



In Memoriam

Shirley Stevens, Former IDC Executive Director Passes Away

Shirley Stevens was so much more than the IDC Executive Director during her 16 years of service (1992-2007). She was the heart and soul of the organization, our rock, and a friend to us all.

In truth, without her the IDC would have ceased to exist. It was fortuitous that, when the organization suffered one of its darkest times, we found a leader of such high integrity and character. Shirley's commitment to the IDC and all those who served over the years was critical. She led with her unique combination of grace, style, and extraordinary competence. She worked tirelessly, advancing the organization, our mission, and our message. Shirley helped so many IDC members grow into, and successfully navigate, leadership positions, and she did so with ease—deftly handling the challenges of annual leadership changes.

Our dear friend and colleague Shirley managed all of these challenges and successes with sincere joy and a smile—always with a smile, and an innate understanding of the challenges of running a volunteer organization. While balancing different personalities and approaches to leadership year in and year out, Shirley got a lot of things done. She guided the IDC with deft but gentle direction, and in so doing, quite naturally saw to the needs of the organization and its leaders.

Shirley helped lead the IDC through an important era by masterfully solidifying our financial base, advancing our mission and membership, and raising the organization's profile through many organized events and publications. Reflecting on this era brings back exceptional memories of growth and collegiality, including annual fall and spring seminars, and Trial Academy. Many of us still fondly recall the great times in Lake Geneva, Galena, and Oakbrook. Long before mandatory CLE, Shirley was cutting edge in her shepherding of the "Rookie Seminar," providing a forum for IDC to shine doing what we do best—sharing our talents in the training of young lawyers from our many member defense firms.

She also began the Thursday night Executive Committee dinner meeting tradition—what great fun, laughs, and planning were accomplished at these easy, largely impromptu gatherings. Of greater personal remembrance are the solid friendships and sincere professional understanding and respect that these gatherings fostered. Shirley provided a forum for strengthening relationships, contributing so effectively to even greater and broader IDC accomplishments and growth.

Shirley was a woman of fascinating interests and pursuits—she was truly "one of a kind" and never sat still for long. As a young woman, she was an airline stewardess. She and her husband Gary, a life-long pilot, flew together to many locations, for many years. Knowing Shirley, we envision that while Gary was the pilot, Shirley was almost certainly directing the show from off stage—just as she did for the IDC, no matter who held the title of "president" in any given year. It seems so fitting of her generous spirit, with thoughtful attention to those under her care, that, in her last days, Shirley urged Gary to purchase an airplane he had been eyeing for some time—"no excuses!" she said. As always, with her kind but firm hand, Shirley reached her goal... and Gary has a new airplane.

Shirley once fondly revealed that she kept "a warm place in her heart" for every IDC president with whom she served. In fact, she made each and every one of us feel that we held that special place in her heart. We all maintain a warm place in our hearts for you too, Shirley.



About the IDC

The Illinois Association Defense Trial Counsel (IDC) is the premier association of attorneys in Illinois who devote a substantial portion their practice to the representation of business, corporate, insurance, professional and other individual defendants in civil litigation. For more information on the IDC, visit us on the web at www.iadtc.org or contact us at PO Box 588, Rochester, IL 62563-0588, 217-498-2649, 800-232-0169, idc@iadtc.org.