

1992

Tribute

Paul Roach

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Recommended Citation

Roach, Paul (1992) "Tribute," *Land & Water Law Review*. Vol. 27 : Iss. 2 , pp. 305 - 305.
Available at: https://scholarship.law.uwyo.edu/land_water/vol27/iss2/2

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TRIBUTE

*Paul Roach**

Mark Twain once said, "Loyalty to a petrified opinion never broke a chair or freed a human soul." Joe Geraud's work over the past twenty-three years as the NCAA Faculty Athletic Representative for the University of Wyoming epitomized Twain's distrust of dogma.

Joe is a nationally recognized and respected representative to both the NCAA and the Western Athletic Conference. In fact, Joe has been involved with the inner workings of the NCAA so long that the current 479 page NCAA Rules Manual was only about a ten page brochure when he started.

In Joe Geraud we had a very unique resource. He not only thoroughly understood the nuances of the numerous and often complex regulations, but he played a major role in creating many of them. One can only liken this to the opportunity of having had Moses around to help us interpret what the Ten Commandments really mean. Despite the dogmatic appearance of the voluminous rules that today guide intercollegiate athletic programs, Joe brought a humanism and understanding to them that we shall sorely miss. Many people can "interpret" the rules, but few can "feel" them; Joe had that "feel."

As a Faculty Senator, Joe Geraud educated many academicians about the real world of college athletics. His wit and professionalism helped the Senate negotiate the sometimes turbulent waters that exist between academics and athletics. Joe had the astuteness to calm those waters at the University of Wyoming. His previous position as Vice President of Academic Affairs gave him a frame of reference which was invaluable in the faculty governance process.

Although tremendously knowledgeable about the rules, he never hesitated to consult with his colleagues when sufficient questions existed. Joe certainly had strong, well-informed opinions on issues, but they were far from "petrified." He was committed to looking judiciously at every compliance issue and doing what was right rather than what was expedient.

Intercollegiate athletics will certainly miss Joe Geraud as an active participant. The smell of pipe smoke in our department came to herald the advent of a lively discussion, an interesting lecture on the NCAA, or just a little "fat chewin."

We all wish Joe well in his new home overlooking the Wind River. Our only hope is that he doesn't stray too far from the phone.

* Athletic Director, University of Wyoming.