

State of Wisconsin



2011 Senate Joint Resolution 50

ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION

Relating to: the life and public service of Dick Wheeler.

Whereas, Dick Wheeler, the dean of the State Capitol press corps, passed away on November 11, 2011; and

Whereas, Dick Wheeler is survived by his daughter Gwyn Guenther, son-in-law Trevor Guenther, granddaughters Camille and Tabitha, and his longtime companion Diane Harmelink; and

Whereas, Dick, who was originally from Pennsylvania, previously worked for United Press International and Scripps Howard in Michigan and Ohio, covering stories such as the shootings at Kent State in 1970 and the Hough race riots in Cleveland; and

Whereas, in 1972, Dick arrived in Madison, Wisconsin, and began working for the Gongwer News Service; and

Whereas, also in 1972, Dick Wheeler created the famous government reporting service for Capitol insiders, government officials, and lobbyists that bore his name, "The Wheeler Report"; and

Whereas, The Wheeler Report originally began as a newsletter detailing the activities of the legislature and state government, which was mailed to subscribers daily; and

Whereas, The Wheeler Report progressed from a mailed newsletter, to a faxed newsletter, and finally led to the creation of a Web site in 1998; and

Whereas, today, the wheelereport.com is a popular Web site that links stories and allows viewers to track the daily actions of the Wisconsin legislature; and

Whereas, The Wheeler Report was truly a family business run by Dick, his daughter Gwyn, his son-in-law Trevor, and his longtime companion Diane; and

Whereas, Dick will not be forgotten for the role he played in securing a State Capitol room, centrally located between the senate and assembly chambers, designated for use by press covering the workings of the state's elected officials in the 1998 budget; and

Whereas, Dick was an invaluable resource to his fellow Capitol press reporters and served as the president of the Wisconsin Capitol Correspondents Association before stepping down in 2010; and

Whereas, Dick's impressive knowledge of state government and the inner workings of the legislature will be missed by all; and

Whereas, Dick, seen frequently arriving at 5:30 a.m., was known for his dedication in covering legislative activity, particularly that of the Joint Finance Committee, well into the night; and

Whereas, the Wisconsin Capitol Correspondents Association voted unanimously to request that the press room be named in Dick's honor; and

Whereas, the familiar smell of pipe tobacco wafting through the portico of the Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard entrance to the Capitol will fade, but never be forgotten; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the senate, the assembly concurring, That the Wisconsin legislature commends the life and dedicated service of Dick Wheeler, expresses its sorrow at his death, and extends its condolences to his family, friends, and all those who were touched by his work; and, be it further

Resolved, That in recognition of his many years of distinguished service to the legislature and the people of Wisconsin, Room 235 SW in the Capitol shall be known as the Dick Wheeler Capitol Press Room; and, be it further

Resolved, That the senate chief clerk shall provide a copy of this joint resolution to Mr. Wheeler's daughter and family.

Representative Jeff Fitzgerald
Speaker of the Assembly

Senator Michael G. Ellis
President of the Senate

Date

Jeffrey Renk
Assistant Chief Clerk of the Senate