

James A. Wagner, December 14, 1944 – September 2, 2016

Jim Wagner, beloved husband, father, friend, and gifted attorney, died on September 2, 2016 after a long and courageous battle with Multiple Myeloma.

Born in Akron, Ohio to Philip and Betty Wagner, Jim joined the U.S. Navy in 1966 and completed his Navy career aboard the U.S.S. Bon Homme Richard, during which time he also earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Jim received his law degree in 1974 from the University of Akron School of Law, returned to Hawaii, and was admitted to the Hawaii State Bar Association in the same year.

In a four-decade-long legal career, Jim built a reputation as a pre-eminent bankruptcy lawyer. He handled some of the highest profile and complex corporate bankruptcies filed in the State. Listed in the Best Lawyers in America from 1987 to the present, Jim was honored as a fellow of the American College of Bankruptcy.

Active in the community, Jim was a founding director and vice president of the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Hawaii (1984-1987). Kitty Lagareta, a founding director and first executive coordinator for the Ronald McDonald House, praised Jim's volunteer leadership. "Jim and Pattie Wagner were dedicated volunteers from the early days of planning until long after the opening of Hawaii's Ronald McDonald House. In all honesty, we might not have a 'home away from home for critically ill children and their families' without Jim's extraordinary volunteer leadership during the acquisition of the property. He secured a conditional use permit -- which was withdrawn then reinstated due to his diligence -- allowing us to proceed with creating Hawaii's Ronald McDonald House." Jim was also a director and president of the Friends of the Children's Justice Center (Children's Alliance of Hawaii) (1983-2003), board member of St. Francis School (2011-2014), and a member of the finance committee at Sacred Heart Church (2009-2016).

In 1975, Jim met the lovely Patricia Akana, the love of his life for 40 years. A devoted family man, he enjoyed not only coaching his children's soccer and baseball teams, but also serving as an umpire or referee for other community teams. When the last child left for college, Jim once again resumed his passion for golf, and in his later years he and Pattie enjoyed his other interests of traveling and attending theater, opera and symphony performances.

Jim is survived by his wife Pattie, daughter Jennifer Lee (Marian) Czerwinski, son Matthew (Pamela) Wagner, son James "Koa" (Jenny) Wagner, and seven grandchildren: Jacob, Micaela, Michelle, Kawai, Kapili, David and Ben. Jim is also survived by four of six siblings, all from Ohio: brothers Richard, William (Laura) Wagner, Michael (Linda) Wagner; and sister Patricia (Clyde) Bailey.

Visitation: 4 p.m., September 22 at Sacred Heart Church, 1701 Wilder Avenue, Honolulu.
Mass: 5 p.m. Aloha attire.

Inurnment at The National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, Punchbowl Crater. September 23, 11:30.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Hawaii or the International Myeloma Foundation.