

Robert B. Hoffman, Esquire
Memorial Resolution

TO THE HONORABLE JUDGES OF THE COURT, our colleagues at the Bar, and friends in attendance:

On Friday November 3, 2017, our friend and esteemed colleague Robert B. Hoffman, Esquire departed this life at age 68.

Bob was born on February 13, 1949 in Cleveland, Ohio. He was a 1971 graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and 1976 graduate of the Boston College Law School.

Early in his legal career Bob joined the Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General, eventually serving as Assistant Counsel for Department of Public Welfare.

Bob left public service to start the career which fashioned him into an accomplished health care lawyer and litigator. In 1986, Bob partnered with the Pennsylvania Medical Society in a joint endeavor which shaped the course of Pennsylvania law regarding medical care and which caused his involvement in almost every significant health care case in the PA Supreme Court in the last 25 years.

But it was Bob's facility as an advocate for almost any issue which demonstrated how talented he truly was. By way of example, Bob argued PA's first "right to die" case but Bob's skill also led him to become involved in numerous appellate cases involving constitutional issues of all stripes. In fact, to the substantial frustration of many of his law partners, Bob argued several cases involving an effort to keep beer out of grocery stores.

If you did have a legal problem (or any problem), Bob would always find time to talk in both the depth and time necessary to understand the issue. At a time when everyone else wanted to cram every billable hour into a day, Bob listened with patience and wisdom. His manner of practice harkened back to a more genteel time whose (at least partial) passing has made us all a bit poorer.

When you took a legal problem to Bob, he would deconstruct it, think about it and pronounce his verdict. He would rarely provide a pat or cookie cutter answer but would really think deeply about your issue and often spot things about which you had not previously thought. If he disagreed with a court's opinion, a result or a line of attack, he would say, with an almost Gallic shrug, "Eh, well, I just don't think that's right."

He was a great comfort to those of us finding our way through the fog of a case. Because of his experience, equanimity and fairness, Bob's approval was comforting and any disagreement meant that you probably should re-examine your prior thoughts on a case.

Bob's patience was extended to both partners and associates for Bob never believed in any kind of artificial hierarchy. The number of associates who found their way to his door seeking a

guiding hand stretch over the life of three law firms. More than that, he sought to truly explain how he got from one point to another, how he used a particular case or why he thought a particular edit was worth making.

Bob was a model of civility to his adversaries, in word and in deed. In our fractious age, Bob stood firmly on the perch of honorable behavior. And he was appreciated for that -- by the Court, by his clients, and by all in the mix of heated debate.

Bob's commitment to the law was really a commitment to answering this question: what is just? A great example of that defining principle was his commitment to pro bono and service activities. Bob was a great supporter of the DCBA Camp Intern program, a steadfast participant in trial advocacy training and an advocate for numerous community organizations. Bob knew that those values had to be transmitted to the upcoming generations of lawyers and, each July, Bob spoke eloquently of civility to those L1 law students who participated in the CAMP program.

It is sometimes a great failing of lawyers to attempt to reduce human endeavor to milestones and achievement as a way of reducing a life to metrics. In Bob's case, to know him only as a lawyer was to miss a great deal more.

Everyone who knew Bob was grateful for his wide breadth of knowledge, not only about the law but also issues outside the law. Bob was a consumer of the world and its issues and if you mentioned something in the news to Bob, you were entitled to his opinion which was neither boring nor trite. Occasionally (often), a simple hallway conversation could last more than a few minutes but when done, Bob had a singular way of concluding the conversation with a wave of the hand and a cheery but definitive, "that's it!"

Bob's idiosyncrasies did not end with hallway discussions but extended to his entire mode of being. On any given day he could be found wearing one of his many plaid shirts combined with a pair of unusually decorated socks. He had a seemingly inexhaustible collection of patterned ties kept on the back of his door which were available for loan but not adverse possession. When one lawyer kept one of Bob's ties too long because he got a favorable result wearing it and wanted more, Bob reclaimed the tie so that its winning mojo was available to others.

The centerpiece of Bob's life, however, was his deep and abiding love for his family, his friends and his former colleagues. It would be fair to observe that Bob's manner of practicing law was founded on the love and respect he had for the people with whom he interacted.


Perhaps, in the end, that is the best tribute to Bob—whose actions as a lawyer directly reflected his values and his profound humanity. Bob had the great gift of being himself and living the same values—kindness, humility, diligence, perception and a willingness to seek and accept truth—both in his public and private life and, from his example, perhaps we can all learn much.


THEREFORE, be it resolved that in the passing of Robert B. Hoffman, the Bar, the Court and the community have lost a friend, mentor, professional colleague and valued citizen. We recognize the loss to our bar and, as a body, we tender our sympathy and condolences to his wife, children, family and friends.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial resolution be spread upon the record of the Dauphin County Courts and the Dauphin County Bar Association, that the original and a copy be filed with the Prothonotary, and copies transmitted to his family members.

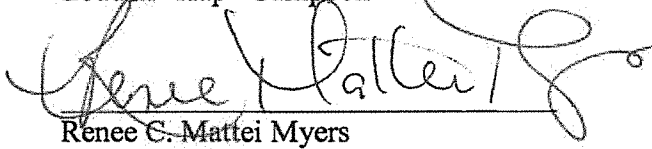
Respectfully submitted,

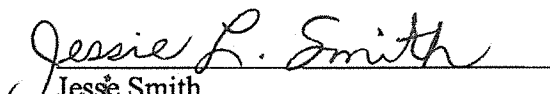
The Robert B. Hoffman Memorial Resolution Committee

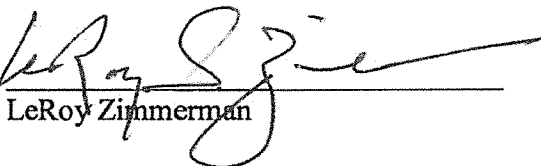

Daniel Clearfield


Grainger Bowman


Loudon "Hap" Campbell


Renee C. Mattei Myers


Jessie Smith


LeRoy Zimmerman