



Tax Law Expert Was Also Piano Virtuoso

Pullman's Wetstone remembered as 'unbelievably talented'

By DOUGLAS S. MALAN

Barrie K. Wetstone was known around the state as one of the go-to attorneys when it came to estate planning and tax law questions.

The partner in the Hartford office of Pullman & Comley served on the executive committee of the Connecticut Bar Association's Tax Section, and the people he assisted through his practice often became more than just professional connections.

"Barrie had a tremendous Rolodex of clients who liked him a lot," said Morris W. Banks, a partner at Pullman & Comley and a cousin of Wetstone's. "He was more than just their attorney. He was their friend, and they liked him because he was a regular guy."

"He was unbelievably talented, and he matched that talent with incredible hard work."

Wetstone passed away on May 28 at age 72, and services were held on May 30.

Only his modest attitude made him a regular guy, Banks said. "He was completely unimpressed by anything he had done," Banks said.

Besides being an accomplished attorney, Wetstone also was a skillful pianist who was playing complicated classical music arrangements by the time he was in his early teens.

"He was unbelievably talented," said Banks, who grew up near his cousin in the Hartford area. "And he matched that

talent with incredible hard work."

Wetstone was a member of the Simsbury Light Opera Company and also sang with the Berkshire Chorale, and music was a central part of his life.

Wetstone graduated from Harvard University in 1960, and he earned a law degree from Columbia University in 1963 before earning his master's in tax law from New York University. After law school, he practiced for two years in the law firm that former Connecticut Gov. Abraham Ribicoff created, before joining the Hartford firm of Sorokin, Gross & Hyde P.C. In 2001, he started practicing with Pullman & Comley.

Banks followed his cousin's path through law school and established his own tax practice. He said the two shared an interest in tax law as they went through their undergraduate years.

As Wetstone worked hard to perfect his pianist skills, he worked equally hard keeping up on the constant changes in tax laws. "When he went home at night, he read," Banks said. "And he wasn't reading novels. He was reading tax law."



Contributed Photo

Pullman & Comley attorney Barrie Wetstone, who died in late May, was a member of the Simsbury Light Opera Company.

Wetstone's immediate family includes his wife, two married sons, three grandchildren and a brother.

D. Robert Morris, who is chairman of Pullman & Comley, said, "We will miss him as a great friend, colleague and professional of the utmost integrity. It was an honor to have worked with him." ■