

A Joint Resolution  
by  
The Board of Trustees  
Stetson University  
and  
The Board of Overseers  
Stetson University College of Law

In Honor of

**W. Gary Vause**

**W**hereas, W. Gary Vause has devoted almost three decades of extraordinary service to Stetson University and Stetson University College of Law;

**W**hereas, he is a Florida native, having been born in Tallahassee in 1942;

**W**hereas, he earned B.A. and J.D. degrees from the University of Connecticut, LL.M. and S.J.D. degrees from the University of Virginia, and a certificate in Mandarin Chinese from Yale University;

**W**hereas, he served his country as a Chinese linguist in the U.S. military;

**W**hereas, he had a successful career practicing business and labor-management law in Hartford, Connecticut, during which time he also served as General Counsel for the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education;

**W**hereas, he joined the Stetson University College of Law faculty as Assistant Dean and Assistant Professor of Law in 1975;

**W**hereas, he became a renowned legal scholar who has authored many books and articles, was elected as a member of the American Law Institute, and served as a Fulbright Distinguished Scholar in China;

**W**hereas, he rendered great service to the National Academy of Arbitrators, the American Arbitration Association, the State of Florida, and The Florida Bar's Section on Labor and Employment Law, among other organizations;

**W**hereas, he served Stetson with distinction as a Professor of Law, Assistant Dean, Associate Dean, and Associate Dean for International Programs, establishing the Center for Excellence in Dispute Resolution, Stetson's LL.M. program in International Law and Business, Stetson's Scandinavian/Baltic Institute on Emerging Markets, and Stetson's Summer Program on International Dispute Resolution in Granada, Spain;

**W**hereas, he was selected to serve as University Vice President and Dean in 1999 and has fulfilled his position with great distinction enhancing the College of Law academic program, international programs and partnerships, financial position, community and government relations, and fund-raising program, and by establishing the College of Law's part-time program and its new Law Center and Campus in Tampa, Florida;

**W**hereas, the Stetson University community wishes to share with Vice President and Dean Gary Vause and Celia Vause the thoughts and feelings occasioned by the outstanding service that they have provided to Stetson;

**Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved** by the Board of Trustees of Stetson University and the Board of Overseers of Stetson University College of Law that this resolution be adopted to honor W. Gary Vause for his selfless devotion to the affairs of Stetson University and the College of Law, his attainment of the highest standards of excellence in the legal profession and within the field of higher education, and to express our appreciation for having been privileged to work with this outstanding individual and his wife.

**Stetson University**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. H. Douglas Lee

**Board of Trustees**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph W. Landers, Jr., Chair

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*A Joint Resolution*

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Board of Overseers

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Thomas E. Stringer, Sr., Chair

Seal

This resolution was passed and adopted by the Board of Overseers on April 23, 2003 and by the Board of Trustees on May 2, 2003.



Dean W. Gary Vause, Professor John Cooper, and one of their Chinese students walking on the Great Wall of China

## “GARY, WE HARDLY KNEW YE”

John F. Cooper\*

At the memorial services for Dean W. Gary Vause, speakers and attendees alike described Gary as reserved, private, and dignified. All of these terms described one side of him, but as former Vice Dean Tom Allison accurately observed, Gary Vause was one of the most complex and multifaceted individuals he had ever met.

When I think of Gary Vause, I often think of Ernest Hemingway and his writings. Hemingway can be read at many levels. Some read his novels and short stories for the travel, the adventures, and the love of life that Hemingway’s writings evoke. Others read his writing and marvel at the simplicity of style and the strong emotions that this simplicity evokes. Literary scholars marvel at how much of Hemingway’s themes and thoughts are submerged beneath the surface of his writing, in a technique that Hemingway himself occasionally referred to as “iceberg” writing.

For me, Ernest Hemingway wrote three great books with timeless themes. The first was *A Farewell to Arms*,<sup>1</sup> where he offered a gripping illustration about how to live a passionate and gratifying life. The second was *For Whom the Bell Tolls*,<sup>2</sup> where Hemingway provided a compelling analysis about how to die with dignity. In *The Old Man and the Sea*,<sup>3</sup> Hemingway fashioned a forceful analysis of growing old with grace.

Both Hemingway and Gary Vause shared a complexity that was often misunderstood, and generally resided below the surface. Together, Hemingway and Gary Vause have been my teachers in learning how to live life, grow old, and die.

Like Hemingway, Gary Vause could function effortlessly in any foreign culture. In the early 1980s, he donned a backpack

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\* © 2003, John F. Cooper. All rights reserved. Professor and Interim Director of Graduate and International Programs at Stetson University College of Law. B.A., The College of William and Mary, 1972; J.D., University of Oklahoma College of Law, 1979; LL.M., University of Florida College of Law, 1988.

1. Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms* (Scribner Paperback Fiction 1995).

2. Ernest Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (Charles Scribner’s Sons 1968).

3. Ernest Hemingway, *The Old Man and the Sea* (Charles Scribner’s Sons 1952).

while on sabbatical and purchased an around-the-world plane ticket from Pan American Airlines. With the small backpack filled with a few personal belongings, Gary Vause visited such exotic places as Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, China, and Tibet. Travel was always gratifying to Gary. The trip to Spain was particularly rewarding because he met his future wife, Celia, in Madrid where she was studying.

Gary lived to travel and to traverse the globe. He used every opportunity to pursue this interest. After spending most of one summer teaching in China, but prior to returning to his teaching duties at Stetson University College of Law that fall, Gary traveled on his own to Inner Mongolia, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thailand, and Vietnam. Celia and he planned to retire to Fortaleza, Brazil, her hometown.

Gary had a flair for languages. While in the Air Force, he first learned Mandarin Chinese at Yale University to prepare for monitoring Chinese radio broadcasts from Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, Japan, for the Air Force. After marrying Celia, he quickly learned Portuguese.

In addition to his language skills, Gary quickly grasped and was sensitive to cultural concerns that would have escaped many. He used chopsticks like he was born with them in his hands, but he also understood that the hygiene in China was suspect, so he carried his own chopsticks. In China, reciprocal toasts at banquets were viewed as a polite courtesy, and the failure to reciprocate was viewed as an insult. At an informal gathering with our Chinese hosts, our hosts toasted our visit to their college. Although I was caught off-guard, Gary promptly responded with a gracious toast to our Chinese colleagues.

As a legal academician, Gary loved to teach, produce legal scholarship, and promote Stetson. Teaching young students was what first attracted Gary to becoming a law professor. He taught not only Stetson and University of Connecticut law students, but also law students all over the world. His teaching carried him to China several times, where he often lectured in Mandarin—once under a Fulbright grant—and to Brazil, where he taught International Law in Portuguese. Even after becoming Dean, Gary often was able to sneak in a little teaching in Stetson's summer study-abroad programs in Estonia and Spain.

Gary appreciated excellent scholarship. He earnestly believed that scholarship was the duty of every faculty member. As a

young faculty member, Gary published articles in labor law—the area in which he had practiced. These law review publications included respected articles on labor law in Vietnam and China.<sup>4</sup> However, when he recognized that international business law was becoming a prominent specialty practice in Florida, he shifted his academic writings to that area. He subsequently published a number of articles in prestigious international law journals.<sup>5</sup>

In April and May of 1989, I was a relatively young, non-tenured professor at Stetson who agreed to travel with Gary Vause to China to teach for a brief, two-month period at the Beijing College of Economics. When I was traveling with Gary throughout China during that period, our days and evenings were filled with teaching, traveling, and interacting with our Chinese hosts. We would usually retire to our separate rooms between 10:00 and 11:00 p.m. We would then meet in the morning for breakfast between 7:00 and 7:30 a.m. What I did not know then, but learned from the secretarial pool after our return, was that Gary, following our separation in the evening, would then work on chapters for a book he was authoring in *International Business*.

Upon our return from China, Gary suggested that we co-write a short article about our experiences in Tiananmen Square. The first issue of the *Stetson Lawyer* was being prepared, and the editors were soliciting timely articles. He knew I had kept a daily journal of our experiences in China, and asked me to prepare a draft article based on that journal. Some of the journal was in the first person, and most of it was very personal. I wrote the journal as an exercise of reflection on each day in China. I had never contemplated that some or all of it might be published. Nonetheless, I reviewed my journal and spliced together a chronological sequence of our experiences in Beijing at the time of the Tiananmen Square demonstrations. Without any expectations, I sent the draft to Gary. I assumed he would conclude that the article had no future and return it to me.

About a week later, I was amazed when Gary provided me an edited version of the article. He had taken my draft, separated the

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4. Stetson U. College L., *W. Gary Vause*, <http://www.law.stetson.edu/faculty/vause/default.htm> (accessed Aug. 20, 2003) (listing his various publications).

5. *Id.*

various incidents into distinct parts, and then woven around the separated parts an illuminating discussion of Chinese history and culture. I was amazed by his additions, which added such depth to the incidents I had reported. Almost everything that I had drafted survived, but it was better for Gary's commentary. The writing was seamless.<sup>6</sup>

Gary also found time to co-author a legal text with a Bulgarian lawyer, Kalina Sarmov.<sup>7</sup> Prior to immigrating to the United States, Kalina had served as counsel for Bulgarian airlines. Today, Kalina is a successful real estate attorney in Pinellas County. I doubt she would have attained that level of achievement without Gary's constant support.<sup>8</sup> Unfortunately, Kalina arrived in the United States with limited English language skills. Regrettably, this lack of language skills hindered her ability to attend law school productively. Gary mentored her as she developed her language skills. Ultimately, with Gary's support, she was admitted to Stetson. Once again, she struggled with English comprehension issues, as well as new and difficult legal concepts. She contemplated quitting many times, but Gary counseled her to persevere. Although Kalina admits that her law school experience was difficult from the day she entered law school to the day she graduated, she never gave up, and Gary never failed to support her.

Most of the achievements discussed above advanced Gary's personal reputation and only indirectly enhanced Stetson's reputation. However, Gary loved Stetson and found many ways to convert his personal interests and skills into programs that would directly enhance the reputation of the law school. Early in his career, Gary developed an interest in alternative dispute resolution.<sup>9</sup> He became a mediator and developed his mediation skills. Ultimately, he established a Center for Dispute Resolution at Stetson and organized Continuing Legal Education seminars on the topic.

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6. Gary Vause & John F. Cooper, *Chinese "Democracy" and the Rule of Law—The End of Illusion or Beginning of Change?* 1 Stetson Law. 24 (1989).

7. W. Gary Vause & Kalina Sarmova, *Business Law Guide: Bulgaria* (BookWorld Publications 1997).

8. Kalina Sarmov, *One Life in Eternity*, 33 Stetson L. Rev. 55 (2003).

9. Cary R. Singletary, *W. Gary Vause: Educator, Scholar, and Southern Gentleman*, 33 Stetson L. Rev. 59 (2003).



His interest in travel and international law also bore a rich harvest for the law school. He established summer study-abroad programs for Stetson in Tallinn, Estonia and Granada, Spain. Prior to and after selecting these sites, Gary continued to promote Stetson abroad by visiting foreign law schools in Germany, China, Thailand, Taiwan, Russia, and Australia. These visits often resulted in faculty visits from foreign lawyers and educators. In the last few years, the Stetson campus has hosted visiting scholars from China, Ghana, England, Russia, Germany, Spain, and Iceland.

As chair of the faculty's International Programs Committee, Gary spearheaded Stetson's efforts to establish a Master of Laws (LL.M.) degree in International Business at the law school. This goal was ultimately achieved when Stetson's first class of LL.M. students arrived on campus in the fall of 1998.

Despite these many commitments, Gary applied for and was appointed Dean of Stetson University College of Law by University President H. Douglas Lee in 1999. During his four-year term as Dean, Gary achieved a number of notable goals for the law school. He supervised the creation of standard rules and policies at the law school. Being a keen judge of talent, he professionalized and upgraded the law school staff, and he presided over the hiring of an impressive number of promising young scholars. He supervised the revision of the faculty merit-pay system to more effectively mirror faculty productivity.

Gary spearheaded the establishment of a part-time law program in Tampa, and he employed his keen negotiating skills to purchase land for the law school at a choice Tampa location and at a cost favorable to the law school. He oversaw the plans for the construction of the Tampa campus and leased one floor of the Tampa campus to the Second District Court of Appeal. This arrangement has the dual benefit of providing rental income to the school while enhancing the school's claim to establishing a law center in Tampa.

Gary realized that Stetson's endowment needed significant growth. He supervised the development of the Cornerstone Campaign, thereby jumpstarting the law school's fund-raising. This campaign focused on faculty needs and student scholarships. Although the campaign was still in its infancy when he died, initial contribution levels are encouraging.

This is a remarkable record by any standard. Considering Gary's rather humble beginnings, it is an epic achievement. Gary Vause was born into a rural, blue-collar, north Florida family. The Vause family immigrated to the Tallahassee area from South Carolina in the early 1800s.<sup>10</sup> His father was employed in the timber and logging industry,<sup>11</sup> and sometimes Gary's father would take him to work. As a young boy, Gary watched his father toil in difficult manual labor. Gary's father would ask, "Son, do you like doing this kind of work?"<sup>12</sup> When Gary would say, "No, I don't," his father would tell him to get an education.<sup>13</sup> So, to fund this education, Gary delivered newspapers around Tallahassee using a 1958 Volkswagen with all but the driver's seat removed.<sup>14</sup> Four Volkswagens later, Gary was the first member of his family to graduate from college, and later law school.<sup>15</sup>

Gary learned perseverance from his parents following his father's diagnosis of terminal cancer. Ultimately, his father was transferred to Hospice care when the medical authorities determined that there was no course of treatment that could improve his condition. Most Hospice patients return home, become bedridden, and slowly die. Gary's father fought back. During the six months after being released to Hospice, Gary's father hand-made wooden rocking chairs for each of his three children and several of his Hospice nurses. Hospice nurses are not supposed to accept gifts from their patients, but they made an exception in Mr. Vause's case. The rocking chair that his father made for Gary sits proudly in the Vause living room.

Gary had been born and raised a Southern Baptist. A few months before his death, Gary, who had been attending Catholic services for years with his wife, Celia, converted to Roman Catholicism. Father Bill Swengross, the priest who performed the conversion, was astonished at how knowledgeable Gary was about Catholicism. Gary had studied the precepts of his new religion well.

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10. Frank Klim, *A Life of Service*, 43 *Stetson Law* 24, 25 (Spring 2003).

11. *Id.*

12. *Id.*

13. *Id.*

14. *Id.*

15. *Id.*

But Father Swengross was also quick to observe that, although Gary had converted to Catholicism, Gary viewed this conversion as just one more step in his religious development. Gary became a Catholic because it was consistent with his religious beliefs at that time. As Father Swengross emphasized, Gary was also proud of his Baptist background and he never rejected his Baptist roots. This was easily evidenced by two of Gary's favorite hymns that were sung to him nightly by Celia, and that were played at his funeral service: "How Great Thou Art" and "Amazing Grace."

At his Stetson memorial service, Celia said that Gary had two great loves in his life. The first was Celia, and the second was Stetson. Celia claimed that she was never jealous of Gary's love for Stetson, because at least the law school was not a woman. However, while Stetson was not a woman, it did consume large quantities of Gary's time.

Gary's love affair with Stetson began in 1975 when Gary was a partner in a small labor law firm that he had established in Connecticut. While on a trip to Tampa to visit his sister Suzanne, she suggested that they visit a small law school located across the bay in Gulfport. Gary agreed, and they drove to the Stetson campus for the first time. Gary was taken aback by the beauty of the campus, and he asked Suzanne to wait in the car while he attempted to introduce himself to the Dean.

Gary walked into the Dean's office where he introduced himself to the Dean's secretary, Dorothy Bishop. Dorothy was working in the same office that she occupies today. Gary asked to introduce himself to Dean Richard Dillon. Dorothy knew that Dillon was occupied with a particularly thorny legal issue, and that he did not want to be interrupted. Gary persisted in his quiet, unassuming way, and Dorothy grudgingly relented. After being escorted into Dillon's office, Gary asked a somewhat irritated Dillon what legal issue was perplexing him.

The issue was an employment law question. As a labor lawyer, Gary was interested, and he had actually researched the question several months earlier. Gary explained the answer to Dean Dillon. Meanwhile, a puzzled Suzanne waited patiently in the car. Several weeks later, Gary was hired as a Professor and Assistant Dean at Stetson College of Law. Gary's love affair with Stetson had begun.

President Doug Lee's eulogy described Gary as a Renaissance man. It will be that man, with all his personal and professional achievements, that most will be remembered, but not to me. While I admire Gary's accomplishments as a law professor, and as a dean, the Gary Vause I will remember is not the one whose accomplishments are memorialized in bricks and mortar, or in history books. What I genuinely admired about Gary was his character, kindness, compassion, quick wit, and sense of adventure.

While Gary's academic accomplishments were obvious to all, his personality and character were submerged below his calm, reserved surface. Gary's father was demonstrative and emotional. Gary's brother and sister, Bobby and Suzanne, seemed to inherit these traits from him. Gary's mother, however, was cautious and circumspect. She also had a stoic and inscrutable nature. Suzanne believes that Gary inherited these traits from their mother. Gary merged his mother's stoic nature with his father's hardiness. He blended these traits with his own intellect, education, and savvy to become the man he was. Gary did not offer his opinions freely, and he always held his own counsel. This aloof demeanor was often misinterpreted and misunderstood by others. He was viewed by some as a dispassionate, humorless, maybe even uncaring person. This conclusion really misses the mark.

Because of his private nature, Gary tended to internalize his feelings. When his daughter GariAnn was killed by a house fire in Connecticut in 1994, Gary did not mention this personal tragedy to anyone. Instead, in the days following his daughter's death, he managed a Continuing Legal Education program. Even close friends found it difficult to approach or console him. One of Gary's closest friends and mentors was Professor Don Weckstein, a former dean at the University of San Diego Law School. Don was incredulous that Gary attended the seminar. Don also said he had never seen a man in such internal pain. Ultimately, the unreleased grief affected his physical appearance. His hair grayed quickly, and I, for one, believed he physically aged a decade in the year following his daughter's tragic death.

We will never know what motivated Gary to mask his basic nature, but at heart, he was a warm, compassionate, and caring man. At the Stetson memorial service, Celia graciously agreed to exhibit several of the many letters that Gary had written to her over the years when they had been temporarily apart. In one letter, Gary exposed a deeply romantic side. He wrote lovingly to

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*Dean W. Gary Vause Memorial*

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Celia that he was sitting at his desk, but that he could not get any work done because his thoughts kept drifting back to her. He also spoke of his loneliness and his great love for her.

As for Celia, how could anybody think that Gary lacked feeling when he was married to such a strong, caring, and loving woman as Celia? Celia was the love of Gary's life, and Gary was the love of Celia's. At Gary's funeral, Father Swengross said Gary's life was well lived. He also was well loved by a strong, exceptional, and deeply religious wife. Gary loved to teach—and Celia knew this. On the night of Gary's death, I heard Celia say something that will stay with me forever. She said, "Gary, soon you will be teaching to the angels." During the moments immediately following her husband's death, this incredible woman ignored her own pain and loss, and instead sought to comfort the others in the room.

Gary was a quietly compassionate man. This compassion often led him to make unpredictable decisions, if he felt it was the right thing to do. When Gary was Associate Dean, he had to deal with a difficult personnel problem. An employee had done something that was clearly inappropriate, and maybe even reckless, but the offending conduct was not representative of the employee's overall service. Although few could have blamed him if Gary had recommended dismissal of the individual, Gary took the unexpected course. Instead of recommending dismissal, Gary counseled the employee, emphasizing to the individual the seriousness of the indiscretion, but giving the employee a second chance. This individual went on to a successful legal career at another law school. Shortly before Gary's death, this individual wrote to Gary: "Gary, you made a major difference in my life and career. I hope you know how much I appreciate the balanced and reasoned way you dealt with me over my poor judgment—10 years ago." Few people ever knew what Gary had done for the employee. I told this story in the Stetson memorial service held for Gary on May 2, 2003. At the reception following the service, two individuals inquired whether the story was about them. Apparently, below his stoic demeanor, Gary could have a bit of a soft touch. However, I doubt that anyone ever received a third chance.

During the last week or two of Gary's life, Professor Luz Nagle and I spent time with Gary and Celia—first in St. Anthony's Hospital and then at their home. I learned a lot about Gary during this time. One evening, a young man appeared in the

hospital hallway. I asked the young man how he knew Gary. He said, "He's my father." He then said not biologically, but that Gary had raised him. Prior to meeting Celia, Gary dated a single mother with two small boys. Gary assumed their absent father's role. This father-son relationship continued after Gary's relationship with their mother had ended. The young man I met in the hall visited Gary daily. The other brother flew in from his home in Maui to spend time with Gary in the hospital.

Gary had an adventurous and inquisitive side that I still envy, and have frequently, and unsuccessfully, tried to emulate. In many ways it is almost ironic. All the caution that Gary exhibited in his professional dealings disappeared wherever and whenever he traveled. An appealing and clever wit replaced the reserve. During one of the memorial services, Gary's close friend and former law partner, Tom Sullivan, observed that to understand and know the real Gary Vause, you had to get him off campus. Apparently, geographical distance acted to soften his intense focus on his work and job.

As mentioned above, in 1989, Gary and I traveled within China as part of a faculty exchange arrangement that Gary negotiated during an earlier trip to China. I had only recently joined the faculty and did not know Gary well. From my previous dealings with him, I expected a productive, but formal business trip with limited fun; that was my first mistake.

I met Gary at the Tampa airport where we caught a flight to Los Angeles. I had previously checked two bulky suitcases. Gary arrived at the gate with a small backpack. I assumed his other luggage had been checked—but it had not. He had no other luggage. During the course of the next month or so, I swear I saw him remove from that backpack business suits, sports jackets and slacks, dress shoes, athletic shoes, books, a camera, a camcorder, and several gifts for our Chinese colleagues.

On the flight to Los Angeles, Gary struck up a conversation with a young woman seated next to us. She had started a small business in St. Petersburg manufacturing leather swimsuits. That was more than enough conversation for me, but all the way to California, Gary inquired about what leather she used, where she obtained it, how she treated it, how she cut it, and how much it shrunk after use. I remember thinking, "Who is this guy?"

In Los Angeles, we changed to a Korean Airlines flight that took us to Hong Kong via Seoul and Taiwan. While we awaited

the announcement to board the flight, Gary suggested that I stand back and wait until the boarding announcement was made. When it was, the primarily Korean passengers raced in a pack to the plane door. Gary knew that Koreans had no cultural sense of “queuing up.”

I remember arriving in Hong Kong exhausted. Gary did not want to sleep; he wanted to explore the back alleys of Hong Kong. We ate Indonesian food, priced fake Rolex watches, and bargained with vendors all over the island. I remember walking by a blind tailor, and Gary observed wryly that now he knew where Professor Tom Marks had all of his suits made. He wanted to travel to Macao, but our time in Hong Kong was too short.

We were met at the Beijing Airport by a delegation from the Beijing College of Economics. They took us for a quick Chinese meal and deposited us at the Furong Hotel. The Furong was not a tourist hotel, but a hotel for visiting workers primarily from Taiwan. Gary anxiously hurried the meal. I assumed he finally wanted to rest, because I know I did. Instead, he wanted to explore the back streets and byways of Beijing.

Gary steered me away from the large tourist hotels that excluded all Chinese, except as employees. That was not the real China. Gary spoke Mandarin, so we were able to travel through parts of Beijing typically closed to tourists. We quickly found a small restaurant located near our hotel. We had already eaten, but Gary still wanted to go inside. We entered, finding four or five nonmatching tables with plastic tablecloths. Posters of rural American scenes were displayed on the walls. The cash register was a tin box. The food was cooked over an open coal fire, and served in dishes that did not match. We may have been the first Americans ever to have stepped into this restaurant that was operated by one of the new capitalists permitted by Deng Xiaoping’s recent economic reforms. This, not a hotel restaurant, was more Gary’s style.

I had told Gary that I did not know how to use chopsticks, and this was the place Gary selected to teach me. He ordered a large plate of peanuts. I was supposed to pick up single peanuts with my chopsticks. Although clumsy at first, hunger improved my technique quickly, or I would have starved.

In this same restaurant, only warm beer was served. Gary observed that a small refrigerator was located in the corner of the restaurant to cool the makings of jiaozi—a dumpling that was a

local favorite and staple of the restaurant. Gary convinced a confused waiter to place a few beers in the refrigerator. Upon our frequent returns, we were always served refrigerated beer. Before we left China, I looked around the restaurant and saw many of its Chinese patrons drinking cold beer. This led me to my belief that Gary Vause had single-handedly introduced refrigerated beer into China.

The college at which we were to teach went on strike immediately upon our arrival. Nevertheless, the students showed up for our classes. We were supposed to teach International Business Law, Labor Law, and Income Tax Law. While the students were polite, they wanted to hear about United States Constitutional Law, particularly the Bill of Rights. At first, we tried not to offend our hosts by lecturing on the requested subjects. After a while, Gary said that we were free to answer direct questions. Eventually, the questions would start before we had even begun our lectures. In answering these questions, Gary ardently lectured the Chinese students about democracy and individual liberty.

Ultimately, we had to reschedule our classes later in the day, because so many of our students were demonstrating in Tiananmen Square. At the time, the students foolishly believed that the Chinese's "Peoples' Army" would never attack Chinese people. Gary knew the students were wrong, and it was only a matter of time before the Chinese leadership violently suppressed the student demonstrations.

Knowing Gary felt this way, I would have preferred to stay in our hotel room whenever we were not teaching. Gary would not have it. Instead, he insisted that we go to Tiananmen Square to monitor the demonstrations first hand. During the early evening of April 27, 1989, Gary and I attempted to reach Tiananmen Square using the local bus system. The traffic jams and crowds in the street eventually blocked our way, and we found ourselves walking towards the Square. The official Chinese media reported that 40,000 students participated in an illegal demonstration that evening, while western media sources placed the number closer to 200,000. Whatever the number, students and others filled the Square, and the surrounding streets were overflowing with stalled cars, pedestrians, and thousands of bicycles.

Platoons of armed soldiers in tennis shoes jogged in formation into the Square with no apparent destination or purpose, other than to intimidate the students. Chinese soldiers with bulging



heavy overcoats ran behind the Great Hall of the People on the warm evening. Chinese Army trucks packed with standing soldiers were visible all over Beijing. Gary admired the courage and conviction of the students, but feared the end was near. The end ultimately arrived on June 4th, when Chinese troops armed with AK-47 assault rifles and backed by tanks cleared the Square by indiscriminately firing against unarmed people. Although fortunately the issue never arose, I am quite convinced that Gary would have remained in the Square with the students that evening if the Chinese army had attempted to clear the square. He certainly was not intimidated by the armed soldiers who were there that evening.

To get us out of Beijing during the continuing demonstrations, the college sent us on a train trip to Inner Mongolia. We arrived in a city called Hohhot, which literally translated means "Yellow, Black City." Never was a city more appropriately named. From there, we took a day-long trip in a Toyota minivan, first on roads and then on a naked prairie, into the heart of Inner Mongolia. Power and phone lines disappeared. Children went to school on horseback. We arrived at a camp that the Chinese government had established as an exhibit of Mongolian culture. Upon our arrival, we were asked if we wanted any finger foods. I envisioned triangular tuna fish sandwiches with the crust removed. The spine of a sheep with congealed grease and buzzing flies was casually tossed on our table. We were expected to tear off the meat with our fingers. Gary acted like he ate that way his entire life.

We lived in a tent called a yurt, and housekeeping arrived on horseback. Gary took up archery. During an exhibition of Mongolian wrestling, Gary told one of the larger wrestlers that I wanted to challenge him to a match. Ultimately, I was able to extricate myself, while an amused Gary laughed. Given the opportunity, Gary decided to go camel riding across the treeless prairie. At the end of a Mongolian culture show, a red bandana was placed in Gary's right hand and he was invited to dance with the performers as the audience sang the Chinese anthem, "The East is Red."

Gary left China before I did. I always found it coincidental that the only English language menu in our hotel restaurant disappeared on the same day that he departed.

As I write these words, I am sitting in a building at the University of Granada in Granada, Spain, which was constructed in

1611 and which architecturally reflects the influence of the Muslim Moors' occupation of Southern Spain. I am teaching in the summer study-abroad program that Gary Vause, as Dean of Stetson, established for Stetson students. The topic of this program blends two of Gary's great loves. The program is called "International Dispute Resolution." One reason I was pleased to be asked to serve as resident director of the program was because Gary Vause would be teaching in the first week. I had hoped that, for a few days, Gary and I might share an experience or two similar to those we experienced so many years ago in China. Sadly, that will never happen.

In China, Gary, like Hemingway's writing, helped me learn how to live. During the last year of his deanship, Gary, like Hemingway's writing, taught me how to die. Although he had known for close to a year that he had cancer, and for several months prior to his resignation had known that his condition was terminal, he never failed to fulfill his duties as Dean. He never sought sympathy, exhibited any self-sympathy, or offered his illness as an excuse. During the final year of his deanship—and his life—Gary was confronted with two of the most difficult, emotional, and time consuming issues that he had to face as Dean. He confronted each of these issues firmly and professionally.

The first time that most members of the faculty knew that Gary was ill was when he appeared at the final faculty meeting of the 2002–2003 academic year supported by a cane. After lengthy reports were given by all of the administrative staff attesting to the healthy condition of the law school, Dean W. Gary Vause announced that he was not. He had been diagnosed a year prior with colon cancer. He indicated that colon cancer was easily treated if diagnosed early and implied that his had not been. With tremendous strength and dignity, he ended the meeting to a standing ovation from the gathered staff and faculty. Forlornly, I realized that Gary would never be able to show me how to grow old.

In the hospital and ultimately during his final days in his home, he continued to fight the disease that he knew he could never beat. Even in intense and unremitting pain, his thoughts were always of Celia. One night as Celia was preparing to leave the hospital for a brief rest at home, Gary called me into his hospital room. "Drive Celia home—and take care of her," he said. That is a request that I hope we all will honor.

## A LESSON IN COURAGE

Robert D. Batey\*

What I remember most about Dean W. Gary Vause is his courage.

Of course, like many law faculty, Gary had the courage of his convictions: When he thought he was right, he stuck to his guns, no matter what. Because we frequently disagreed, I was usually on the receiving end of this determination, as he affably, but implacably, overcame those who opposed him.

But I remember a different kind of courage, a physical one that is rare in academe. It first struck me about twenty years ago. We had a male student with serious mental problems who withdrew, then sought readmission, was denied, and asked for an on-campus meeting to reconsider the decision. The student showed up for the meeting on a warm summer day wearing an oversized leather jacket, which he would not unbutton. My first thought as I greeted him was that the jacket hid a gun or a bomb, and I was petrified.

Throughout the meeting, which was held in a small room with little opportunity for escape if the situation turned violent, I was very shaky. But Gary—fully aware of the danger—sat down near the student and rather casually asked him the questions necessary to justify our refusal to readmit him. After the student left, I complimented Gary on his exemplary behavior, but he characteristically belittled the threat he had faced so calmly.

I never forgot that episode. It made me think that Gary was a man capable of actions far beyond the ordinary. I often mused about whether he had a secret life as a government agent. Think about it: His military background, the special language training he received, his globe-trotting ways—and being a law professor would be a perfect cover for a CIA operative! These thoughts returned again in the early days of this spring when I realized I had not seen Gary in weeks. One of the things I actually considered—

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before the truth became known—was that he was off on some spy mission. A far-fetched notion, but for a man like Gary, not an impossible one.

But we soon learned that Gary was enacting a different kind of courage, one incomparably finer than my silly daydreams of derring-do. Facing a dread disease, he chose to soldier on through a rigorous course of chemotherapy, sharing his burden with very few, and enduring the inevitable petty indignities of being an academic administrator with a stoic, even good-natured, calm. And when he learned that he would lose his battle with cancer, he put his duties as Dean first, planning for a smooth transition while attempting to deceive us about his prognosis, so that we would not let concern for him obstruct our work as students and faculty or our joy in celebrating graduation.

Gary's last days were incredibly brave. He faced death with a surpassing equanimity. He was even capable of making little jokes—evoking W.C. Fields, for example, when talking about using the cane he was obliged to walk with to ward off children and small dogs—thus showing a wry sense of humor that many of us never fully appreciated. And he made a point of discussing his colon cancer, so that others would be conscious of the prevalence of the disease and the need to prevent and treat it.

After Hubert Humphrey lost his gallant fight with cancer, Walter Mondale said of the former Vice President that, “he taught us how to die.” Though I suspect Gary had little liking for either of these two politicians, Mondale's comment about Humphrey is even more true of Gary. He died with honor, humility, good humor, and good will; he was courageous to the last. It is a final lesson we should never forget.

## AN ORAL TRIBUTE ANNOTATED

James J. Brown\*

I made the oral tribute to Dean W. Gary Vause on Monday, May 12, 2003, at the Most Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church in Gulfport, Florida. The oral tribute appears on the left side of this and subsequent pages. In addition, on the right, I have annotated selected paragraphs to illuminate Gary for those who did not have the privilege of knowing him.

Celia, thank you for this honor.—Family members—Friends.

Twenty-two years of being his colleague started coming back into focus as the shocking disorientation of his accelerated final days had slowly receded. That focus was quickened by Celia Vause's request that I be one of four faculty colleagues to speak at the memorial service—a request that I assumed also reflected Gary's wishes in his final days. What had I done to earn this place of honor? How was it that I was so surprised at the call?

Initially, I knew that this honor was not based on a long and deep social friendship. Our families were friends, but not more than that. We did not gather for personal celebrations, like anniversaries. So the request had to be based on other factors, some of which I could only guess. Because Gary was a very private person, as you know from others in this issue, I will never know for certain. As I speculated, I began to visualize him.

From twenty-two years of being his colleague, I see in my mind's eye scattered aspects of Gary as ripples he created in our Stetson pond—ripples that washed

I saw in my mind's eye scattered aspects of Gary, the man. But how was I going to understand him from these glimpses? How was I to interpret these to comprehend his influence? I knew that I had to bring all of these fragments into a sharper focus to counteract the vagaries of memory and time. They were like puzzle pieces that, if assembled into a picture, would help me define Gary's strengths and influence.

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\* © 2003, James J. Brown. All rights reserved. Professor, Stetson University College of Law. B.S., University of Pennsylvania, 1960; J.D., Cleveland State University College of Law, 1964; LL.M., Washington University School of Law, 1970.

over me—so I will *organize and highlight* them now because I never want to forget them.

**In my mind's eye** is a Thanksgiving dinner, soon after his Mother had passed; there were a few non-academic friends, two students without nearby families—I see a relaxed, smiling Gary taking a big second helping of Millie's, my wife's, garlic and cheese grits—baked toasty brown on the top and crispy on the sides—he was a true Florida boy!!

**But a very special one;** I saw it in his WALK, in his BEARING, {Oh, how I longed to be so TALL}, in his DE-MEANOR.

I still see his **style, class, and dignity.** He looked and acted the role model for

Gary usually projected a dignified, reserved image. From my first meeting with him to those meetings much later, this is how I had seen him. He was not the sort of person who “gave you the glad hand” or unreservedly patted you on the back at any opportunity. Recognition, and possibly praise, was limited or reserved for special occasions—usually unexpected moments. He let you know in subtle ways that you were doing right, such as by a choice appointment, which was a sure sign of his trust in you and your judgment. Evidently, a prime source of his perceptions were his many observations of us at faculty and committee meetings. The extent to which we projected an objectivity and balance, even when opposing popular but irrational views, must have comprised Gary's judgment of us.

As the years passed, when our meetings were just the two of us, the reserve was overshadowed by a broad smile, deliberate handshake, and relaxed manner. He became animated in his demeanor while maintaining his characteristic class and dignity.

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future professionals.

In our school, I see him **affecting change** by facilitating it, not dictating it. He used suggestion most often, not the power of the offices he held. I remember a time in the mid-80s when he was Associate Dean—acting as an ombudsman to work quietly between differing sides. He affected change for this faculty.

Gary affected change, which when one is an associate dean or dean, means resolving problems that have the potential for creating time-consuming complications. I remember one instance in which some of my students became very exercised over the amount of course work I expected of them. They thought that in comparison to other courses, I was overzealous or naive about what they could reasonably achieve in any week. So, into the Associate Dean's office went the more vocal few from this second-year class seeking relief from their perceived academic burden. Gary listened patiently, no doubt, and eventually said something like this: "Well, since you have not sought to air your grievance with your professor, I will look into it for you." He would use his office as an intermediary conduit—like an ombudsman—to bridge an evident lack of communication.

Soon thereafter, Gary came to my office for a quiet, closed-door chat. I remember it as a pleasant, albeit surprising one. Gary did not rail against the students, generally or specifically, nor did he berate my efforts to cause them to explore supplementary sources to their casebook reading assignments. Instead, our conversation about the class subject matter, one that he had taught, was focused upon my academic objectives. He injected the student concerns only as a means for isolating components of my objectives. As I remember, he suggested that I might rethink my weekly assignments and expectations against those goals. He neither said that I was being too harsh nor unrealistically naive. He neither told me what to do nor suggested a different course of conduct. He merely caused me to see the various aspects of this small academic dilemma. He subtly opened my eyes to a perceptual concern to which I was blinded by my own absorption in the minutia of the subject matter. Gary caused me to come back up from that depth to realize that some of my students were not keeping up with me and that they likely were not as personally absorbed in self-learning as I wanted them to be. Of course, after my own reanalysis, I made necessary adjustments. Thus, he facilitated the exercise of academic freedom to achieve a result that was in the best interest of the professor and his students. In his last year, Gary worked a similar magic to achieve the best interest of the parties by resolving a faculty problem with the same quiet diplomacy as demonstrated to me years ago.

I speak about new initiatives, new directions for our professional growth. He achieved these improvements, once again, in understated ways.

**I see him as builder** of the school's Tampa Program—although locally approved during Dean Liz Moody's term, he personally had to convince the opposing interests in the accrediting organization of our merits. Undoubtedly, it was his exceptional self-control that carried the day. Cool, verbally precise under pressure—not flustered by the emotions of others. It's especially important not to forget this because he never let on how hard those multiple efforts were!!! *I see that he leaves us better than we were.* These aspects are the hallmarks of a **true leader.**

I see him addressing the assembled faculty, administrators, staff (all of them), and student leaders

He affected change by a welcoming acceptance of new, creative faculty ideas for specialized courses and topical concentrations. He wanted his faculty to develop their expertise.

The Tampa Law Center and Campus for part-time students was, in concept and its initial details, an effort pioneered by Dean Liz Moody, who was effectively instrumental in convincing the faculty to support its implementation for the long-term good of the school. However, when that package was presented to the national accrediting authorities, it ran into objections. It was Gary who personally advanced Stetson's case on several occasions before this national body.



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to chronicle the year's achievements, to praise the team to which he was turning over controls, and to admit, at last, his year's medical struggle. Unflinching, dry-eyed, raw courage in the face of adversity. Later, I said to Connie Evans, wife of and mother of Marines, that the presentation took the courage of a Marine; his own service, the Air Force, would have been doubly proud, I'm sure.

Finally, **I see personal qualities of self-effacing humility**: I would like to have seen, after several years of working with him, the look on my own face when I first learned of his mastery of the very difficult languages of Mandarin Chinese and Portuguese.

Of substance and depth: in professional achievement without overt self-promotion,

The most evident personal quality was his objectivity. It was evident in nearly everything produced during his administrative tenures. I saw him take pains to ensure that each side had input into any issue or policy statement. I saw an infinite patience at refining draft language so that those holding every rational position became satisfied that their views were expressed. Gary practiced objectivity as part of his refusal to entertain irrational extremes and avoid any tendency to espouse only a one-sided view.

How could he, or anyone, be so self-effacingly humble and still be a recognized expert in his field, as well as be a master of Mandarin Chinese and Portuguese? Yet he was. He never wore such achievements as medals or emblems on his sleeve. And it was some years after I had been his colleague that I came to perceive the depth of these achievements and his personal qualities.

Established as an expert by his labor-law publications, he was an arbitrator, sought after for his skills at fairness and objectivity. Those who appeared before him, remember, with respect, his ability for writing fair and balanced opinions from which each side could find comfort and relief.

he was neither “shallow” nor “media flash.”

These are Gary Vause's ripples that have washed over me—that I have highlighted tonight.

**Dignified, humble, facilitator, builder, courageous leader.** From his life, these are the standards by which I will measure my own life.

## LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP

Darby Dickerson\*

At 11:50 p.m. on May 8, 2003, Professor Luz Nagle called me at home. "Darby, I've been called back to Gary's house. I think we're probably within an hour. . . . His breathing is not good."<sup>1</sup> "Okay," I responded, "call me, no matter the hour."

That final call came at 1:10 a.m. on May 9; Professor Nagle made this call as well. "Gary just died." "Was it peaceful?" "Yes, it was."

May 9, 2003. The day of our Honors and Awards ceremony. The day before commencement, at which we were to honor Dean Gary Vause for his twenty-eight years of extraordinary service to Stetson University College of Law.<sup>2</sup> May 9, 2003. Much too soon.

Even after two months, it is still hard to believe that Gary is gone. He had so much left that he wanted to accomplish. High on that list was the anticipated completion of the new Tampa Law Center and Campus, which he had spent a large portion of his deanship ensuring would become a reality. Although Gary did not live to see that day, he has left us with a powerful spirit. He also left us with some lessons in leadership that we should not forget.

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\* © 2003, Darby Dickerson. All rights reserved. Interim University Vice President and Dean, Stetson University College of Law. B.A., M.A., The College of William and Mary, 1984; J.D., Vanderbilt University School of Law, 1988. Dean Dickerson served as Associate Dean and Vice Dean under Dean Vause.

1. Professor Nagle and Professor John Cooper stayed with Gary and Celia Vause virtually around the clock from May 1 until his death early on May 9. Jim Thaler also spent considerable time with Gary and Celia. I admire the courage and dedication that they showed during this difficult period. It is wonderful to know that we have such amazing people at the law school.

2. As I mentioned during Gary's mass on May 13, my last visit with Gary was on May 3 at St. Anthony's Hospital. John Cooper called me that morning and indicated that I should come to the hospital. Fearing the worst, I stopped by the office to pick up the beautiful Stetson Medal that we were to present to Gary at the May 9 graduation. John Cooper, Luz Nagle, and I presented the medal to Gary in his hospital room. I could tell that Gary was very touched by the medal. We took the medal out of the box and put it around his neck, while Celia snapped a couple of photographs of a smiling Gary. On May 9, Dr. H. Douglas Lee, President of Stetson University; Joseph W. Landers, Jr., Chair of the Stetson University Board of Trustees; and Judge Thomas E. Stringer, Sr., Chair of the Stetson College of Law Board of Overseers, presented Celia Vause with the medal and with a joint resolution honoring Dean Gary Vause. The joint resolution appears earlier in this issue.

*LEAD BY EXAMPLE*

Gary was a quiet leader. He did not go around telling people how to do their jobs or use his deanship as a soapbox for his views and positions. He was relatively quiet during meetings, and tended to spend more time listening and thinking than talking. Gary chose to lead with his actions; he gave us an example to follow. Gary exemplified a rare combination of quiet grace, dignity, and honor. He worked hard, he was dedicated, and he was unfailingly loyal. He was courteous and collegial. He honored his word. He showed us how he hoped we all would act on a daily basis, and he set an outstanding example of what it means to be a true professional.

*THE INSTITUTION COMES FIRST*

Gary always put the College of Law first in his decision-making. He did what he thought was best for the school, even if that choice conflicted with what might be in his personal best interest. The only times I saw Gary show any degree of anger or frustration were when he believed that others were trying to harm the college or university. His selflessness was but one trait that made him a strong and effective leader.

*DO NOT BE AFRAID TO CHANGE YOUR MIND*

Although Gary held strong opinions on some issues, he did solicit input on important matters and would listen to and consider opposing views. He did not appoint “yes” men and women to serve as his advisors; instead, he wanted to hear the conflicting opinions. More than once, he told me about something he was considering. More than once, I expressed some degree of disagreement or suggested an alternative. More than once, he revised his position—whether in substance or timing—after listening to my view. I did not always think Gary was listening or had heard me—but he was, and he did. Again, what was important to Gary was that he make the best decision for the school. It did not matter whether that decision originated with him or with someone else, or whether the best idea came at the beginning of the process or closer to the end.

### WORK HARD

Gary was a workaholic and that was the main characteristic we shared. For better or worse, we were often at school on weekends and holidays, and we were both morning people. Even when Gary was not physically at work, we often traded e-mails at what most would consider odd hours—5:00 a.m., 11:50 p.m., etc. Gary worked hard because he loved his job and he loved the law school. He developed a strong work ethic during his childhood<sup>3</sup> and maintained that ethic until he died. Gary knew that working hard was the way to get ahead in life; he equated hard work with success. It is thus fitting that our last conversation—on May 3 while he was in St. Anthony’s Hospital—concerned a new project the school was about to launch.

However, it was not enough for people merely to go through the motions or to put in long hours. Instead, Gary valued results. He was known as a person who could make things happen and bring about positive conclusions—and he looked for that same trait in others. Many of us will remember him by the phrase that he used during his “State of the Law School” address in August 2002—“Forward Momentum.”

### VALUE LOYALTY, BUT DO NOT BE BLINDED BY IT

Gary was extremely loyal. He would stand by people through good times and through bad. He did not speak badly about his friends or colleagues. However, he was not blinded by loyalty. If his sense of loyalty to a person conflicted with his loyalty to the institution, loyalty to the institution would win.<sup>4</sup>

### KEEP CONFIDENCES

Gary hated it when matters discussed in confidence spread through campus; I always assumed that was part of his military intelligence background and training. He could keep a confidence and expected others do to so as well.

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3. Frank Klim, *A Life of Service*, 33 *Stetson L. Rev.* 35 (2003).

4. Gary was also loyal to his country. He served in the military and was very patriotic. A picture of our Nation’s Capitol hung behind his desk in the Dean’s Office. He almost always wore an American flag on his lapel. Although he traveled the world, he believed in “buying American.” And, one of his last official acts was to invite Dr. Susan Demers to sing “God Bless America” during the Spring 2003 Commencement.

*JUDGE PEOPLE ON THEIR MERITS*

Gary judged people on their merits, not on their race, ethnicity, or gender. He promoted women and minorities to important positions in the administration because he truly believed that the institution would be best served by having them in those roles. Thanks to Gary's leadership, women and minorities are better represented in the school's administration today than in any time in the school's history.<sup>5</sup>

*TAKE RESPONSIBILITY*

After taking my first trip to Key West, I gave Gary a replica of the Harry S. Truman desk sign that says, "The Buck Stops Here." One day, I went into Gary's office and noticed that he had replaced the word "Stops" with "Starts." That was Gary; he always took full responsibility for matters that affected the law school. One example of Gary taking responsibility occurred during the first few weeks of my arriving at Stetson as an assistant professor. I was supervising several adjunct professors, and one was not working out as we had hoped. When I spoke with Gary about this in his role as Associate Dean—fully expecting that I would need to make that unpleasant phone call—he asked me for the pertinent facts, and indicated that he would make the call. He had signed that person's contract, and he was not going to put an untenured professor in the uncomfortable position of terminating a school employee.

Another example occurred just a few weeks before his death. A difficult and unpleasant message had to be delivered. Although Gary very well could have asked me or someone else to handle the matter—especially given his precarious physical condition at the time—he came in and handled the matter himself. He was the leader; he understood that it was his responsibility to make those difficult calls and to have those difficult conversations. Although he did not relish them, he never shied away from them.

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5. Gary appointed women or minorities to the following positions during his deanship: Vice Dean, Associate Dean, Library Director, Assistant Dean for Admissions, Associate Vice President for College Relations, Associate Director of Continuing Legal Education, Registrar, and two Directors of Centers for Excellence. Some of these positions had never been held by a woman or minority.

*NEVER PLACE BLAME IN PUBLIC*

I know that most people who worked for Gary did things—whether intentionally or unintentionally—that he wished we had not done. Not once, however, did he place blame or make derogatory comments about those missteps in public. And, more often than not, he supported our decisions regardless of the consequences. When an action was egregious enough that he wanted to ensure it would not be repeated, he acted more as mentor than accuser and privately counseled the individual regarding the conduct he expected in the future. We all appreciated this fact about Gary; it allowed us to perform our jobs the best we knew how, always knowing that Gary would support us and would never speak badly about our decisions in front of others.

*REMAIN CALM WHEN CHALLENGES ARISE*

Gary led Stetson during an interesting time. We grew and prospered, but we faced our fair share of challenges. But Gary remained calm, especially to the outside world. He was so stoic. I can still visualize that slight nod of the head and the smile he would put on. He had a masterful poker face. He was never excitable, never out of control—even at the end. When Gary publicly revealed his medical condition to the campus on April 23, 2003, he did so with a level of courage I had not seen before. Although I am sure that he felt personal frustration and disappointment about his condition, he never let it show. He discussed his condition with dispassion, and always gave us the sense that everything would work out just fine. He said more than once that if he had to come down with a disease, he was glad it was cancer, because it gave us time to plan a smooth transition.

The same was true of how he led on a daily basis. If someone made a legal threat, he calmly invited them to contact the law school's attorney. If he learned about bad news, he calmly gathered pertinent facts to make a deliberate, considered decision. He did not let events control him or how he responded to them.

*CONCLUSION*

Not everyone agreed with all of Gary's decisions or supported his vision for the school. Most, however, admired him for the quiet leadership that he demonstrated day in and day out, even during that last year when he was so very ill. We should learn from the

leadership lessons he taught us in his quiet way, and we should consider how much stronger Stetson is because of what Gary gave us.<sup>6</sup>

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6. Although Gary's last job at Stetson was as Dean, he was a teacher until the end. "A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops." Mitch Albom, *Tuesdays with Morrie* 79 (Doubleday 1997) (quoting Henry Adams).



## A LIFE OF SERVICE

Frank Klim\*

Even as a youngster, Dean W. Gary Vause knew something about lawyers. He knew something else, too—he did not want to work in the timber industry, like his father did.

W. Gary Vause, University Vice President and Dean of Stetson University College of Law, died May 9, 2003 at his Gulfport home, one day before Stetson's 103rd Spring Commencement. He recalled his youth and highlights of his lengthy career during an interview conducted a few weeks before his death.<sup>1</sup>

“When I was a boy in Tallahassee, back in the late 1940s and early 1950s, it was really something to be a lawyer,” Dean Vause recalled. “A lawyer was a statesman, a leader in the community. I really looked up to the lawyers I knew through my father and my family.”

But it was Dean Vause's father who motivated his son to pursue a good education. The elder Vause was a hard worker and a good provider, but he had not had the luxury of an education. He earned his living through hard labor in the logging and timber industry. Sometimes the elder Vause would take his young son along to the work site, where he would carry water to weary workers and do other chores.

“My father would say, ‘Son, do you like doing this kind of work?’ I would always say, ‘No, I don't,’” Dean Vause said. “His answer was always the same—‘if you don't get an education you'll be doing this for the rest of your life.’ That was the biggest incentive I had to get out there. I knew I had to work and get a college education.”

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\* © 2003, Frank Klim. All rights reserved. Executive Director Communications, Stetson University College of Law. B.S., Northern Michigan University, 1976.

Mr. Klim has received numerous journalism and communications awards from various organizations, including the Associated Press, International Association of Business Communicators, Public Relations Society of America, and 3 CMA.

1. Interview with Dean W. Gary Vause, Dean of Stetson U. College of L. (Apr. 2003). This Article is based on an interview between Frank Klim and Dean Gary Vause, conducted two weeks before his death. This Article was also published in the *Stetson Lawyer*. Frank Klim, *A Life of Service*, 43 *Stetson Law*. 25 (Spring 2003).

The Dean's education began in the same six-room Tallahassee elementary school his mother had attended. The Vauses could trace their Tallahassee roots to the early 1800s, when family members moved to the newly established north Florida capital city from South Carolina. The Vause Tallahassee farm remains in the family to this day.

Wanting a college education was one thing, but financing it was another. Gary Vause began his college-tuition strategy while he was still attending Leon High School. With a loan co-signed by his father, he bought a new 1958 Volkswagen and used it to deliver newspapers before and after school. During the next four years, he would rise at 4:00 a.m. daily and deliver the Tallahassee morning newspaper, *The Florida Times Union*. After school, he would deliver the *Tallahassee Democrat*.

"At one point, I had about one thousand papers on my route," the Dean recalled. "I would remove the passenger seat to get all those papers into the VW."

During his last two years of high school and then his first two years at Florida State University, a young Gary Vause traveled over 200,000 miles of county roads and used up four Volkswagens. But he had accomplished his goal—he earned enough money to become the first member of the Vause family to attend college.

After two years at Florida State, the Cuban Missile Crisis made international news, and Gary Vause felt a strong sense of duty.

"In my family, we have a long tradition of military service," he said. "Being twenty years old, I felt it was my turn, so I enlisted in the Air Force." After a series of tests in various areas, the Air Force recommended a more extensive series of language tests. Gary Vause scored on top, and found himself in a one-year language program at Yale University.

"The Air Force gave me the option of studying Russian, Korean, Chinese, and others," he recalled. "I chose Chinese. I would wear my uniform to class. I studied Chinese all day and studied more in a lab at night."

After completing the Yale program, the young airman was sent overseas as a part of a small intelligence unit that monitored Chinese Air Force communications. After his overseas tour of duty, Sergeant Vause was assigned to a base near Springfield, Massachusetts. In January 1963, after an honorable discharge, he went directly to the University of Connecticut, first to complete

his Bachelor of Arts degree, and then to earn his Juris Doctor degree. While at the University of Connecticut School of Law, he edited the *Connecticut Law Review*, “enjoyed some good clerking experience,” and developed an interest in collective bargaining law.

Upon graduation, the Dean had offers from several law firms, but he decided instead to open his own practice in Hartford, Connecticut. “I was out of school for about six months when the University of Connecticut asked if I would teach a course in labor law,” he said. “I taught as an adjunct for four-and-a-half years. I really liked it a lot and gained a lot of experience in practice at the same time.”

During that time, his law firm was growing at a rate of one new lawyer per year. But in 1974, after a number of years as a successful attorney, he traveled back to his home state to take the Florida Bar exam. Afterwards, he visited his sister Suzanne, who then lived in Tampa. While on an afternoon drive together, the two decided to visit Stetson University College of Law.

“I had heard a lot about Stetson and wanted to see it,” he recalled. “So we stopped by with no appointment, and there sits Dorothy Bishop at her same desk. I asked her if the Dean was available. She gave me a rather serious look and said, ‘Do you have an appointment?’ I said, ‘Well, no, actually I don’t.’ But she went in and talked to the Dean and came back and told me the Dean would see me. It was Dean Richard T. Dillon.”

“During that conversation, Dean Dillon told me about a problem he had with a new federal law. It just so happened that was what I did in my practice. We sat down together with the problem and, in about fifteen minutes, I gave him the answer he needed. So that’s the way we started our relationship—pure serendipity.”

A few months later, Dean Dillon asked Gary Vause to join the Stetson faculty as Assistant Dean. Dean Dillon wanted someone who had a combination of teaching, publication, administrative, and practical experience. The firm of Vause, Sullivan, Lettick and Schoen lost its founding partner, but the team would remain close friends.

When Dean Vause joined Stetson in August 1975, the student body was comprised of about 400 students. The school had three full-time administrators—the Dean, Assistant Dean, and Business Manager. “I handled anything the Dean needed me to handle

and taught one or two courses per semester,” he said. “I enjoyed the combination of teaching and administration.”

Stetson’s faculty carried a very heavy teaching load, making it very difficult for members to find the time to publish articles. Most other law schools faced the same challenges in those days, Dean Vause said. “We subsequently made the decision, Dean Dillon and I, to hire faculty members who could bring more publication and scholarship to the classroom,” he said. “We recognized the need to change the profile of Stetson.”

Stetson’s profile has changed significantly since then. Many programs were built out of a catalog of international contacts established by Dean Vause, who was frequently sought out by foreign governments and educational institutions to teach or lecture.

“I saw an important priority to develop a profile on the international scene for Stetson,” he said. “Many law schools had developed summer abroad programs, but we had none. We did not have graduate programs. We had an occasional speaker on international matters. I had taught International Business Transactions since 1985, and I could see that there was growing interest in that. I began to push hard for summer abroad programs, for formal exchange programs with foreign universities, for official visitation programs, and for an LL.M. program in International Law. They all came to fruition.”

Dean Vause continued to pursue Stetson’s international profile when he became Associate Dean of Graduate and International Programs in 1997, and when he was named Stetson’s Vice President and College of Law Dean in 1999.

“The school has changed dramatically since my first days and has become much more competitive,” he said. “As the years passed, law applicants became more demanding, and expected more for their investment. There are many more law schools now, ten of them in Florida, so that has meant that law schools have had to give attention to matters they were able to neglect twenty-five or thirty years ago, such as student services or career placement.”

“We have a very different attitude today. Stetson now has one of the strongest academic support programs in the country. Those types of changes have occurred in part because of competition, but also because of shifts in what society feels is important.”

Dean Vause said Stetson now pays more attention to student services, to helping students in need, and to career placement and

scholarships. "It is a much more caring environment, and I feel I had a part in that." he said. "I feel the law school is more business-like and professional about the way it does things, and is a much better steward of the resources it is given."

Dean Vause also took great pride in the relationship that Stetson now maintains with its graduates, and enjoyed seeing graduates come back to the campus to take part in the Stetson community.

"It makes you feel good to see people that you taught maintain a relationship with the institution." he said. "There is that very personal reason to maintain good alumni relations. Alumni help us in so many ways, not only monetarily. For example, they can recommend good students to us. I've seen this happen many, many times. A student who could go to any one of the top ten law schools in the country would apply to Stetson because an alum had said, 'You ought to go to Stetson.'"

Alumni are also indispensable allies when it comes to making and maintaining long-term alliances for the law school. And, he said, alumni always benefit when the school's fortunes go up.

"That Stetson law degree is going to be there permanently," he said. "It will never change to any other school. If Stetson's reputation takes a nose dive, that degree takes a nose dive. If Stetson continues to go upward and improve its reputation, then the reputation of that degree improves, as well. It has the potential to be a mutually supportive and mutually satisfactory relationship."

During his twenty-eight years at Stetson, he served as Professor of Law, Assistant Dean, Associate Dean, Interim Dean, Director of the Center for Dispute Resolution, Associate Dean of Graduate and International Programs, University Vice President, and Dean.

In the years he was at Stetson, Dean Vause led a small Florida law school to national and international prominence. Along the way, he touched the lives of many students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends. He will be missed, but his legacy will live on.



Dean W. Gary Vause, GariAnn Vause, Lila Vause, and Willie Vause

## DEAN GARY VAUSE—SETTING A STANDARD FOR LIVING

Hon. Elizabeth A. Kovachevich\*

*That shadow my likeness that goes to and fro . . . How often I question and doubt whether that is really me . . .*<sup>1</sup>

The measure of a man is usually more than his physical stature—but when I close my eyes and see the image of Dean W. Gary Vause, I clearly recall the imposing presence of the gentle giant that he was.

From the moment that he assumed the position and obligations as Dean of Stetson University College of Law, his enthusiasm for expanding and achieving its preeminence in the legal world was his number one goal in life. On the occasions when I spoke with him, it was clear that he was painstakingly and doggedly pursuing these objectives, despite obstacles that had to be surmounted and overcome. Whenever I requested his assistance regarding service on court committees and involvement in Stetson's Federal Judicial Internship Program at our courthouse, he was always eager and willing; he knew that it was good for Stetson and for the profession.

Many people consider it a tragedy that his departure from this life left so many things that he sought to achieve unfinished; on the contrary, the tragedy would be failure to realize the great genius that he started, and to lack confidence in ourselves to follow through in fulfilling them, as he would expect us to do.

As both Gary and I shared a common belief in our Creator, it is not a measure of success that the task be finished, but rather that it be commenced; that you give it everything you have. Then, in the Ultimate Judgment of the Almighty, whoever continues the

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\* © 2003, The Honorable Elizabeth A. Kovachevich. All rights reserved. Judge, United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida. B.B.A., University of Miami, 1958; J.D., Stetson University College of Law, 1961.

Judge Kovachevich was the Chief Judge of the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida from January 1996 through December 2002.

1. Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* 137 (Sherman & Co. 1900).

task finds that it is his or her opportunity to prove their worth in the total Plan of life.

When we enter Stetson's Tampa Law Center and Campus for the first time, I intend to close my eyes and sense the presence of the visionary who conceived its existence. And, when my eyes open, I know that there will be a glimpse of a shadow that will catch my gaze; it will be tall and imposing, and it will be smiling.



## THE LEGACY OF W. GARY VAUSE TO INTERNATIONAL LEGAL EDUCATION AND PRACTICE IN FLORIDA

Samuel Robert Mandelbaum\*

To the international lawyers of Florida, the passing of Dean W. Gary Vause on May 9, 2003, was a profound and unexpected loss. The absence of Gary Vause, then serving as University Vice President and Dean of Stetson University College of Law, has naturally been most realized in the functioning of the law school's operations, program development, and expansion.

Notwithstanding these facts, it is fair to observe that the State's international lawyers view Dean Vause as an irreplaceable visionary and maverick in international law. As one of the early pioneers of international business law in Florida since the 1970s, he was an architect in the development of a relatively new area of the law that then had, and presently has, tremendous potential with the emergence and growth of the global economy. To truly appreciate his vast contributions to international legal education and practice, one must reflect upon Dean Vause's activities, professional affiliations, and scholarly writings over past decades.

The Author's good fortune in meeting Dean Vause came in the mid-1980s, through the State's international-trade and busi-

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\* © 2003, Samuel Robert Mandelbaum. All rights reserved. Partner, Mandelbaum & Fitzsimmons, P.A. B.A., State University of New York at Albany, 1974; J.D., Vermont Law School, 1977; LL.M., International Business Law, Georgetown University Law School, 1995.

Mr. Mandelbaum is dual board-certified by The Florida Bar as a specialist in the fields of International Law and Civil Trial Litigation. He serves on the Executive Council of The Florida Bar's International Law Section, chairs the Hillsborough County Bar Association's International Practice Section, and has been appointed by the United States Commerce Secretary to the United States District Export Council as a trade specialist for the Florida District. Since 1995, he has intermittently served as an adjunct law professor teaching International Litigation and Arbitration, International Business Transactions, and International Law at Stetson University College of Law. The Author dedicates this Article to Maria Celia Caminha de Oliveira Vause for the inspiration she provided to her husband over the years.

ness-development organizations. At that time, he advocated for Florida's leadership as a center for foreign trade with Latin America, the Caribbean, and Central America, as well as with Europe. More importantly, even though international trade in Florida had then been comparably minimal, Dean Vause was quite vocal in asserting the need for Florida lawyers to develop those specialized skills and the knowledge necessary to provide international legal services to the businesses of this State and foreign trade partners.

By 1985, he had already expressed an interest in expanding the curriculum at Stetson to meet, what he believed, would become a pronounced demand for international legal services in the future. Although few United States law schools of the time offered many courses beyond a basic survey of international law,<sup>1</sup> Dean Vause introduced International Business Transactions at Stetson in 1985 to effectuate this purpose. The new course was immediately popular as an elective, and generally attracted third-year students who focused on commercial and corporate law. With even more ambitious plans for Stetson's future, he felt this was a logical step to the ultimate goal of establishing a graduate specialization program in international law.

As vocal as Dean Vause had become in promoting international legal education in the State, he also advanced the notion that Florida's practicing lawyers needed to enhance their legal skills for international business. The Florida Bar had established its Section of International Law in 1982, which, at the time, was one of the Bar's newest and smallest sections. Dean Vause was quite active in the fledgling section, and he offered to assist with developing Continuing Legal Education (CLE) programs for the State's lawyers. At this time, the interest and attendance was modest.

With economic liberalization coming rapidly to the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, China, and Vietnam in the late 1980s, Dean Vause expressed the positive view that national trade barriers were disintegrating throughout the world. That time period, he believed, contained the seeds of a "global marketplace," a theme consistently expressed in his scholarly writings of the late 1980s

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1. The International Law course was essentially a survey of *public* international law, focusing on sources of international law, treaties, international human rights and criminal justice, legal relations between nations, and environmental and territorial issues. It only briefly addressed issues of private (commercial) international law and dispute resolution.

and early 1990s.<sup>2</sup> As the fast pace of negotiations proceeded during the early 1990s with several major multilateral trade pacts, Dean Vause's notion of a world economy was coming into focus, and it became clear that lawyers needed to be ready, willing, and able to provide effective, quality international legal services.

While these economic developments transpired during the early 1990s, he questioned whether lawyers and law students could ever gain sufficient expertise in international business and dispute resolution through a smattering of law school courses, or by attending an occasional CLE seminar. Rather, Dean Vause believed a comprehensive program of study and technical training was essential for developing international legal competency, as could be derived from immersion in a graduate degree program. He cited that at the time, the following were the leading schools with graduate international law programs: his alma mater, the University of Virginia, as well as Columbia University, Georgetown University, Harvard University, and New York University.<sup>3</sup> However, Dean Vause felt that a quality Master of Laws (LL.M.) program with a broad selection of courses in international law was essential in the State of Florida. At least during that period, such a program did not exist. It was his ambitious goal to eventually establish such a program at Stetson.

During the 1993 to 1995 period, two profound trade agreements were in the process of ratification and implementation by the United States and its trade partners—the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the General Agreement of Tariffs & Trade (GATT).<sup>4</sup> Prior to the United States' ratification of

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2. See e.g. W. Gary Vause, *Law & Legitimacy in Sino-U.S. Relations*, 16 N.C. J. Intl. L. & Com. Reg. 89 (1991); W. Gary Vause, *The Coming End of Perestroika's Golden Age of Law Reform?* 20 Stetson L. Rev. 201 (1990); W. Gary Vause, *Investment in Vietnam—Prospects and Concerns for the 1990s*, 4 Fla. Intl. L.J. 231 (1989); W. Gary Vause, *Perestroika and Market Socialism: The Effects of Communism's Slow Thaw on East-West Economic Relations*, 9 Nw. J. Intl. L. & Bus. 213 (1988). In his later 1997 treatise, Dean Vause observed a “new world order” from the collapse of communism and emerging market economies. W. Gary Vause, *Introduction to International Business Transactions 2–3* (BookWorld Publications 1997) [hereinafter Vause, *International Business Transactions*].

3. Based on Dean Vause's recommendations, the Author earned an LL.M. degree at Georgetown University Law School in International Business Law for this purpose.

4. These multilateral trade agreements substantially reduce or eliminate tariffs, duties, and nontariff barriers between the signatories. NAFTA essentially creates a free trade zone between the United States, Canada, and Mexico. World Trade Org., *Regional Trade Agreements*, [http://www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/region\\_e/region\\_areagroup\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/region_e/region_areagroup_e.htm) (accessed Oct. 14, 2003). GATT, actually a comprehensive series of agreements presently

NAFTA and GATT, Dean Vause had been notably involved in the lively national legislative debates that ensued from 1992 to 1994 between the rivaling corporate and labor interests.

His zealous advocacy for free trade, lending support to the joint efforts of the Florida Department of Commerce and Florida industry, brought criticism that he favored the interests of big business to the detriment of the American worker. However, he was thoroughly committed to the premise that economic self-protection, discriminatory government trade practices, tariffs, duties, and nontariff barriers are counterproductive in the long term, and that the free-trade tenets of NAFTA and GATT were critical steps to world prosperity and financial growth.<sup>5</sup> Dean Vause summarized his view as follows: "It is clear that successful international business transactions are very important to the growth of all countries, regardless of whether they are fully developed and modernized or are still in a developing stage."<sup>6</sup>

With the United States's implementation of NAFTA and GATT by 1995, he knew that the global economy was moving forward quickly, and skilled international lawyers had to be ready to make it work and succeed. Dean Vause advocated the specialization of international practice, noting, "International trade is considered a specialty, and a business client should consider hiring such a specialist if he or she plans to conduct business in the international arena."<sup>7</sup> Dean Vause was integrally involved in promoting The Florida Bar's Board of Legal Specialization to expand its burgeoning board-certification programs to include international law as another regulated specialty field. He felt doing so would assist in monitoring and assuring the competency of Florida's international lawyers.

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between 146 nations, created the World Trade Organization (WTO). World Trade Org., *Members and Observers*, [http://www.wto.org/english/thewto\\_e/whatis\\_e/tif\\_e/org6\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/tif_e/org6_e.htm) (updated Apr. 4, 2003). It effectively diminishes trade barriers, promotes non-discriminatory trade and investment policies, liberalizes international procurement and intellectual property transactions, and limits government subsidies favoring national products. World Trade Org., *A Unique Contribution*, [http://www.wto.org/english/thewto\\_e/whatis\\_e/tif\\_e/displ\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/tif_e/displ_e.htm) (accessed Oct. 14, 2003). The WTO has a member-dispute-resolution tribunal for determining claims of violation of GATT policies and provisions. *Id.*

5. Vause, *International Business Transactions*, *supra* n. 2, at 8–9, 32–33, 92–93.

6. *Id.* at 16.

7. *Id.* at 28.

Dean Vause was named the Associate Dean of Graduate and International Programs during Stetson's 1996–1997 academic year. To bring a graduate program further within Stetson's reach, he created the International Lawyers Advisory Committee in 1996, appointing seven international practitioners from Central Florida.<sup>8</sup> At the Committee's first organizational meeting, after the group reviewed the curriculum and resource requirements of the American Bar Association (ABA) for the establishment of a graduate law program, there was skepticism in the Committee concerning Stetson's ability to meet the vast challenges of establishing an accredited LL.M. program. However, Dean Vause exuded confidence that a graduate program would come to fruition at Stetson. Two years later, it did, when an ABA inspection team announced its approval of accreditation for Stetson to award LL.M. degrees in International Law and Business. The Committee members and Dean Vause felt that the welcomed ABA action had poured the foundation for a long-needed graduate international law program in Florida, especially one on the State's west coast.

As the 1990s proceeded, the World Trade Organization (WTO) was firmly taking hold in the new world order. Global trade was increasing exponentially, fueling the notion that skilled international professionals were essential to servicing the growing world economy. Commenting on the growth of international trade professionals, Dean Vause noted the following in his 1997 treatise:

Courses in international business transactions are drawing unprecedented numbers of students in colleges and universities, and providing continuing education for established business and professional persons who wish to expand their involvement in the global marketplace. A number of factors have coalesced to establish this recent trend, not the least of which is the growing awareness that international business offers exciting career opportunities to those who possess the requisite skills and education to compete in the global arena. This new

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8. Besides the Author, other members of Stetson's International Lawyers Advisory Committee included the following: John Bierley, Esquire; Lucius Dyal, Esquire; Cary Singletary, Esquire; William Flynn, Esquire; Professor Peter Fitzgerald; Professor Tim Reilly; William Sharp, Esquire; and Frank Swacker, Esquire.

global awareness also is the product of exciting and dynamic forces that are transforming the international economy.<sup>9</sup>

In 1998, in accordance with Dean Vause's call for the development of professional standards for international lawyers, the Board of Legal Specialization of The Florida Bar approved international law as a new board certification area of specialization.<sup>10</sup> The certification program for international lawyers was the first for any United States state bar, or any bar for that matter. This screening process, he believed, was essential for the public, the profession, and the business community. The following year, thirteen attorneys became board certified by The Florida Bar as the State's first group of international lawyers.

While Dean Vause readily recognized that GATT "has resulted in more free trade throughout the world" and less protectionism, he nonetheless felt that the system was not perfect and needed improvement for the flow of trade.<sup>11</sup> Noting that "[t]he GATT/WTO system is dynamic and growing," he believed that a great deal of work needed to be done on those agreements in the areas of "subsidies, dumping, product standards, rules of origin, customs unions and free trade areas."<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the rules drafting committees of the WTO needed to keep working.

Dean Vause's vision of a graduate program in International Business and Law finally came to realization during the 1998–1999 academic year, when Stetson welcomed its inaugural LL.M. class. It was comprised of both United States and foreign lawyers, with varying levels of professional experience and language proficiency. Not everything went as planned, and many unexpected challenges surfaced for the LL.M. students throughout the year.

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9. Vause, *International Business Transactions*, *supra* n. 2, at 1.

10. In 1998, the newly enacted Rule 6-21.3 of the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar formulated standards for board certification of international lawyers. Such standards currently include the following: (a) five-year minimum membership in a state bar; (b) "substantial involvement in the practice of international law during each of the 3 years immediately preceding the date of application"; (c) completion of "at least 60 hours of continuing legal education in the field of international law"; (d) peer review of at least five attorneys or judges, demonstrating "the applicant's special competence and substantial involvement in international law, as well as the applicant's character, ethics, and reputation for professionalism"; and (e) passing a full-day examination "demonstrat[ing] sufficient knowledge, skills, and proficiency in international law to justify the representation of special competence to the legal profession and the public."

11. Vause, *International Business Transactions*, *supra* n. 2, at 92–93.

12. *Id.* at 93.

At that time, Stetson had rather modest experience in dealing with foreign lawyers, a number of whom were from civil-law jurisdictions with little familiarity with the significantly different English common-law system.<sup>13</sup> However, by May 1999, the fledgling LL.M. class managed to overcome those difficulties, and Stetson successfully conferred its first LL.M. degrees.

During 1999, Dean Vause was promoted to Vice President and Dean of the College of Law, abdicating his post as Associate Dean of Graduate and International Programs. Since the LL.M. program began, nine classes of LL.M. students have graduated and entered the international marketplace. While his contributions to Stetson clearly span far beyond the field of international law, Dean Vause is likely, in the Author's view, to be remembered most in Florida for his renowned scholarship, professionalism, and academic leadership during the critical 1988 to 1998 period of unprecedented restructuring and growth of the global economy.

In April 2003, shortly before his death, the Executive Council of The Florida Bar's International Law Section<sup>14</sup> voted unanimously to confer upon Dean Vause the Section's award recognizing his generous contributions to international legal education in Florida. Ten days after his passing, the Section's chair, Laurence D. Gore, advised Mrs. Celia Vause in a letter dated May 19, 2003, of the award to her late husband:

Dear Mrs. Vause:

As Chair of the International Section of [T]he Florida Bar, I and the members of our section's Executive Council, deeply regret the recent passing of your husband Dean Gary Vause on May 9th. The tremendous loss to you, the Stetson law community and the international bar cannot be overstated.

Prior to that, the Executive Council had decided to confer upon Dean Vause the International Section's award in recognition of his outstanding contribution to international legal education in Florida. Dean Vause has been a true maverick in the

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13. *Id.* at 24–26. In his 1997 treatise, Dean Vause pointed out the “significant differences among the major legal traditions in the modern western world.” *Id.* at 24. He noted special caution for these differences in the context of doing international business: “The differences in legal traditions have practical consequences for business persons engaged in foreign trade and investment.” *Id.* at 25.

14. With more than 1,000 members, The Florida Bar's International Law Section is one of the world's largest professional organizations for international lawyers.

field of international law and legal education, and the many innovations and programs he put into place will be felt by international practitioners and Florida industry for years to come. The Florida Bar's International Section is pleased to confer this recognition to Dean Vause.

We would invite you to attend the International Section's annual meeting next month on June 27th in Orlando for formal presentation of the award. On behalf of the members of the section's Executive Council, please accept our warmest condolences at this time of loss. Hopefully you can join us at that time.

Sincerely,

Laurence D. Gore, Chair  
The Florida Bar International Law Section<sup>15</sup>

The following month, at the Section's annual meeting on June 27, 2003, the award was presented to Mrs. Vause in her late husband's honor. During her acceptance speech, she proudly thanked the Section for its recognition, and urged Florida's international lawyers to support her husband's greatest dream—financial assistance for Stetson's international LL.M. students. At the Section's Executive Council meeting later that day, a resolution was approved creating the "W. Gary Vause Memorial Scholarship for Excellence in International Law."

Florida's international lawyers have long recognized Dean Vause's vast contributions to the field, which will be realized by generations of international practitioners and law students. Through these official actions of the state's largest and oldest association of international lawyers, it is anticipated that Dean Vause's greatest mission—serving as a relentless cheerleader for international legal education and elimination of trade barriers—will be vigilantly pursued for years to come.

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15. Copy on file with the *Stetson Law Review*.



## A LAWYER'S LAWYER, A PROFESSOR'S PROFESSOR, A DEAN'S DEAN, A WONDERFUL PERSON

Marsha Griffin Rydberg\*

I first met Gary Vause in the mid-seventies when I was a student at Stetson University College of Law. He was Assistant Dean at the time, and the law school was a very different place. For instance, diversity was a four-syllable word with little applicability to our school. Survival of the fittest was the mantra—the old “look to the right and look to the left; only one of you will be present at graduation” sermon. Furthermore, tradition was strong—male students were required to wear ties to class, leaving female students out of place.

Dean Vause represented a breath of fresh air in that sometimes stale environment. As student government secretary, I remember joining President Doug Williamson and the other officers in a meeting imploring Dean Richard Dillon and Dean Vause to lift the men's tie requirement. Dean Dillon was not moved; however, Dean Vause seemed responsive. Not many semesters later, the ties were gone! Dean Vause's willingness and ability to promote harmony in the law school was one of his greatest gifts.

First and foremost Gary Vause was an outstanding lawyer. He was a lawyer's lawyer and a respected authority in international and labor relations law. I remember being proud when he joined the faculty because he was such a well-recognized and respected lawyer. Throughout his tenure, his substantial legal abilities added to his credibility throughout the bar because he had been an in-the-trenches lawyer, even before becoming a law school professor and dean.

Dean Vause also was a professor's professor. In any profession or small community, little time elapses before one's peers sort out the stars from the journeymen. Dean Vause always was a

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\* © 2003, Marsha Griffin Rydberg. All rights reserved. Partner, The Rydberg Law Firm, P.A. B.A., Emory University, 1968; J.D., Stetson University College of Law, 1976.

star, and everyone recognized that fact! Accordingly, when he became Dean, he already had the respect of his peers. That respect, coupled with the skills he gained as a labor relations negotiator, equipped him to bring harmony where discord might otherwise prevail. Like an adroit conductor, Dean Vause led his professorial colleagues toward harmony, and maximized their talents and skills even in the face of forces and situations that might have elicited cacophony in the hands of one less gifted. Without outstanding professors working together for a united goal of excellence, a law school can never achieve national recognition. Dean Vause encouraged the fine professors already at Stetson, added new stars to the faculty, and created an atmosphere in which legal scholarship and superb teaching could flourish. His efforts planted the academic seeds for Stetson to become a recognized leader in legal education.

Dean Vause was a dean's dean. Really good deans raise a lot of money and inspire academic excellence in their schools, and indeed, Dean Vause was a really good dean who accomplished both of those goals with his characteristic style and charm. A great dean, a "dean's dean," is a visionary who embraces a dream and imbues that dream with life from his own personal strength, sheer hard work, and the force of his will and commitment. That was Dean Vause!

Dean Vause dreamed of a nationally recognized legal institution, and he achieved it. Stetson is the oldest law school in the State of Florida. Notwithstanding its long and distinguished history as a private institution, Stetson confronts significant challenges in the competitive arena of legal academia. Under Dean Vause's leadership, Stetson's dominance in litigation-skills training was nationally acknowledged. I remember, when the son of former Florida Bar President and outstanding litigator Ben Hill enrolled at Stetson, saying, "Congratulations, now the Hill family will have a first-rate trial lawyer!" Indeed, at American Bar Association (ABA) meetings and at almost any bar function at which the subject arises, Stetson is recognized as the benchmark against which trial-practice programs are measured.

Dean Vause also dreamed of creating the first-in-the-nation, evening law school operated from a satellite campus in a neighboring city. He envisioned a fully accredited law school that spanned Tampa Bay and provided access to quality legal education for all of the area's residents and for those who would choose

to move to Tampa Bay for this unique opportunity. Dean Vause's vision was not of a pedestrian office building that housed a few dreary classrooms populated by weary professors and night-time law students, who dragged to school after a full day's work. Instead, Dean Vause conjured a gorgeous Mediterranean-style building, shared by a state appellate court and adjoining a park along the Hillsborough River. This would be a signature facility for the neighborhood, for the court, and for the school.

Of course, Dean Vause's dream culminated into the Tampa Law Center and Campus located in Tampa's urban core, but also in the pastoral surroundings of a park and the Hillsborough River. I had the distinct honor to work with him to shape that dream into a reality. Dean Vause was at his best when he was negotiating a deal, and the Tampa Law Center and Campus was quite a deal! From the outset, Dean Vause and Tampa Mayor Richard Greco had a special compatibility and a shared vision for making Stetson a major enhancement to the historic Tampa Heights community.

The lease Dean Vause negotiated with the Second District Court of Appeal created an unparalleled synergy. The Hillsborough County courts needed the space that had been leased to the Second District. The Legislature had failed to fund the District Court's purchase of land from the City of Tampa, and the need for a site for the Court was becoming critical. In the midst of negotiations with the City for Stetson's acquisition of the Tampa Law Center and Campus site, Dean Vause seized the opportunity to offer the Court a home, which will provide a marvelous enhancement to the Tampa students' law school experiences. The Court could lease a portion of the new law school building. The school's courtroom could be utilized by the Court during the day, and the law school in the evening. The library could also be used by both the Court and the students. Most importantly, Stetson students could study in the shadow of the Court and experience first-hand the workings of the appellate court system, while receiving Stetson's first-class legal education and outstanding trial training.

No major construction project is easy, and the Tampa Law Center and Campus had many challenges. Nonetheless, Dean Vause never wavered. His vision was fixed, and he never lost sight of it. In fall 2003, the Court should begin to operate from Stetson's Tampa Law Center and Campus and, in January 2004, the first classes will be offered. Dean Vause's vision will become

reality. The legacy will be complete and will remain a lasting tribute to his vision, his perseverance, and his leadership.

Finally, Dean Vause was a wonderful person, who enriched my life merely by his acquaintance. From the almost daily conversations we had while negotiating the acquisition of the Tampa Law Center and Campus, I came to appreciate Gary as one can only after having worked closely with a person to achieve a common goal. He was a man of wisdom who was not afraid to seek and to accept counsel from others. A natural leader, Dean Vause thrived at quarterbacking his team toward a well-defined goal. He inspired respect, admiration, and loyalty. The Stetson family, The Florida Bar, and the City of Tampa have been substantially enriched by Gary Vause.

## ONE LIFE IN ETERNITY

Kalina Sarmov\*

One person's life is a flash in eternity, but if that life touches the hearts and minds of many people, it becomes eternity itself. A human being who unselfishly shares his knowledge, experience, and wisdom, and who devotes his life to service is a remarkable example of humanity. This special and remarkable person, whose contributions will transcend his lifetime, was Dean W. Gary Vause. He embodied humanity, wisdom, moral values, knowledge, and intelligence. He impacted and enlightened my life. He taught me to be strong, supported me through difficult times, and guided me with kindness and wisdom throughout the difficult maze of the American legal system and the English language.

I have spent hours thinking of ways to begin this Essay and how to articulately express my feelings of the tragic loss of my mentor and a very special friend, Gary Vause. I have continued to stare at a blank piece of paper, and I have realized that no words will even come close to describing the exemplary personality, professionalism, and humanity of Gary. I still find each word not expressive enough, each sentence not strong enough to express my admiration, gratitude, and respect to a man I think very highly of; a man I have always looked up to in my life and career. I am utterly grateful for everything he taught me about the American legal system, international law, and alternative dispute resolution. His extraordinary example has guided me through my professional career and development and has helped me become a better attorney and a better person.

Looking back, I know that I would not have become the person I am today without Gary's tremendous influence on my life. I have always been very thankful for his friendship, guidance, support, and encouragement. I will always remember him for every-

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thing he was: a brilliant scholar and attorney, as well as a dear friend who will be missed.

I had the opportunity to personally express my gratitude and admiration to Gary while he was still alive. I wanted him to know the true impact that he had on my life. I let him know how his friendship, guidance, and support have played a major role in my development as an attorney. On occasion, I have found myself in difficult situations, and I would think, "How would Gary handle this?" When I shared with him my professional difficulties, success stories, and failures, I always found a word of congratulation, encouragement, or advice. During my study at Stetson University College of Law, I freely took advantage of his "open door" policy, which continued after my graduation in the slightly modified form of an "open phone" policy.

I had the honor to work with Gary on two publications concerning foreign investments and labor and employment issues. *Business Law Guide: Bulgaria* was a comprehensive and authoritative guide for business persons, lawyers, and other people interested in the opportunities for doing business in Bulgaria.<sup>1</sup> The second publication was a chapter on Bulgaria's Labor Law in the American Bar Association Section of Labor and Employment.<sup>2</sup> We spent endless hours in discussion, comparing the civil-law and the common-law systems. I will always keep very special memories of this challenging educational experience.

Gary's scholastic talent and superb teaching skills have contributed tremendously to the development of the American legal system and the legal systems of other countries. His deep knowledge of international business law, in addition to proficiency in several languages, made him an extremely valuable and recognized scholar in the international arena. He contributed tremendously to the development of Stetson as one of the best law schools in the United States; Stetson continues to educate some of the best lawyers. Until his last days, he devoted his talent and heart to the Stetson community and our society. Opening a part-time law program was a dream come true for Gary. He devoted hours and hours to planning and implementing this idea. A draw-

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1. W. Gary Vause & Kalina Sarmova, *Business Law Guide: Bulgaria* (BookWorld Publications 1997).

2. ABA Sec. Lab. & Empl., *International Labor and Employment Laws* vol. II, 14-1 (William L. Keller et al., BNA Books 2001).

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ing of the new campus was displayed in his office, and every time I asked about its development, his face lit up with pride and a sense of accomplishment.

Someone once said, “You only live once, but if you do it right, you can live forever.”<sup>3</sup> Gary is no longer with us, but he will live forever in our hearts and minds. In honor of his exemplary life, we should continue to uphold high standards of professionalism, ethics, and humanity.

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3. Xplore, Inc., *Brainy Quote*, <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/m/maewest109701.html> (accessed Sept. 5, 2003) (attributing this quote to Mae West).



Dean W. Gary Vause instructing students at the Beijing School of Economics on International Business Transactions



## W. GARY VAUSE: EDUCATOR, SCHOLAR, AND SOUTHERN GENTLEMAN

Cary R. Singletary\*

I first met this remarkable man we all knew as Dean W. Gary Vause in fall 1975. He had just arrived at Stetson University College of Law from Connecticut to become the assistant dean and an assistant professor of law. Immediately upon meeting him, I recognized that he was not a “northerner.” His modest, soft-spoken, and easy manner immediately identified him as a true “southern gentleman,” consistent with his upbringing on a small farm outside of Tallahassee, Florida. I learned from Gary that he had left Tallahassee at the age of twenty, joined the Air Force, finished a certificate in Mandarin Chinese at Yale, and thereafter, completed his military service. He then earned his Bachelor of Arts and Juris Doctor degrees at the University of Connecticut. When Gary came to Stetson, he had recently left the private law firm he had founded in Hartford, Connecticut, where he had specialized in labor and employment law. The firm primarily represented management from various local school districts in all aspects of labor law.

He told me that, after much contemplation, he had made the decision to forgo private practice and devote his life to being an educator and scholar. This personal decision has shed enormous benefits not only upon the students, faculty, administrators, and alumni of Stetson, but also upon private practitioners, the Labor and Employment Law Section of The Florida Bar, the International Law Section of The Florida Bar, government agencies, foreign scholars, foreign governments, and countless individuals and employers. It is truly remarkable that, twenty-eight years later, his decision has proven to be enormously significant in the lives of so many others.

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\* © 2003, Cary R. Singletary. All rights reserved. Mediator and Arbitrator, Tampa, Florida. B.S., University of Tampa, 1968; M.C.S., Rollins College, 1971; J.D., Stetson University College of Law, 1973. Mr. Singletary is also a Distinguished Professional Lecturer at Stetson University College of Law.

Gary and I shared a common love for the joy of teaching. In the early years of our friendship, I was teaching courses in Labor Law and Collective Bargaining at the University of Tampa, while also practicing labor law in Tampa. He was also teaching Labor Law and Collective Bargaining, as well as other courses at Stetson. Often, we conversed about effective teaching techniques, new texts in our subject fields, and legal developments in labor law. Gary's keen interest in his students, his expertise in labor law, and his innovative classroom-teaching techniques made him popular with students and faculty. His classes filled quickly each semester, and his office was always busy with students seeking opportunities to gain knowledge and experience in labor law.

Fortuitously, in 1975, the year Gary came to Stetson, the first statewide public-employee collective bargaining act for Florida public employees went into effect. Also, the Legislature created the Florida Public Employees Relations Commission (Commission) and gave the Commission the responsibilities of administering the registration and certification of public-employee labor unions and adjudicating unfair labor practices. Gary's previous legal experience under Connecticut's public-employee-relations law enabled him to quickly become established as a highly sought after legal resource for Florida labor lawyers. He was soon selected to become a Special Master by the Commission, which authorized him to hear and recommend solutions to impasses that had developed in public-employee collective bargaining.

Gary rapidly became a popular speaker at programs and seminars sponsored by the Labor and Employment Law Section of The Florida Bar. He also became a member of the Executive Council of that section and contributed greatly to it for several years. Even after no longer serving on the Executive Council, he continued to support its activities. Gary wrote articles and books on Florida labor law, which have contributed greatly to the understanding of the subject. These writings include: *Labor Dispute Resolution in the Public Sector*,<sup>1</sup> *The Special Master in Public Labor Disputes*,<sup>2</sup> *Labor Arbitration in State and Local Government*,<sup>3</sup>

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1. W. Gary Vause, *Labor Dispute Resolution in the Public Sector*, 53 Fla. B.J. 52 (1979).

2. W. Gary Vause, *The Special Master in Public Labor Disputes*, 53 Fla. B.J. 123 (1979).

3. W. Gary Vause, *Labor Arbitration in State and Local Government* (Fla. St. U. Ctr.

*PERC Deferral to Arbitration*,<sup>4</sup> *The NLRB Policy on Deferral to Arbitration—Deference or Abdication?*,<sup>5</sup> *Impasse Resolution in the Public Sector—Observations on the First Decade of Law and Practice under the Florida PERA*,<sup>6</sup> *Impasse Resolution in the Public Sector*,<sup>7</sup> *The Good Faith Obligation in Public Sector Bargaining—Uses and Limits of the Private Sector Model*,<sup>8</sup> and *Labor and Employment in Florida—Law, Policy, and Practice*.<sup>9</sup>

One of Gary's significant contributions to Stetson was his tireless effort in helping Stetson become recognized as a leading law school for labor studies. In the 1980s, he created a nationally recognized Annual Labor Law Conference (Conference) hosted by Stetson's Office for Continuing Legal Education. Since its creation, there have been fifteen conferences. The Conference has brought prominent members of the National Labor Relations Board, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, National Mediation Board, Florida Public Employee Relations Commission, Florida Commission on Human Relations, lawyers, management representatives, and union leaders as conference speakers to Stetson. This Conference was one of the first of its kind in labor law and contributed in a large way to Stetson's becoming a nationally known law school.

Another of Gary's significant contributions to Stetson's prominence in labor law was the creation of a working partnership with the Labor and Employment Law Section of The Florida Bar (Section). Throughout the years, the Section and Stetson have jointly sponsored numerous seminars and trainings in substantive labor and collective bargaining topics. In addition, the two organizations regularly co-sponsor a week-long Employment Law Trial Skills program designed to provide Florida lawyers with an

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for Empl. Rel. & L. 1981).

4. W. Gary Vause, *PERC Deferral to Arbitration*, 56 Fla. B.J. 818 (1982).

5. W. Gary Vause, *The NLRB Policy on Deferral to Arbitration—Deference or Abdication?* 58 Fla. B.J. 461 (1982).

6. W. Gary Vause, *Impasse Resolution in the Public Sector—Observations on the First Decade of Law and Practice under the Florida PERA*, 37 Fla. L. Rev. 105 (1985).

7. W. Gary Vause, *Impasse Resolution in the Public Sector*, 36 L. Rev. Dig. 33 (May–June 1987).

8. W. Gary Vause, *The Good Faith Obligation in Public Sector Bargaining—Uses and Limits of the Private Sector Model*, 19 Stetson L. Rev. 511 (1990).

9. W. Gary Vause, *Labor and Employment in Florida—Law, Policy, and Practice* vol. 1 (Stetson U. College L. Ctr. for Lab.-Mgt. Dispute Res. 1989).

intense, total immersion learning experience in the art of presenting an employment case to a jury.

In recognition of Gary's contribution to the development of labor and employment law in Florida, the Section named its scholarship the W. Gary Vause Award for Excellence in Labor and Employment Law. This scholarship is for a third-year Stetson student who shows the most interest and promise in the field of labor employment law. His contributions, along with his faculty leadership in increasing the diversity of labor and employment law courses, has led to Stetson's recognition by Florida labor practitioners as the premier law school for training labor and employment lawyers.

Coincidental to his recognition as a labor law expert, Gary became a popular labor arbitrator, which was a role he ably performed along with his other faculty responsibilities. He regularly served in both public-sector and private-sector labor disputes. As always, Gary pursued the highest level of attainment whenever he became involved with any activity. Accordingly, after arbitrating countless labor disputes, he was accepted to membership in the prestigious National Academy of Arbitrators.

In my private labor law practice, it was always a pleasure to have Gary serve as an arbitrator. He brought to the table a sense of dignity that enhanced the sanctity and integrity of the process. He conducted the proceedings with an even hand, assuring both sides a fair and full hearing. He was never rushed, nor did he make decisions in haste. No matter how adversarial the parties or the advocates, he never lost his composure. His decisions were always well-reasoned and carefully researched. Regardless of who prevailed, there was never a sense of disappointment in the arbitrator.

One arbitration case, in particular, stands out in my mind. It occurred in the early 1980s and involved the discharge of a career employee of a public utility. The employee had been discharged based on allegations that he had repeatedly sabotaged company equipment while working unsupervised on night shifts. Both the opposing advocate and I were friends with Gary, and we chose him as the arbitrator because we knew the case would require superior knowledge of labor law and a strong decision maker. Gary was, no doubt, somewhat uncomfortable in accepting the arbitrator's role in this instance; yet, he did not dodge appointment to the case. Gary possessed the confidence of a seasoned pro-

professional who knew he could make the decision based on the evidence and not on whom he knew. We had complete confidence in his neutrality and wanted him to adjudicate this difficult case.

True to his form of always disclosing any information that may be perceived by the parties as bearing on his neutrality, he fully disclosed to the parties his friendship with both advocates. His courtly manner and forthright revelation of being friends with both of us immediately put the parties at ease and dispelled any apprehension of favoritism.

The case was based on circumstantial evidence and required several hearing days. During the case presentation, Gary was required to rule on many difficult procedural and evidentiary matters. While not all of those rulings were popular with the advocates or the parties, Gary never blinked when he made them. When the case was concluded and Gary's extensive and well-analyzed award was given, neither side regretted selecting him. In fact, both parties used him in future cases.

In later social gatherings, where both advocates were with Gary, the case never came up in discussions. It was as if it never happened. Gary's ability to separate his professional decisions from his personal relationships was one of his greatest qualities. He never compromised his professional judgment on any issue.

In 1985, Gary began to teach courses in international law. He invited me to become an adjunct professor at Stetson and teach the Collective Bargaining and Arbitration course that he had been teaching for several years. Needless to say, it was a daunting prospect to step into his shoes, but I was delighted with the invitation to teach at Stetson and accepted the offer eagerly. It was the beginning of a fifteen-year Stetson teaching experience, which I will always cherish as one of the highlights of my legal career. I taught Collective Bargaining and Labor Arbitration for several years, always enjoying the challenge of the subject matter and the students' excitement.

In the early 1990s, Gary and the faculty noticed that many state courts, including Florida, were moving toward various methods of alternative dispute resolution. They recognized that advocacy skills in trial practice alone would not be sufficient for Stetson students to excel in their careers. They knew that negotiation and mediation skills were growing expectations of well-trained, modern lawyers. Accordingly, he and the faculty determined that dispute-resolution skills courses were needed in Stet-

son's curriculum. I was invited to develop a course called Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) to include those skills. One of Gary's requirements was that mediation advocacy skills be strongly emphasized. It was my privilege to develop the course and to teach it, along with others, for several years.

As students became acquainted with mediation from the ADR courses and from their clerking experiences, many expressed an interest in pursuing careers as ADR neutrals. The students were aware of the development of Master of Law (LL.M.) programs at other law schools and wanted more classes at Stetson on the subject. In response, Gary and the faculty asked me to research the requirements for law students to become certified as mediators in Florida courts. I reported to Gary that students could become certified by the Florida Supreme Court as County Court Mediators. It would be necessary for the students to take a skills training course taught by a Primary Trainer certified by the court, complete a mentoring program consisting of observing four county court mediations, and actually conduct four mediations under the supervision of a certified county court mediator. Gary and the faculty decided to add the certified county court mediator training as an additional ADR course.

To teach the certification course, the Florida Supreme Court required me to become a Qualified Primary Mediation Trainer. My certification required participation as an assistant trainer at five separate mediator training courses offered by the Court at various locations around the state. Upon completion of that requirement, Stetson added the Certified Mediator Training course to the ADR curriculum. Because students still needed opportunities to observe mediations and to actually mediate to complete their certification, Gary was able to obtain the cooperation of the Pinellas, Hillsborough, and Orange County court-annexed mediation programs to permit Stetson students to mediate under their guidance. This cooperation has resulted in Stetson's being one of the few law schools in the country that actually offers a program leading to state certification as a mediator, in addition to practical experience.

As we all know, Gary was always deeply interested in international law. Two of his goals were to have Stetson establish a LL.M. degree program in International Law and to provide Stetson students with study-abroad programs. Before initiating those programs, Gary pursued advanced legal education for himself. He

took leaves of absence to complete the LL.M. and Doctor of Juris-tic Science (S.J.D.) degrees from the University of Virginia. After completing those degrees, Gary returned to Stetson and success-fully established both programs.

One of Gary's successes in the study-abroad program was the creation of an affiliation with Concordia International University (Concordia) in Tallinn, Estonia. Concordia was founded in the aftermath of the fall of the Soviet Union. Its purpose is to provide a western-style education, including a law degree, to students from the Baltic countries. Concordia is located outside the city limits of Tallinn in a converted fish-processing facility. The facil-ity was designed as a model Soviet factory town consisting of apartments, hospital, stores, offices, and cafeterias. It was easily converted to a university facility.

Concordia determined that, for the summer of 1997, it wanted to have all its law students take a comprehensive course in western-style negotiation, mediation, and arbitration. Gary was asked to recommend someone to teach the course. He ap-proached me to determine my interest in the project. He indicated that he would also be present during part of the summer, teach-ing Stetson students who were participating in the summer study-abroad program. I had visited Tallinn some years earlier, shortly after it had gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1989. It is a charming, ancient European city that was badly ne-glected during the Soviet occupation. The prospect of returning for a summer teaching experience interested me greatly, and I agreed to take on the challenge.

Needless to say, there were many unexpected surprises. I had eighty students assigned to the class. The class was in session for six hours each day for four weeks. The students were from Esto-nia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Russia. Fortunately, the only common language was English. If that was not enough, I quickly realized that the students had all been accustomed to the Soviet system of education (i.e., the teacher teaches the examination or gives the answers so that everyone passes). Without knowing that custom, I gave the first unannounced short test and had a near riot on my hands.

After consulting with the academic dean of Concordia, I de-cided that I should teach in the western-style, rather than using the Soviet method. As I continued through the course, students continued their resistance. Then, about half-way through the

course, attitudes began to change. I noticed that students completed their homework more carefully and asked questions in class. Further into the course, students were staying after class to ask questions. By the end of the course, they were embracing the western-style of teaching enthusiastically. They sincerely wanted to be competitive and to measure up to western standards. I have remained in contact with many of the students, some of whom have done very well in their careers. The Estonia teaching experience is one that I will always remember and be thankful to Gary for making possible.

The Estonia trip was eventful in still another way. When Gary arrived in Estonia that summer, we made plans to take a Scandinavian tour during the summer solstice. We departed Tallinn by hydroplane and crossed the Baltic to Helsinki, Finland. We spent a day touring Helsinki, then booked a ship for an overnight sail to Stockholm, Sweden. Of course, on the year's longest day so far north, the sun never completely disappeared. As we traveled by ship through the countless islands along our route, the locals were burning their celebratory fires on nearly every island. It was a magnificent sight.

When we arrived in Stockholm, we rented a car and drove north. We had no particular destination other than our intention to visit Uppsala University, which was a pleasant surprise. Uppsala still had its original, centuries-old classrooms. We toured the campus and spoke with faculty members. Unfortunately, the law school was not open, so we missed that experience. After Uppsala, we leisurely drove through northern Sweden for two days. It was a most enjoyable trip, and I truly cherish this time Gary and I spent together. It was this experience that helped me understand his true passion for travel and study abroad.

In 1997, Gary was named Associate Dean for Graduate and International Programs. He asked me if I would assume one of his former positions, Director of the Center for Dispute Resolution. I agreed and also continued to teach the ADR courses. Under Gary's leadership, the international programs continued to grow, including students from numerous foreign countries as well as local attorneys. Many foreign countries do not have trial by jury, and LL.M. students often enrolled in my ADR courses for training in mediation and arbitration. These foreign students greatly enriched the learning experience of the other Stetson students; it



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was a special joy to have the foreign students explain their legal systems to the American students.

In 1999, Gary was named Stetson's Vice President and Dean of the College of Law. This achievement was well earned and truly deserved. In 2000, he and the Stetson faculty named me to the position of Distinguished Professorial Lecturer. I was deeply honored by this recognition.

As Dean, Gary recognized that Tampa was the only metropolitan area of its size in the country that did not have a law school. The likelihood of a new competing law school starting up in Tampa had been a long-term Stetson concern. This threat became real in the early months of Gary's administration when the Florida Legislature approved the establishment of two new state law schools. Florida A&M University was approved for one of the law schools, with a legislative requirement that the law school be located in central Florida. The city of Tampa, its Mayor, and its prominent civic leaders aggressively pursued Florida A&M to establish its campus in Tampa. They offered valuable downtown acreage on the Hillsborough River to build the law school. Orlando also offered land. Gary, in his diplomatic style, met with the players and closely monitored the situation while not directly intervening in the churning controversy that erupted between the competing factions. Meanwhile, he reminded the Stetson community that Stetson itself had plans to expand with a campus in Tampa.

Florida A&M decided to open its law school campus in Orlando. Gary immediately seized the moment of Tampa's disappointment and approached its Mayor with the proposal for a Stetson campus on the same location offered to Florida A&M. His timing and judgment were perfect. The Mayor immediately endorsed the project, and Gary embarked upon making the campus a reality. Endless hours and countless challenges were presented. With the help of many others, Gary patiently worked through each of them. Success was achieved and ground was broken in January 2003 for the new campus. It is only fitting that Gary remained with us to see the new campus actually rising out of the ground in spring 2003.

The entire Stetson community has been blessed by the contributions of this remarkable southern gentleman who quietly devoted twenty-eight years of his life to the growth and development of students, faculty, administrators, staff, alumni, and sup-

porters. The world has been blessed by his contributions to international law. And I have been blessed by knowing him and having his friendship.

## A PERSONAL REMEMBRANCE

Leslie Reicin Stein\*

I knew Gary Vause for almost twenty-eight years. I respected and admired him as a teacher, a scholar, an administrator, a colleague, a mediator, an arbitrator, a builder, a visionary, and most of all, as a friend. But this was not always true.

In the fall of 1975, Dean Vause came to Stetson University College of Law to assume the administrative duties of the Assistant Dean and to teach labor and employment law. He left a small law practice in Connecticut, where he specialized in representing management on labor and employment law issues. Because he had aspirations of becoming a prominent labor arbitrator, he believed that a short stretch as a law school dean would enable him to be perceived by both management and labor as a neutral. He also saw his new status as an opportunity to publish in the field, thereby increasing his stature for his burgeoning arbitration practice. He chose Florida, as he had family and property in the State, and it would enable him to visit both. Little did he know that being Dean of Stetson would turn out to be his life's aspiration and the most fulfilling career he could imagine.

In addition to his administrative duties, Dean Vause taught two courses, Labor Law and Non-Litigative Dispute Settlement Seminar during his first semester at Stetson. At that time, the law school was not the student—or family—friendly, supportive place it is today. My son Michael—now an attorney—was born in

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\* © 2003, Leslie Reicin Stein. All rights reserved. General Counsel, Verizon Data Services and Verizon Information Technologies. A.B., *with honors*, Phi Beta Kappa/Phi Kappa Phi, University of Michigan, 1967; M.A., History, University of South Florida, 1973; J.D., *with honors*, Stetson University College of Law, 1976; M.B.A., University of Tampa, 1987.

Ms. Stein was Editor in Chief of the *Stetson Law Review* and received the Moot Court and Walter Mann Awards. She was President of the National History Honorary at the University of South Florida, and recipient of the Karl Kreher Award as the Outstanding M.B.A. Graduate at the University of Tampa. Ms. Stein is a member of the Stetson Board of Overseers and President of the Dana Foundation. Her Bar activities include President of the Florida & Hillsborough Associations for Women Lawyers, Vice President of the National Conference of Women's Bar Associations, the editorial board of the *Florida Bar Journal*, and membership on several Executive Councils of The Florida Bar. Her community activities include Chair of the City of Tampa Civil Service Board, Vice Chair of the National Executive Board of the National Conference for Community & Justice, the Children's Home Board, the Davis Island Civic Association Board, and the Athena Society.

July 1975. Although I was Editor in Chief of the *Stetson Law Review*, several faculty members had counseled that I should drop out of school, as balancing motherhood and the practice of law would be extremely difficult. Despite this advice, I enrolled in both of Dean Vause's courses, not because I had any interest in the field, but because it would enable me not to have to commute to St. Petersburg from Tampa on Wednesdays and Fridays, and I could spend the days with Michael. This schedule enabled me to take six courses, spend time at the *Law Review*, and be a full-time mother several days of the week. After the first week of classes, when the drop period was over, Dean Vause announced that he had been selected as an arbitrator on several cases that necessitated changing the time of our classes to the free hours or evenings on other days on an as-needed basis. Needless to say, Dean Vause and I spent many hours during the semester in Dean Richard T. Dillon's office, arguing about class schedule changes and the attendance policy. We finally settled on my nonattendance at the rescheduled classes and his not imposing the attendance policy on my absences. This was not a satisfactory conclusion, but it would enable me to graduate if I could pass despite my less-than-stellar attendance. As grading was anonymous, Dean Vause was shocked later on to discover that I had won the American Jurisprudence Book Award in both of his classes. He was so surprised that he came to visit me at the University of South Florida, where I was employed as the Associate General Counsel following graduation. He demanded to know how I had studied to "book" his courses and what I intended to do with my career. This meeting began a collegial relationship that we enjoyed until his death. Over the next few months, he asked me to assist him in rewriting the curriculum for the two courses to make them more relevant. He also adjusted his arbitration schedule so that his class schedule took precedence. I was extremely impressed as he listened and changed his priorities to benefit students.

Early in his career at Stetson, Dean Vause recognized that, if he was going to make teaching his priority, he needed to obtain the highest academic credentials. As a consequence, he took a leave of absence and attained his Master of Laws (LL.M.) and Doctor of Juristic Science (S.J.D.) degrees from the University of Virginia. He also worked at the Labor Center at Florida State University College of Law.

When he returned to Stetson, Dean Vause quickly realized that, for Stetson to increase its stature in the academic community, it needed to develop Centers of Excellence. He created the Center for Excellence in Dispute Resolution (Center). He invited leaders in the legal community throughout Florida to serve on its board, sponsored conferences with national speakers, and published monographs on current topics. To promote Stetson and this Center, he assumed leadership roles in The Florida Bar, the American Bar Association, the Industrial Research Relations Association, and the National Academy of Arbitrators. As these leaders became invested in Stetson's future, they volunteered to teach specialized topics to supplement the law curriculum, provided internships in their offices, contributed money, and helped prepare students for moot court competitions. He also established relationships with federal and state agencies and convinced them to offer special seminars on campus for students and practicing attorneys. These actions improved the quality of education at Stetson, increased the stature of Stetson in the legal community, provided a service to the bar, and helped develop a loyal volunteer and contributor base.

During the 1980s, Dean Vause became a well-respected arbitrator. I had the privilege of appearing before him on many occasions, because by then I was Labor Counsel for GTE Florida—now Verizon. Cary R. Singletary,<sup>1</sup> who was then Union counsel, and I regularly taught courses at Stetson, and we were both active in the Center. We convinced our clients that Dean Vause could admirably serve as both an impartial arbitrator and mediator to our disputes. He became so admired by both GTE and the Union for the conduct of the hearings and his well-reasoned decisions that when GTE established a new company, both management and union officials consented to have Dean Vause conduct an election of the bargaining-unit employees.

In 1984, in response to a request for a Women's Studies program at the Law School, I worked with Dean Vause to develop the curriculum for a course on Women in the Law, and I was its first adjunct professor.

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1. Cary R. Singletary, *W. Gary Vause: Educator, Scholar, and Southern Gentleman*, 33 *Stetson L. Rev.* 59 (2003).

In the late 1980s, Dean Vause's interest increasingly focused on international law and the interplay between labor and international law. As he was fluent in Mandarin Chinese, Portuguese, and Spanish, and had some working knowledge of Russian, he was able to travel extensively and lecture in Brazil, China, and in the countries of the former Soviet Union. As I had now become General Counsel of GTE Data Services—now Verizon Data Services—and we were licensing software throughout the world—we used Dean Vause as a consultant on many of our ventures. In fact, in our contract with Portugal Telecom we listed him as our choice for an arbitrator if disputes arose. He freely gave his time and his talent and enjoyed working with different cultures. The relationships he developed with lawyers, faculty, and community leaders enabled him to establish foreign study and exchange programs and the LL.M. program in International Law and Business.

In 1999, Dean Vause contacted me regarding an impending vacancy for the position of Stetson's dean because Dean Elizabeth A. Moody was resigning to return to teaching. Dean Vause informed me that he intended to apply for the position and asked if I would write a letter of recommendation for him. He advised me that becoming the dean would be the culmination of his career, and he believed that his diverse experience had prepared him to take Stetson to the next level. I was honored to write a recommendation to the search committee and to participate in the dean selection as a member of the Board of Overseers. The support for his selection by members of the faculty, administration, alumni, students, and community was overwhelming.

In the few short years he had as Dean, he served Stetson well. He established the new Tampa Law Center and Campus, launched the part-time program, and expanded the joint JD/MBA, the LL.M., and the summer study-abroad programs. He discovered that he was a highly effective fundraiser and that he was able to attract colleagues who were inspired by his vision.

Dean Vause may have come to Stetson with a view toward a temporary stay to enhance his career as an arbitrator, but he became an outstanding teacher, scholar, and the epitome of excellence as a dean. We shall all miss him, and are better for having known him. Most of all, I will miss him as a mentor, a colleague, and a friend.

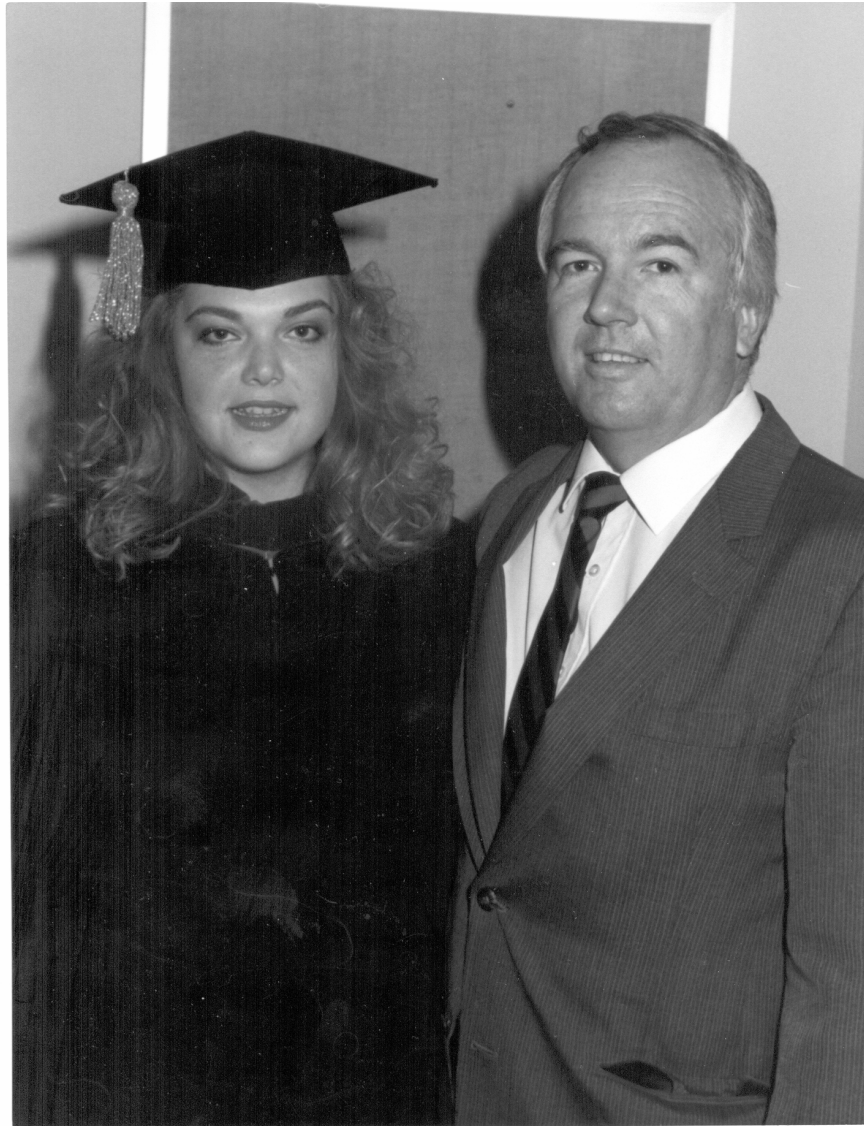
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John Long, Suzanne Long, Chad Strickland, Daniel Long, and  
Dean W. Gary Vause at Stetson University College of Law  
Commencement Ceremony



GariAnn Vause and Dean W. Gary Vause at Stetson University College  
of Law Commencement Ceremony in December 1990



## GARY VAUSE: A PERSPECTIVE

D. Chad Strickland\*

In the spring of 1975, W. Gary Vause was in private practice in Connecticut with his law partner, Thomas Sullivan.<sup>1</sup> They had a successful law practice specializing in public-sector labor law.<sup>2</sup> He had represented school districts in labor arbitrations and collective bargaining since before he graduated from law school and had become quite skilled in the practice. Nevertheless, he had grown weary of the northeastern winters and was considering moving back to his home state of Florida. As a result, he decided to visit his pregnant sister, Suzanne, who was living in Tampa at the time.

During the visit, Suzanne took Gary on a tour of the Tampa Bay area. As they drove by Stetson University College of Law, Gary asked her whether she would mind if he went in to see if he could get a word with the Dean. By that time, Gary had taught several classes as an adjunct professor at the University of Connecticut and was considering teaching as a profession. Gary entered the Dean's office wearing just jeans and a collared shirt, and yet somehow managed to get an audience with Dean Richard T. Dillon. Obviously, the meeting went well for both Gary and Stetson, for he was soon offered a position as Assistant Dean and a member of the faculty, which he gladly accepted. So began his twenty-eight year love affair with Stetson.

Suzanne, my mother, was pregnant with me at the time. As a result, my only memories of Gary are those in which he was associated with the school in some fashion, either as a Professor, Assistant or Associate Dean, and eventually as Dean and University Vice President. His commitment to the betterment of the school and the education of capable lawyers was truly remarkable. I am

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\* © 2003, D. Chad Strickland. All rights reserved. Corporate Legal Counsel, Aaron Rents, Inc. B.S., Political Science, Florida State University, 1996; J.D., Stetson University College of Law, 1999.

1. Thomas Sullivan, *A Best Friend Recalled*, 33 Stetson L. Rev. 83 (2003).

2. The law firm is still in existence today as Sullivan, Schoen, Campane & Cannon, L.L.C. in Hartford, Connecticut.

lucky enough to be one of those lawyers, but even luckier to know him as my uncle and mentor. As I look back on my experiences with Gary, I consider myself truly privileged to have known him in both his professional capacity as a professor and administrator and in his personal life as patriarch of my family. The only other individual I know of who was able to see these wonderful contrasting sides of him was his late daughter, GariAnn, also a Stetson graduate.<sup>3</sup>

I am often asked why I became an attorney, or more specifically, why I chose the area of law I practice. The answer is always easy for me—my Uncle Gary. He served a dual role for me, first as an inspiration as I was growing up and then as mentor as I entered the legal profession. When I was young, his subtle inquiries about my grades and ambitions were more effective than he ever imagined. He was always the one to encourage me to explore alternative professional careers, whether in the military or in business, although I now realize that his underlying theme was always for me to be a leader in whatever field I chose. Yet, as tempting as he made those other careers sound, there really was no other option than to become a “labor lawyer” like him.

Once it was apparent that I had chosen the legal profession, Gary never directly tried to influence me to come to Stetson. My desire to leave Tallahassee, and the opportunity to be closer to him and gain his valuable insight during my legal education left me with only one alternative. Once I entered law school, Gary and I never discussed how we would handle the fact that I was his nephew; it was basically an unspoken agreement that no one would know. I guess we both figured this would be the best way to avoid any potential conflict issues. This mutual agreement lasted until the day of graduation, when the commencement ceremony included an announcement that I would be receiving my diploma from my uncle—a complete surprise to me. I think he got more of a kick out of surprising my former professors than he did me.

Looking back on what now seems like my brief law school career, I realize one of the most important things Gary taught me was to recognize the difference between the intellectual side of law and the actual practice of law. He continually insisted that I obtain the ability to function productively, almost immediately

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3. GariAnn graduated from Stetson University College of Law in December 1990.

after graduation. He stated that it was important for Stetson to have a reputation as a school that produced capable lawyers, who graduated, passed the bar, and made an immediate impact on society. It was this practical approach to the education of young lawyers that distinguished him from most academicians. He felt that so many schools produced students trained in theory and not in practice. As a result, he encouraged me to participate in a variety of clerking and internship opportunities. This was possibly the most beneficial bit of wisdom Gary imparted to me during law school. The practical work experience and personal relationships I forged during these experiences have played a large role in the success I have achieved in my career to date.

To Gary, legal education was an investment in one's future. He felt an obligation to graduates to increase their degree's worth by increasing the reputation of the law school. He was always concerned about the school's reputation and the opinion of lawyers who were looking to hire Stetson graduates. He knew that the best way to increase the school's reputation was to increase the perception of the type of graduates the school produced.

His assertion that new graduates should always have the ability to practice was more than just rhetoric. Gary continued his private practice by conducting labor arbitrations throughout his tenure at Stetson, until he was forced to give it up due to time constraints when he became Dean in 1999. I frequently meet lawyers who presented cases before him at arbitration and have nothing but the deepest respect for his ability as a neutral. His attentiveness to the ever-changing areas of labor and employment law and his ability to get to the truth of the matter was something both labor and management sides had no choice but to respect. This made Gary one of the most sought-after arbitrators in the country.

It was not until I began my professional career that I realized one of Gary's greatest attributes was his ability to manage people and issues in difficult situations. It was this ability that enabled him to accomplish many of the wonderful things he was able to do within such a short period of time as Dean. Of course, his proudest achievement was the establishment of the Tampa Law Center and Campus and part-time program—his "baby" as he often referred to it. There was so much work involved in maneuvering the various interests to get this accomplished that I lost track half-way through the process. However, I knew that he wanted it

done, and as a result I had no doubt that it would be accomplished. It was his ability to deal with difficult situations, stay focused on the big picture, and avoid getting bogged down in ancillary issues that made him such a capable administrator and leader of the school. I analogize his ability to that of a CEO of a major corporation, and I have little doubt that he would have been just as successful in that capacity.

Anyone who worked closely with Gary knew that his success was due in large part to his ability to put in long hours to get things accomplished. His work ethic can be traced directly back to his father, Willie Vause. My grandfather was something of a depression-era entrepreneur. He spent most of his time working in the dangerous and difficult lumber industry of north Florida and south Georgia. He was also a builder, a dabbler in the apiary business, and a restaurateur (a partnership with Gary); he spent his twilight years in the shrimping industry. He was a big strong man with a head full of white hair and skin as tough as leather. He was the type of man who was always on the move and did not stop working until his head hit the pillow. As with many of his contemporaries who grew up during the Depression, Willie knew no other way of life but to work hard.

During that era, men could not afford to spend their time getting an education because they had to support their families, but he certainly knew the value of an education and constantly stressed it to Gary. He had Gary working in the lumber mill at a very young age, catching planks of wood off of a conveyor belt. It was repetitive, hard work that demanded attention. Gary recollected his father's warnings that, if he did not get an education, he would be working in the lumber mill for the rest of his life. It was these warnings that motivated him to work hard toward obtaining an education. Gary told me this story as we were repairing a barbed wire fence during a particularly cold winter day in Tallahassee. In his typical, subtle fashion, Gary made the inference clear.

Because Gary obtained his work ethic and determination from his father, it leaves little doubt that he acquired his compassion and patience from his mother, Lila Vause. My grandmother, a beautiful southern belle from Tallahassee, was a kind and gentle person who possessed the same subtle and persuasive qualities that Gary was known for throughout his professional career. Gary was lucky enough to take these attributes from her and

combine them with the hard work ethic and determination of his father. The result was Gary's drive to succeed at everything he did, but at the same time maintain the ability to patiently seek long-term goals and remain compassionate about such things as helping underprivileged foreign students pursue a career in the United States. These attributes were also instrumental in his ability to be a successful administrator, manager, and arbitrator.

I know Gary's death has been hard on so many of the people whose lives he touched because it seemed to be so very sudden. He was working practically up to the very day he passed away, all the time knowing that his time was near, but never indicating to anyone that he was in the least bit uncomfortable. In February, I came down to St. Petersburg to visit him. It was the first time I had seen him since Christmas. It was readily apparent to me that his health had taken a dramatic turn for the worse, but we never had a chance to discuss in detail exactly what that meant. Though I had known for some time that he had been battling cancer, I, as well as my entire family, assumed that Gary would be able to beat the disease because we had always viewed him as invincible. But, during that February visit, I saw for the first time a vulnerability that had never been present before.

After the visit, he called me in Atlanta and informed me that, due to his health, he was going to have to cancel his plans to spend the coming summer in Brazil. That was all that needed to be said. Like his father, who had died of pancreatic cancer in November 1994, Gary would not allow his health to hinder him from accomplishing his goals. Despite the fact that he knew his body was soon to be overcome, he was never one to burden others with what he considered unnecessary worries, so he continued his work as Dean. This was so typical of him, not to want any sympathy or special treatment.

In April, I came down and stayed with him for several days. He was very sick, and it was extremely difficult to see him in that condition. Nevertheless, he would not let his condition affect our time together. He wanted me to be assured that he was comfortable with his fate. As we sat and talked, the conversation soon turned to a brief chronology of the events in his life. He loved to tell stories of his childhood growing up in Tallahassee with his good friend, William Meggs. He discussed how he had convinced William that they would join the Marines together and then, after William signed up, Gary changed his mind and went the "easier"

route with the Air Force—a story that I had heard countless times.<sup>4</sup> He recalled the hard training he went through and his work in military intelligence in Japan listening to North Korean fighter pilots. And as I sat and listened, it dawned on me that he knew he had accomplished more than he ever anticipated in life.

I have heard many people state that Gary lived a “full life.” What I think is more appropriate is what my good friend and classmate, Chris Johnston, said after learning of his passing. Chris, who constantly amused Gary with his numerous exploits, said, “You know, Gary packed the equivalent of five lifetimes into sixty years. I hope I can do just half of that.” Indeed, Gary himself was confident in the fact that he lived his life to the fullest and committed himself completely to all his endeavors. As a result of this realization, he was content with his fate.

It is very difficult for me to adequately express what Gary meant to my small family. He was more than an uncle to my brother Daniel and me, and more than a brother to my mother and his brother Bobby. He was a source of pride and accomplishment. Everyone who knew Gary has lost something special, whether it be a good friend, mentor, colleague, professor, or trusted advisor. Fortunately, we all have our memories and should feel extremely lucky that we were able to be touched by such a unique individual.

As I know we must all pass on eventually, I, for selfish reasons, was not ready for Gary’s death. I always assumed, or I guess imagined, that Gary would be there to help guide me through my professional endeavors. To date, I am beginning my fifth year of practicing law and, as Gary recently said to me, I no longer need any guidance on the law, but guidance on how to successfully navigate the world using what I know. He was my compass. But, now that he is gone, I realize that he was sure to point me in the right direction and expected me to make my way. I have a feeling that there are many young lawyers just like me that he pointed in that direction. Thank you, Uncle Gary, for showing us the way.

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4. William Meggs also chose the legal profession and currently serves as the State Attorney in Tallahassee. Amazingly, they remained very close friends despite this incident.

## GARY VAUSE: A GREAT LEADER

Hon. Thomas E. Stringer, Sr.\*

I really did not get to know Dean W. Gary Vause very well until, as a member of the dean search committee, I had the opportunity to participate in an in-depth evaluation of his qualifications for the vacant deanship. Like the other members of the committee, I was quite impressed and realized early on that he was the person to lead Stetson University College of Law into the twenty-first century. This initial impression matured into reality over the following four years during his service as Dean.

I subsequently became chair of the Board of Overseers and had the opportunity to work closely with Gary on several issues. I was most impressed by his level of commitment to Stetson and its mission of producing some of the finest legal minds in this country. One of the main functions of the Board of Overseers is to serve as an advisory body to the Dean. Gary understood this, and without fail, he consulted the Board and sought its advice on every important decision affecting the school.

In the last year and a half of his tenure as Dean, the dream of a few became the reality of many as we began constructing the new Tampa Law Center and Campus. It would not have been possible without Gary's vision, leadership, and perseverance. This Center will forever stand as a monument to his love for and commitment to Stetson, and his legacy will live on in each of the students who graduate and go on to epitomize the qualities of professional excellence for which Gary stood.

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\* © 2003, The Honorable Thomas E. Stringer, Sr. All rights reserved. Judge, Second District Court of Appeal. B.A., New York University, 1967; J.D., Stetson University College of Law, 1971.

Following college and before attending law school, Judge Stringer joined the United States Air Force where he attained the rank of Captain. After graduation from Stetson, he served as an Assistant State Attorney from October 1974 to November 1976. He was in private practice until his appointment to the Hillsborough County Court by Governor Bob Graham in April 1984.

In December 1987, he was appointed to the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Court by Governor Bob Martinez where he served as the Administrative Judge for the Family Law Division until January 1994. Judge Stringer has served as a member of the Implementation Committee for the Florida Supreme Court Gender Bias Commission and was appointed by the Supreme Court to the Florida Commission for Responsible Fatherhood and to the Florida Family Court Steering Committee.

Dean W. Gary Vause and Celia Vause



## A BEST FRIEND RECALLED

Thomas Sullivan\*

I once told Gary Vause what a New York City firefighter said after the department's chaplain was killed by falling debris from the twin towers while ministering to a victim of the World Trade Center attack. The firefighter recalled the chaplain suggesting to firefighters that if they wanted to make God laugh, all they had to do was to tell him what their plans were for tomorrow. Gary appreciated this anecdote about life's essential irony. When it became clear that his death was imminent, Gary's one comment to me on the matter was that he was "philosophical about such things." If he was angry about the hand he had been dealt, it was not out of self-pity, but because he loved his wife, his family, and life, and because there was still much work to be done.

It was sometime in the 1970–1971 academic year that my friendship with Gary began. I was studying in the library of the University of Connecticut School of Law (UCONN) and Gary approached me, in his affable way, to say hello. I had returned to UCONN as a second-year law student under the school's readmission program for students who had been inducted into the military after completing their first year of law school. Gary and I had become acquainted two years earlier as first-year law students, so we knew one another by sight. Over lunch, he told me that he was a sole practitioner and also General Counsel for the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE). That summer, Gary got me a job with CABE, and I was assigned to "analyze" Connecticut school board-teacher union contracts. That work was my introduction to labor relations and employment law in the public schools, an area of the law hardly known at that time and not yet taught in law school.

After my admission to the bar and a short stint as a general practitioner in New Haven, Gary asked me to join him in the

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\* © 2003, Thomas Sullivan. All rights reserved. Partner, Sullivan, Schoen, Campana & Connon, L.L.C. B.A., Fairfield University, 1967; J.D., *with honors*, University of Connecticut School of Law, 1972.

practice of law. I gladly accepted, as by now we had become fast friends and Gary's practice, with its emphasis on education law and public sector labor relations, provided a cutting-edge opportunity. Gary and I practiced law together in Connecticut for a few years until circumstances drew him back to his native state, Florida, in 1974. Nevertheless, our friendship grew. As Director of the Center for Dispute Resolution, Gary appointed me to the Center's Advisory Council, and I often traveled to Gulfport to consult with him on programs for the Center and to be an occasional presenter in some of those programs. Of course, these trips were also a welcome break from law practice for me and from law school administration for Gary.

Of the many places Gary introduced me to on my early trips to Florida, the place we visited most was Busch Gardens. Here we would walk and talk, ride the roller-coasters, and wet our whistles at the hospitality house. Gary loved to ride the roller-coasters. The *Python* was his favorite, until the *Montu* appeared. But the conversations were the best part of these Busch Gardens adventures. Always solicitous of how I was doing and how the law practice was going, Gary would not speak of himself or of his work at Stetson University College of Law until I broached these topics. Then, he would tell me things in his measured manner, with as few words as necessary to make the point, and a dialectical process would begin. "Tom, I'm thinking about dealing with the problem this way, what do you think?" I knew it was likely that Gary had already decided how to deal with the problem, but perhaps he felt that hearing from his old buddy might provide useful reinforcement. I enjoyed this little game of ours, not the least because Gary's description of a situation or personality was always entertaining. Gary had a Southern brand of homespun humor that was part Mark Twain and part Will Rogers. He could turn a phrase like no one else I knew, and the result was often highly amusing. This was not artfulness, just Gary's way of conversing.

My time with Gary was not confined to Busch Gardens or the other Florida attractions we visited through the years. Gary loved New York City, and when he came to the City on business, I would meet him and his wife Celia for a Broadway show and a visit to one of Gary's favorite Manhattan restaurants. On these trips and on other trips to places Gary loved to visit, such as Boston, Newport, Washington D.C., and New Orleans, the dialectic would resume. Celia was always most gracious in encouraging the

“two buddies” to spend some time together. On the lower East Side of New York, where my parents were raised, was McSorley’s Tavern, a New York City landmark that Gary loved the moment I introduced him to it. Celia had no interest in drinking establishments, but would gladly agree to shop in Midtown while Gary and I resumed the dialectical process over a mug of McSorley’s ale.

Celia always encouraged me to visit Florida. She knew that, when I did, Gary would take a few days off from work, and she felt this was good for him. I readily obliged at every opportunity. On those occasions when Celia would make a trip without Gary to visit her family in Brazil, she always encouraged the two of us to plan a trip of our own. With Celia’s loving guidance, my friendship with Gary thrived, and I will always be grateful to her for that.

On our last visit, shortly before his death, Gary briefly left home for the office to deal with a difficult issue for which he was responsible as Dean, one that could have been delegated under the circumstances. Though physically frail and dependent on Celia to drive him to the office, and although he dreaded what he had to do, Gary was determined to handle the matter himself because he considered it his duty to do so. It was an act of courage and dedication, and so characteristic of Gary, though to think of it in those terms would never have occurred to him.

Gary and I came from different places. He was a good old boy from the Deep South, and I was a Brooklyn-born Yankee raised in New England. But we were both blessed with parents who taught us that, as my father used to say, “Hard work isn’t easy.” For Gary, only family and friendship were more important than work. He knew that nothing of significance could be accomplished without tireless dedication, whether it was the realization of a downtown campus for the law school or writing a scholarly piece on international trade. Gary’s enormous accomplishments at Stetson, the fruit of his tireless dedication, are part of his legacy as is the success of the law practice he founded in Hartford. Though it no longer bears his name, the Hartford firm bears Gary’s imprint, just as Stetson always will. But more importantly, Gary leaves the indelible imprint of himself on our lives. Gary’s life was in the entrepreneurial spirit of the country he loved, but he also lived life in the spirit of giving. He was a man of action who accomplished much, but as he did, he was ever mindful of the interests of others. To me, he was both friend and mentor, and I know he

would have done anything for me, provided he was convinced that it was for the best.

## A UNIQUE INDIVIDUAL

Frank W. Swacker\*

In the spring of 2003, the world lost a unique individual. That was when Dean W. Gary Vause, humanitarian, educator, international scholar, Dean, and Vice President of Stetson University College of Law died. The late Dean Vause had earned the highest degrees of his profession, including a Doctor of Juristic Science degree from the University of Virginia School of Law. Not only his beautiful wife Celia, but also his many professional colleagues in the legal community and friends will miss his brilliant and charming companionship.

It was my privilege to become one of his close friends over the past fifteen years. As a member of Stetson International Lawyers Advisory Council and as an adjunct professor at Stetson, Dean Vause often invited me to lecture to his students and foreign visiting lawyers on international investment and foreign trade. We also shared Continuing Legal Education (CLE) speaking platforms and attended many delightful social events.

I will never forget his genuine and immediate response to a personal request that he provide his insights on business and legal aspects of Latin American trade and investment at an off-campus CLE seminar. At the time of the request, Dean Vause had just returned from teaching labor law in Brazil while on sabbatical. Those who attended the seminar were delighted with his presentation. It was on that occasion that my life became enriched by our continuous friendship that ended with his untimely, early passing at age sixty.

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\* © 2003, Frank W. Swacker. All rights reserved. International Lawyer & Arbitrator Adviser to major law firms, corporations, and foreign governments on trade and investment treaties. B.A., Union College, 1947; J.D., University of Virginia School of Law, 1949; LL.M. (International Law), New York University Graduate School of Law, 1961.

Mr. Swacker is the lead author of *World Trade Without Barriers: The World Trade Organization (WTO) and Dispute Resolution*. Frank Warren Swacker, Kenneth Robert Redden, & Larry B. Wenger, *World Trade Without Barriers: The World Trade Organization (WTO) and Dispute Resolution* vols. 1 & 2 (Marion Foundation McCurdy ed., Michie Butterworth 1995).

Before his death, our mutual respect for Jeffersonian principles provided us with many hours of pleasant discussions at our frequent private luncheons. We shared the experience of resolving disputes as neutral arbitrators. We shared the belief that the business community's support and communication with the academic world is a necessary component for their respective future growth. Dean Vause achieved these aspirations to bring them closer by spearheading and bringing to reality global teaching and the establishment of a satellite campus in Tampa, Florida.

## A REMEMBRANCE OF DEAN W. GARY VAUSE

Ruth Fleet Thurman\*

It was obvious from the start that Gary Vause was going to be a superstar. When Gary and I began teaching at Stetson University College of Law in September 1975, as assistant professors of law, Gary was also hired as our new Assistant Dean, replacing the now late Calvin A. Kuenzel, who was returning to full-time teaching after serving in that position for several years.

In those days, we had just two deans and several administrators, chiefly the business manager, librarian, head of buildings and grounds, registrar, and admissions director; sometimes, the latter two positions were handled by the business manager. Other administrative functions were handled by faculty committees. For example, during my first three years at Stetson, I was simultaneously chairman—nobody called us chair in those days—of the following committees: Alumni, Placement, Continuing Legal Education, Financial Aid, and Honors and Awards. In addition, I was in charge of Publicity and Graduation, and I taught all of the first-year Research and Writing courses.

I mention my assignments—all of which I vividly remember and loved—as an example of the heavy demands on teachers in the mid-1970s. These were the days before new teachers were given lighter teaching loads and summer research grants. Most of us taught summer school to make ends meet. And that was what made Gary so remarkable. He was able to squeeze in significant scholarship from the start. He wrote articles for the *Florida Bar Journal* and was editor of a monthly article for the Labor Law Section of The Florida Bar. That was just the beginning. Before long, his publication credits included articles and books, many translated into foreign languages, a number of which he himself spoke, including Mandarin Chinese and Portuguese.

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\* © 2003, Ruth Fleet Thurman. All rights reserved. Professor of Law, Stetson University College of Law. B.A., Smith College; J.D., Stetson University College of Law; LL.M., Columbia University.

If I could pinpoint one quality that made Gary remarkable, I think it would be his intense focus and ability to listen. Every time I met with him, I was struck by the fact that he was listening to every word I said, as if it were the most important thing in the world. Sometimes, this made me self-conscious, and I chose my words with care because I realized, “Gary is really listening to me.”

His responses were equally remarkable—focused and insightful—showing incredibly good judgment and fairness. It is no wonder that he was a successful arbitrator and mediator and pioneered Stetson’s course in Alternative Dispute Resolution and our Center for Excellence in Dispute Resolution. These same qualities were evident in the superb reports he wrote as a faculty member and as a dean. These reports were beautifully crafted and well-reasoned. They promoted consensus and helped bring to fruition some of the law school’s major programs, such as, our Master of Laws in International Law and Business and the Tampa Law Center and Campus.

I always marveled at his accomplishments and once remarked to his marvelous wife, Celia, that I did not know how Gary was able to be so productive. She replied, “Oh, he works very hard.” She said he would go into his study and work without interruption until she tapped on his door, and he invited her to come in and sit down. She told me he gave her his full attention, and after awhile, thanked her for her “visit,” whereupon she would leave, and he would go back to work.

They were simpatico. He was a perfect Dean and she was a perfect Dean’s wife. Together they made tremendous contributions to Stetson and to all of our lives. We will always be grateful and treasure them in our hearts.