

1976

Kurtz joined the Georgia Law faculty in 1975 as an assistant professor and worked his way up the ranks to endowed professorships such as the Law School Association Professor and the J. Alton Hosch Professor (which he currently holds). He will retire on June 30 after almost 40 years of service to Georgia Law.

A native New Yorker until his college days at Vanderbilt University, Kurtz fully immersed himself into his adopted Southern hometown of Athens. He and his wife, Carol, are supporters of the arts, and he has affiliated himself with various local organizations – the Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation, the Athens Area Emergency Food Bank, Athens Community Connection and Project SAFE. He even served as a local “Athens star” in the latter’s fundraising version of “Dancing with the Stars” and won the 2009 People’s Choice Award for his dance floor moves.

Active in legislative issues, Kurtz served as reporter for the Georgia Supreme Court’s Indigent Defense Reform Commission (2000–03) and served on the 11-member Public Defender Standards Council (2003–09). For numerous years, he has been very active in the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws and has served in various capacities including as commissioner for the last 12 years. On campus, Kurtz served five terms on the University Council and two terms on the board of the Georgia Athletic Association. He has been a Senior Foundation Fellow since 1995 and was a Peabody Awards faculty judge for nine years. He also was a leader in the broader legal academy and served as president of the Southeastern Association of Law Schools in 2003–04.

Specializing in criminal law and family law, Kurtz also taught Constitutional Law, Criminal Procedure, Agency and Partnership, Appellate Practice and Civil Rights Litigation over the years. Additionally, he served as the adviser to the law school’s Moot Court Program and its LL.M. Program and played a role in the establishment of an Order of the Coif chapter at UGA.



2002



2002

A farewell message

Not many would accuse me of being shy, but I am retiring. And when I leave, please know I intend to take a lot of priceless things with me. Not to worry, I don’t intend to steal any of the historic portraits hanging in the hallways. I won’t be squirreling out any of the first editions from the law library. And no need to alert the GBI that I have any designs on those hard-won advocacy plaques and trophies in the Hatton Lovejoy Courtroom – or the picture that hangs over the bench that I’ve always thought resembles Ed McMahon.

Of course, what I am taking with me to treasure always are the memories – of events, of buildings and, most of all, of people. I remember having attended most of the Sibley Lectures ever given, virtually all the Edith House Lectures and more moot court practices than I can count. I attended the opening of the library annex, Sen. Edmund Muskie’s speech at the groundbreaking for Dean Rusk Hall, the gatherings of former Secretaries of State and the speeches of U.S. Supreme Court Justices Harry Blackmun, Stephen Breyer, Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas. But to clear the record (and before Lawton Stephens (J.D.’81) suggests to the contrary), I was **not** around when Abraham Baldwin taught his first class in Old College.

While I’ve witnessed many memorable happenings at the law school, not all of them were happy. I remember the hot summer day in 1995 when we watched Brooks Hall, the home of the Terry College, virtually burn to the ground. I recall memorial services for students and for faculty colleagues abruptly taken from us. I have a picture in my mind of the tears of faculty, students and staff watching in the student lounge on that horrific September morning in 2001 as the towers went down.

The North Campus I came to in the summer of 1975 had quite a different look. Caldwell Hall hadn’t even been imagined back then (it was a parking lot). Herty Field also was a parking lot (without a fountain) and Herty Drive was a through street. What is now the Administration Building was a rarely-visited Georgia Museum of Art and the UGA president worked in the Lustrat House, where the Office of Legal Affairs is now housed. The President’s Garden didn’t exist, and law school commencement didn’t occur on the North Campus Quadrangle, but in a dank auditorium in the Fine Arts Building.

The major component of my treasure chest will be the people who became a central part of my law school family. Former colleagues who were some of the giants in the law school’s history – Perry Sentell (LL.B.’58) and his Palsgraf Days, Verner Chaffin (LL.B.’42) who really does understand the Rule Against Perpetuities, Dick Wellman and the vulture in his



1978 – One of the first Order of the Coif induction ceremonies.



1985



Kurtz and his wife, Carol, are ever present faces around the law school campus and at law school events. He has participated in Law Revue/ Libel shows, served as an auctioneer for the annual Equal Justice Foundation Auction, danced at the annual Bull Roast and attended countless Homecoming BBQs and class reunions, end-of-the-year banquets, alumni events and donor events.

from Associate Dean

Paul M. Kurtz

office window always in appropriate attire, Ron Carlson and his Always Ready for Prime Time Players and Milner Ball (J.D.'71) who was my role model. Some younger colleagues who were struck down in their prime – Ellen Jordan, Larry Blount and my close friend and partner in humor, Anne Proffitt Dupre (J.D.'88). My law school classmate, Al Pearson, who I followed into academia and then to Athens. I'll always keep close the first night in Athens that Carol and I spent at Al's house when we were looking for our first home. Ralph Beard, who as dean laid the foundation for the wonderful school we have become. Ron Ellington who was my friend and colleague before becoming my dean and David Shipley who arrived as my dean but remained as my close friend. A special place will be reserved for the "younger" crowd who are now part of the old guard – Tom Eaton, Jim Smith, Dan Coenen and Mike Wells.

There have been hard-working dedicated staff members who helped make the school run – Frank Polster, Gwen Wood, Elaine Mitchell, the inimitable Jill Coveny Birch and Emma Terrell, whose laugh I miss every day. And I'll never forget three very able assistants who helped cover up my mistakes – Kay Bramlett, Clair Drew and Debbie Love, for whom I have worked over the last 9 years.

Perhaps the most memorable figure in my recollections will be Rebecca Hanner White, who I have served the longest as associate dean. I will remember recruiting her, becoming her friend and then watching her as dean remake the face of the law school in so many ways. She has been a tireless leader without peer, and I am so proud to have been a helper to her.

But my students mean the most to me. Bright, enthusiastic and (almost) always engaged. So many faces in and out of the classroom flood my memory. The D.A.'s who I "elected" in Criminal Law, those from the early years who became my friends and eventually learned to call me Paul, the students who put the Velvet Elvis on the second floor of Hirsch Hall, those who have assumed responsible positions in the state and federal governments, those who have become giants at the bar and in the community, and the ones who have invited me and Carol to their weddings and sent me holiday cards and pictures of their little ones. All these students have morphed into the alumni body of Georgia Law, anxious to support their alma mater.

All this I will take with me and look back upon with fondness. Not a bad retirement gift ... not bad at all. Georgia Law often will be in my thoughts and always will be in my heart.

Kurtz's scholarship includes two books, *Family Law: Cases, Text, Problems* and *Criminal Offenses in Georgia*. He has also served as associate editor and as a board of editors member for the *Family Law Quarterly* since 1983.

He has received many accolades and honors over the years including: the highest honor given by the Law School Association – the Distinguished Service Scroll Award (2012), the Milner S. Ball Social Justice Award from the Athens Justice Project (2011), the National Child Support Enforcement Association's community service award (2008) and UGA's Disability Services Faculty Member of the Year Award (2006). He was also elected honorary faculty marshal by four graduating classes prior to his appointment as associate dean.



2012 – Kay Deming (J.D.'78), one of Kurtz's former students, presented him with the LSA's Distinguished Service Scroll Award.

In 1985, to help celebrate the 125th anniversary of the founding of the law school, Kurtz – dressed as Groucho Marx – comically portrayed one of the law school's founders in a "libel-type show."

In 1991, Kurtz was named associate dean for academic and student affairs. In this role, he is an integral part of many aspects of faculty and student life at Georgia Law – he oversees the curriculum, the hiring of adjuncts, the organizing of the school's Sibley Lecture Series, the operation of the Honor Court and its proceedings as well as course and exam scheduling. In addition to his official role at graduation, he assists the school with fundraising and also stands in for the law school's dean when necessary.



2010 – At the Joseph Henry Lumpkin Society Spring Twilight Affair with Eleanora Banister (J.D.'80) (left) and Julie Lumpkin (J.D.'90) and her husband, Don Sando.