

1 IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

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3 PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

4

MEMORIAL SERVICE

5

SPECIAL SESSION

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9

Upper Marlboro, Maryland

10

Thursday, November 14, 2019

11

12

BEFORE:

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14

HONORABLE SHEILA R. TILLERSON ADAMS,
Chief and Administrative Judge for Prince George's
County and the Seventh Judicial Circuit of Maryland

15

NICHOLAS E. RATTAL, Associate Judge

16

JOHN P. DAVEY, Associate Judge

17

CATHY H. SERRETTE, Associate Judge

18

SHARON M. GRAYSON KELSEY, Associate Judge

19

C. PHILIP NICHOLS, JR., Senior Judge, Chair

20

RICHARD D. LONDON, ESQ., Co-Chair

21

22

23

KIMBERLY HIMES
Official Court Reporter
P.O. Box 401
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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 THE BAILIFF: All rise. The Circuit Court for
3 Prince George's County, Maryland is now in Special
4 Session. The Honorable Chief and Administrative Judge
5 Sheila R. Tillerson Adams, The Honorable Nicholas E.
6 Rattal, The Honorable John P. Davey, The Honorable ShaRon
7 M. Grayson Kelsey, and The Honorable Cathy H. Serrette
8 presiding.

9 JUDGE TILLERSON ADAMS: Thank you.

10 THE BAILIFF: You may be seated.

11 JUDGE TILLERSON ADAMS: Good afternoon,
12 everyone.

13 ATTENDEES: Good afternoon, Your Honor.

14 JUDGE TILLERSON ADAMS: And welcome to the
15 Annual Memorial Service of the Prince George's County Bar
16 Association.

17 You know, this morning we sat in this courtroom
18 celebrating the adoption ceremony, and we had a packed
19 courtroom of children just starting off in their lives.

20 And this afternoon, we celebrate the lives of
21 men and women of our Bar Association who have given up
22 their lives and talents to this community to make it a
23 better place for everyone. So I thank you for coming.

24 To the family, we want you to know how much your
25 loved one meant to this community, to this Bar

1 Association, and to this courthouse. So we thank you for
2 taking the time to come and allow us to memorialize your
3 family member.

4 So at this time, I'm going to turn the program
5 over to Judge Nichols.

6 JUDGE NICHOLS: Good afternoon, everyone.
7 Welcome to a ceremony that has great meaning for all of
8 us. Today we honor all those lawyers who believed in the
9 rule of law, who made it work in our county seat and made
10 it work that way for a very long time.

11 In America now, nearly 98 percent of all cases
12 settle. That is because lawyers are good at what they do
13 and we try that other two percent. In any event, let me
14 introduce our president, Manny Geraldo.

15 Manny.

16 MR. GERALDO: Judge Tillerson Adams, Judges of
17 the Federal Court, Judges of the Court of Appeals, the
18 Court of Special Appeals, and the District Court, brothers
19 and sisters of the Bar, family and friends, good afternoon
20 and thank you very much for coming today for this Court's
21 and our bar's honored tradition of memorializing the
22 members of our Bar Association members who have
23 transitioned this past year.

24 Our Court, the Prince George's County Court,
25 does a lot of great things for this county, untold things

1 that a lot of the residents don't realize. But two things
2 that we do that are wonderful is: One, the adoption
3 ceremony that we spoke of today.

4 JUDGE TILLERSON ADAMS: I'm sorry. Check the
5 mic.

6 MR. GERALDO: The mic isn't on.

7 JUDGE TILLERSON ADAMS: The mic is not on.
8 Sorry.

9 JUDGE NICHOLS: Talk loud.

10 MR. GERALDO: Judge, I will continue.

11 JUDGE TILLERSON ADAMS: No problem.

12 MR. GERALDO: So the service that we have today,
13 it's a tradition that gives us the opportunity to
14 recognize our members who have gone but whose memories are
15 not forgotten.

16 Yes, we come together in sorrow acknowledging
17 our loss of colleagues, friends, and of family. Our
18 celebration of the lives of our colleagues does not blunt
19 our feelings of loss, but it helps us with finding
20 strength and support in the collective sharing of this
21 mutual friendship in memorializing our colleagues.

22 My friends, everyone who sits in this room today
23 is a gift to everyone else here. When we are together
24 during this service honoring our departed colleagues, just
25 our presence, even in silence, is a deep comfort for those

1 who have experienced their loss.

2 Our presence here today is proof that we do not
3 need to ride our waves of joy and sadness alone. Always
4 know that in our association, the member may be gone but
5 she or he is not forgotten. Thank you for coming.

6 Judge Nichols.

7 JUDGE NICHOLS: Chief Judge Adams has asked me
8 to remind everybody about the rules for this. Somehow we,
9 being very rule oriented, deviate a bit.

10 For example, we've asked the speakers to speak
11 for five minutes. We've also asked them not to put their
12 papers on top of the clock so they know their five minutes
13 is up.

14 And I've asked -- just in case the lights go
15 out, as they did last year for Judge Femia's presentation,
16 I've asked them to jump up and say "whoa" or "stop" or
17 words to that effect.

18 All right. This does not happen by accident. A
19 lot went into this. All of our colleagues are here. We
20 try to do as great a job as we can, and it's just a
21 wonderful thing just to hear all the nice things that get
22 said that you never knew about someone.

23 In any event, Richard London is here. Richard
24 is the vice chair of our committee.

25 Richard, please stand.

1 Could I have a round of applause for Richard,
2 please?

3 (Applause.)

4 JUDGE NICHOLS: Robin Hadden, our -- where is
5 Robin -- our executive director, who worked day and night
6 to pull this together.

7 (Applause.)

8 JUDGE NICHOLS: Thank you all.

9 All right. Once again, this is five minutes.
10 No papers on the clock. If the lights go out, Vince will
11 jump up.

12 By the way, we're really pleased you're here,
13 sir.

14 (Applause.)

15 JUDGE NICHOLS: I became Vince's understudy. It
16 was tough, but in any event, people helping people, as
17 they say.

18 Lindsey K. Erdmann, Esquire for Monica M.
19 Haley-Pierson, Esquire.

20 Please, Lindsey.

21 MS. ERDMANN: All right. Good afternoon,
22 everybody. Thank you to Judge Tillerson Adams, to the
23 judges of the court who are here today, to the other
24 judges as well, also to members of the Bar who are here,
25 and to everybody's family members for those who have

1 passed and the friends of those who have passed.

2 I am really honored and humbled to have been
3 selected to present on behalf of Monica. And to tell you
4 a little bit about how I met Monica, I met her back in
5 2003. At that time, I actually clerked here in Prince
6 George's County Circuit Court for Judge Weatherly.
7 Everybody who knows Judge Weatherly, knows she does mostly
8 family law, which is also primarily what Monica was doing.

9 With Judge Weatherly, she had a rule for all of
10 her clerks, which was that you need to go into the
11 courtroom, you need to see the good attorneys, you need to
12 see the bad attorneys because you'll learn essentially
13 from both. And so that's what I did.

14 And Judge Weatherly said, "Monica is one of the
15 best. She's one of the best family law attorneys in this
16 county. You will learn a lot from her."

17 So I met her in that respect.

18 When it came time for me to leave the comforts
19 of this particular courthouse and my clerkship, I decided
20 to travel around the pond from the County Administration
21 Building, and I interviewed with Monica at what was
22 previously known as Knight, Manzi, Nussbaum & LaPlaca here
23 in Upper Marlboro.

24 Monica was kind, very kind, always was. She
25 interviewed me. It was a terrific interview and she ended

1 up hiring me. And I remember at that time, she thought I
2 knew so much. She said, "If you came from this clerkship,
3 put on your wings and fly." But she really didn't know
4 that I knew very little. I knew a bit about the law but
5 how to practice was obviously new to me.

6 And Monica was very gracious and giving of her
7 time, of course. She told me, "No question is too silly;
8 no question is too dumb. Come to me. Ask me. I am going
9 to mentor you, and sometime you'll go to court and you'll
10 be a great attorney."

11 But the times that I really remember most about
12 Monica, in addition to mentoring me and mentoring others,
13 was really the kind of person that she really was. She
14 was sweet; she was kind. She had a little bit of a giggle
15 which was tremendously cute, and she just spent a lot of
16 time with her family. She spent a lot of time with the
17 people that she loved, the people that she cared about.
18 Her clients meant really and truly the world to her.

19 In 2011, I left that firm, and I went over to
20 McNamee Hosea to essentially run and develop a family law
21 practice. And when I left, Monica was very gracious, very
22 kind, and told me, "I've mentored you all this time;
23 you'll be great. Do a good job; you'll be great. Don't
24 forget me and please call me."

25 And so over the years, Monica and I, even though

1 we went our separate ways, spent a lot of time talking.
2 We spent a lot of time talking about our cases, and I
3 always had the ability, of course, to turn to her, which I
4 always appreciated.

5 What I really want to share with everybody about
6 Monica -- and those who knew Monica likely knew this very
7 well -- Monica spent the majority of her adult life in a
8 significant amount of pain.

9 I remember when I met her in 2004, she walked
10 with a cane. She then used a walker. At the end parts of
11 her life, she used a wheelchair. Monica never, ever, ever
12 let that define her. She didn't. She worked hard, worked
13 hard every day. She hustled to get clients. She cared
14 about her clients, and she cared about the people, and she
15 wouldn't want to be remembered for that at all.

16 So I wanted everybody just to, sort of, know
17 that about her. She hustled and she struggled through
18 that and never wanted that to really define her.

19 With respect to Monica, she had a tremendous
20 amount of faith. She was a Catholic, a very good Catholic
21 who went to church all the time. Every Sunday without
22 fail, she was in church.

23 She loved very much her family. She was married
24 to Andy Pierson. Andy, if anybody has ever met him, is
25 about the best magician you'll ever meet. He does magic

1 tricks in restaurants, and they host parties with these
2 amazing magic tricks.

3 And Andy really was Monica's first love, and she
4 had been married to him for a tremendous amount of time.
5 Monica and Andy had a son Patrick. Patrick went into the
6 military. I can't remember exactly what year, but Monica
7 had never really been more proud of anybody in her life
8 than she was with Patrick, and she talked about Patrick
9 quite a bit.

10 Monica had a number of sisters and good friends
11 that she was also very close with and shared that with
12 those that knew her well.

13 So in closing, I'm honored, again, to be able to
14 speak for Monica. I think she has contributed quite a bit
15 to the family law bar and to the Bar as a whole. And I
16 personally will miss her, as I'm sure all of us will as
17 well. Thank you.

18 (Applause.)

19 JUDGE NICHOLS: Joyce Lombardi, Esquire for
20 Martin A. Hertz, Esquire.

21 MS. LOMBARDI: Good afternoon, Your Honors, Your
22 Honors' guests, families, everyone.

23 I'm really happy to speak for Marty Hertz. I
24 really wanted to. My brother and sister and I have known
25 Marty Hertz just about most of our lives. I never

1 actually practiced law with Marty Hertz, but I can tell
2 you that he had a big impact on me as a lawyer and a
3 person.

4 Marty Hertz and my dad, Jim Lombardi, who will
5 be honored here today in a few minutes, were attorneys
6 together for Prince George's County, and then later they
7 went into private practice with Joe Casula -- The
8 Honorable Joe Casula who was honored here about five years
9 ago.

10 And then later, Marty went into private practice
11 in Anne Arundel County. And Marty, if you knew him, was a
12 people's lawyer. He did it all. He did personal injury.
13 He did torts. He did civil. He did criminal law. He did
14 family law.

15 He mentored a lot of young lawyers. He mentored
16 Connie Kratovil, who is here with her family. Her father
17 will be honored here in a few moments.

18 And I asked around and it turns out that a lot
19 of the lawyers and colleagues of Marty knew the Marty
20 Hertz that we, the Lombardi kids, knew. And if you know
21 Marty, you know he's funny. He was known for his humor.

22 Right? You're laughing. Lynnda is laughing.

23 And he was known for his compassion. I will
24 tell you that as a young person growing up, I would hear
25 Marty -- Marty was always at our family functions, and he

1 would talk a lot about his clients with a lot of empathy
2 and respect. Like, he really -- he felt his cases; he
3 cared. And so for me, Marty really came to embody some of
4 the emotion behind law and behind life.

5 Marty is also, if you know him, a big family
6 man. Sari is at -- are you here? There you are.

7 So his wife, Elaine Hertz -- also always over --
8 wrote in his bio that Marty's secret ambition, or maybe
9 not so secret, was to be Tevia in Fiddler on the Roof.
10 And he kind of was. He had three daughters: Sari, who is
11 here; Lauren and Amy; seven grandkids. And he was a big
12 part of our family. We loved Marty, and I -- I think
13 Marty loved us, and actually, he kind of was a -- in some
14 ways he was a bridge to our dad's world.

15 And he would say, "Jo, your dad will never tell
16 you this, but when your truck drives up the driveway, your
17 dad runs to the window because he's really excited." And
18 he's like, "Don't tell your dad I told you."

19 And then for me, I gave him a gag gift for
20 Father's Day. It was inappropriate. I was going to bring
21 a replica. It's still inappropriate. I don't have a
22 replica. And he stood up at my wedding with the gag gift,
23 which was an inappropriate tie, and showed it around. And
24 people came up to me afterwards and were like, "Your dad
25 is really funny."

1 I'm like, "That's not my dad. He's like a
2 second dad."

3 I guess the one thing that I want to say to
4 Sari, I kind of want to thank you and your siblings for
5 sharing your dad with us. As his clients and his
6 colleagues know, Marty Hertz's heart was big enough for
7 all of us. Thank you.

8 (APPLAUSE.)

9 JUDGE NICHOLS: Samuel L. Serio, Esquire for The
10 Honorable Frank M. Kratovil, Sr.

11 MR. SERIO: Members of the bench, former members
12 of the bench, family members, and friends and colleagues,
13 I'm here today to talk about Frank Kratovil.

14 The last time I talked about Frank Kratovil was
15 not in this courtroom, but it was in 201 when he was being
16 sworn in as a District Court judge after having been
17 appointed by Don Schaefer, the governor, and that's where
18 he was sworn in to take a seat on the bench.

19 I have with me today from May 11th, 1995, the
20 first controversial case that Frank ever had, and he got
21 it because he was low man on the totem pole in the
22 District Court, and it was about some officers that were
23 convicted by Frank for beating a suspect, but Frank took
24 it like a man, as he always would, and he ruled. I
25 thought he was wrong, but that's the way he went.

1 Number one, he was a patriot all the way. He
2 had served in the military, and I think he and I had a
3 bond together because he was an MP in the military. And
4 after I graduated from Maryland, I became a police officer
5 in Baltimore City and did that for three years until I
6 came down here with Judge Parker as his law clerk.

7 I look around the room now and there are only
8 two people, other than myself, who were clerks at the
9 time. Phil Nichols and Steve Platt and myself were all
10 law clerks at the same time.

11 I remember meeting Frank. Now, you have to
12 understand, when you call the Eastern Shore and you ask
13 for "Frankie" they say, "Where are you from, from across
14 the water?" Because that's the way he's known. He's not
15 known as that there. He's "Frank, Judge, Your Honor."

16 But Frankie is the way I met him back when he
17 was about that big coming out of Joe Casula's office with
18 his dad, and he had on a gray corduroy suit. He was about
19 seven years old. And I see that just as plain today as
20 the day that I saw him walk out of that office.

21 And I shook hands, and he shook hands like his
22 father. He gave me a good robust handshake, and I've
23 known him ever since and appeared before him just like I
24 did with his father. Frank was known as "The Hammer" for
25 those of you who don't know, and The Hammer would do

1 exactly that, and he did, in this case, with the likes of
2 Dave Simpson, Ned Camus, Tim Maloney, and me as the
3 attorneys for these four officers.

4 And he was a music lover. He had 2,500 albums
5 that, I think, Frankie has now. And Monte Montgomery was
6 talking about "a busload of faith to get by," which was a
7 great song, and Frank had the album. He loved it.

8 And he was a great sports fan. He followed all
9 of your sports. And, actually, I followed -- who was at
10 McDaniel? Is it McDaniel or is it Western Maryland?

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: McDaniel.

12 MR. SERIO: McDaniel now.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The two older ones.

14 MR. SERIO: Oh, the two older ones were there.
15 Okay.

16 And I called Frankie and said, "I see where your
17 son scored a goal in Lacrosse the other day."

18 He said, "What are you looking at?"

19 I said, "I'm following your kid." So we all
20 have gotten along well together.

21 Frank was a mentor of mine. He never ever said,
22 "I don't have time to talk to you." There were several
23 who were mentors of mine: Jim Lombardi, his family is
24 here; Joe Casula. Joe is gone. They are all gone.
25 They've all had this service before.

1 One who has taught me quite a bit was Judge
2 Femia, who is seated in the front row, but none of us
3 could be where we are unless we had a mentor or several
4 mentors. I think I needed more than one, and that's why I
5 had eight or nine, because I didn't know anything about
6 law. I came in here in 1971; knew nobody; knew nothing.
7 I was a sophomore in law school, and I got help from
8 lawyers like Frank Kratovil, who was my friend.

9 Another mentor is Jim Salmon, who is seated in
10 the front row, and I want to say thank you to Jim before
11 either he or I are the subject of this. I never said it
12 before, but I want to thank Jim.

13 All the other ones, I want to thank them too,
14 and especially Frank. Frank was my friend. Always will
15 be my friend in my mind, and I hope Frankie and I can keep
16 that friendship going. Thank you.

17 (APPLAUSE.)

18 JUDGE NICHOLS: The Honorable Glenn T. Harrell,
19 Jr. for the Honorable James J. Lombardi, please.

20 JUDGE HARRELL: Chief and Administrative Judge
21 Tillerson Adams -- oh, and by the way, congratulations on
22 becoming part of the newest power couple in Prince
23 George's County.

24 (APPLAUSE.)

25 JUDGE HARRELL: -- the other members of the

1 Circuit Court, the basket of deplorables in the jury box
2 to my left, family, and friends. Let me just make a brief
3 acknowledgment: Jim's wife, Cindy Davis, is here. Her
4 son and Jim's stepson, Davis Stromeyer. Is he here?

5 MR. STROMEYER: (Raising hand.)

6 JUDGE HARRELL: There he is.

7 Then we have, also, Joe -- raise your hand, Joe
8 -- Anne Marie, and Joyce Lombardi, the children of Jim and
9 Ann Landry Lombardi.

10 I come not to bury Caesar, but to praise him.
11 Now, I thought that was a superficially apt opening line,
12 but I will confess it's not exactly four square.

13 Number one, Jim Lombardi was much more beloved
14 than Julius Caesar. As we all know, Caesar was stabbed to
15 death on the floor of the Roman Senate by former allies
16 and friends. Jim Lombardi passed on June 11th in his
17 home surrounded by loved ones at the age of 83 after
18 having a serious stroke a few weeks before.

19 Another distinction between Caesar and Jim
20 Lombardi, Julius Caesar knew Italian wine. Jim Lombardi
21 not so much.

22 Whenever he and I and Judge Spellbring and
23 others would go out to dinner, Spellbring and I would get
24 to the restaurant ahead of Jim and commandeer the wine
25 list and select appropriate wine, so we could enjoy the

1 evening. Then we would hide the wine list, because we
2 were worried when Jim would get there, he would order some
3 very pedestrian Chianti, and it would be for a miserable
4 evening.

5 As I said, Jim passed away at the age of 83. He
6 had suffered from ALS for about ten years prior to that;
7 although, it was the stroke that took him.

8 When he was diagnosed with ALS they basically
9 said, "Well, you've got about five years." He beat it by
10 five more years. It had a lot to do with the fact that he
11 was in superb condition when he received the diagnosis.

12 Jim was a very, very, very good athlete and very
13 physically fit. Almost as fit as I was. He loved to
14 swim. You could hardly go to the Bowie Sport Fit and not
15 find him in the pool.

16 He loved to do single sculling on the creeks in
17 Anne Arundel County. He played softball for the County
18 Bar Association team many years ago, and he also fancied
19 himself to be a tennis player.

20 Now, he and I and, again, Judge Spellbring, we
21 played for a number of years in over-50 and then in
22 over-60 leagues in Anne Arundel County. Not so much for
23 the exercise or the enjoyment of playing tennis, but so
24 that we could go have a couple of Guinesses at that Irish
25 place over on Central Avenue right afterwards.

1 Also, we had some mutual friends. They would
2 have a social mixed-doubles tournament at their home every
3 year, and it was my job to pair up the teams. Sharon
4 Salmon, Jim Salmon's wife, was arguably the best tennis
5 player of the lot. So I would try to pair her with the
6 worst male player in the tournament, and for the most
7 part, that was Judge Platt. But after a period of time,
8 Sharon threatened my life, and I moved to Jim Lombardi.

9 Now, Jim was, as I said, incredibly fit and he
10 would run down every ball, which was part of the problem.
11 If you know anything about doubles, there's usually a
12 player back and a player up close to the net.

13 When Jim was up at the net, he would go after
14 every ball whether it was his shot to take or his
15 partner's shot to take, and Sharon would not sit still for
16 that. It's called poaching.

17 A couple of times Jim would go for a shot and
18 flub it that should have been taken by Sharon. When she
19 got serve next, she put a ball directly in his back. It
20 didn't break the habit, but it got a lot of laughs for
21 everybody around.

22 Now, you heard me refer to Chief and
23 Administrative Judge Tillerson Adams and Mayor-Elect Adams
24 as the newest power couple. Maybe the first power
25 couple in the modern history of Prince George's County was

1 Jim Lombardi and Ann Landry Lombardi.

2 Ann was on the Prince George's County Council.

3 She was on the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission. I
4 was still in practice back then, and I dreaded going
5 before the County Council because Ann had such a
6 monumental intellect. She would pick my cases apart and
7 just leave me bleeding there at the podium.

8 Jim was a very successful lawyer. He served for
9 25 years on the Court of Appeals Standing Committee on
10 Rules of Practice and Procedure, which is a longevity that
11 is unrivaled.

12 He was an Orphans' Court judge here in the
13 county. He was a federal magistrate judge, and then he
14 was selected to the Circuit Court in, I believe, '97, and
15 he served until 2006 when he turned 70 and took on senior
16 status and served in a number of circuit courts around the
17 state and did so right up to a few weeks before his death.

18 As is noted in the materials, Jim was also a bit
19 of an actor. The Prince George's Little Theater and the
20 Prince George's County Bar coproduced Twelve Angry Men in
21 August of, I think, 2001. It may have been that. Anyway,
22 Jim and I auditioned and got roles, and we competed to see
23 who could be the angriest man. Jim's skills were much
24 better and he succeeded in prevailing.

25 We had a wonderful celebration of Jim's life in

1 Annapolis on July 24th of this year, and this is a
2 continuation of that. So if you would, raise an imaginary
3 glass of Prosecco and repeat after me "Ciao bella."

4 ATTENDEES: Ciao bella.

5 JUDGE HARRELL: Thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 JUDGE NICHOLS: M. Celeste Bruce, Esquire for
8 Michael (Mike) S. Nagy, Esquire.

9 MS. BRUCE: So there wasn't a light that went
10 off when Judge Harrell was talking that was telling him to
11 sit down like we all get.

12 JUDGE NICHOLS: I just ignored it.

13 MS. BRUCE: Yeah. We try that and the hook
14 comes out and we get ushered off.

15 Judge Tillerson Adams, it's been too long. Nice
16 to see you. Other members of the bench, it's also been
17 too long. Nice to see all of you.

18 I had some remarks prepared, and then I got here
19 today and found out that Judge Harrell was going to be
20 speaking for Judge Lombardi. And for those of you who
21 don't know or didn't know Mike Nagy, we were partners for
22 20 years. We lasted longer than my first marriage, which
23 is a good thing. No worries there.

24 But Mike and I were particularly close. We
25 always had offices next to each other. I was the

1 litigator, and Mike was the land use/zoning attorney. So
2 when he would get through the CAB building across the
3 street, I would get the phone call of the "Now what do we
4 do," because inevitably it would end up over here in front
5 of a judge.

6 And, eventually, we ended up one time together
7 down in Charles County, and Judge Harrell indicated to you
8 all that, later on, Judge Lombardi would be sent out to
9 the various circuits to sit when there was a conflict or
10 they needed another judge.

11 And Mike Nagy and I ended up in Charles County
12 in front of Judge Lombardi, and it was interesting because
13 we were all carpetbaggers, if you will. They had brought
14 Judge Lombardi down. They had brought us in from out of
15 county, because it was a highly-politicized case involving
16 everyone's favorite superstore, Walmart, and no one in
17 Charles County would touch it.

18 And so we went down to Charles County every day
19 with Judge Lombardi, and I just thought it was the very
20 circle of life, if you will, that Judge Lombardi -- and it
21 was the last case that Mike and I had tried together in
22 Charles County, which brings me to Judge Harrell, and he
23 spoke for Judge Lombardi.

24 And Judge Harrell probably doesn't know this,
25 because he's probably stopped reading all those horrible

1 land use decisions that come out of the Court of Appeals
2 since he retired, but he wrote the seminal case in Zimmer,
3 which if you do any land use in this county, you have
4 cited it 500,000 times.

5 But Zimmer, Judge Harrell didn't write the
6 entire treatise on land use. He stopped halfway through,
7 because the only issues in front of them were -- you know
8 what I'm talking about -- he stopped halfway through, and
9 he didn't get to special exceptions. And so what came in
10 the wake of Zimmer was a plethora of litigation all about
11 special exceptions.

12 And I bring that up because the last brief that
13 Mike and I did together, the last anything that he did in
14 our office, was we wrote the Court of Appeals brief for
15 Grant versus County Council, and that was for the Court of
16 Appeals.

17 And I bring that up because Judge Harrell did
18 not sit on that panel, but his name was brought up any
19 number of times during the argument. And we cited to a
20 minimum of 25 to 30 of his footnotes in our brief, and as
21 everyone in this courthouse knows, Judge Harrell buries
22 all the good stuff in the footnotes, and so we all went to
23 the footnotes.

24 And I just thought it was a fitting story to
25 tell you all that that's kind of how connected this county

1 can be. That the last thing that we did together was now
2 the second half of Judge Harrell's treatise, and Mike Nagy
3 will forever be known for the person who got special
4 exceptions decided in Prince George's County so we never
5 have to litigate again who has original jurisdiction,
6 until the General Assembly changes the law for us. So I
7 just thought that was a great, fitting story of how all of
8 these folks come together.

9 For those of you who didn't know Mike, he was
10 not only a land use/zoning attorney, but he was also a
11 landscape architect. And so what Mike brought to the
12 practice that some other of us practitioners don't have is
13 creativity, and he would look at things from a different
14 way than we ever could.

15 And so he was a problem solver, as opposed to
16 someone who would throw up road blocks for clients, and it
17 was such a refreshing way to practice with someone who
18 actually looked at things creatively, as opposed to
19 pulling out a book and telling me what we can and cannot
20 do.

21 So the other story I did want to tell you all
22 about Mike Nagy, because I think it speaks to his
23 character and who he was, "Nagy" is Hungarian. And he,
24 Mike, had a client who he took on many years ago, and his
25 name also happened to be Michael Nagy. He was also

1 Hungarian. And he was an older gentlemen, and he found
2 our Mike Nagy because he looked up all the attorneys that
3 he could and he came across someone with his same surname.

4 So he came to our office one day and he said,
5 "I'd like to hire you."

6 And Mike said, "Okay. What land use/zoning
7 issue do you have? What property do you own? What can I
8 help you with?"

9 He said, "No, no. I want you to help me get my
10 V.A. benefits."

11 Well, for those of you who know, we don't do
12 V.A. benefits. I mean, we couldn't even find the V.A. if
13 we threw a stone at it.

14 So Mike said, "I will do this."

15 Knew nothing about V.A. benefits, knew nothing
16 about how he was going to help this gentleman, but he
17 wasn't going to turn him away.

18 Now, the elder Mr. Nagy did not have money to
19 pay us, did not have money to pay Mike. And for seven
20 years, our Mike Nagy represented this gentleman through
21 every phase of trying to get the benefits from the V.A.
22 without any payment. He just did it out of the kindness
23 of his heart.

24 And periodically -- and by periodic I mean
25 weekly -- the elder Mr. Nagy would show up at our offices

1 with food. Many times a Hungarian stew or something that
2 he had bought on the way in, but he brought food to the
3 office.

4 In addition to bringing us food, the elder
5 Mr. Nagy was also a hoarder, and so he would bring us
6 things from his house that he thought we could use, and
7 this was his way, I guess, of bartering with us. And we
8 would have things he brought us. You name it, we had it.
9 And we never threw it away. We always kept these items.

10 And I just thought that was another testament to
11 who our Mike Nagy was, that he would undertake to do
12 something he had no idea what it was for someone who had
13 given so much to this country and had benefits coming to
14 him, and that's what he did.

15 So, am I done, Judge?

16 JUDGE NICHOLS: You're done.

17 MS. BRUCE: I'm done.

18 (Applause.)

19 JUDGE NICHOLS: Monte Montgomery, Esquire on
20 behalf of Edward J. O'Connor, Jr., Esquire.

21 MR. MONTGOMERY: I too would like to thank Judge
22 Sheila Tillerson Adams, Judge Nichols, other members of
23 the Bar and the Bar Association for carrying on this
24 tradition of the Memorial Service. I only wish I didn't
25 know more and more of the names on the list as the years

1 go by.

2 I'm here to speak about my friend Edward J.
3 O'Connor, Jr. As you can see from a copy of the obituary
4 in the -- and, you know, before I go on, Sam, you need to
5 get your quotes down right. When Frank, The Hammer,
6 quoted those lyrics, it wasn't in a casual conversation
7 with him. He was sending one of my clients to jail for a
8 first-offense DWI offense. He saw the look of horror on
9 my face and said, "Mr. Montgomery, you need a truckload of
10 faith to get by."

11 And I responded, "I don't think Lou Reed wants
12 you using his lyrics." But after that, he invited me back
13 into his chambers, and I learned all about his love for
14 music, but anyway, I digress.

15 Ed died on December 9th of 2018. He was a
16 Prince George's County boy. He grew up in Prince George's
17 County. He attended High Point High School; the
18 University of Maryland, undergrad; the University of
19 Maryland Law School.

20 I met Ed 18 years ago when I moved into the
21 office next to his across the street here on Water Street.

22 I immediately recognized the name on the door.
23 It was right next to mine. I must confess: I had heard a
24 lot about him over the years, and some of it wasn't all
25 that flattering. I didn't know what to expect, but before

1 too long, he became the best friend I ever had. And I'll
2 try to keep it together.

3 We had a lot in common. Aside from being solo
4 practitioners worried every day about making enough money
5 to keep the doors open, we were both married. We both had
6 kids. We lived close to each other. We loved to talk; we
7 talked too much. He was a far better listener than I was.
8 We would talk about our families, our cases, music,
9 sports, politics, and life in general.

10 Our families got together on occasions, and I
11 remember the first time I invited Ed over to my house to
12 watch a football game. His wife, Julie; Lauren and
13 Caitlyn were in the SUV, drove down my driveway, and I'm
14 like, "Where the hell is Ed?"

15 The next thing I hear is the rumbling of a
16 Harley-Davidson coming down my driveway going into my
17 garage, and it sat there for two weeks. I finally had to
18 call him up and say, "Ed, you need to come over and get
19 this damn bike out of my garage. I'm getting tired of
20 explaining to my son the meaning of all the obscene
21 stickers on the gas tank." He came over and got it.

22 Ed and I would go to concerts, ballgames, and an
23 occasional gambling trip. The last time I made the
24 mistake of doing that with him, he told me, "Hey, I've got
25 a bartender friend who's got a boyfriend who can comp us

1 at a hotel in Atlantic City. And, oh, by the way, see
2 that guy over there? He's a pilot. I'll bet you I can
3 get him to fly us there." He did.

4 We got into the plane and Ed immediately took
5 over. He was a licensed pilot, and as we approached
6 Atlantic City, Ed suggested that we buzz the beach. I
7 said, "No, Ed. That's not a good idea. Let's land the
8 damn plane and get to our hotel." He listened to me that
9 time.

10 But most of what I remember, the best things I
11 remember about Ed were simply talking to him every day.
12 There wasn't probably a day that went by over 17 years
13 where we didn't get together and talk about life in
14 general and everything. He was funny. He was smart. He
15 was a great lawyer.

16 He was one of the most prepared lawyers I've
17 ever met. He knew everyone in the courthouse. Not just
18 the judges. He knew the secretaries. He knew the law
19 clerks, and he had a story about every one of them.

20 And one Christmas, I was impressed with all the
21 people that he knew, so I gave him a coffee mug. The
22 coffee mug said: "A good lawyer knows the law. A great
23 lawyer knows the judge."

24 Ed thought that was funny. He kept it in his
25 office. The next year he outdid me and gave me a sign,

1 one of these decorative signs. And it said: "A good
2 friend will come and bail you out of jail, but a true
3 friend will be sitting next to you saying, 'Damn, that was
4 fun.'" And, fortunately, we came close but we never had
5 to really live that scenario out.

6 Ed, in order to get some attention, would
7 constantly remind me that he was an orphan and that I had
8 to be nice to him. He was an only child and his mother
9 and father had passed away long before I met him, but I
10 remember him telling me, he goes, "Monte, you're lucky
11 both of your parents are still living. You're lucky
12 you've got little brothers." And he met them all. We did
13 things with my brothers, too.

14 And he said to me -- and it was kind of sad --
15 he said, "I wish I had a brother."

16 And I said, "Ed, you do."

17 And he just started laughing. I was kind of
18 referring to me, but I don't know if it sunk in. But he
19 treasured having friends. He would do anything for them,
20 and he expected a lot in return. He was always there for
21 me, and I would like to think that I was there for him
22 too. Ed worked hard and he played hard. He was a willing
23 participant when I felt the need to go out and blow off
24 some steam.

25 When I attended his funeral a year ago -- and I

1 still, to this day, can't believe it's been a year -- I
2 learned some new things about Ed. The pastor or reverend,
3 whatever he was called, was gushing over Ed O'Connor at
4 this church.

5 I didn't even know he went to church. He never
6 talked about it with me. But not only did he attend
7 church, but he was one of the best volunteers that this
8 church had with regard to charitable events, church
9 functions. All the things he did on his own, I was
10 astounded. I never knew that; he never spoke about it.

11 And I can say this: There is not a day that
12 goes by that I don't think of him. Sometimes I forget
13 he's gone. I pull into the parking lot of the office, and
14 I --

15 JUDGE NICHOLS: Wrap it up.

16 MR. MONTGOMERY: I'm almost done. I've got five
17 minutes. It hasn't been that long.

18 JUDGE NICHOLS: We set his clock for five hours
19 is the problem. Under the best of circumstances...

20 MR. MONTGOMERY: When I pull into the parking
21 lot, I instinctively look for his car, and then I realize
22 he's not there, and I wonder about all the things we could
23 have talked about that day.

24 In the last two years of his life, Ed underwent
25 a number of health issues. He didn't really talk about

1 that either, but I suspect that he knew the end was near.
2 He told me he was going to retire. He was cashing out.
3 He was going to go buy a house in the Caribbean and live
4 on the beach and sell straw hats. He was serious.

5 He actually took a trip there the year before he
6 died, and he sent me a postcard. And it's a beautiful
7 beach on Long Bay, and it quotes one of his favorite
8 movies. It says: Dear Red, if you've come this far,
9 maybe you're willing to come a little bit further. Your
10 friend, Andy.

11 Well, that never happened. I don't know what
12 happens when we die. None of us do. I hope there's some
13 accountability for the way we live our lives and perhaps
14 some peace for living a good life and being kind to
15 others. I think Ed would pass that test. I hope Ed is at
16 peace. I hope he's sitting on a beach with a tall drink
17 in his hand surrounded by his friends.

18 What I do know, though, is that for the past 17
19 years he was my best friend. I was honored to be his
20 friend. I miss him every day. If you knew him, you'd
21 like him too. And for those of you who did know him, I'm
22 sure you miss him as I do. Thank you.

23 (Applause.)

24 JUDGE NICHOLS: Michael E. Lyons, Esquire for H.
25 Michael Rankin, Esquire.

1 MR. LYONS: Esteemed members of the bench,
2 friends and family and peers. Among the several that
3 we've all gathered here to celebrate and honor, we've lost
4 one great one, Mike Rankin. Well, they're all great ones,
5 but one other great one.

6 He was one of those -- I guess I take a
7 different perspective. I'm a young lawyer or a younger
8 lawyer than most of the speakers here. So what I saw of
9 Mike was one of those silver-haired attorneys that are in
10 the courthouse that are always willing to answer a
11 question; you know, that always had just a really positive
12 demeanor and vibe; you know, the attorneys that have been
13 practicing for 45 years and they still did it better,
14 faster, and more often than those that practiced, just
15 like myself, even a third of the amount of time; and one
16 of those attorneys that we often see in this county and I
17 would say in the Southern Maryland counties in the rural
18 areas, they were able to manage to balance all the things
19 that we hear about as younger lawyers -- professionalism.

20 They managed to balance their personal lives,
21 their practices, and the relationships between all of the
22 actors within the court; myself, as opposing attorney --
23 that's how I first met Mike -- clients, opposing parties,
24 judges.

25 It was really something that I thought that was

1 a great example to look towards, and I really felt like,
2 too, Mike did a great job of balancing his personal
3 beliefs in addition to meeting the needs of his clients.

4 And I know we've all come across those attorneys
5 and had those experiences, and it really makes you feel
6 great when you have those cases, when you have the
7 attorney on the other side that knows what they're doing,
8 that's prepared, that's friendly; you know, that doesn't
9 come at things like it's a scorched-earth tactician of
10 this is going to be war.

11 And I first came across Mike about three years
12 ago when Ron Cooper, another attorney here in Upper
13 Marlboro, said, "Mike, I need somebody to stand in." He
14 told me -- I think it was about 4:30 on the day before,
15 as, I think, how Ron likes to do that the few times he's
16 asked me.

17 And so I saw Mike. It was a contested custody
18 case in front of the magistrate. Both parties were on
19 polar opposites and it didn't seem, when I looked at the
20 file, there was any way to bridge this gap. And I
21 immediately came in and Mike said -- you know, I
22 introduced myself, and he said, "Come with me. Let's
23 talk."

24 So we chatted, and in pretty quick order --
25 totally a credit to Mike and not myself -- he had come up

1 with a solution that was good for everybody, that had
2 everybody willing to agree to it, the mother, the father;
3 and protected the relationship with the children.

4 And then after that, we had some time to sit and
5 wait for the case to be called. And during that period,
6 we started talking about our shared military service, and
7 I think that's probably why Cindy asked me to come speak,
8 maybe a little bit. Because a lot of us know he practiced
9 for 47 years here in Upper Marlboro, so -- but maybe a
10 little bit about his military -- that's something that was
11 very near and dear to him.

12 And I should point out, Cindy wished to be here
13 but unfortunately is in North Carolina and had a health
14 issue and couldn't come, but Cindy is just as great of a
15 person as Mike was.

16 And while we were there talking about our shared
17 experience and, I guess, when I was preparing for this, I
18 used the word "war" stories -- well, Mike's were probably
19 more about war, and mine was probably more about stories.

20 He was in the service for 20 years. Six of it
21 was on active duty. He served in Vietnam. He had a
22 decoration for combat.

23 And at the time that I met him, I was only about
24 a year, maybe a year and a half out of the Air Force,
25 active duty, JAG Corps, and just immediately kicked off a

1 really great relationship. Over the course of the next
2 three years, he became a fixture with the members of my
3 firm, who also have a connection to military service, and
4 it was really just a great situation.

5 And everybody -- when we heard that, you know,
6 Mike had died, in my office, it was really just a profound
7 impact over such a short period of time, frankly, to know
8 him, but I think it's a credit to who he was.

9 I think Mike would like me to talk about and
10 would appreciate the core values. So as a JAG, we are
11 charged with maintaining good order and discipline. And
12 through that process, in the military, core values are
13 kind of a foundation.

14 I tell you what, Mike was the personification of
15 core values. I mean, he had honor. He had integrity. He
16 practiced with excellence. You could tell when you were
17 dealing with him, that he understood that his role wasn't
18 to satisfy or to resolve this legal issue, but it was
19 about something that was a little bit bigger. It was
20 about the law.

21 (Judge Nichols indicating to Mr. Lyons.)

22 MR. LYONS: Aye aye, Captain.

23 I just really, really appreciated that. I
24 wanted to share that with all of you.

25 And, lastly, I think one little neat aspect of

1 Mike is he was a singer, and I think that's probably why
2 he had this positive vibe. He was part of the West Point
3 Alumni Glee Club. And if you ever had the opportunity to
4 speak with him about that, you could see it in his eyes;
5 you could feel it in his voice, just such a great part of
6 his personality; something he truly loved.

7 And so we really lost, you know, somebody that
8 was a great lawyer. I had a lot of interaction with Cindy
9 and him, because Cindy worked in his office. A great
10 family man and a great person. So thank you for allowing
11 me to share.

12 (APPLAUSE.)

13 JUDGE NICHOLS: Glenn F. Ivey, Esquire for
14 J. Patricia Wilson Smoot, Esquire.

15 MR. IVEY: Thank you, Your Honor. To the
16 esteemed members of the bench who are present, Chief Judge
17 Adams and, I guess, First Lady Adams now as well, family
18 members, attorneys, friends, good afternoon all.

19 It's been more than a year since we lost Trish,
20 and it still hurts for me, I must say, but I'm thankful to
21 be here today to speak briefly on her behalf and in
22 remembrance of her life and work.

23 Many people don't know this, but I actually
24 didn't know Trish until after I was elected. After the
25 campaign was over, I sat down immediately with Bob Dean to

1 ask him to stay. It was actually funny. I think he
2 thought I was going to fire him. I knew what a legend he
3 was and how fortunate we were to have him, so we came to
4 terms with that quickly.

5 In those days, there were two deputy spots. The
6 other deputy was the guy that I had just run against, and
7 it did cross my mind that maybe keeping him on as the
8 deputy might not be the best way to go. So I started
9 looking around, and I reached out to people that I knew
10 and people reached out to me. Other attorneys, judges,
11 colleagues from the U.S. Attorney's Office downtown where
12 I had worked previously.

13 And it became clear that, as I reached out and
14 spoke to more and more people, Trish Smoot's name just
15 kept coming up. Even though we'd served in the same
16 office, we didn't overlap, but caller after caller who I
17 spoke with talked about what a great prosecutor she had
18 been and what a great manager she was there at the U.S.
19 Attorney's Office.

20 So I did some research on my own, and I was
21 definitely impressed with what I found. As you see in her
22 bio, she graduated from Bucknell, earned her law degree
23 from Catholic University. She clerked for a very tough
24 taskmaster, Judge Winfield downtown at the Superior Court.
25 She worked as an assistant public defender here in Prince

1 George's County, and I thought all of that was great.

2 She then later became an Assistant U.S. Attorney
3 in the Washington, D.C. office in June of 1994. She
4 worked there under Eric Holder, and she quickly rose up in
5 the office. She started out as a line prosecutor. Then
6 she became one of the senior attorneys in the Sex Offense
7 Unit and then eventually moved up to the front office, as
8 they call it, and became the Director of Professional
9 Development. She had a great track record that I found
10 hard to ignore.

11 So when I met with her, I was immediately
12 impressed. I thought she was smart, thoughtful,
13 insightful. She was also fun and great to be around, and
14 she shared my view about the need to try and move
15 prosecutors' offices in a slightly different direction,
16 not simply just to prosecute but also to consider
17 intervention and prevention programs and take a broader
18 approach to reducing crime. And we both had gotten that
19 from Mr. Holder when we worked at the office.

20 So even though we had a bunch of other stellar
21 candidates, I immediately hired her on the spot and she
22 accepted on the spot.

23 The U.S. Attorney at the time was a guy named
24 Roscoe Howard, and he's actually never forgiven me for
25 hiring her away. He said, "Glenn, you stole Smooty from

1 me." But it was really one of the best hires I ever made,
2 and it's clear that Washington D.C.'s loss was Prince
3 George's County's gain. She proved to be an outstanding
4 deputy for me.

5 She supervised the Sex Offense Unit, the Child
6 Abuse Unit, the Juvenile Division in the District Court.
7 Bob Dean took the other half of the office.

8 And she also helped us get started, the Domestic
9 Violence Unit. And I see the judge here who led the unit
10 when we got it started, and together they did an
11 outstanding job, not only getting that unit started but
12 really raising the type of prosecutions and the impact we
13 could have around the county.

14 She had great trial skills, and she was
15 outstanding with sharing those. The skills that she honed
16 downtown, she was able to bring here to Upper Marlboro --
17 back to Upper Marlboro, because she had actually started
18 here as an assistant public defender, and she did it with
19 great effect.

20 I also benefited from her wise counsel -- not
21 only on prosecution issues but on other issues in the
22 office, especially human relations and the management
23 piece.

24 She had a keen eye for talent. She headed up
25 the team that interviewed our new applicants, and she also

1 was one of the people I really turned to in making
2 decisions about who to promote.

3 And I think it's clear, when you look around at
4 the people that came in or were elevated during that time
5 period, that she had fine discernment in picking out great
6 talent. We had four re-elected state's attorneys,
7 Department of Justice prosecutors, Senior Capitol Hill
8 aides, members elected to the House of Delegates and the
9 State Senate, and of course, judges. Not only judges here
10 in Prince George's County but around the region. And that
11 legacy of the people that she hired and what they were
12 brought on to do has had a great and lasting impact.

13 She was also a great mentor. I didn't find this
14 out until later, but Mike Glynn approached me -- it says
15 "4."

16 JUDGE NICHOLS: That's 4 hours.

17 MR. IVEY: I'm just looking at the "4."

18 After I left the office, Mike Glynn came up to
19 me and he said, "You know, you were a tough guy to
20 approach. So a lot of times when people had questions or
21 problems or concerns, they didn't come to you directly,
22 but they did go to Trish."

23 Trish had a great ear. She was fantastic in
24 sitting and listening. She had a knack for helping them
25 find solutions to thorny problems, and she had a perfect

1 touch for delivering the type of tough love that trial
2 lawyers need to really become the best that they can be in
3 practicing in court.

4 At the same time, she had that great smile and
5 infectious laugh that allowed her to make things feel a
6 little bit better even when they were tough and bad news.
7 She was certainly a rock for me during my bout with
8 cancer. And for all of us, she was a great supervisor and
9 colleague. She was more than that though. She was also
10 family.

11 At her funeral, Delegate C.T. Wilson mentioned
12 that Trish was like a mother figure to him. She had been
13 the mother he wanted but had never known. And during the
14 service, many heads nodded, a lot of tears were shed in
15 agreement because he wasn't alone. She was the emotional
16 glue that held that office together, and we were all
17 better for it.

18 Towards the end of my second term, she got a
19 call from the President of the United States' office to
20 return to federal public service. President Barack Obama
21 elevated Trish to the commissioner position of the United
22 States Parole, and she did such a great job in that role,
23 that he then made her the chairman five years later. And
24 I was tremendously proud of the fantastic work that she
25 did there, and that work lives on.

1 After that fateful presidential election in 2016
2 -- and I'm not going to say anything more about that here
3 in Court -- but it meant that Trish saw the writing on the
4 wall, and she knew she had to move somewhere else.

5 So she went to CSOSA. She didn't really have a
6 chance to get started there, because that's when she was
7 cut down prematurely, but, you know, she had worked hard
8 to make a difference in the community.

9 She had all sorts of other community service
10 activities she carried out. National Black Prosecutors
11 Association, Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Abuse,
12 Prince George's County Domestic Violence Fatality Review
13 team. It goes on. The accolades were extensive. She did
14 fantastic work.

15 But I know Trish's greatest accomplishment, her
16 pride and her joy, was her family. I think Greg is here
17 today and Tommy and Nicole. She loved them more than
18 life. They were the complete focal point for her, her
19 reason for being.

20 She was an outstanding lawyer and a public
21 servant, but her public accomplishments that were
22 recognized by giants like Eric Holder and Barack Obama.
23 Even in spite of those, she always felt that her greatest
24 and most important legacy was being an excellent and
25 loving wife and mother.

1 I will stop with this: Trish Smoot was a good
2 and faithful servant for her family, for the community,
3 and to the rule of law. We can all say: Well done,
4 Trish, our good and faithful servant. Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 JUDGE NICHOLS: Ivonne C. Lindley, Esquire for
7 Solomon M. Sterenberg, Esquire.

8 MS. LINDLEY: Thank you all so much for doing
9 this. It's a very unique and special opportunity to
10 remember our colleagues and people who meant a lot to
11 everyone in the legal community. It's a very special
12 thing that you do, so thank you for having us and letting
13 us speak about our friends and colleagues.

14 I met Sol Sterenberg about 13 years ago when he
15 was my opposing counsel on a case while he was working for
16 the dark side, insurance defense. He finally had the good
17 fortune to leave the wrong side.

18 I was lucky enough to have him come to our firm,
19 Stein Sperling, where he spent the last 11 years of his
20 career. It took him a while to stop calling his clients
21 "the defendants," but eventually he did, and he fully
22 embraced the chance to fight for people who were hurt
23 instead of defending bad drivers.

24 He spent time getting to know his clients. He
25 empathized particularly well with clients who had trouble

1 supporting their family or difficulty doing activities
2 with them because of their injuries. He understood them
3 because he could relate to them, having five children of
4 his own. He had Danny, Samantha, Gregory, Jackie, and
5 Kelly. Jackie and Kelly are here today sitting in the
6 second row.

7 Anyone who knew Sol is very well aware that
8 family was the most important thing in his life. He would
9 drive for hundreds of miles so he wouldn't miss any of his
10 kids' games. He was their loudest cheerleader and biggest
11 fan. He would proudly put any announcements about their
12 accomplishments on his door, both academic and sports
13 related, for everyone to see. His office was a shrine to
14 his children. He had more pictures of them than law
15 books. He was a proud working dad and husband to
16 Elizabeth, his wife of 25 years, who is also here.

17 He balanced his love of spending time with his
18 family with his passion for practicing law. He was a
19 dedicated attorney elevated to senior counsel at our firm,
20 and even after getting a terminal diagnosis, just five
21 weeks before he passed, he emailed us every day about his
22 cases.

23 He was a mentor to all of our attorneys. Four
24 of them came -- four of us came today who were mentored by
25 him. He spent time teaching and helping us grow. He

1 spent countless hours going through our cases with us,
2 helping us come up with trial strategies from his days on
3 the dark side. He was patient. He was supportive, and he
4 was committed to making us all better attorneys, but he
5 was old school.

6 He was completely averse to doing any research
7 online rather than in books. He was a prolific user of a
8 tape recorder for dictation. I think he was the last one
9 at our firm to be using it. He handwrote his outlines for
10 trial. He shuddered at the thought of technology or iPads
11 in a courtroom or using them.

12 In addition to his love of family and the law,
13 he was also crazy about baseball and sports generally. He
14 would have loved to see the Nats in the World Series, but
15 he was a lifelong Mets and Jets fan. He loved music. He
16 was an unexpected fan of artists like Pink, Katie Perry,
17 and Kelly Clarkson, because at the time, his kids were
18 fans of those people. So most days you could hear him
19 blasting music from the CD player in his office. Yes, he
20 had CDs, because as I said, he was old-school.

21 The last time that I saw him was a week before
22 he passed away. I left his house so happy to have spent
23 time with him but so sad to see what he was going through.
24 I spent most of the car ride crying, heading to an event
25 at my kid's school, and then Kelly Clarkson came on the

1 radio, and I started to laugh because it made me think of
2 him rocking out to her in his office.

3 So I wondered how I was going to get my act
4 together to spend time with my kids at their event. And
5 then I stopped to ask, "What would Sol do?"

6 And unequivocally he would have asked me, "Are
7 you freaking kidding me?" And he would have said, "It is
8 what it is. Get your act together and be there for your
9 kids no matter what."

10 Everyone should know here how much Sol
11 contributed to the legal profession. He set an example in
12 the meticulous way he handled his cases, his
13 professionalism with opposing counsel, and his
14 preparedness for court.

15 He was not only a great attorney but he was an
16 exceptional person. He was a model of strength, courage,
17 resilience, and heart. He taught the lawyers he mentored
18 not only about the law, but also how to be dedicated to
19 your family, how to be there for your children, and how to
20 be present and involved.

21 Every day since he's been gone, my colleagues
22 and I, we try to honor his memory and do as Sol would do.
23 We do everything we can to be good attorneys, good
24 parents, and good friends no matter what. We're not only
25 better lawyers because of Sol Sterenberg, but better

1 parents and coworkers who appreciate how much life there
2 is to live.

3 He died at the age of 53 with so much left to
4 give this world, so we hope that we continue his legacy
5 through our own work as attorneys and through seeing his
6 children grow up and do great things. So thank you for
7 doing this.

8 (APPLAUSE.)

9 JUDGE NICHOLS: Makeba Gibbs, Esquire for Wilmer
10 "Bill" R. Ticer, Esquire.

11 MS. GIBBS: Good afternoon, Chief and
12 Administrative Judge, esteemed colleagues and judges and
13 friends and family. I couldn't believe I was asked to do
14 this, because Bill had so many friends for so many years,
15 but I did work very closely with him the last five years
16 of his life.

17 I met Bill when I was a public defender. I was
18 a public defender for nine years. Bill was the President
19 of the Charles County Bar Association, and he was seeking
20 to diversify the organization because it was mostly older
21 white men.

22 So he asked me to be on the board and it's a
23 slate. So if you're the entertainment chair, which I was,
24 you were in charge of doing the follies, which no one
25 wanted to do. And if you've seen it, you know all the

1 attorneys have to get up and act in front of their
2 colleagues, and it's kind of embarrassing. But I didn't
3 mind doing it, but you do; you work your way up to being
4 president. And so Bill was a mentor to everyone. He was
5 friend to me.

6 I wrote down a few things, because I tend to get
7 a little nervous, so I don't forget.

8 Bill was 74 when he passed away. When I got a
9 text message, I was so busy I didn't notice, from his
10 assistant, that he was, quote/unquote, missing. And I
11 told her -- I was just, like, "74-year-olds don't go
12 missing. Like, that's not a good sign." And I know Bill
13 would say the same thing, so that's why I can be so candid
14 about it. But it was a hunting accident. That's how he
15 passed away, and since it was so sudden, people didn't
16 know that he would be gone.

17 I shared an office with him. I would say 30
18 people had come by after his funeral service, just passing
19 by. That's the type of lawyer he was. You could just
20 come by his office if you needed something. He was
21 certainly an attorney for the people.

22 And everyone who I had to notify he had passed
23 away had wonderful things to say about him. That he
24 worked hard. That he was very down to earth. That he was
25 very prepared. They said he was an excellent attorney,

1 which he was, and that he didn't charge very much.

2 That's something he and I would talk about,
3 because he and I would talk about how -- I would tell him
4 that it was -- I guess it was a misconception that
5 attorneys -- all attorneys were rich, and we talked about
6 that all the time. He'd tell me, "This is the only way an
7 attorney could get rich," and I would be like writing it
8 down like this. But that wasn't an area of law I wanted
9 to go into, so...

10 My practice is mirrored exactly like Bill's was.
11 He still had the old-school Rolodexes. Some of his
12 files -- oh, my goodness, he had probably, I think -- I
13 want to say, like, 15 file cabinets this high, just --
14 they went back. They're way past five years old and
15 needed to be destroyed, but they all went up to bar
16 counsel. I was going to work on his practice, you know, I
17 guess closing his practice, but it was just too many cases
18 to go through for a sole practitioner to take on.

19 I did say he was a mentor and a friend. He did
20 like to talk. We talked every day about all his cases.
21 As a matter of fact, when people came by the office after
22 he had passed away, I knew most of the people, and I knew
23 most of their cases because Bill had talked to me about
24 it.

25 He also talked about being in a high-speed chase

1 when he was a teenager and going through roadblocks. I
2 was like, "This cannot be true." And he said what it was
3 like to own a boat and how he would, like, party, and I
4 was like, "Okay. We have a lot in common."

5 He rode a Harley. He had his Harley, I think,
6 up until about three years -- Brenda is here; she would be
7 able to tell you -- about three years before he passed
8 away, and he rode it to the Crab Feast, which I thought
9 was just amazing for someone 72 years old. But he
10 eventually sold the Harley.

11 He told me many stories about practicing here in
12 Prince George's County, and I'll admit I didn't know all
13 of the names, but he loved the camaraderie in this
14 courthouse and he loved practicing law.

15 He was also very funny. And I'm not going to go
16 long, but he passed my office one day and he was like,
17 "Makeba" -- now, I'm 49, so I was born in 1970, he says,
18 "Do you know who the president was when I was born?"

19 I'm not, like, a history buff, so I was like,
20 "Eisenhower?" That was the only president I could think
21 of.

22 He was like, "No." He didn't tell me, but I
23 Googled it. It was FDR, so just so you know. But I
24 thought that was pretty funny.

25 I did learn a lot from him. I do know that Bill

1 was a workaholic. Bill had appointments scheduled the day
2 before he passed, the day after he passed away, and his
3 assistant had to notify them that he had passed away.

4 If he wasn't working, he was spending time with
5 his wife or tending to his four horses, which I couldn't
6 believe he had. He was in the office. One day he was
7 like, "I have to go." You know, he would step away and
8 then come back obviously. He said, "I have to go around
9 to my home because some hay is being delivered."

10 And I was like, "Okay. Well, you know, who is
11 going to help you with this?"

12 He was like, "Just the guy that delivers it and
13 me."

14 I said, "What is it? Bales of hay or whatever?"
15 He had to tell me what it was called.

16 He said he would take them -- and they weighed
17 like 50 pounds -- and he would stack them up. He said the
18 first two rows weren't too high, but then it got really
19 high.

20 I was like, "Bill, you know, you're not my
21 parent, so I'm not going to fuss at you but be glad that
22 you're not. I'll see you when you get back."

23 Bill was in the office before I got there, and a
24 lot of times he was there when I was leaving at the end of
25 the day. I certainly have a different take on life. I

1 know that this is a very stressful practice, so every
2 opportunity I get, I'm on a plane. My family lives far
3 away, so I have to do that in order to see them. But this
4 is what Bill loved and you all were his family. So I
5 can't blame him for that.

6 Of the four -- four and a half -- it's four
7 years and two months that I worked with Bill, I only knew
8 him to be out of the office for maybe three days. And I
9 was, like, amazed at that, but again, he loved it, and I
10 didn't judge him.

11 And, actually, after I got to realize how much
12 he knew about the practice of law, I would tell him -- I
13 was like, "Please never retire. You have to be here, you
14 know." And he helped me out a lot.

15 So I'm very grateful that I'm able to speak to
16 you all. I'm sorry for crying.

17 JUDGE NICHOLS: It's okay.

18 MS. GIBBS: I'm going to beat myself up for the
19 next few days. I'm so embarrassed. But anyway, he was a
20 friend. He stood up for me. Even after he discouraged me
21 from running for judge of the Circuit Court, I didn't tell
22 him I went up and filed after, you know, everyone was
23 speculating about it. And when I got back and I told him,
24 I was looking at his face for, like, disapproval. He
25 didn't care. And then even afterwards, when people

1 would -- you know, the courtroom gossip, he said he stood
2 up for me, and that really meant a lot.

3 There was one more thing I wanted to say about
4 that, but I think I'll leave it, but I really appreciate
5 being here. Thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 JUDGE NICHOLS: Almost on time and under budget.

8 Chief Judge Adams, President Manny Geraldo, and
9 colleagues, as a court and as a bar, this is a grand
10 opportunity for us to appreciate the contributions of our
11 colleagues. Those who have given it their all in
12 courtrooms like this, who have made life a better place
13 for all of us and another place at the Bar for those who
14 follow behind us.

15 I would like to thank Richard London again and
16 Robin Hadden and the staff at the Bar office for help
17 putting this together.

18 For those of you who kept to the five minutes,
19 thank you. For those of you who have no sense of
20 situational awareness whatsoever and didn't notice me
21 invading your space, also, thank you.

22 We have flowers for all of the families. Please
23 take one when we're done. Chief Judge Adams, thank you.
24 Thank you, colleagues.

25 (Applause.)

1 JUDGE TILLERSON ADAMS: Judge Nichols, thank you
2 for chairing this committee.

3 To the Prince George's County Bar Association, I
4 thank you for establishing this committee and working with
5 the Court so that we can have this ceremony every year.

6 It is so important that we come together to
7 pause for a minute to remember our brethren and our
8 sisters who have gone before us, because we will all be in
9 this situation one day.

10 But as we sit here and remember and laugh and
11 cry -- and know that it is okay to cry -- it shows how
12 much we love and how much we learn and how much we've
13 shared over the years through this journey, in this
14 profession, in this Bar Association.

15 As I look around the room, I look at all the
16 mentors I have had over the years. And I look at all the
17 years that have gone by, and I guess it hit me like a ton
18 of bricks today when Celeste was talking, because I
19 remember when she started practicing with him, and that
20 was a long time ago.

21 MS. BRUCE: Yes, it was, Judge.

22 JUDGE TILLERSON ADAMS: But, also, this gave us
23 an opportunity just to pause for a minute to say thank you
24 and to let the family members know: We know, you know,
25 how much you loved your family member, and we want you to

1 know how much this legal community loved your family
2 member, whether you were his child and had the joy of him
3 coming to all of your athletic or your extracurricular
4 activities or whether you were his child and were just so
5 proud of him, as we know that you all are, or whether you
6 were his friend, or her friend, or a colleague that
7 admired them from afar.

8 That's what we come here today to do, to pause
9 and to say thank you. Love extends beyond, you know, all
10 kinds of things -- race, creed, and color. But here in
11 this courthouse, we respect one another. We love one
12 another. We learn from one another. And this was a time
13 that we come to pause and to express that.

14 So on behalf of all the judges of the Circuit
15 Court for Prince George's County, we thank you for sharing
16 this moment with us.

17 The judges of the Circuit Court for Prince
18 George's County are grateful for the Prince George's
19 County Bar Association and the members of the committee
20 for the presentation of these memorials and making the
21 arrangements for the ceremony. It is a very fine
22 tradition that we have maintained here at Prince George's
23 County for many, many years.

24 We pause from the usual matters taking place in
25 these courtrooms, and we honor our departed brethren and

1 pay tribute to their memories.

2 Many of you have enjoyed a very pleasant and
3 warm personal relationship with those we have memorialized
4 today. The Court will direct that the memorials presented
5 be spread among the permanent records of the court and
6 that copies be sent to the respective families of those
7 colleagues we are honoring today.

8 In conclusion, I think that does conclude the
9 ceremony today. And, Mr. Bailiff, if there is nothing
10 else, we'll -- I mean Senior Judge Nichols, if there is
11 nothing else, we can announce the adjournment of this
12 ceremony.

13 THE BAILIFF: All rise. This Court in Special
14 Session is now adjourned.

15 (Whereupon, the Special Session concluded at
16 5:22 p.m.)

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