

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

2024 BAR MEMORIALS CEREMONY

MONDAY, MARCH 4, 2024  
9:00 A.M.  
COURTROOM NO. 1A  
LEHIGH COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

IN MEMORY OF:

CHARLES J. FONZONE  
DONALD W. SNYDER  
JAMES J. HOLZINGER  
MARGO S. WEINER  
MARK P. ALBRIGHT

BEFORE:

HONORABLE J. BRIAN JOHNSON, P.J.  
HONORABLE ROBERT L. STEINBERG, J.  
HONORABLE JAMES T. ANTHONY, J.  
HONORABLE MICHELE A. VARRICCHIO, J.  
HONORABLE DOUGLAS G. REICHLEY, J.  
HONORABLE ANNA-KRISTIE M. MARKS, J.  
HONORABLE THOMAS M. CAFFREY, J.  
HONORABLE THOMAS A. CAPEHART, J.

\* \* \*

BRIANNA M. SEESE, OFFICIAL COURT MONITOR

INDEX

<u>MEMORIAL</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
CHARLES J. FONZONE by Larry R. Roth, Esq.	6
DONALD W. SNYDER By The Honorable Douglas G. Reichley	13
JAMES J. HOLZINGER by Victor E. Scomillio, Esq.	20
MARGO S. WEINER by The Honorable Edward D. Reibman	24
MARK P. ALBRIGHT By David M. Roth, Esq.	33

1                   COURT CRIER: Please rise. The  
2 Honorable Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of  
3 Lehigh County, Pennsylvania.

4                   Oyez, oyez, oyez. All manner of  
5 persons having anything to do before the Court  
6 of Common Pleas of Lehigh County, herefore come  
7 forward and they shall be heard. God save the  
8 Commonwealth and this Honorable Court.

9                   Please be seated.

10                  PRESIDENT JUDGE JOHNSON: Good  
11 morning. My name is Brian Johnson. I am honored  
12 to serve as the President Judge of this Court.  
13 On behalf of my colleagues on the Court of  
14 Common Pleas of Lehigh County and personally, I  
15 welcome you to the annual Bar Memorial Ceremony,  
16 which is sponsored jointly by the Bar  
17 Association of Lehigh County and this Court.

18                  Joining me on the bench in order of  
19 seniority are the Honorable Robert L. Steinberg,  
20 James T. Anthony, Michelle A. Varricchio,  
21 Douglas G. Reichley, Melissa T. Pavlack, Anna-  
22 Kristie Morffi Marks, Thomas M. Caffrey, and  
23 Thomas A. Capehart. Judge Zachary Cohen was  
24 unable to be with us today, but he sends his  
25 condolences and regards.

1                   We also recognize other judges and  
2 elected officials present for this ceremony:  
3 U.S. District Judge, Joseph F. Leeson, Jr.;  
4 former United States District Chief Judge,  
5 Edward N. Cahn; Senior Judges and former  
6 President Judges of our Court, Carol K.  
7 McGinley, and Edward D. Reibman; former Judge of  
8 our Court, William E. Ford; District Attorney,  
9 Gavin P. Holihan; Chief Public Defender,  
10 Kimberly Makoul Goodge; and former District  
11 Attorney, James Martin.

12                   In this special session of the  
13 Court, we pause to remember and pay respects to  
14 our colleagues and fellow members of our Bar  
15 Association who have passed away during the year  
16 of 2023. Those of us in the legal profession and  
17 those who live or work with us know that our  
18 days in this profession are often long, but in  
19 times like this, we are reminded that our years  
20 are short.

21                   In our annual Bar Admissions  
22 Ceremony, we admit new members to our Bar with  
23 great joy as they commence their professional  
24 lives and with great hope that they will do well  
25 for themselves and their clients, and do good

1 for our community and our profession. But today,  
2 we have a more somber, but no less important  
3 duty of paying respects to our departed  
4 colleagues.

5 As we all know, birth is a beginning  
6 and death is a destination; life is the journey  
7 between them. In remembering our departed  
8 colleagues and the journey they took, we also  
9 remind ourselves of our own mortality, the kind  
10 of life we live, and the legacy we will leave  
11 behind.

12 The Court recognizes the President  
13 of the Bar Association of Lehigh County,  
14 Attorney Mark Crossley.

15 MR. CROSSLEY: Thank you, Your Honor.  
16 Good morning, everyone. May it please the Court,  
17 distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. We  
18 gather today for what could be our finest  
19 tradition, the annual Bar Memorial. This year is  
20 our 119<sup>th</sup> year as we gather together for this  
21 tradition.

22 Today we honor those member  
23 attorneys that have passed away in 2023. We  
24 thank the Court for its continued commitment for  
25 clearing the Court calendar, and to join us and

1 assist us as we pay tribute to our members. We  
2 would also like to thank Attorney Jenna Fliszar,  
3 who diligently and wholeheartedly volunteers  
4 every year to help organize this celebration of  
5 life. Thank you, Jenna.

6 Today we gather to honor the memory  
7 of: Charles Fonzone, who will be remembered by  
8 Larry Roth; Donald Snyder, who will be  
9 remembered by the Honorable Douglas Reichley;  
10 James Holzinger, who will be remembered by  
11 Victor Scomillio; Margo Weiner, who will be  
12 remembered by the Honorable Edward Reibman; and  
13 Mark Albright, who will be remembered by David  
14 Roth.

15 At this time, please welcome Larry  
16 Roth, who will honor Charles Fonzone.

17 MR. L. ROTH: May it please the  
18 Court. I am honored, albeit, with sadness and a  
19 heavy heart, to come before you this morning to  
20 speak about my good friend and longtime  
21 colleague, Charles Fonzone. I first met Chuck in  
22 1973, when we were both newly graduated from law  
23 school, new to the Bar of Lehigh County.

24 I didn't know him when he was  
25 growing up, so there's not a lot I can relate

1 about his tender years other than statistical  
2 things, such as he was born auspiciously on New  
3 Years Day in 1941. He was the son of Charles and  
4 Margeret Fonzone, had a sister, Joan, and a  
5 sister, Margaret. He grew up in the Fullerton  
6 area of Whitehall Township. He was a devout  
7 Catholic, with a capital "C", and he attended  
8 parochial school.

9 I know this to be a fact because  
10 whenever we traveled, Chuck always found time to  
11 go to mass. And when he had you trapped in the  
12 car and he mused about his young days, he would  
13 always break out in -- not song, but more like a  
14 chant about what food people could eat --  
15 families could eat during the week. It went  
16 something like Monday, meatloaf, Tuesday,  
17 chicken, and Friday was always fish.

18 So after grade school, Chuck  
19 attended Central Catholic High School. In high  
20 school, he became the only student at Central  
21 Catholic to ever captain the football team and  
22 be president of his senior class. After high  
23 school, he attended Lehigh University where he  
24 earned a degree in English. He did tell me a  
25 number of stories about his life at Lehigh, none

1 of them are believable and don't need to be  
2 repeated here this morning.

3           After college, Chuck spent a few  
4 years teaching junior high school English. He  
5 tired of that and made a small career change  
6 entering the Marine Corps to serve in Vietnam as  
7 an artillery officer and actually a forward  
8 observer, which meant he was way up front ahead  
9 of everybody else directing the people behind  
10 the lines where the artillery was landed. He was  
11 wounded in Vietnam earning a Purple Heart, and  
12 returned home to attend Duquesne University Law  
13 School.

14           While at the law school, Chuck  
15 distinguished himself becoming the managing  
16 editor of their bar review -- or their law  
17 review, rather. Okay. It was there at Duquesne  
18 that Chuck met his future bride, his longtime  
19 love, and best friend, Mary Ann.

20           After leaving law school, he  
21 returned to the Lehigh Valley area where he  
22 practiced as a public defender and became an  
23 associate in the law firm of Walker, Thomas,  
24 Karess, Lipson, and Zieger. At that time, I had  
25 also just graduated from law school like Chuck



1 and Mary. Cathy and I were almost newlyweds and  
2 trying to make a go of our new careers.

3 So I worked at the courthouse as a  
4 law clerk and that's where our paths crossed and  
5 Chuck and I began our long-term friendship. In  
6 fact, it was through Chuck that I got my first  
7 job. Guess where; Walker, Thomas, Karess,  
8 Lipson, and Zieger. And not to sound ungrateful  
9 to the firm or to Chuck or anybody, but when you  
10 were a new associate in a law firm with five  
11 partners, that meant that the files you got were  
12 already rejected by five other lawyers.

13 Chuck's career was built on doing  
14 insurance subrogation cases, and he had a lot of  
15 them. I learned, or discovered, that insurance  
16 subrogation was short for: hard work, long  
17 hours, and not much compensation. Chuck and I  
18 were both fortunate that our wives were working  
19 in those early days. But through his subrogation  
20 work, Chuck met and impressed a lot of people  
21 and he built a great practice. Suffice to say  
22 that Chuck, along with John Ashley and the other  
23 people that were in their firm and went through  
24 his office, including Judge Steinberg, they  
25 built what was obviously one of the premier law

1 firms in the Lehigh Valley.

2 But more importantly than Chuck's  
3 success as a lawyer, I believe Chuck was a  
4 success as a human being. Chuck embodied all  
5 those qualities that you would want to have in a  
6 human being. He had integrity, he was honest, he  
7 was a loyal friend, most importantly, I believe  
8 Chuck was a great family man. He was a good  
9 brother, a good son, a fantastic husband,  
10 father, and grandfather. He loved his family and  
11 would tell all sorts of stories about them and  
12 the grandkids.

13 Chuck's work ethic was notorious.  
14 Chuck just worked all the time. But not  
15 withstanding all the time that he put in  
16 working, he was always fun to be around. Okay.  
17 Chuck loved music, he loved sports, in fact, he  
18 continued to play sports into his late 40s and I  
19 believe into the 50s where he played touch  
20 football and basketball with his high school  
21 buddies who were numerous.

22 Chuck loved to travel, not that he  
23 did an awful lot of it, but when Mary could pry  
24 him away from the office, we would take trips --  
25 family trips. When the boys were still at home,

1 our two families would vacation together at  
2 times. And when we became empty nesters, which  
3 was about the same time because our children  
4 were about the same age, we began traveling to  
5 Europe. So for -- travel for Chuck meant that he  
6 could spend about 24 hours of the first day and  
7 24 of the last day working on depositions in the  
8 airport and on the plane. I mean, the guy was  
9 just impossible at times.

10                   The last trip we took was a mini  
11 grand tour of Europe, where we started -- the  
12 four of us and my brother and his wife -- in  
13 Italy going through Switzerland, Germany, and  
14 France. Chuck loved Italy, of course, and he  
15 loved his Italian heritage. Every city that we  
16 went to, he would point out a sign that had  
17 "Fonzone" in it. By the time we left Italy, I  
18 was certain that Fonzone was Italian for Smith.

19                   We get to Switzerland and we took a  
20 side trip to the Alps. And we actually took a  
21 carved railroad up into the Alps that went  
22 through one of the Alps through a tunnel that  
23 was carved or blasted or built through the Alps  
24 itself. And Chuck never let me forget the plaque  
25 on the front just when you went into the tunnel

1 that was dedicated to the Italians who died  
2 building that tunnel.

3           In fact, many years later, when  
4 Chuck was suffering from his memory issues and I  
5 visited him at Country Meadows, we were having  
6 sort of a one-sided conversation where I'm not  
7 sure that Chuck was following what I was saying  
8 and he was kind of dozing off. So I put it to  
9 him and I said, "Chuck, who built that tunnel  
10 through the Alps?" And he looked up to me and  
11 smiled and said, "The Italians." So I knew then  
12 that even though at times you didn't think he  
13 was listening, he was.

14           If Chuck had one character flaw, it  
15 was his competitiveness. And oftentimes, that  
16 would manifest itself with competition with Mary  
17 when they would play cards, Cribbage, and board  
18 games. Mary relates how Chuck would infuriate  
19 her by putting stars next to his score whenever  
20 he won. This also drove Chuck to cheat at  
21 Trivial Pursuit, denying Mary one of her  
22 victories by asking the wrong question that he  
23 knew she could never answer. Who knows who threw  
24 that pitch to Roger Maris when he hit his 61<sup>st</sup>  
25 homerun; right?

1                   So as I mentioned, Chuck loved  
2 music. He loved everything from opera, he loved  
3 the Eagles, and he liked Willie Nelson. So when  
4 my wife found out that I was giving this talk  
5 this morning, she reminded me of a quote from  
6 Willie Nelson that goes something like this --  
7 actually, it should go exactly like this. Willie  
8 said, "Death is not the ending of anything. I  
9 believe all of us are only energy that becomes  
10 matter. When the matter goes away, the energy  
11 still exists. You can't destroy it; it never  
12 dies."

13                   So too, I believe that if memories  
14 are energy, his family and friends will always  
15 have Chuck in their heart. Thank you.

16                   MR. CROSSLEY: Thank you, Mr. Roth.  
17 Please welcome the Honorable Douglas Reichley,  
18 who will honor Donald Snyder.

19                   JUDGE REICHLEY: May it please the  
20 Court, President Judge Johnson, the other  
21 members of the bench, counsel, and family  
22 members. Thank you very much for allowing me to  
23 make some remarks about Don Snyder, my friend  
24 and colleague from the State House.

25                   There are times when we forget that

1 although these memorial services provide the  
2 helpful and interesting glimpse into the lives  
3 of our colleagues we have lost from the past  
4 year, the remembrance is still too sensitive for  
5 some family members, and such that it is for  
6 Nancy Snyder, who was not able to attend today  
7 because today is the one-year anniversary of  
8 Don's passing. Excuse me. Sorry about that.

9           In an interesting twist of fate, in  
10 listening to Larry's remarks, I remembered I was  
11 the trial judge for Chuck Fonzone's last trial  
12 where his client was, of all people, Nancy  
13 Snyder, Don's now widow, in a civil case, an  
14 auto accident subrogation case, of all things.

15           So in looking back over Don's  
16 professional career, a couple of aspects stand  
17 out; his resilience, his intimate connection  
18 with so many of the essential institutions of  
19 the Lehigh Valley, and his strong belief in  
20 education and self-improvement.

21           Don was born in Greenawalds in 1951  
22 and graduated from Parkland High School in 1969.  
23 He began his post-high school graduation by  
24 attending Lehigh Carbon Community College, an  
25 institution with which he was going to have a

1 later association. He received his associate  
2 degree from LCCC before eventually moving on to  
3 receive a bachelor's degree from Penn State in  
4 1973.

5           From there, he went on to obtain an  
6 MBA degree at Lehigh University, and while  
7 that's unfortunate for any -- for anyone  
8 attending Lehigh University, as a graduate from  
9 Lafayette College, Judge Reibman and I express  
10 our sympathies for those individuals.

11           While Don was achieving his MBA, he  
12 was still working full-time at Mack Trucks as an  
13 accountant. From there at Mack Trucks, he went  
14 on to work at Air Products and then began his  
15 involvement in local government by serving on  
16 the South Whitehall Township Planning  
17 Commission, an organization in which he chaired  
18 for eight years.

19           For some, this would have been  
20 enough to keep busy, but it was clear that Don  
21 had other goals. At the same time he was  
22 working, serving on the planning commission, and  
23 most importantly, raising a family with his  
24 wife, Nancy, he decided to go to law school and  
25 graduated with his juris doctorate from

1 Villanova in 1981. But on top of all of this, as  
2 if this was not sufficient, Don was running for  
3 the Pennsylvania State House in the same year he  
4 graduated from law school.

5           Don and I had a similar career path  
6 to this extent. He and I both represented the  
7 134<sup>th</sup> State House District, although Don did it  
8 for 20 years and I served for just 9 years. And  
9 this is another example, that all of us in the  
10 Bar know, how unconventional all of our paths  
11 are in the law.

12           Don, while he was in the State  
13 House, kept his hand in the legal profession by  
14 associating with a firm, Steckel and Stopp. But  
15 being in the House full-time is a very demanding  
16 situation. So maintaining an active legal  
17 practice can be challenging at times, especially  
18 when anyone recognizes that Don was not just a  
19 back-bencher when he served in the State House.

20           He served on various committees and  
21 special select bodies, such as the select  
22 committee to study the availability of services  
23 for handicapped adults, the select committee to  
24 investigate teen suicides, the select committee  
25 on land use management, and the local government



1 commission. He also took on the challenge of  
2 running for leadership roles while he served in  
3 the State House within the Republican caucus,  
4 and was elected by his fellow Republican members  
5 to the position of Caucus Policy Chair and  
6 ultimately as the Majority Whip for his final  
7 four years in the House.

8           And for some of you who may already  
9 know this, the term Whip, in terms of political  
10 circles, is not from something in the wild west  
11 where people are being assaulted, but in fact  
12 comes from the Old Ancient English tradition of  
13 fox hunting where the whipper-in is the person  
14 who keeps the hounds focused and staying on  
15 track, such as the Whip has to do in political  
16 circumstances. And Don was very good at it.

17           To prove that Don believed in the  
18 adage that the moss does not grow on a rolling  
19 stone, he went on to achieve his LL.M. in taxation  
20 from the then Dickenson School of Law, and now  
21 Penn State University Law School, in 1989 while  
22 he was serving in the State House. Now, some of  
23 you may recall, Don even ran for a position on  
24 the Court of Common Pleas here in Lehigh County.

25           And although unsuccessful, it

1 reminded me of an anecdote that I may have been  
2 actually involved with to a certain degree. As  
3 my colleagues on the bench know, each Election  
4 Day we serve on a rotating basis to handle any  
5 Election Day controversies that may occur. One  
6 year, Don was running for election and there was  
7 a controversy that ensued and it required a  
8 hearing I believe in front of Judge Backenstoe,  
9 where Don's opponent alleged that Don was buying  
10 votes by handing out something at the polls.

11           Now, as any of us who know who vote,  
12 we realize people hand out cards and sometimes  
13 little novelties and trinkets, but Don's offense  
14 in this occasion was handing out Snyder's  
15 Pretzels. His opponent cried foul and argued the  
16 provision of the pretzels constituted a  
17 violation of the election code by providing an  
18 item of value to obtain the voters' support.

19           The hearing was held I believe, as I  
20 said, in front of Judge Backenstoe, who with  
21 great Solomonic wisdom, determined the provision  
22 of pretzels was a *de minimis* token and therefore  
23 not a violation of the election code.

24           While the popular phrase in  
25 Harrisburg is, as tough as it is to get elected

1 to the State House, it's even tougher to know  
2 when to leave. So when Don was able to  
3 masterfully achieve this segway, he returned to  
4 leading Lehigh Carbon Community College as its  
5 President from 2000 to 2013. During which time,  
6 he expanded the scope of educational  
7 opportunities for numerous Lehigh County  
8 residents using his business background and his  
9 legal background as well.

10                   Upon his return to private life, Don  
11 remained active in community organizations by  
12 serving on the boards for PBS 39, the Lehigh  
13 County Historical Society, Good Shephard  
14 Hospital, Boy Scouts Minsi Trails Council, and  
15 with the Jordan UCC Church. He continued his  
16 passion for expanding his knowledge of the world  
17 by traveling extensively with Nancy even after  
18 he developed some health problems, and indulging  
19 in his love for adding items to his large train  
20 putz collection.

21                   Don leaves behind his wife, Nancy,  
22 to whom he was married for 46 years, their  
23 daughter, Schelly, and her husband, John, his  
24 son, Sean, and his wife, Claire, along with  
25 three grandchildren and his brothers -- brother,

1 Richard, and sister, Susan. And he is surely  
2 missed by all friends and loved ones. Thank you.

3 MR. CROSSLEY: Thank you, Judge  
4 Reichley. Next, please welcome Victor Scomillio,  
5 who will honor James Holzinger.

6 MR. SCOMILLIO: Good morning. May it  
7 please the Court, colleagues, family, and  
8 friends. It is my honor here today to speak  
9 about my partner, James Holzinger.

10 Jim was a lifelong resident of  
11 Bethlehem, and he would let you know that about  
12 all the little ins and outs of Bethlehem that no  
13 one else knew and the personalities that  
14 comprised the city. He was a graduate of Liberty  
15 High School; a graduate of Moravian College. He  
16 then took a break and worked for the Allentown  
17 State Hospital, which may explain how he had  
18 such a successful career in law. And then, went  
19 on and graduated from Delaware Law School.

20 Upon his graduation, he clerked for  
21 the Delaware Supreme Court, John J. McGinley --  
22 or McNeilly, I apologize. He returned to  
23 Bethlehem, worked for the firm of Tallman  
24 Hudders. He then left Tallman Hudders and went  
25 into a -- in a partnership with Rich Boyer, then

1 became -- brought on Paul Herrick. And then, in  
2 one of his more questionable decisions, brought  
3 me on into his office. That's his bio. That's  
4 what you can find if you look at a website.

5           For those of you who are litigators  
6 here and don't know Jim, Jim was a transactional  
7 attorney. We were joking before this session  
8 commenced today, that his wife Liza has spent  
9 more time in a courtroom in this century than  
10 Jim did. And that is true.

11           For those of you who don't know who  
12 he was, he was in the back corner of the CLE  
13 sessions working on estate plans while the  
14 classes were going on. Jim's fingerprints are  
15 all over the City of Bethlehem. His  
16 transactional work had him deal a lot with land  
17 development and business development in  
18 Bethlehem and in the Lehigh Valley.

19           One of the things that I learned  
20 early on from working with Jim was, our measure  
21 of success as attorneys in our office was not by  
22 our financial gain, was not by fancy cars or  
23 shiny objects, it was the success of our  
24 clients. Their success was ours. And that was  
25 from the small mom-and-pop business, to the

1 large corporation; from the couple who's buying  
2 their first house, to the large land development  
3 outfit. And he would often remind us that the  
4 first house for that couple may be the more --  
5 most important thing in their life. They have  
6 much more to lose than the developer who has the  
7 financial cushion to absorb the loss.

8           In our office, Jim was notorious for  
9 his lunches, which usually involved a lot of  
10 humor, and then transgressed into some form of a  
11 CLE. And if he started out by asking, "Let me  
12 ask you a question," what he really meant was,  
13 "Let me ask you a dumb question." And you know  
14 you were in trouble by that -- by that  
15 statement, and that you had to answer to  
16 something that he already knew.

17           We learned a lot from Jim. We  
18 learned a lot over this past year that his  
19 fingerprints are not only in this city in the  
20 land development work that he did and the  
21 corporations he helped and the businesses he  
22 helped, but in the clients he met and interacted  
23 with.

24           Over the course of this year, I have  
25 met many couples, old and young, who talk about

1 Jim with fondness and admiration for his skill  
2 and ability. Jim had the uncanny ability to take  
3 a complex situation and really parse it down to  
4 its true issue in simple terms to get to a  
5 resolution. We're still meeting clients who are  
6 saddened by Jim's loss -- or the loss of Jim.

7           We are still meeting clients who are  
8 still in appreciation of all the hard work and  
9 personal aspect he gave to their case, to their  
10 family. Because in their eyes, Jim was their  
11 lawyer, their family lawyer. That's Jim the  
12 lawyer. That's the Jim Holzinger who Paul and I  
13 knew, worked with, and tried every day to carry  
14 on his legacy. If you want to know about Jim,  
15 the person, talk to his wife because there is  
16 nothing that lit up his life other than when he  
17 talked about his family, his wife, his time with  
18 them in Delaware and Florida.

19           Jim will always be remembered. We  
20 will see him all the time in our files, in our  
21 clients, and in the work we do in our office.  
22 And at the conclusion of today's session, I ask  
23 this Court to end this session in honor of the  
24 members of the Bar lost in Lehigh county this  
25 year. I ask everybody to continue their legacy

1 in what they do and how they practice. Thank  
2 you.

3 MR. CROSSLEY: Thank you, Mr.  
4 Scomillio. Please welcome the Honorable Edward  
5 Reibman, who will honor Margo Weiner.

6 JUDGE REIBMAN: Thank you, Mark. May  
7 it please the Court, President Judge Johnson,  
8 members of this distinguished Court -- more  
9 distinguished now than it was two years ago when  
10 I retired from it -- Margo's husband, Steve,  
11 colleagues of the Bar, and relatives and friends  
12 of those we remember today.

13 Margo grew up in Rutherford, New  
14 Jersey. Her mother was a high school teacher in  
15 the nearby blue-collar town of Lyndhurst, where  
16 she was an advocate for improving wages and  
17 working conditions for teachers. Her mother had  
18 three sisters and the relationship between those  
19 four women and their mother, Margo's maternal  
20 grandmother, was a tumultuous one. They were  
21 always bickering, usually over petty things.

22 Margo and her only sibling, Bobby,  
23 who was seven years older than Margo, observed  
24 the dissention between their mother, aunts, and  
25 grandmother and promised each other -- literally



1 a pinky swear -- that they would never have a  
2 contentious relationship between them. And Margo  
3 and Bobby never did.

4 Her father was a mild-mannered  
5 lawyer who commuted by train each day to his  
6 office in New York City. He represented coal  
7 miners and railroad workers who were injured on  
8 the job. And as those industries petered out, he  
9 developed a general practice, ultimately  
10 practicing in the law office of the notorious  
11 Roy Cohn.

12 From the age of three years, Margo  
13 argued often, had a sharp tongue, and was never  
14 without an answer or a retort. She was always  
15 making a case. Even at that early age, friends  
16 of the family said, "She should become a  
17 lawyer." She attended Boston University, where  
18 as a junior, she met Steve Weiner, of Allentown,  
19 who was then a senior at B.U. They have been  
20 together ever since.

21 Margo graduated Phi Beta Kappa from  
22 B.U. in 1974. She wanted to go to law school.  
23 That did not please her father, who Margo  
24 adored. His experience with women lawyers in New  
25 York City was not a good one. He found them to

1 be tough, brash, and aggressive. For Margo's  
2 father, think Bella Abzug. And that was not the  
3 image he wanted for either of his daughters.

4 Margo's father had been successful  
5 in dissuading Bobby from going to law school  
6 seven years earlier. And Bobby went on to get a  
7 master's degree in urban planning. But Margo was  
8 a different kid. She dismissed her father's  
9 reservations and went to Rutgers Law School.  
10 Margo's father died unexpectedly on the first  
11 day of her classes. She was devastated.

12 She and Steve married in 1976. And  
13 Margo completed law school in 1977, within the  
14 traditional three years of law school, despite  
15 her rough start. To our good fortune, Steve  
16 brought Margo to his hometown of Allentown,  
17 where she had joined his family in their  
18 restaurant design and supply business.

19 In those days, there were few women  
20 lawyers in Lehigh County, and Margo as an  
21 outsider, with no book of business or  
22 experience. Nonetheless, Attorney Ed McGee gave  
23 Margo a job in his office. Ed had young  
24 daughters of his own and understood the  
25 importance of creating role models and

1 opportunities for women. He treated Margo and  
2 Steve as members of his own family; they had  
3 dinners and took canoe trips down the Delaware  
4 together.

5 Attorney Gwin Krouse later joined  
6 their practice. Their office was in a roach  
7 infested building on Hamilton Street. One day  
8 while meeting with a client, a roach attempted  
9 to cross Margo's desk. Margo nonchalantly took  
10 off her shoe, squashed the unwelcome pest, and  
11 continued on with her client. Margo later  
12 practiced with Attorneys Clayton Hyman and then  
13 with Sandy Engel and Steve Bergstein, retiring  
14 from the law firm of Engel, Bergstein, and  
15 Wiener in 2018.

16 Margo was wired at a young age to  
17 become a lawyer. She was mild-mannered, like her  
18 father. She demonstrated grit, determination,  
19 and commitment by attending law school despite  
20 her father's reservations and completing the  
21 program on time despite his sudden death. She  
22 saw how damaging the dynamics were on her  
23 mother's side of the family and vowed with her  
24 sister that they not replicate them.

25 It was not a great leap for Margo to

1 become a family lawyer with a preferred style of  
2 resolving issues collaboratively instead of  
3 pouring gasoline on a fire. Margo became so well  
4 respected in the field that she taught family  
5 law to other lawyers as a lecturer for the  
6 Pennsylvania Bar Institute. She cared about  
7 people.

8           In addition to her family practice,  
9 which was all about people, she was the  
10 solicitor to the of the Lower Milford Township  
11 Zoning Hearing Board. Among her cases, and well  
12 known to this Court, was the *Geryville Quarry*  
13 case which generated 63 zoning hearings before  
14 the Zoning Hearing Board. Margo attended all of  
15 those hearings. The members of the board were  
16 all volunteers.

17           To help alleviate their suffering,  
18 and her own, she thoughtfully brought candy to  
19 them at every one of those 63 hearings. It made  
20 such an impact on the members of the board that  
21 Margo's successor, Attorney Jeff Fleischaker,  
22 has felt compelled to continue Margo's  
23 tradition.

24           As more women lawyers came to the  
25 county, Margo had took it upon herself to become

1 a friend, confidante, mentor, and role model for  
2 many of them. She and Steve had two children,  
3 Michael and Daniel. The other lawyers saw in  
4 Margo a person who could balance a busy  
5 professional life with raising a close-knit  
6 loving family.

7           Even Bobby, Margo's older sister,  
8 looked up to Margo as her role model. Bobby went  
9 to law school later in life, practiced family  
10 law, and became a mediator to resolve family  
11 problems collaboratively, rather than  
12 adversarially, and while she and her husband  
13 raised their own family.

14           Margo stood five feet three inches  
15 tall and weighed in at 100 pounds, but make no  
16 mistake about it, she was no pushover. She was  
17 not bombastic or disrespectful to anyone. She  
18 never raised her voice; she never had to. She  
19 was focused, stood her ground, was extremely  
20 well prepared, knew her facts and the law,  
21 presented them matter-of-factly without drama or  
22 exaggeration, and she was confident without  
23 being smug. She was noticeably devoted to her  
24 clients and firm, and effective on their behalf.  
25 She practiced law with the utmost integrity. She

1 was well-liked and well-respected among the Bar  
2 and members of the Court.

3           On a more personal level, Margo  
4 developed an interest in fashion design and  
5 painting while in high school. When she and Gwin  
6 Krouse decided to practice law together and  
7 their new office needed curtains, Margo sought  
8 the advice of a decorator, Gwin went to Kmart.

9           Margo and her sister met often in  
10 New York to shop for their professional outfits.  
11 Margo's down-to-earth and practical mother-in-  
12 law characterized Margo's style as "fancy." I  
13 would call it, "understated elegance."

14           Margo resumed her interest in  
15 painting after retiring from the practice of  
16 law. She took classes at The Baum School of Art  
17 and became quite a good painter of oil on  
18 canvas. She became a Baum Trustee and a  
19 scholarship has been established there in her  
20 memory.

21           She was an excellent cook and  
22 presented her dishes as works of art. Her  
23 signature dish was paella and hers was as  
24 beautiful, aromatic, and tasty as any cook could  
25 hope for. She also made a wonderful salad

1 dressing. It was only after her passing that  
2 Steve told us he never liked it, but could not  
3 bring himself to tell Margo.

4 Margo also loved to garden. And one  
5 of her lasting gifts to Steve, in addition to  
6 their two children and their many memories  
7 together, are the flowers she planted at their  
8 home that are now beginning to bud. She and  
9 Steve traveled almost always with their  
10 children, Bobby, and her husband, Stan. They  
11 went to Europe, Asia, South America, Africa, and  
12 Florida, but their second home was Colorado,  
13 where they loved to ski, hike, ride horses, and  
14 raft together as a family.

15 For at least the last 20 years,  
16 Margo developed a condition called sarcoidosis,  
17 in which inflammatory cells formed in her lungs  
18 compromising her pulmonary function. Her doctors  
19 were amazed that she could live the active life  
20 she did, especially in the high altitude of the  
21 Rockies. She developed kidney cancer a few years  
22 ago and became a staunch advocate for kidney  
23 cancer treatment and research through her  
24 involvement with KidneyCAN and other kidney  
25 cancer advocacy organizations. She shared her

1 experiences as a patient and advocate with  
2 others.

3 Margo never complained. She did not  
4 compete with anybody except with herself. She  
5 always tried to improve her lawyering, skiing,  
6 cooking, and painting. Her orientation reflected  
7 her parent's values of helping others to get  
8 better, do better, and be better. She was kind,  
9 generous, thoughtful, even-handed, upright, and  
10 insightful.

11 In retirement, she, Lisa Frankel,  
12 and my wife, Elizabeth, walked together almost  
13 every day when all of them were in town.  
14 Sometimes, the husbands would join them. I found  
15 it both frustrating and admirable that Margo  
16 never had a negative word to say about anyone,  
17 not even about fellow lawyers or judges.

18 During the early days of COVID,  
19 Margo, Lisa, and Elizabeth made dinners for one  
20 another's family and delivered them to the  
21 doorstep of one another's homes. We all ate  
22 well, despite the pandemic related restrictions.

23 Margo died peacefully in her sleep  
24 on June 20, 2023 at the age of 70 years after a  
25 courageous and protracted battle against kidney



1 cancer. Even during the low depths of that  
2 battle, if the spotlight was shining, Margo made  
3 sure it was shining on you and not her. She was  
4 an extraordinarily good soul. Some thought she  
5 was a saint.

6 Margo was survived by her husband,  
7 Steve, who was supportive, adoring, and devoted  
8 to her since the day they met more than 50 years  
9 ago; and their wonderful sons who live in  
10 Colorado, Daniel and Michael, and Michael's  
11 terrific wife, Kate; her sister, Bobby Friedman,  
12 and her husband, Stan, of Hamden, Connecticut;  
13 and her extended family, many friends,  
14 colleagues, and clients.

15 Thank you, President Judge Johnson,  
16 members of the Court, Mark Crossley and Jenna  
17 Fliszar of the Bar Association for allowing me  
18 the honor of remembering Margo.

19 MR. CROSSLEY: Thank you, Judge  
20 Reibman. Please welcome our final speaker, David  
21 Roth, who will honor Mark Albright.

22 MR. D. ROTH: May it please the  
23 Court, members of the bench, members of the Bar,  
24 and distinguished guests. Thank you for this  
25 opportunity to recognize my longtime friend and

1 colleague, Mark Albright, who passed away last  
2 December. Mark was born on January 30, 1958 in  
3 Reading and he graduated and received his  
4 bachelor's degree from Albright College later  
5 getting his juris doctorate from Maryland School  
6 of Law.

7 I first met Mark shortly after I  
8 started practicing law in the fall of 2004. I  
9 was introduced to him by Attorney Jan Thwaites,  
10 as a fellow member of a small group of attorneys  
11 who regularly practice in the Orphans' Court and  
12 volunteered to serve as guardians or guardian *ad*  
13 *litem* for people. Mark had just met Colleen, the  
14 wonderful woman who became his wife later in  
15 2008.

16 Mark was survived by his wife,  
17 Colleen, his daughters, Meredith and Allison,  
18 and his grandchildren, Parker and Olive --  
19 Oliver. Sorry. When I met Mark, I could tell  
20 from the start that he was different; he was  
21 unique. He was interested in the way that he  
22 approached the world with curiosity. Mark was  
23 kind and funny and understanding for everyone  
24 around.

25 At the time, I thought it was just

1 nice personality traits, but as I've grown older  
2 and I've been practicing longer, I see how  
3 incredibly unique and wonderful that was. You  
4 see, we work in this environment where almost  
5 every client we meet is sick or dying, or had  
6 just found out that someone they love is sick or  
7 dying, or has just passed away. And it can be  
8 lonely and exhausting and somber. But Mark never  
9 once displayed any of that.

10 To the contrary, Mark had a  
11 seemingly limitless pool of happiness and  
12 compassion that never wore out and never gave  
13 in. His clients and the people that knew him  
14 loved him. To this day, I am in awe of Mark  
15 Albright for this.

16 Mark had been practicing for many  
17 years before I met him. He was a member of the  
18 Lehigh County Bar, of the Northampton County  
19 Bar, the Estate Planning Council of the Lehigh  
20 Valley, and the National Academy of Elder Law  
21 Attorneys. And despite all his accolades and his  
22 experience, early in our relationship, Mark  
23 called and asked if it would be all right for  
24 him to call me from time to time to run through  
25 some fact patterns and analyze problems

1 together.

2                   You see, Mark ran a solo shop in  
3 Hellertown, which meant that he got the ability  
4 to make his own hours and to pick his own  
5 clients and to be the master of his own domain.  
6 But it also meant that he didn't have a sounding  
7 board. And I was honored that he would even  
8 think of me for this. I didn't know nearly as  
9 much about the law as he did, but I suppose just  
10 listening could be helpful. And we became fast  
11 friends.

12                   I always looked forward to Mark's  
13 calls, sometimes because I could spot an angle  
14 that might help, but mostly because of his sense  
15 of humor. Mark was a real comedian, and I say  
16 that meaning it literally. It's not just that he  
17 told a lot of jokes, but he performed as a  
18 comedian. He was a member of several improv  
19 groups that performed all around the Lehigh  
20 Valley and as far away as in Manhattan.

21                   When Mark would call me, he would  
22 always beg forgiveness for the intrusion and ask  
23 for a moment of my time. And I guess he didn't  
24 know that I would gladly have given him an  
25 unlimited amount of time to hear his stories and

1 his jokes. On my worst day, when I would feel  
2 like I couldn't take another phone call or  
3 another problem or another crisis, the phone  
4 would always ring at about 4:55 and it would be  
5 Mark and he would have a question, but we would  
6 talk until all of the staff in the office was  
7 long gone.

8           One of these phone calls a few years  
9 back, he told me that he was planning on  
10 retirement. We often talked about this. We both  
11 dreamed of living in a nice warm place in  
12 winter. Mark was moving to Myrtle Beach, South  
13 Carolina. He told me that he and Colleen had  
14 always dreamed of moving there and that they  
15 were leaving.

16           Without skipping a beat, he told me  
17 why he was leaving. And he noticed that I got  
18 very silent. But in classic Mark tradition, he  
19 knew that what he had said had hurt me because  
20 his kidney transplant had apparently run its  
21 course. Without even skipping a beat, he then  
22 decided that he was going to try to cheer me up  
23 and tell me jokes. And that was Mark.

24           He told me he was going to spend the  
25 rest of his days in the sun with the woman he

1 loved and that he was going to live every day to  
2 the fullest. Every time I spoke with him after  
3 that, he would say the same thing; he was living  
4 in paradise with his wife, playing golf among  
5 the palm trees and enjoying a cold beer at the  
6 sunset. That's the way I'll remember Mark. May  
7 we all have his unlimited well of compassion and  
8 joy. Thank you.

9 MR. CROSSLEY: Thank you, Mr. Roth.  
10 When you take a look at somebody's life, it's  
11 defined by two dates; their date of birth and  
12 their date of death. And in-between those two  
13 dates is either a dash or a space. And it's that  
14 dash or space that we learn something about here  
15 today. And I hope we all took something away for  
16 those that we honored here today.

17 And as I get ready to turn this  
18 matter over to the Court, I'd like to share a  
19 quote by R.J. Palacio that really represents all  
20 our dear friends as we say goodbye here today.

21 "We should be remembered for the  
22 things we do. The things we do are the most  
23 important things of all. They are the most  
24 important, than what we say or what we look  
25 like. The things we do outlast our mortality.

1 The things we do are like the monuments that  
2 people build to honor heroes after they've died.  
3 They're like the pyramids that the ancient  
4 Egyptians built to honor the pharaohs, only  
5 instead of being made out of stone, they're made  
6 out of memories people have of you. That's why  
7 your deeds are like monuments, built with  
8 memories instead of stone."

9                   Again, I would like to thank the  
10 Court for allowing us to get together here  
11 today. And with that, I would turn this matter  
12 over to the Court. Thank you, Your Honor.

13                   PRESIDENT JUDGE JOHNSON: Thank you,  
14 Attorney Crossley.

15                   In addition to those memories  
16 expressed by the speakers, each member of the  
17 Court has treasured memories of those  
18 memorialized this morning. But it's always  
19 fascinating to me how much more we learn about  
20 our colleagues at this ceremony.

21                   The Court expresses its appreciation  
22 to the Bar Association for continuing this  
23 tradition, to Attorney Jenna Fliszar, the Chair  
24 of the Bar Memorials Committee, for her hard  
25 work in making this ceremony a success, and to

1 the speakers who have so beautifully  
2 memorialized our departed colleagues.

3           They have helped to continue a great  
4 tradition and allowed us to share in the lives  
5 of our departed members and to be reminded of,  
6 or learn, some of the qualities that we wish to  
7 emulate. We are grateful for the lives of those  
8 we have honored here today and for their  
9 commitment to the principles of justice that we  
10 all share.

11           We thank all of those present for  
12 joining us today in remembrance and thought. And  
13 we especially thank the family members, friends,  
14 and associates of our departed colleagues for  
15 sharing them with us. They have enriched our  
16 lives as well as yours.

17           The official court reporter is  
18 directed to transcribe the notes of testimony of  
19 these proceedings and make a digital copy of it  
20 available to the Bar Association of Lehigh  
21 County and the Bar Association will publish the  
22 transcript on its homepage at  
23 <http://www.lehighbar.org>. One may read, print,  
24 or download it from that site.

25           At the conclusion of this ceremony,



1 the Bar Association invites you to a coffee  
2 reception in the hallway directly outside this  
3 courtroom immediately behind me -- behind the  
4 bench. You can access that hallway through the  
5 doors to my left or the doors to my right.

6 At this time, we will adjourn this  
7 ceremony out of respect to our departed  
8 colleagues, in honor of the profession of law in  
9 which they served and its honorable traditions  
10 in Lehigh County. Mr. Metzner, you may adjourn  
11 court.

12 COURT CRIER: All rise, please. The  
13 memorial service is adjourned.

14 (Whereupon, the Bar Memorial  
15 Ceremony concluded.)

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this transcript of proceedings is true and correct and meets the format specifications established by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania in Rule 4010.

April 2, 2024

DATE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Seese', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

BRIANNA M. SEESE, OCM