

TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR ROBERT A. WEEMS

*Guthrie T. Abbott**

I am honored to be asked to pay tribute to my good friend Bob Weems, on the occasion of his retiring from full time teaching. I met Bob and his brother Billy when we all started at the Ole Miss Law School in 1964. We became fast friends during the trauma of our first semester, and we have remained close friends ever since. My wife, Patsy, and I still reminisce with Bob and his wife, Janis, over the good times that we had living in Avent Acres during our law school years. We were all broke and happy as could be. Robert Khayat or Len Blackwell or Bill Rainey or any one of the other aspiring lawyers living in our \$62.50 per month apartments would crank up the grill and all of us would throw on our five pounds for a dollar hamburger meat from Mr. Levy's Jitney Jungle, and we would dine as if we were kings and queens.

I joined the Ole Miss Law faculty in 1970, and my greatest gift to the law school occurred in 1977, when Cliff Hodge and I took Bob Weems to lunch and talked him into leaving his successful law career in Vicksburg to start a law teaching career at Ole Miss. As they say, the rest is history!

Bob is a natural teacher. It has made no difference whether he was teaching junior high math in Jackson or advanced courses in law school. Our students often brag on Bob, and as one student summed it up: "Professor Weems just explains everything so clearly. He is a great law professor, but he could teach basket weaving, or anything, and have you coming back for more."

I was blessed to be able to work with Bob for twenty-eight years on our Annual Summary of Recent Mississippi Law CLE programs. Bob is so conscientious, well organized, and easy to get along with that we never had a single disagreement over all of those years. However, we did have some exciting times during which Bob's attention to detail saved us. For example, a year in

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advance, we had obtained a written contract with The Clarion Hotel in Jackson, Mississippi for meeting space, which Bob had confirmed several times, as he always did. Nevertheless, Bob decided to triple check and called two days before we were to present our CLE to three hundred lawyers and judges, only to be told by The Clarion that they had never heard of us and that the meeting rooms were already rented to someone else. Thanks to “Mr. Thorough,” Bob Weems, we were able to somewhat sort out that mess, and the Abbott & Weems dog-and-pony show went on as scheduled.

Bob has earned his semi-retirement, but the law students are richer because Professor Weems will continue to dispense his words of wisdom on wills and estates. Bob has a way of just taking over the areas in which he teaches. He is the Southern Distributor of the Mississippi Law of Torts and of Wills. His textbooks on those topics are the bible for students, lawyers and judges. Bob will enjoy his more relaxed life style, but he will continue to have our students anxious “to come back for more” of his clear analysis as he continues in the classroom.