



Francis Edgar Maxwell

November 7, 1923 - March 21, 2017

The Honorable Francis Edgar Maxwell, retired Judge 20th Judicial Circuit, Nashville, Illinois, died March 21, 2017

Francis Edgar Maxwell (known to many of his friends as Max) was born on Nov 7, 1923, in Hoyleton, Illinois to Ruth Edgar Maxwell and Joseph Daniel Maxwell, who was then teaching school in Hoyleton.

Francis moved to Nashville after his father was elected County State's Attorney, and attended public schools in Nashville.

After graduation, Francis won a scholarship to the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, where he began his studies in 1941.

In October 1942, however, he enlisted in the Army and was sent to the ASTP program at the University of Nebraska. He then served in Battery C 156th Artillery in France, Austria, and environs, until the end of World War II. In 1944,

Francis married Joan Beckmeyer, daughter of Myrtle and Gustav Henry Beckmeyer of Nashville, his classmate in school in Nashville.

After discharge from the Army, Francis returned to the University of Illinois to

finish his law degree while Joan worked in an Abstract of Title office in Urbana. Francis was sworn in as an attorney shortly after their twin daughters were born on January 17, 1949.

Francis returned to Nashville to practice law with his father Joseph, while also managing an abstract of title company and an insurance practice.

Notwithstanding that very busy schedule, Francis was an active member of the First Presbyterian church, serving as both Elder and treasurer, the American Legion, and the Lion's Club service organizations, as well as helping to organize, and serving as president for 17 years, the memorial park district which created the beautiful park in Nashville.

He was a gifted athlete playing tennis and golf regularly, as well as enjoying other outdoor activities including canoeing with Joan and his children and others.

Francis was elected as an Associate Judge in 1966 and later was elected as a full Circuit Judge after the Illinois courts were reorganized.

He was known for his honesty, fairness and intelligence, as well as his self deprecating sense of humor, in both his personal and professional life,.

He had a knack for mediating disputes and enjoyed the confidence of his fellow judges who sometimes called upon him to effectively handle potentially difficult situations.

He enjoyed his service as a judge in the circuit, which had him holding court frequently in St. Clair County and other counties in the Circuit, and several weeks a year in Cook County (Chicago).

While not a fan of the travel involved, his service in Chicago allowed him to spend extra time with his three children who lived in Chicago at the time (all three of whom were practicing attorneys).

Francis retired in 1986 after 20 years on the bench, in part because he knew other lawyers had interest in serving as judge and there was only one judgeship available.

Francis and Joan became "snow birds" spending more and more time in and finally moving to Sarasota, Florida, first at Palm Aire Country Club, where they both enjoyed tennis and golf and outdoor activities, and in 2011, moving to the retirement community at Bay Village where they resided and Joan continues to reside.

Francis and Joan enjoyed the many activities and community at Bay Village, and Francis' sharp mind and memory continued to serve him in good stead in their bridge games.

Francis had the good fortune to remain 'on top of his game' up until the end when his spirit left him with his beloved Joan by his side at the end as he would have wished.

Left to mourn this loving man are Joan his wife of 73 years; his children Rebecca Maxwell and husband Ben Small of Tucson, Arizona; Margaret Maxwell Zagel and husband The Honorable James B. Zagel, of Chicago; Andrew Joseph Maxwell and his wife Ann Emge Maxwell, of Chicago; and Kathryn Maxwell and her husband Michael Perrino, of Tempe, Arizona; and Ann and Andy's three children, Sarah K Maxwell and her husband Josh Hutchison, Caroline M Page and her husband David Page of Chicago, and Lily Ruth Maxwell of San Francisco, and two great grandchildren Henry Page

and Genevieve Hutchison. Francis is also survived by his sister Joanne M. Marsh of Wichita, Kansas, as well as many nieces and nephews around the country.

Family members who predeceased Francis were his parents, his siblings Norman Edgar Maxwell and Charlotte Small and his aunt Charlotte Edgar Schleifer.

A memorial service will be held June 3 at 1pm at Bay Village, 8400 Vamo Road, Sarasota, Florida.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the First Presbyterian Church, 2050 Oak St, Sarasota, Florida 34237 or Lighthouse of Manasota, 7318 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, Florida, 34243.