



## Judge Alfred Burka, SMA '45



**(1928 – 2014)**

Alfred Burka was born on February 27, 1928, and was raised in Washington, DC. He entered Staunton Military Academy (SMA) in the fall of 1941 and graduated as First Lieutenant, Ordnance in 1945. He had been on the track team for four years, on the Rifle Team as a sophomore, and News Editor of the Kablegram as a senior.

Alfred “attended Georgetown University and Georgetown Law School and briefly practiced law before going to Korea as a combat infantry officer, where he was awarded his second bronze star with “v” for valor. Judge Burka then entered public life as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia, until he was appointed as Federal Judge in the Superior Court for the District of Columbia in 1967.

“After retirement as a judge, he became a resident of Worton MD, and became active in many professional and social organizations. A popular and gregarious man, he was a leader and major supporter of many Eastern Shore conservation groups. He served on the boards of the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy and the Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage. His own farm became a model of wildlife and nature preservation.

“Judge Burka was notable for generously supporting many charitable organizations and individuals, too many to list.

“He was as major figure in establishing and teaching at the National Judicial College in Reno, NV. Judge Alfred Burka died on December 31, 2014, at the age of 86. He is survived by his children, Susan Walsh of Kensington, MD, and Richard Burka of Gaithersburg, MD, and his brother Dr. Edward Burka [SMA '48] of Worton, MD.”

Following are two of many memorials to Judge Burka:

“I served as Judge Burka's first law clerk when he was appointed in 1967 to the D.C. Court of General Sessions (now the Superior Court of the District of Columbia). .... Judge Burka was a wonderful mentor and well respected for his compassion and understanding of the litigants who came before him. He was exceptionally kind and generous with his time and it was a privilege to have known him.

**James L. Lyons** - January 05 [2015] ”

“I was honored and privileged to serve as Judge Burka's last law clerk in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia from November, 1978, through December, 1979. He was a dedicated jurist, extremely knowledgeable and well spoken. He was a teacher and mentor to other judges, as well as to the law clerks who served him. He graced me with his company many times, inviting me hunting (I barely knew one end of the shotgun from the other), to lunches and dinners, affording me the opportunity to represent him as an attorney in several matters, and encouraging me in private practice. He even gave me advice on remedies to help my sick infant son, who was born during my clerkship with him. When I was sworn of (sic) as the circuit court judge in Queen Anne's County 11 years ago last Friday, he not only attended, he insisted on buying the robe that I continue to use. I will forever be thankful to have known this man of such a zest for life and keen intellect and uncanny ability to communicate on any level. He will truly be missed.

**Tom Ross** - January 12 [2015] ”

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