

Memorial: Winifred Wylie Edwards (1931–2005)*



¶1 Winifred “Winnie” Edwards, librarian at Streich, Lang, Weeks & Cardon law library in Phoenix, Arizona, passed away peacefully on October 6, 2005, after a long illness. When I posted the announcement to the Arizona Association of Law Libraries (AzALL) discussion list, I received many beautiful e-mails and phone calls sharing memories about Winnie. One such e-mail was from an AzALL member who was still in library school when Winnie retired from the firm in 1996, but remembered hearing her name mentioned during several different law library events. That says a lot about this marvelous lady who packaged spunk and intelligence into one.

¶2 Education and learning were an important part of her life. Winnie held a bachelors degree from Stanford University, a masters degree in library science from the University of California at Berkeley, and a doctorate in microeconomics from the University of Texas at Dallas. She was a member of Phi Beta Kappa.

¶3 I first met Winnie when I came to Streich Lang for a job interview in 1987. Little did I know that she would be my *Reader’s Digest* “Most Memorable Person” before the term *mentor* came into vogue. The library had just received a donated computer to replace the antiquated Cardex file, and the Lexis “red box” was still a valued tool in law libraries all over the land. She was an enthusiastic instructor, never put off by my leaning over her shoulder, pulling up a chair to watch her on Lexis and Westlaw, or asking one question after another. We would write out the research strategies in advance, stringing dot-command sentences or combining Boolean terms like a game, hoping for a “best time.” Winnie was one of the few people I have met in life who knew that “Salve!” meant more than a simple “Hello!” It was then that I learned she had been a high school English and Latin teacher before entering the world of law librarianship. Winnie shared her

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knowledge and encouraged staff who were pursuing library science degrees, as well as those who were not.

¶4 Winnie was an active member of the law library community. She was a member of AALL and AzALL when it was known as the Phoenix Area Association of Law Libraries (PAALL). She served on several committees and as an instructor at the annual Legal Research Institute. On many occasions Winnie commented that PAALL members were the best. She never forgot how helpful the law library group was when she first started working at Streich Lang, and she thought PAALL was a great acronym for just such a generous group of professionals. She served as PAALL president in 1993–94. In typical Winnie fashion, at the start of her term as president she banged the gavel to signify the start of a new chapter year and remarked, “Now, let’s roll up our sleeves and get to work!”

¶5 Winnie was awarded the AzALL Distinguished Member award as well as a chapter lifetime membership. She was the consummate volunteer, once trekking up a wooded hill with her husband Ralph to deliver a mattress to a needy family when there were no passable roads available. She loved roses, reading, and scholarship, and in retirement was a member of the University of Oregon’s Learning in Retirement program and the Assistant League of Eugene, Oregon. To sum up a lifetime of accomplishments in a few paragraphs does not do justice to a lifetime such as this. She exemplified extraordinary leadership and dedication over a lifetime of service. “Salve, Winnie!”—*Charlotte Graesser Henderson*¹

1. Library Services Manager, Quarles & Brady/Streich Lang LLP, Phoenix, Arizona.