



## James Devitt Rogers

May 5, 1929 - August 30, 2025

James D. Rogers, retired judge, passed away Aug. 30, 2025. Jim was a judge of Hennepin County District Court and sat on the bench for just shy of 30 years. At one time he and his father, Judge Harold Rogers, were members in the same Court.

Preceded in death by his parents and sister Kathleen. Survived by wife Leanna, nephew J. Neil Anderson (Mandy) and their children Emma and Benjamin, a cousin John Rogers, Mollie, his wire fox terrier, and many friends and colleagues.

A funeral service will be held in his honor on Thursday Sept. 11 at 11:00am, at Wayzata Community Church, 125 E. Wayzata Blvd.

Other volunteer positions he held or supported:

UM School of Veterinary Medicine

UM Law School - Wm. Lockhart Scholarship Fund

UM Athletic Dept., mainly Golden Gopher Men's Basketball. (a tkt holder for over 70+years)

Jim was an honorary member of the M Club for his guidance on a Drug and Alcohol Abuse Committee

ESGR (Employee Support for Guard and Reserve

Minneapolis Red Cross

National Judicial College at the U of Nevada Reno  
American Bar Assoc. Housing Committee  
President of the National Christmas Tree Growers Association

Memorial donations may be made to:

The Honorable James and Leanna Rogers Scholarship in Veterinary Medicine  
<https://makingagift.umn.edu/give/fund.html?id=24440>  
University of Minnesota Foundation  
200 Oak Street SE, Suite 500  
Minneapolis, MN 55455-2010

Dartmouth Club of the Midwest Judge James D. Rogers 1951 Fund  
P.O. Box 300551  
Minneapolis, MN 55403

Turning land into a legacy

How one donor used his property to support students at the U of M

Judge James Rogers wasn't planning on selling his 70-acre Christmas tree farm near Zimmerman, Minnesota, until he received an unsolicited offer last year. "I really wasn't thinking of selling," he says. "But I knew if I did, the capital gains taxes would be significant."

Rogers and his father, Judge Harold Rogers, bought the land for \$3,000 in 1957. "Each year I got my tax statement, I saw the value go up," he says. "And I didn't need the money from the sale."

The retired Hennepin County judge called his accountant and asked how to best handle the situation. One option: To give the land to a charitable organization, allowing him to deduct the full market value as a donation.

A 1954 graduate of the University of Minnesota Law School, Rogers has had a sweet spot for the U, giving to many areas over the years including the Law School, the College of Veterinary Medicine, the Landscape Arboretum, and the Athletic Department.

Rogers donated the land to the U of M in July 2021; it sold for \$365,000 in September. Since then, he and his wife Leanna have enjoyed figuring out how to allocate the proceeds. Helping students was a priority. "What bothers me is the cost of college today and the debt kids have when they graduate," he says. "When I graduated from law school, I wasn't in debt. Not a lot of kids can say that today."

He and Leanna are creating a scholarship for veterinary medicine students who plan to work with small animals. "We're dog people," he says, adding that Toby, their 12-year-old wire fox terrier "runs the house." "So many people adopted pets during the pandemic. More vets are needed."

They're also giving to the William Lockhart Scholarship fund to help a law student. The Arboretum, which Leanna has been involved with since the 1970s, was also high on their list. Their gift will help refurbish the Snyder Building, the original visitor center.

Other gifts will go to Eastcliff, which Rogers describes as "a hidden jewel of the University," and the Masonic Cancer Center to support the joint work of veterinary and human oncologists.

"We wanted to do something while we can," Rogers says of his reason for making this gift during his lifetime. "It's a privilege to get to see the results."

# Previous Events

## Funeral Service

SEP 11. 11:00 AM - 11:45 AM (CT)

Wayzata Community Church  
125 E. Wayzata Blvd.  
Wayzata, MN 55391

## Reception

SEP 11. 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM (CT)

Wayzata Community Church  
125 E. Wayzata Blvd.  
Wayzata, MN 55391

# Tribute Wall

JS

“ Judge Rogers was a true gentleman served as a host for our University of Iowa basketball team when we played in NCAA tournament in Minneapolis since then we became very close friends and he has been so loyal and kept in contact have the greatest respect for the man my thoughts and prayers go to him and his entire family John Streif

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**John Streif** - September 05, 2025 at 04:50 PM

JG

Everyone in our MN ESGR Committee respected Judge Rogers for his keen insight and clear thinking. He had a gift when talking to people which could persuade everyone to his point of view. He was very proud of his time in the military. He was a wonderful friend. I will miss his frequent telephone calls and his wise advice. The MN ESGR and I will miss his guidance on our Awards Board. We feel loss for Lee and her family.

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**Jack J Grams** - September 09, 2025 at 02:59 AM