

Memorial Resolution In Honor of Neil J. Rovner, Esquire

Neil was destined to be a lawyer from a very young age. He was always a seeker of truth and justice. His brother shared a story about Neil as a child. Neil's Mother would tell him to finish his dinner as there were hungry kids in Africa, to which Neil kindly asked her to name just one, and if she could, he then would finish his dinner.

Neil was raised in Margate City, NJ, and lived in the Harrisburg area from 1975 until his death. He attended Atlantic City High School and spent his summers working at the beach. Following graduation from high school, Neil attended Lafayette College, where he made Dean's list, and graduated cum laude. He then volunteered for the Peace Corps. After returning from the Peace Corps, he earned a Master's in Education from Temple, and attended law school at Temple University at night while teaching at Cherry Hill West High School in New Jersey during the day.

After admission to the PA bar in 1975, he clerked for the Honorable Glenn E. Mencer on the Commonwealth Court. Neil's legal career was devoted to plaintiff's personal injury and medical malpractice. Over the years he was recognized by Pennsylvania Super Lawyers and Best Lawyers in America, including being selected by his peers in 2014 as Lawyer of the Year in the Harrisburg area for Plaintiff's Medical Malpractice Law.

Neil loved the practice of law and trial. He never really slowed down. He believed in our profession, took great pride in it and was a true advocate. He never shied away from a challenging case not matter how small the claim if he believed justice

could be awarded. He was a skilled trial lawyer. He was referred to as a good man by many of his colleagues which speaks of his legacy and approach to both the practice of law and life. He was modest and approachable, civil, kind and competent.

We loved Neil for his integrity, sense of humor and philanthropy. Since its inception in 2005, Neil worked tirelessly to ensure the legacy of Hope Springs Farm, a day program in Hershey he and his wife created to benefit their daughter and other adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities and autism.

Neil relished his role as mentor to many who became better lawyers through his guidance. He was a gifted and dedicated mentor, and took great pride in the professional accomplishments of his proteges. When one of us was presented with an esoteric legal issue, Neil was our go-to person, and would often not only know the answer, but also instantly cite the relevant cases from memory.

Neil was loving father, doting grandfather, loyal son, noted philanthropist, accomplished astronomer, frequent world traveler, renowned attorney, avid theatergoer, Shakespeare devotee, loyal Phillies fan and daily workout enthusiast.

Neil is survived by his wife, Nina, children, Adam, Matt and Miriam Rovner, and granddaughter Talia.

In closing, I will leave you with words written by Neil's youngest son Matthew.

An Elegy for My Father (May 30, 2019)
In final years before this final rest
I saw my father at his very best
He found a place and oh, it loved him so.
It feels too soon, too soon to let him go
But we've no choice so let him go we must.
We know too well that all returns to dust.
And now, as in the time of poet Yeats,
the ignorant and cruel beat down the gates
Why should they live while you've no breath at all?
I thought you'd live at least until the fall.
You loved the stars and grew beside the sea.
Stars must orbit and tides are never free.
But life releases us, it does at last.
So time to take the sail down from the mast.
You've no more air; see no night sky above.
Yet, I send you on, only with my love.

In his passing, the Bar, his family, and especially those of us a Navitsky Olson Wisneski have lost our loyal friend and colleague.

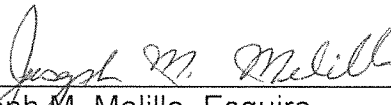
Therefore, be it resolved that in the passing of Neil J. Rovner, we have lost a friend, mentor, and passionate advocate of the law. His children have lost a devoted and caring Father.

And be it further resolved that the members of the Dauphin County Bar Association, in meeting assembled, mourn the death of our esteemed colleague, Neil J. Rover, and tender our sympathies to his family.


Be it further resolved, that copies of this Memorial Resolution be spread upon the records of the Dauphin County Courts of Common Pleas and of the Dauphin County Bar Association, that the original be filed in the office of the Prothonotary, and that copies be transmitted to his family.

Respectfully submitted,

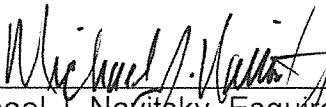
Memorial Resolution Committee Members




Joseph M. Melillo, Esquire



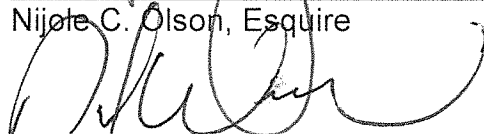
Lisa M. Benzie, Esquire



Michael J. Navitsky, Esquire



Nijole C. Olson, Esquire



David S. Wisneski, Esquire

Neil Rovner Seconding Remarks

I met Neil Rovner on February 4, 1980, the date I began working for the firm of Benjamin and Angino. I was 28 and he was 33. I last saw him shortly before his death in July, when we spoke candidly about many things.

Neil had retained his trademark sense of humor, so I offered- pro bono, of course- to prepare legal papers supporting his admission into Heaven. Neil suggested that we'd need lots of signatures to obtain any relief. I didn't disagree- we are lawyers, after all- but if there is any justice in this life or the next, Neil is a shoo-in.

For many years Neil, along with Richard Angino, were my mentors in the law. Over time Neil also became my confidante on matters legal and personal, and my friend. You've already heard a good summary of his accomplishments and personal qualities, but I'd like to provide some anecdotes which put these into perspective.

First and foremost, Neil had a great sense of humor. I recall him describing how thoroughly Atty. Wilhelm Shissler, then a dean of the defense bar, conducted a personal injury deposition. According to Neil, Wilhelm's first question would request the witness's full name, and the second his date of birth. The third question would be "and what happened next? " And so on.

Neil also provided examples of his defense colleagues' creativity in the courtroom. He

would mimic one esteemed practitioner, tongue in cheek, arguing to the jury as follows: "Yes, my client ran a stop sign; but you know, the moon was bright! Anyone in that situation could have been distracted and missed the sign." Neil never said whether the moon had been added as an additional Defendant.

Neil was helpful and reliable. He would agree to cover any legal proceeding if you had a conflict, if he possibly could. He'd help out with personal matters, too. Shortly before the birth of my son, I asked Neil if he'd rather cover a hearing or the birth if they conflicted. Predictably, this conflict nearly came to pass. While Neil never expressed his preference, I have no doubt that he would have accepted one responsibility or the other. He was that kind of guy.

Neil was modest and self-effacing, but he could also be quite competitive. He was a trivia master. While I do OK myself, I never could beat him. My best chance came during a holiday luncheon, which included a Christmas trivia contest. This, I thought, should be one I can win. Well I didn't. Guess who did.

Of course he wasn't perfect. Neil could be very stubborn and unrealistic. Neil was a lifelong Phillies fan, and I lobbied him regularly to switch allegiance to a less frustrating franchise, like my beloved N.Y. Yankees. In that regard, he never saw the light.

Neil was the person who answered the hard questions. I once tried a case in which the two defendants, a physician and a lab, were blaming each other at trial. I told Neil that I

felt the evidence had favored the doctor over the lab, and asked his opinion on how to handle their conflict during summation. His advice was to tell the jury to assign no negligence to the doctor, to mark the verdict slip "no." After considering how I would explain this position at a subsequent malpractice trial against me, I decided to take Neil's advice. The result certainly supported his judgment.

Neil was a teacher in the broad sense of the word all his adult life. His most valuable lesson came at the end. He demonstrated to all of us how to face a terminal illness with grace and acceptance. His final illness was completely unexpected. Neil had always taken good care of his health, and he had longevity on both sides of his family. Indeed, his Mother only died shortly before he did. Nonetheless, Neil was not bitter about his fate, simply concluding that "it happens".

I'm certain that he Neil struggled inwardly with this reality, but he never complained or sulked. I recall Neil coming to the office and announcing that he was going to die. His only request was that he be allowed to work for as long as he physically could; and so he did.

I still reflexively look for him when passing his darkened office, and think, "Neil, where the heck are you"? I don't know the answer, but am sure it's some place good.