

IN MEMORIAM: TOM RUSH MOODY JR.

Tom Rush Moody, Jr. died on November 5, 2015 in Trappe, Maryland. He was born in Alpine, Texas on July 21, 1930 to Tom Rush and Lois Whipkey Moody. Rush grew up in Houston, Texas, graduating from John Reagan High School in 1948. He attended Rice Institute for two years before transferring to the University of Texas to complete a joint BBA/LLB degree program. There, he was a member of Delta Tau Delta, Friars, Silver Spurs, and President of the student body in 1952-53. After a brief timeout to marry his college sweetheart Ann, he took a leave of absence to serve in the United States Air Force as an intelligence officer stationed at Warner Robins Airbase. He returned to the University in 1955 to complete his law studies, becoming an Associate Note Editor of the Texas Law Review and member of Phi Delta Phi. He graduated in 1956 and was admitted to the State Bar of Texas that same year.

After graduation, he returned to Houston to take a position with the Baker, Botts, Andrews, and Shepherd law firm. In 1961, he told the partners that he was leaving the firm to join his college mentor Tom Sealy's law firm in Midland, Texas, a move that was subsequently postponed for nine months when he learned that Ann was pregnant with triplets. After ten years practicing in Midland as a trial lawyer and learning as he said "everything I needed to know about law from Bill Browder," Rush was appointed by President Richard Nixon (with critical support from Congressman George Mahon and Senator Lloyd Bentsen) in 1971 to a five-year term on the Federal Power Commission, then chaired by John Nassikas.

Rush served ably for four years but found himself increasingly voting in dissent with regard to the Commission's continued regulation of interstate natural gas prices under the Natural Gas Act. He ultimately resigned in 1975, urging President Gerald R. Ford in his resignation letter to pursue a legislative solution to end the natural gas shortages then plaguing the Atlantic Seaboard. Texas Governor Dolph Briscoe immediately appointed Moody to serve as his special counsel, advising him and Lt. Governor Bill Hobby on energy policy and helping Senator Lloyd Bentsen draft what ultimately became the Natural Gas Policy Act of 1978.

In 1977, Rush returned to private law practice in Washington, working at a number of Texas-based firms, helping each of them grow their energy practice groups. After stints with Baker & Botts, Vinson & Elkins, and Akin Gump, Moody joined Andrews Kurth where he served as managing partner from 1992 until his retirement in 1996. He worked on regulatory, trial, and energy policy matters for many clients but was perhaps most proud of his work helping his friend John G. McMillian organize and finance a consortium to build the first natural gas export pipeline from Prudhoe Bay, Alaska to the lower 48 states.

Upon retirement, Rush and Ann moved from Chevy Chase to Trappe, Maryland where he enjoyed being a gentlemen farmer growing corn and soybeans at Trappe Landing Farm. He was also past-President of Chesapeake Chamber Music, Inc., a board member of the Easton YMCA, and an usher at Christ Church Easton. Not able to keep the lawyer in him from disappearing completely, he also served on the Talbot County Planning and Zoning Board of Appeals until his death.

Rush dearly loved being on the water, catching fish, and watching the sunsets. Neither “hell nor high water” would keep him from his weekly gin rummy and poker games with friends. He developed a skilled hand at woodcarving, producing exquisitely figured and painted butterflies. Most of all, after many years of hard work, he loved having the time to be with his family, re-engaging with his children, and teaching a few good card tricks to his grandchildren.

By all who knew him, he will be missed.