

Dauphin County Bar Association
Memorial Resolution on the Death of
Frederick "Ric" R. Martsolf

I am honored to present this resolution on the passing of Ric Martsolf on behalf of the lawyers of our firm, Steven J. Schiffman, John D. Sheridan, Bret P. Shaffer, our staff and myself who had the privilege to know and work with Ric who was a Senior Lawyer with us for 20 years. I want to thank several attorneys who shared their memories with me-John Connelly, Jim Spade and Carol Verish Houck.

Frederick R. Martsolf, was born December 3rd, 1945 in Atlantic City, New Jersey. His family moved to Bay View, Michigan when he was a child. There, he grew up and met his future wife Nancy when they were just kids. They knew early on that theirs was a romance for the ages. They married in August of 1968.

He lived most of his life in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania with his beloved wife, Nancy and their two boys, Eric and Justin. Ric graduated Michigan State University in 1967 with a Bachelor of Arts. He and Nancy married that year

and Ric enlisted and served in the United States Army in the canine division until 1970. He went on to attend Dickinson Law School, earning his J.D. in 1972.

Ric was an esteemed real estate attorney in Central Pennsylvania for over 50 years. He was an active member of the Pennsylvania Bar Association and the Dauphin County Bar Association and its Foundation. He published articles and gave lectures for the Pennsylvania Land Title Association, the National Business Institute, and the Pennsylvania Bar Institute. He was also admitted to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania as well as the U. S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania

Ric made Harrisburg his physical residence with his beloved Nancy and their sons. But Home in his and Nancy's hearts remained in the westside of northern lower Michigan on Little Traverse Bay in the town of Bay View where they spent the summer in their beautiful family cabin. Nancy was a talented artist and the beauty of the lakes and landscapes of Michigan no doubt inspired her talents.

Anyone who knew Ric, knew he was ½ of the whole of an inseparable couple. We had known of Ric as one of the best real estate lawyers in Central Pennsylvania, but did

not know him as a person until he merged his practice with our firm in 2001, when his long time partner of 14 years, the late Honorable Bruce Bratton, was appointed to the Dauphin County Court of Common Pleas by Gov. Ridge.

Ric needed a new home. We were thrilled to have him join us, bringing a wealth of knowledge in his field of real estate law. He loved to refer to himself modestly as a “dirt” lawyer.

Before joining, Serratelli, Schiffman, Sheridan & Brown, Ric’s legal career began around 1975 as a partner in the firm of Jameson, Connelly, Martsof, and Guida on South St. in Harrisburg. By 1980, Ric then became partners in the separate and independent firm of Connelly, Martsof and Reid-later Connelly, Martsof, Reid, Bratton and Spade- located on Second St briefly, then on Walnut St. Ric and Bruce Bratton broke away to start their own firm in 1987. Ric was appointed Solicitor to the Tax Claim Bureau, retiring from that position in late 2020.

I had the pleasure of reminiscing a bit with John Connelly and James Spade in preparation for writing this resolution. Suffice it to say, there were lots of stories that had me crying with laughter at the high jinx of the

young Ric Martsof. He had a very dry sense of humor and quick wit. He was a prankster. Always the life of a party with his stories.

His son Eric asked me to mention that his Dad loved Harrisburg, and was always proud to be a part of the city in any capacity that he could; he called his father a “man about town” for sure! Eric said he was unsure if his business community truly knew how funny he was- “belly laughs in our home as a result of our father’s antics were common.” From my conversations with John Connelly and Jim Spade, it sounds as if his colleagues in the early days definitely knew how funny Ric could be. In a nutshell, he was the guy you wanted in the room, or at the bar, to liven it up.

Apart from his jovial side, he was a man to be respected. As a daytime soap actor, Eric said he still patterns much of his performances through his Dad’s heroic nature; he told me that his usual process is to wonder “how would Dad handle this situation, or respond to this scenerio”? “He continues to be an influence on my life and work daily.”

John referred to Ric as a “savant” in real estate. Steve and I would agree. He was meticulous and detailed. He was the consummate transactional attorney who loved marking up a document. He was not averse to litigation in court or administrative proceedings in his early years of practice, but his comfort zone was definitely in his office, door closed, marking up documents in his later years.

Ric was a gracious mentor to many of our associates- Carol Verish Houck, Merritt Reitzel, Bret Shaffer as he was to Jim Spade back in the day of Ric’s early practice, as Jim recalled to me.

Ric was seemingly introverted in the office. He was there to work. He was happy shut in his office working but in a social setting he was a totally different man. Loquacious, witty and fun!

While Ric kept to himself at work, Carol recalled he was always willing to help her, and our other associates in their practice if it related to his field – she said his depth of knowledge was a great resource, and he would allow her to ask him questions/bounce thoughts off of him in order to assist clients. He was not the best with technology, so she assisted him with technical issues (as

we all did). I recall that he used to dictate his emails for his secretary to send.

He is truly missed. We all still expect to see him walk around the corner in Sheetz, where Carol often bumped into him in the morning, with a cup of coffee in his hand and a newspaper tucked under his arm- or we would all see him coming up the office elevator scurrying back to his office.

As we came to know each other not just professionally, but personally, it was clear that Ric's family was everything to him. He was so proud of his two sons and clearly in continuous love with his wife. Over the last decade, especially, of the 20 some years he was with our firm, he would run home to have lunch with Nancy and they would watch tv together to see their son Eric on his soap opera, Passions. Although Eric did not follow his father into the practice of law, he did play a fictional lawyer, Ethan Winthrope on Passions until 2008 when he took on a new role on Days of Our Lives. Justin took his career into real estate as a realtor. Both sons made their parents very happy and gave them collectively 3 grandchildren. Eric and his wife Lisa have twin boys Mason and Chase and Justin and Heather have a son, Grayson. The sons and grandsons inherited the

charming, good looks of Ric and the beauty of Nancy. Both sons recalled to me that family life with their mother and father was full of fun, love, music and laughter.

Steve and I always enjoyed sharing in that family fun at the annual Christmas Eve open house at the Martsolf home. Nancy made her famous seafood chowder. Rick manned the bar on the kitchen table, and the dining room was resplendent with delicious appetizers and crab dip cradled in silver service ware. Candles were lit and the warmth of the friendship they shared generously with all their guests felt like a warm blanket on a cold winter's night back in the day when snow covered the ground on Christmas Eves.

The last few years were difficult. Nancy was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and fought long and hard until it was too much. Ric had been by her side through the long fight. He retired as the long time Solicitor for the Dauphin County Tax Claim bureau and closed his practice in December 2020 to concentrate on his wife. He still came into the office and closed the door for some solitude as he saw Nancy growing weaker. She left us on February 24, 2021 and Ric was devastated. Part of him died in February with Nancy. He struggled through each

day. The family decided to have a memorial service for Nancy on July 3, 2021 in Bay View, Michigan near their summer cabin. Ric left for Michigan in June, as he had done for years, but this time to be with his brothers John and Rob, and sister Margie to prepare for Nancy's memorial. On June 20, 2021, he passed away peacefully in his summer home after spending a pleasant evening with his sister and brothers.

The Memorial Service took place on July 3, but now for both Ric and Nancy. As Eric wrote to me:

Anyone who knew Ric and Nancy knew they would not stay apart for very long. To quote his son Eric: They were united in time, divided by time, and reunited when time shall be no more.

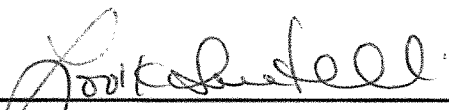
When we walk by his office, or down the hall, we still expect to see Ric in his usual hurried dash for the elevator to go home to his happy sanctuary. He always had a pleasantry to share or some quip with a dry sense of humor. He was at once a very private man, but also very happy socializing with his friends. There is no doubt he found happiness at home and fulfillment and enjoyment in the practice of law. Dauphin County was very fortunate to have such a learned practitioner and

solicitor and Ric elevated the quality of our bar association.

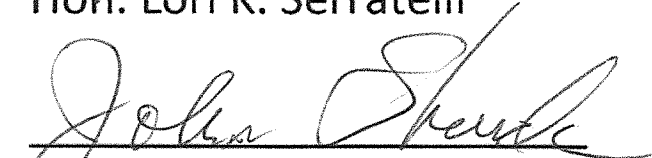
In the passing of Frederick R. Martsolf, the Bar and the larger community have lost a uniquely talented attorney and a wonderfully loving husband, father, and brother to his family. We miss both Ric and Nancy.

We extend our deepest sympathies to his sons and their wives, grandsons, sister and brothers to whom copies of the resolution shall be provided. The original and a copy of this resolution shall be filed with the Office of the Prothonotary and in the permanent records of the Bar Association.

Respectfully submitted this 23rd day of March, 2022 by
the resolution committee:



Hon. Lori K. Serratelli



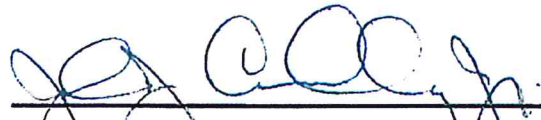
John D. Sheridan, Esq.



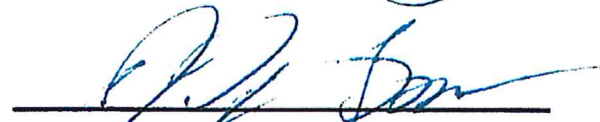
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