

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION FOR MARY OLERT BOYD

My mother Mary Olert Boyd passed away December 19, 2015 at the age of 85. She is survived by her husband Joe, my brother David and his wife Sabrina; my husband Richard Littlehale and me, and three grandchildren: Daniel and Sarah Boyd of Jacksonville, FL, and Alice Littlehale of Nashville. She is preceded in death by a son, Lt. Col. Andrew Boyd. My mother was born in Holland, Michigan, the daughter of Rev. Frederick Hermine Olert and Sarah Klooster Olert. My grandfather was a Presbyterian minister whose career took the family to Paducah, Kentucky; Cincinnati, Ohio; and Detroit, Michigan. My mother's 4 years of high school were spent in four different schools, including one year as a boarding student at Ward-Belmont here in Nashville.

My mother received her B.A. in 1952 from Hope College in Holland, MI. She met my father, her husband of 61 years, during medical school at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. Joe Boyd was a Navy officer stationed in Washington, D.C. She decided to leave medical school and pursue a teaching career instead, so after receiving her teaching certificate at American University, she became a school teacher in Washington, D.C. and later in Nashville, while my Dad was in law school at Vanderbilt. At this point, my Mom began her legal education, taking law classes at Vanderbilt.

When my dad graduated, my parents moved to his hometown of Dyersburg, Tennessee, where he practiced law and she taught school. Soon, motivated by a strong sense of justice and innate desire to help others, my mother decided to go to law school herself. When I began first grade, my mother began law school at what was then Memphis State University, living in Memphis during the week and returning home on weekends to study. She graduated in 1977 and began practicing law in Dyersburg, eventually becoming an Assistant District Attorney and heading the child support division of the District Attorney's Office. During those years, paternity testing was still relatively new, and my mom tried many jury trials to establish parentage and ensure that women with children received the financial support from the father of those children that the law entitled them to. She was beloved by her clients, who called her days, nights, and weekends looking for advice and counsel, and for someone who would fight for them. In my mom, they found all of this. When my mother first began practicing law in Dyersburg, there was only one other female lawyer in Dyersburg, and that woman, Lucy Honey Haynes, soon moved to Nashville, eventually becoming the Deputy Attorney General. My mom found friendship and camaraderie with other women lawyers throughout the State through the Tennessee Lawyers Association for Women, an organization that gave many lawyers like Mom who had few other women attorneys in their jurisdictions an opportunity to interact with, learn from, and be mentored by other women lawyers who had traveled the same lonely path.

Throughout her career, my mother was a strong advocate for equal rights for women, and she spent a great deal of time talking about issues like statutory rape -- which, in those days in rural West Tennessee was sometimes tolerated or even ignored. My mother was greatly disturbed by the cycle of poverty that resulted from children born out of wedlock, and fiercely advocated birth control and education as ways to combat that poverty cycle. Her concern and advocacy for these issues led her to the Democratic Party, which she chaired first in Dyer County, and later in Davidson County. She also served on the State Executive Committee for the Tennessee Democratic Party. My mother also was active in the state bar, serving on many committees and serving as the first chair of the Family Law Section of the TBA.

In 1993, my parents relocated to Nashville, where Mom assumed a position with the General Counsel's office of the Department of Human Services in the McWherter administration. Later, she went into private practice. Upon arriving in Nashville, my Mom immediately got involved in the Lawyers Association for Women, LAW, where she had the opportunity to be a mentor to younger women lawyers herself.

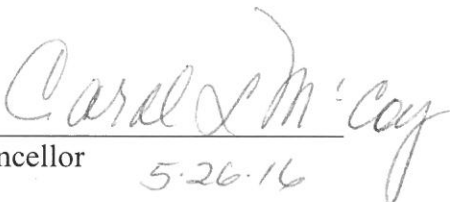
My mother was also passionate about flying. She began taking flying lessons after my dad got his pilot's license, arguing that she wanted to know how to land the plane if he had a medical emergency mid-air. She became an accomplished pilot in her own right, becoming an instrument-rated pilot and taking an active role in the national women pilots club called The Ninety-Nines. My mom served as Chair of the Cape Girardeau Area Chapter of the Ninety-Nines and Stop Chairman for the Powder Puff Derby in Dyersburg. Much of my mother's flying career was devoted to the Civil Air Patrol, an auxiliary of the United States Air Force. The CAP, as one of its tasks, is responsible for flying 80% of all civilian search and rescue missions in the United States. My mother rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and served as Tennessee Wing Legal Officer and Legislative Liaison and the Group 3 Public Affairs Officer. Since my parents were both instrument-rated pilots, they flew together in numerous search and rescue missions, many at night.

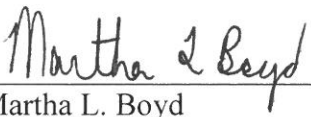
The CAP, because of its affiliation with the Air Force and its incorporation of opportunities for civilian service, scratched an itch that my mom had experienced since meeting my father while he was in the Navy. She had tried to get into the Navy Reserves herself, but the service at that time would not accept married women of childbearing age. In addition to serving in the CAP, my mother was extremely supportive of her husband's service in the Navy Reserves, and later of the service of all three of her children, two of whom served in the Army and one in the Navy. Her oldest son -- my brother Andy -- died while serving in the Army in 2002, an event that shook my mother, and our entire family, to our core. Nevertheless, my Mom remained extremely proud of all of her children's military service, and truly believed that they were carrying out a legacy of military service that she was not permitted to fulfill.

During the last years of her life, as my mother became challenged by severe hearing loss and dementia, my father was her constant companion and champion. Mom's cognitive impairment was difficult for all of us who knew and loved her, but she remained interactive, kind, and loving until the end of her life. We will all remember her for years of fellowship and service to her profession, her family, and the clients she fought for.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Nashville Bar Association, that we honor the life and work of our friend, wife, mother, and colleague, Mary Olert Boyd.

Respectfully submitted on this the 26th day of May 2016 by the undersigned.


Chancellor
5.26.16


Martha L. Boyd