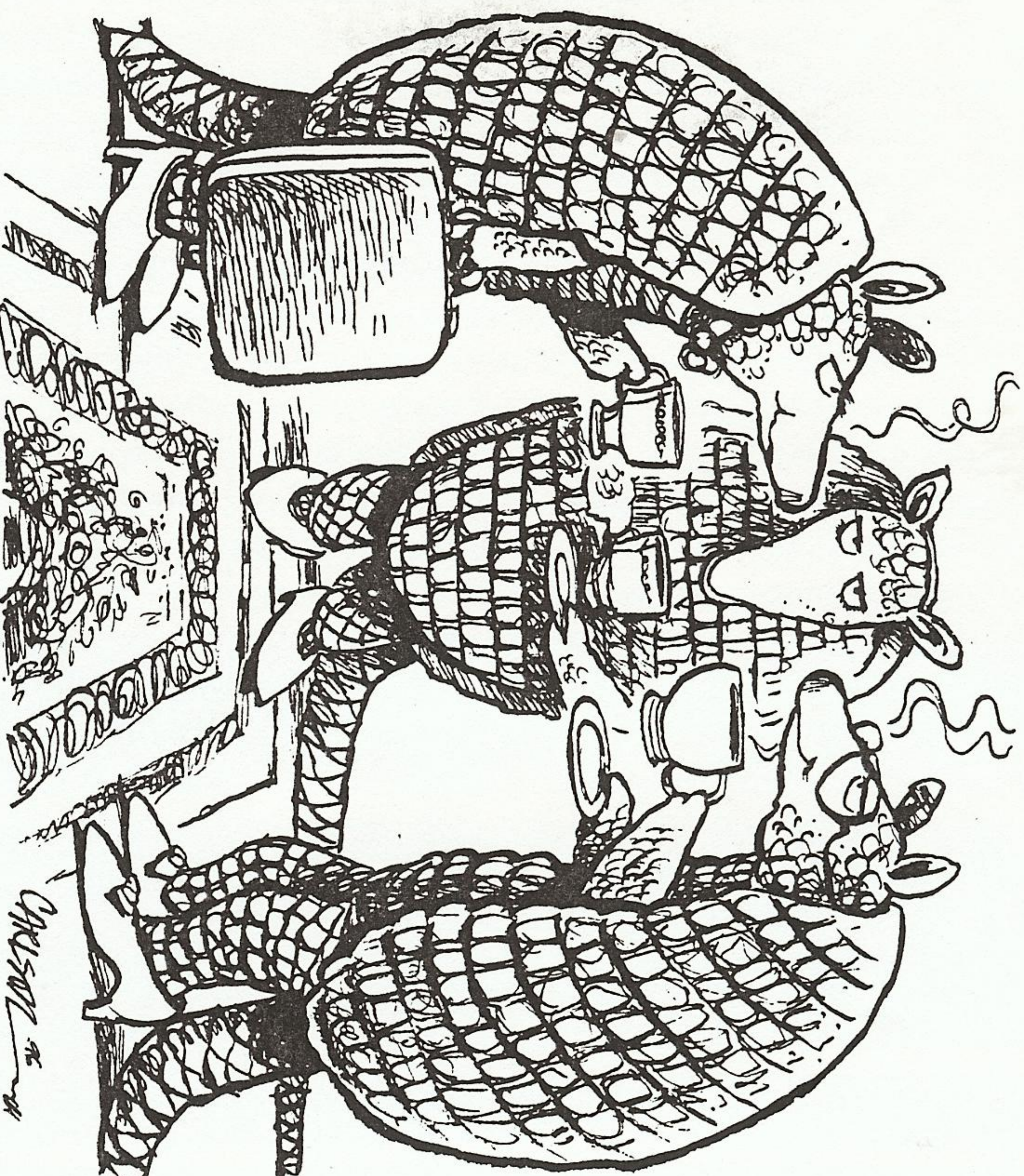
The club's roster now numbers more than 50 and includes lawyers from Tressler, Soderstrom, Maloney & Priess; Querry & Harrow; Bates, Meckler, Bulger & Tilson; Baker & McKenzie; Burditt & Radzius; Haskell & Perrin, Clausen Miller; Robbins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi; Williams & Montgomery; Killgallon, Carlson & Simkus; Peterson & Ross; Caron, Greenberg & Fitzgerald; Vedder, Price, Kaufman & Kamholz; Merlo, Chapello & Douglas; Schiff, Hardin & Waite; Lord, Bissell & Brook; Bollinger, Ruberry & Garvey; Tribler & Orpett; and Hinshaw & Culbertson. Corporate counsel are also in the ranks.

"We try to avoid talking about work, but occasionally we do talk business," Weaver said.

Weaver posts sites for the monthly lunches in the Armadillo Announcements, a monthly mailing for members.

"I also try to include little tidbits of information, job openings or somebody's sister who is graduating from law school," she said.

Weaver said the Armadillo Club



has no dues and probably never will.

"It's free of charge as long as I can afford a stamp," she said.

The club also has no officers because all the members are considered equal, Weaver said.

"It's just purely enjoying being with each other and staying in touch with the people within the legal community in our area," she said.

The club does not discourage men from joining, Weaver said.

"We do have men supporters, too," she said. "In February we had a Sadie Hawkins luncheon

where the members invited the men who practice in insurance coverage to come. And the few brave souls that did, I think they really enjoyed it."

So how did the Armadillo Club get its moniker?

"We went for several meetings without a name," Weaver said.

"Then somebody came up with an insurance endorsement which precluded coverage for bodily injury caused by an armadillo in excess of 50 pounds, so we decided that was a good name for our club," Weaver said. *

was that everybody wanted something small that really could be useful to them."

Attendees include women

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Schwartz & Freeman

Also showing no signs of letting

business owners and executives

potential client, you know you're not going to be sold services. It's there to help the participants rather than to be a sales pitch. The relaxation and the casualness

because it's a small group, those people who are shy or quiet are not afraid to speak up. We may not know each other's names, but we get to know what each other does.

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