

## Memorial: Maurice D. Leon (1911–2007)\*

¶1 Maurice D. Leon, Professor Emeritus of Law at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, died on March 7, 2007, at the age of ninety-five. He was known to family, friends, and colleagues as Maury. Following his tenure as director of the UW Law Library from 1969 to 1982, he enjoyed twenty-five years of active retirement.

¶2 Maury was born in Chicago, Illinois, on July 27, 1911, to David and Esther (Chevalier) Leon. As a young man, his dream was to be an artist. To fulfill his love of art, he attended the Layton School of Art in Milwaukee while working at the Milwaukee Public Library. Maury said the Depression of the 1930s interfered with his art career because he had to go to work. Fortunately, his love of books and perpetual desire to read and to learn prevailed, resulting in his job as government documents librarian at the UW Law School until World War II. During the war, Maury served with the Army 33rd Division in the Pacific. Upon his return to Madison, he attended law school and received his law degree in 1948. He became the foreign documents librarian and then the social studies librarian at Memorial Library. He returned to the law library in 1956 as associate librarian, at a time when the law school was still housed in its original nineteenth-century building.

¶3 Named director of the law library in 1969, Maury led the library into the era of technology. With the advent of the first computer-assisted legal research services, he was very proud that the UW Law Library was one of the first in the country to venture into automation and provide access to these services to law students and faculty at no charge. Maury was an ardent proponent of students learning computerized research. Another source of pride was the library's unique criminal justice collection, which he described as one of the best in the country.

¶4 Upon his retirement in 1982, Maury pursued his love of art by taking classes at UW. His return to art was manifested in graphic arts, such as beautiful linoleum prints depicting scenes on campus and State Street. In tribute to Maury, several of his prints are on display in the law library conference room.

¶5 In addition to a lifelong love of art, Maury was an enthusiastic vegetable gardener, a prolific reader, and had a lifelong enthusiasm for learning. His intellectual curiosity and the perpetual desire for new knowledge continued until the end. At the time of his death he was listening to an audio CD titled *The History of the English Language*.

¶6 Maury is survived by Dorothy, his wife of fifty-seven years, and his daughter Ann, both of Madison. He always will be fondly remembered as a strong advocate for the law library's staff, collection, and services; as a good colleague who was always willing to offer support; and for being someone who always had an open door. He was kind, thoughtful, and a receptive listener. He will be greatly missed.—*Sue L. Center*<sup>1</sup>

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1. Assistant Director Emerita, University of Wisconsin Law Library, Madison, Wisconsin.