



JOANNE ROSS WILDER

Dec. 8, 1942 - Nov. 14, 2011

MEMORIES OF A FRIEND

by
Thomas Wolfrum

All who knew Joanne—her husband, Bruce, her son Charlie, Academy Fellows, her law partners—know that with Joanne's passing they have lost a very special person.

Joanne was the best at everything she did: Editor of the Academy Journal, author of a Pennsylvania Practice Series, adjunct professor, wife, and mother.

The AAML Foundation is bestowing a scholarship in Joanne's name to be given annually to ____.

Joanne worked tirelessly as Editor in Chief of the Journal. In her many years as Editor in Chief, Joanne published countless Journal articles by well-known and highly regarded Fellows and academics. She worked constantly to improve the quality and professional reputation of the Journal for the next generation.

Simply stated, Joanne was the consummate law journal editor. She personally proofread every article, which was truly a daunting task.

Joanne was born in Rochester, N.Y., grew up in Baltimore, and worked as a fashion model while earning her undergraduate degree in College Park at the University of Maryland in 1964. Her mother was a social worker and her father an insurance agent. After college, she became a social worker until she entered law school.

She was one of three women in a class of 250 students at the University of Maryland where she earned her law degree in 1969. Graduating from law school in 1969 was no small task for women. The women in the class had to walk two blocks from the school to use a bathroom because the school had no restrooms for women. There were no female professors.

She was a legal scholar who taught for more than a decade at the University of Pittsburgh. Joanne was an outstanding role model for female and male lawyers.

In 1970, she married Bruce Wilder, a neurosurgeon, the love of her life. Her other love is her and Bruce's son, Charlie. In 1972 Joanne and Bruce moved to Pittsburgh where Dr. Wilder completed his residency. Joanne managed the Homewood office of Neighborhood Legal Services. In 1973, she met her future law partner, James E. Mahood, then a second-year law student. In 1978 they formed Wilder & Mahood and were law partners for 31 years.

Besides the Journal, Joanne enjoyed partnering with the best current matrimonial lawyers to teach trial advocacy skills to new family law lawyers.

Joanne practiced life and law with elegance, charm, and strength.

The consensus of Fellows is that there is no other attorney whom they would rather model. Joanne was a brilliant lawyer, beautiful woman, loving wife and mother, and genuinely caring human being. She practiced law with great intellect and great passion.

Joanne will remain alive in the hearts of Academy Fellows and in the hearts of many others. Those of us who knew her are better

people because of her. The Academy is a better organization for her having been a part of it.

*Down the Academy streets and roads
Come many Fellows who advance
the cause of families and family law.*

*There was once a special Fellow, a beautiful yellow haired
Outspoken lady lawyer, who shared her many gifts.
When she passed we all mourned one of our favorites.*

*All around the sad news spread, the
Yellow haired outspoken lady lawyer was gone.
Never to edit, never to advance her clients' interests.
Those of us who remain know, we will never see her likes again.*

*Now her show is over, her curtain's down
Her flame no longer burns.
But wherever Fellows gather, she will be remembered
For all her songs, her joy, and all she added to our lives.*

