



Waclaw Richard Janikowski

August 8, 1951 - March 8, 2021

W. Richard Janikowski, beloved husband of Phyllis Betts, died unexpectedly at their home in Gap Creek, outside Asheville, NC, on March 8, 2021. Phyllis found him unresponsive in his reading chair, after he had worked outside on a warm spring day. Reading and working outside were two of his favorite things.

Richard was a widely known and well-respected criminologist based at the University of Memphis, where he built a twenty-six-year career that left an enduring imprint on the University and on the City of Memphis. Working closely with law enforcement agencies and community organizations, he pioneered data-driven community safety strategies that linked research with community action and introduced students to field-based learning beyond the classroom.

Richard was born on August 8, 1951, in London, England, to Anna Biernacka Janikowski and Waclaw Janikowski. His parents were critical participants in the Polish Resistance Army during WWII. His mother was in medical school when she joined the Resistance, and his father was a civil engineer in the professional military. They joined forces with the British Army in Italy and ultimately emigrated to England. From there they emigrated to Chicago and Oak Park, Illinois, in 1956, where the public schools put Richard in speech therapy to eradicate his British accent. Richard was proud of his Polish heritage, could still speak the language, and was in the process of claiming

his Polish citizenship. Richard's first name was Waclaw, after his father.

Richard earned his BA in Political Science from Loyola University Chicago and his JD from De Paul University. He began his legal career practicing securities law in a well-established Chicago firm. He eventually formed his own firm, Kotell, Janikowski, and Light, where cases became more diverse, and he developed his interest in criminal law.

Seeking a change of environment, Richard made his way to Asheville in 1985 to join the firm of attorney Marvin Pope, then in private practice before he became a judge. When Richard was seeking an expert witness for a case, he connected with the Department of Sociology at the University of North Carolina Asheville, where he met Phyllis, then an Associate Professor of Sociology and founding Director of the newly established University Honors Program. The relationship with Phyllis and the University fueled his interest in research, teaching, and an academic career. He eventually taught law-related courses for the Departments of Sociology and Political Science and was tapped by Cecil's College (now South College) to develop and implement their Paralegal Studies degree.

Richard and Phyllis married in 1987. By 1990 they had both taken positions at the University of Memphis, where Richard would chair the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice. They remained there until their retirement in 2013. When they moved away from Asheville in 1990, they said they would return. Richard always said to his strong network of colleagues and friends in Memphis, "The mountains are calling, and I must go."

When Richard first arrived at the University of Memphis, he taught typical academic courses such as criminal law and the more esoteric "Law and Semiotics." When the department was approached by Bob Bryden, Director of the newly formed Memphis Shelby Crime Commission and the US Attorney

for the Western District of Tennessee, Veronica Coleman, in the late 1990's, a new era for criminology at the University of Memphis began. Faculty and students helped solve real-world problems by linking community-based action with field research and data analysis.

Richard founded the Center for Community Criminology and Research, known as C3R. Phyllis, then a faculty member of the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, collaborated with him through the Center for Community Building and Neighborhood Action (CBANA) that she started. Richard's first project was the US Department of Justice's Strategic Initiatives for Community Safety, followed by other DOJ initiatives such as Project Safe Neighborhoods, the Drug Market Initiative, and the Community-Oriented Policing initiative. He developed a long and productive partnership with the Memphis Police Department's efforts at data-driven policing, including the development of the Blue CRUSH (Crime Reduction through Using Statistical History) and the establishment of the Real Time Crime Center. During the roll-out of Blue CRUSH Richard and then Deputy Director Dewey Betts (no relation to Phyllis) met in the neighborhoods with over 100 community groups, an early effort to engage the community and move toward community policing, where neighborhood residents and other stakeholders have a say in how best to pursue community safety.

During his time in Memphis, Richard received the University's Excellence in Engaged Scholarship Award (which he and Phyllis were recognized for simultaneously for their joint work) and the W. Russell Smith Award for Teaching Excellence. He was included in the "Who's Who in Memphis" editions of Memphis: The City Magazine and recognized by the Memphis Commercial Appeal in 2010 as one of the 10 Most Influential People in Memphis during the decade.

When they retired, Richard and Phyllis were awarded the Key to the City by then Mayor AC Wharton. Richard was a member of and active in the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, the American Society of Criminology, and the Southern Criminal Justice Association. He continued to consult with the Memphis Police Department until the day he died. The Memphis Commercial Appeal published a special tribute to Richard in its March 25, 2021, print edition and online: <https://www.commercialappeal.com/story/news/local/2021/03/24/richard-janikowski-father-memphis-blue-crush-model-policing-dies-age-69/6966107002/>

Richard and Phyllis returned to Asheville in 2013 but maintained their ties to the worlds of community safety and community development and with Memphis through their consulting firm Strategic City Solutions. They re-established their relationship with the University of North Carolina Asheville. They endured the pandemic together and did not mind being together at home with their feline companions Kismet, Thompson, and Patches. They were looking forward to their second vaccinations, which Phyllis got four days after Richard died because she knows he would have wanted that. They lived, loved, laughed, played, and worked together for 33 years of marriage, including seven years of retirement.

They called home a restored farmhouse on two acres and were in the midst of ongoing outdoor projects to create a special environment for friends and family visiting from Illinois. They enjoyed the frogs in their pond and listening to the waterfall and sitting around the fire pit where Richard excelled as a fire builder. They fed the birds, especially the hummingbirds, and enjoyed rabbits, squirrels, groundhogs, deer, foxes, and the occasional bear. The rabbits and groundhogs enjoyed their vegetable garden, so Richard designed and built a functional but beautiful garden enclosure. They joined a dinner club and enjoyed entertaining inside or outside in the outdoor kitchen and dining

pavilion. Richard built three of four planned levels of an outdoor terrace connecting the various outdoor spaces. Phyllis will have it completed and dedicated to his memory.

“And one day you will look back and be comforted to know that you have survived, and thrived, and that he was with you all the way.” Wisdom from a friend.

Besides his wife Phyllis, Richard is survived by brother Andrew (Drew) Janikowski and wife Sue Greffen, of Villa Park, Illinois, and two cousins, Dr. Anna-Barbara Moscicki of Los Angeles and Dr. Richard Moscicki and wife Marianne of Boston, and their families. Other family remains in Poland and in Sweden. He is also survived by father-in-law John Betts and family friend Linda Cisco, sister-in-law Cheryl Betts Wall (husband Ted), and nieces Krista Mohns Donnelly (husband Chad), Susan Kinney (husband Dan), Amy Sullivan, and Haylie Mohns, as well as eight other great nieces and nephews, all of Illinois. And of course, his beloved cats.

A Celebration of Richard’s Life will be hosted by Phyllis, family, and friends on the UNCA campus in August or September, when we hope to gather less restrictively. Richard’s Department is planning something later in the spring on the U of M Campus. Check back with the Morris Funeral Home tribute site as plans are finalized or to leave tributes and memories of Richard, which have been a comfort to Phyllis and family. Morris also has contact information for Phyllis.

Memorial tributes in Richard’s name may be made to the Phyllis Betts-W. Richard Janikowski Honors Program Fund through the UNCA Foundation (checks payable to UNC Asheville Foundation, Inc. CPO #3800 1 University Heights Asheville, NC 28804-8507 with notation clearly designated for memorial gift to the Honors Fund, or on-line select “other” and write in the

Fund at <http://giving.unca.edu/>); the tribute contribution page of the Asheville Humane Society at www.ashevillehumane.org; the Manna Food Bank in Asheville to designate at <https://donate.mannafoodbank.org/>; the Memphis Shelby County Law Enforcement Foundation www.msclfoundation.org for designated gifts to the outstanding Police Awards Ceremony or Memorial for Fallen Officers; or the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice W. Richard Janikowski Academic Enrichment Fund, made out to the University of Memphis Foundation but clearly designated for the Janikowski fund, and sent to Dept 238, U of M Foundation, PO Box 1000, Memphis, TN 38148-0001.

A Celebration of Life will be held at the Highsmith Student Union University of North Carolina Asheville at 2:00 PM on Sunday, October 3, 2021. The family will receive friends thirty minutes prior to the service. Please RSVP by Wednesday, September 22, 2021.

Previous Events

Family will Receive Friends

OCT 3. 1:30 PM (ET)

Highsmith Student Union University of North Carolina Asheville
700 Founders Drive
Asheville, NC 28804

Celebration of Life

OCT 3. 2:00 PM (ET)

Highsmith Student Union University of North Carolina Asheville
700 Founders Drive
Asheville, NC 28804

Tribute Wall



“ *Waclaw Richard Janikowski*

October 07, 2023 at 11:15 AM



“ *1 file added to the album Service Details*



Morris Funeral Home - September 21, 2021 at 04:18 PM



“ *I knew Richard from our days in law school together. You always have a few classmates that you sense will go on to achieve great success in their careers, and I sensed that with Richard at the time. And I was correct. Unfortunately, I did not stay in touch with Richard for more than a few years after school, but by pure coincidence I became very good friends with Richard's brother, Andrew, here in the Chicago area. Andrew was very proud of his brother, and rightfully so. We have not only lost a highly accomplished professional, we have lost a fine person. I extend my deepest sympathies to Richard's family and hope that the words of those who knew Richard will give you some comfort in this difficult time.*

David Novotny - April 09, 2021 at 12:56 PM

HL

“ *Harvey Lomax purchased the Ghirardelli Galore for the family of Waclaw Richard Janikowski.*



Harvey Lomax - April 07, 2021 at 10:59 PM

JL

“ It was a great privilege to have this remarkable guy as a friend. This is a good photo of him. He was generous and loving, always thoughtful, well read, modest, and graced by a wonderful sense of humor. Above all he was a fine citizen and a born leader. Obviously Rich did a lot to reduce crime in Memphis, and that's a big deal. But he was also an excellent chair and an inspiration to fellow faculty, to students, and on another level to social workers. He sat in on a couple of my classes in political thought, which was down his alley, and he contributed beautifully to the discussions. He had an almost astonishingly rich range of experiences, and could cite an apt anecdote to match nearly any situation. If you needed help, you could absolutely count on Rich. After 9/11 he engaged in some sort of top-secret work in national security. His wife, Phyllis Betts, is also a lovely human being with a big heart and a sharp mind. She was a much-beloved Honors Director at UM until she was dismissed from that position by an envious VP (himself later fired for sexual harrassment) for doing her job so well (!!?) Their contributions to the University and to the city of Memphis were monumental. Asheville is lucky to have her.

Mournfully, but in celebration of a wonderful life,

*Harvey Lomax
Professor Emeritus of Political Science
University of Memphis
jhlomax@memphis.edu*

John Lomax - April 07, 2021 at 10:49 PM

JH

“ Phyllis --- I hope it helps to know that others care about you, and would ease your pain if we could. Take care. --- John Hochstein (jhochste@memphi.edu)

John Hochstein - April 06, 2021 at 04:19 PM

KM

“ *Kathleen Vanderpool Manning lit a candle in memory of Waclaw Richard Janikowski*



Kathleen Vanderpool Manning - April 05, 2021 at 10:58 AM

KM

“ *While working under the School of Urban Affairs (SWRK/PADM), I admired the Drs. Betts and Janikowski, and their assistance with Memphis' law enforcement. Dr. Betts, I am deeply sorry for your loss. Your husband was a remarkable man and will be missed.*

Kathleen Vanderpool Manning - April 05, 2021 at 10:56 AM

CB

“ *30 years ago at Memphis State, I attended a great criminal justice class taught by. Dr. Janikowski as well as a sociology class with Dr. Betts the same year. As a young undergrad, they both made a memorable impact on me, my education, my career, and my life. Dr. Janikowski's research and expertise has been positive for the city of Memphis and interesting to watch over the years.*

Rest In Peace, Dr. Janikowski.

Dr. Betts, you are both in my prayers

Chris, former student and fan

Chris Bond - April 04, 2021 at 04:28 PM

CK

“ *Rich was a terrific criminal justice reformer and wonderful person. I cannot believe we have lost him. His memory will live on because of all his wonderful work to make communities safer*

Cliff Karchmer - April 01, 2021 at 11:42 AM

RG

“ *...great professor and intellectual.*

Robert Gatewood - March 29, 2021 at 06:50 AM

RF

“ *Phyllis,*

What a surprise. You lost a partner and confidant too soon. Our community misses you both.

Rick Fischer

Rick Fischer - March 25, 2021 at 03:58 PM

DH

“ *Dear Phyllis,*

We are so saddened to hear about Richard, and hope that the memories you have of your time spent together will offer you comfort. We are so glad that you and Richard got to move to the place you had been longing to live, and know Richard relished his time spent there with you. You are in our prayers. Take care.

Tom and Donna Huddleston

Donna Huddleston - March 24, 2021 at 06:55 PM

RI

“ *Phyllis, I am so sorry to hear of Richard's passing. He was a fine man. I was always struck by how close and comfortable the two of you were together. I cannot imagine your grief. Please take care of yourself.*

Best regards,

Russell Ingram

Russell Ingram - March 23, 2021 at 11:15 PM

PW

“ *Phyllis, Richard was instrumental in motivating our Midtown Security Community group of neighbors to partner with the Memphis Police Department to keep Midtown safer. He was a walking textbook of knowledge and ideas for keeping neighborhoods safe. He was also incredibly generous in sharing that knowledge as well. In fact, when he would speak at our monthly meetings, it was a standing joke among all of us that he would keep talking until we turned his microphone off. Please know that you are in my thoughts and prayers at this sad time after Richard's death.*

Sincerely, Peggy Williamson, former chair of Midtown Security Community

Peggy Williamson - March 23, 2021 at 09:46 AM

JH

“*Dr Betts, I am so sorry to hear of Dr Janikowski's passing. We worked together at the Memphis Police Department's, Real Time Crime Center, as you well know. We would brainstorm during our weekly TRAK meetings and usually come up with a new angle that made what we were doing that much better! He was always ready to listen to a new idea and give it his take. He also always pushed the envelope of conventional thinking and was unafraid to try new things. Together, we actually won the "Excellence in Law Enforcement" from the International Association of Chief's of Police for the things we did in Blue C.R.U.S.H. which he helped develop. We were all so proud of our accomplishment when we travelled to Dallas to accept the award, particularly since we beat out NYPD and LAPD for the honor.*

I learned about a methodology called Kraizen many years ago from Dr Tom Peters, a Harvard Business professor who wrote several books on companies who were a "cut above." He cited the president of Toyota who would go down to the assembly floor and put on a white coat with the workers. He would do the job and talk to the workers to see what they thought would make the process and product better. We did that too with the MPD and I think we were very successful. The awards and the 34% reduction in crime in Memphis are ample testimony to that. We had a team that worked very well together. Dr J, Director Godwin, my brother Jim, Ken Shackelford and I were sort of the face of the team, but it included every officer and civilian staff in the RTCC and the entire Memphis Police Department. We were all proud of the program!

I was astounded by the glowing letter of recommendation he sent to the Ogden Police Department when I won the job of Deputy Director of Administration over 28 other applicants. I'm sure his recommendation carried the most weight.

Dr J. was one of those people whose memory you carry with you all your life. Sure, I mourn his passing, but I have many wonderful memories of the time I got to spend working with him. He even had

me come be a guest lecturer at the University of Memphis for one of his classes. I would have done anything for him. He was a special person, but I'm sure you always knew that. I have been blessed to have known and worked with him.

john harvey - March 16, 2021 at 11:27 PM

HS

“ Dear Phyllis,

I am so very sorry for your loss. I cannot imagine what a difficult time this must be for you. I heard that Richard had passed from my father-in-law. Both of you were at our wedding, and I remember he really took a shine to Richard. When I have talked of Richard in the past, I have always mentioned how wonderful he was as a Chair of our department, and an insightful leader. When asked about renewal when I was there, he would not do it until they paid some of our faculty more fairly, and they agreed. He seemed to be always standing on the right side of issues and he was always exceptionally centered, able to see things from high above, and at the individual level. I talk about him to others as the leadership style I would hope everyone would emulate. Finally, I will always remember him driving us for one of our monthly bonding meetings at one of the Casinos in Mississippi. I remember as he drove he would speed up, but then as he got talking he would slow down... Then others would talk and he would speed up, then he would talk and he would slow down... It was reflective of the fact that when you had him engaged, you really had all of his attention. That is so rare in people. My husband recalls working on your trees when you lived in Cordova and how great it was to work there. We were so thankful that both of you could come to our wedding, even though you knew were were leaving the country and leaving The University of Memphis. I am so glad that you were able to have time together in Ashville. I remember the days after you bought some land there, and he was so excited about that place. Jim and I will miss him. We wish for you the very best. Hannah and Jim.

Hannah Scott - March 16, 2021 at 05:30 PM

DC

“ *Dr Betts,
On behalf of the Memphis Police Department, we extend our
condolences. Dr . Janikowski was a very important of the MPD and
the entire City of Memphis. He mentored many commanding officers
and made us all better.*

We are here to assist you and pray for you as you heal.

Memphis Police Department Command Staff

Don Crowe - March 12, 2021 at 02:59 PM



“ *Phyllis , I heard yesterday from
Linda lav of Richard's death - I am
so very sorry. Though I did not know him for very long, I liked him a
lot, and fondly remember his genial hosting of the dining group. I'll
be thinking of you during the difficult times I know you are now
facing - and if you ever want to just unload to someone outside your
immediate circle of support , I'm available: 828 989 0324.*

*Excuse my reliance on this web site to offer my condolences,, but I
seem to
have lost all contact info for you.*

*Take care, dear Phyllis, and know that you are in the thoughts and
prayers of many.*

Nancy Schuman - March 12, 2021 at 02:10 PM

LS

“ Dr. Betts,

I am Lisa R. Settle (Webster) and Mr. J has had such a major, positive impact on my life to the point where my children and parents knew him. I am deeply saddened to hear of his passing. I have referenced him, his sayings, his mentorship and influence on my life over the years. He was a great man and will not be forgotten. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.

Lisa R. Settle



Lisa Settle - March 12, 2021 at 01:31 PM

TA

“ *The Southern Criminal Justice Association purchased the Small Garden Dish for the family of Waclaw Richard Janikowski.*



The Southern Criminal Justice Association - March 12, 2021 at 10:32 AM