# TOF COMMON PLEAS OF NORTHAMPTON COUNTY COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA NORTHAMPTON COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

## MEMORIAL SERVICE

### **HONOREES:**

HONORABLE ISAAC S. GARB MARK S. REFOWICH, ESQUIRE JAY A. SCHERLINE, ESQUIRE

#### **BEFORE:**

THE HONORABLE COURT OF Northampton County, Third Judicial District, Easton, Pennsylvania, Courtroom No. 1 on Tuesday, September 24, 2013.

HONORABLE STEPHEN G. BARATTA

HONORABLE F.P. KIMBERLY MCFADDEN

HONORABLE EDWARD G. SMITH

HONORABLE EMIL GIORDANO

HONORABLE PAULA A. ROSCIOLI

HONORABLE ANTHONY S. BELTRAMI

HONORABLE LEONARD N. ZITO

HONORABLE MICHAEL J. KOURY

HONORABLE CRAIG A. DALLY

Proceedings stenographically recorded by Mollie E. Shannon, RPR, Official Court Reporter.

Order for the Annual Memorial Service. On behalf of the Court, I want to welcome the family, friends, and colleagues of Judge Garb, Mark Refowich, and Jay Scherline. The Court recognizes the President of the Northampton County Bar Association, Stanley Margle, Esquire.

MR. MARGLE: Thank you, Judge Smith. May I please the Court, Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of Northampton County, I would also like to recognize the Commonwealth Court Senior Judges Simpson, Hogan, Moran, and Judge Zito's also with us today.

like to welcome the family and friends of our honorees today. This is a proud tradition at Northampton County, something that we do once per year to honor those members of our bar who have passed away. We, today, need to honor three of those members of our bar; Jay Scherline, Mark Refowich, and Judge Garb. I do not want to take the thunder from our speakers today, so I'll just be very brief with regard to our three honorees.

Jay Scherline; I did not know Jay very well, but what I did know about him was his warm smile, his handshake, and his willingness to help our very young members of the bar. He was a member primarily of the Lehigh County Bar, but became very close to members in the Northampton County Bar. He came to our meetings, our outings, and he was welcome. In fact, there was a rumor he even liked Northampton County more than he liked Lehigh County by the end of his practice. We miss him, we are going to miss him. He is gone too soon.

Secondly, Mark Refowich. Mark was one of the first members of the Bar that I met when I came to practice in 1983. And quickly I had a divorce case with Mark and had a perfectly wonderful settlement agreement to propose to Mark. So I went up to him, said, Attorney Refowich, I've got this deal for you, it's going to make your client very happy. I proposed the deal, and he looked at me and he said one word: trial. And he meant it. And we went to trial, where he proceeded to prevail, of course.

But underneath that very tough exterior is a very, very skilled trial lawyer. And most importantly, a teddy bear. He really was. Even though he gave you that tough exterior and said trial probably to every member of our Bar here today at one point or another, he was very willing to accommodate any requests that you wanted. He was very courteous and very professional in his dealings with members of the Bar. We're going to miss him, too.

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And finally, Judge Garb. When we had a short bench years ago, we had the distinct honor and pleasure of having Judge Garb join us as a Senior Judge. He really helped out the bench and helped out the Bar. He was preceded by a very small reputation for integrity, wisdom, and his demeanor on the bench. He was tough but fair. We've heard that a lot about Judges, but he really was.

I remember trying a very difficult case with Judge Garb, prevailing -- yes, I did prevail -- and I went to the Superior Court and I stood in front of the Superior Court and the first thing I said to the three-member panel

was that this case was tried before one of the most distinguished and most experienced trial Judges in Pennsylvania. And I remember, distinctly, all three members of the Superior Court nodded in unison. They all acknowledged and knew who he was.

He also helped Northampton County by establishing what we have now as a pretrial conference procedure. Every case, every custody case that comes before the bench, is preceded by a pretrial conference. We try to settle it, keep it away from our Judges. Judge Garb has now become a verb. Every case must be Garbed before it goes to trial. And we say that affectionately. We miss Judge Garb, and we wish his family well.

Thank you for your time. I'd like to turn this program back over to Judge Smith.

JUDGE SMITH: Thank you very much.
The Court recognizes Stephen G. Baratta,
President Judge.

JUDGE BARATTA: Good morning. Bear with me, I'm getting over a bit of a cold, but I've been given the honor of memorializing Judge Garb. Let me first start by providing a

brief biographical history. Isaac S. Garb was born on June 19th, 1929, in Trenton, New Jersey. He was married for forty-seven years to his wife, Joan. Joan passed away in 2009. The Garbs have three children; Emily, Maggie, and Charles, and a granddaughter, Ava.

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At the time of his death, December 3rd, 2012, Judge Garb resided in Bucks County, Buckingham Township. Now, Judge Garb grew up in Trenton and apparently he was quite a football player, which is hard for me to believe because I remember Judge Garb being about this high and he weighed about a hundred pounds. Still, he must've been pretty tough, because he received a football scholarship to Methodist College.

Unfortunately, and probably not surprisingly, his football career did not progress as he expected. He was pretty well beaten up and returned to New Jersey to enroll in Rutgers. He graduated in 1951, and thereafter he enlisted into the United States Army.

He was assigned to the County Intelligence Unit in Washington and there,

according to his daughter, Maggie, Judge Garb chased spies and Communists within the United States Government. He was honorably discharged in 1953 and began law school at the University of Pennsylvania. He graduated in 1956, and instead of practicing law, he spent almost a year hitchhiking around Europe and the Middle East.

When he returned he began the general practice of law in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. In his early years, Judge Garb was an Assistant Public Defender, then he moved on to the United States Attorney's office for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

He resigned in 1962 because he ran on a democratic ticket for state assembly, but he ran as a democrat in Bucks County. He was on a ticket with the famed novelist James Michener, also a Democrat. True to form, both Judge Garb and Mr. Michener lost, but fortunately, democratic registration did not interfere with his political career, because in 1966, at the age of 37, he was appointed by the Republican Governor William Scranton to the Bench in Bucks County.

After he survived one election and three retention elections, he served continuously for thirty-three years until the mandatory retirement age of 70. When he reached 70, he began serving as a Senior Judge for another eight years until he sat as a Senior Judge in both Bucks County and Northampton County. Here he presided over criminal trials, civil trials, and he spent a fair amount of time in our Juvenile Court.

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One of the more impressive aspects of Judge Garb's services to this Court was that he accepted all assignments and, surprisingly, he worked for free. We made quite a lot of profit off of Judge Garb. And when I say he worked for free, literally, he worked for free. After about April, the stipend that we had for Senior Judges ran out for Judge Garb, and from April to December, he worked nearly full-time for no pay, because he loved to work.

In 2007, at the age of 78, Judge Garb was forced to step down as a Senior Judge. Thereafter, he continued to work in Northampton and Bucks County, where he sat as a Juvenile Court Master and a Custody Master. Judge Garb

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gladly accepted other assignments that our President Judge was able to delegate to him. He also remained continuously available to discuss the art of Court Administration. He was a very valuable asset to the Northampton County judiciary, the local Bar Association, and to the citizens of Northampton County.

Now, if the Judge were here today he would probably tell you that his work in Juvenile Court was his most important work, and it was really the work that he loved the most. Judge Garb was known to be an advocate for children, especially those in need. Now, besides the law, Judge Garb had other passions including running, and I believe he was running well into his 70's, at least five miles a day. He tended to a vegetable garden, loved the Metropolitan Opera, loved the New York Yankees, and, to a lesser extent, the New York Football Giants.

Now, as Judges we often love to discuss our quote, unquote, famous cases. And we all have cases that might have some local notoriety or that we think are important cases. Judge Garb had a number of famous cases with

two of the more particular cases that garnered both national and international fame. One was a murder case of 1983, and the other was a civil case involving a very important environmental issue that he rendered a decision on in 1985. Then again in 1987, those two cases were a wholly independent game intertwined when he ran for his retention election.

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In the first case in 1983, he was appointed by the Chief Justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Courts to handle a high profile murder case, Commonwealth vs. William Bradfield. Bradfield was accused of killing Susan Reinert and her two children. And you may have remembered this case, because it was christened the Main Line Murders.

Both Bradfield and Reinert, the victim, were teachers at Upper Marion High School. They were also lovers. The theory in the case was that Bradfield, after he was named beneficiary to Reinert's insurance policy and her estate, killed her for the money. Allegedly, Bradfield had the help of the Principal of the school, Jay Smith. It was

quite a horrific crime. They found Reinert in her parked car in a parking deck in Harrisburg with the trunk open on a weekend. She was badly beaten and strangled. The children were never found.

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Bradfield at the time was -- he had an airtight alibi, he thought, because he was at the Jersey Shore with friends when she was found. It was quite a case, covered by the press both locally, nationally, and internationally. Judge Garb, after Bradfield was convicted, sentenced him to three consecutive life sentences. But this story was covered by Joseph Wambaugh, and became the subject of a book called Echoes in the Darkness, which was a national best seller, and Judge Garb was prominently discussed in the book.

Later in 1985, Judge Garb rendered a decision in a contentious civil case which permitted the construction of what you may have heard before, the Point Pleasant Pumping Station. The Pumping Station was part of twenty years of political, legal, and environmental dispute. The Pumping Station was

designed to divert almost a hundred million gallons of water from the Delaware River each day to two separate water companies and also the Cool Nuclear Power Plant.

During the time that Judge Garb was handling the dispute, the dispute was brought by the commissioners of Bucks County to stop the construction. There were continuous protests against the plant for fear of its environmental impact. Many protesters were jailed for violating Court Orders or engaging in civil disobedience. It attracted the attention of Abbie Hoffman who, according to folklore, moved into a chicken coop on a Bucks County farm to live and to head the protests.

Judge Garb was the center of much animosity as he made it clear throughout the case the turn on narrow principles of contract law and the fact that Bucks County had previously entered into a contract with Philadelphia Ledger to permit the power plant to be conducted.

During the case, Abbie Hoffman was holding numerous press conferences. He accused Garb of having a Napoleonic complex and at one

point he even called Judge Garb a Nazi, which I can only assume is a very hostile slur, one Jewish man calls another one a Nazi.

Judge Garb ruled that, based upon the law, the plant should be built. Likely, this decision was not one that Judge Garb personally believed in, because in his private life, Judge Garb was known to be politically liberal, very concerned about his community. He enjoyed nature and the outdoors and was very socially conscious. I believe his sympathies were with the protesters, and Judge Garb called the case as he saw it. He was a man of principle.

That decision jeopardized his future. He was on the ballot the very next ticket. Apparently, Abbie Hoffman made his chicken coop a permanent home and he remained in Bucks County and campaigned vigorously against Judge Garb. Judge Garb won, not by a lot, and there are those that say Joseph wambaugh's book was instrumental in helping Judge Garb overcome the opposition, because the book was released shortly before the election and Wambaugh Heaped a lot of praise on Judge

Garb because, in his opinion, Judge Garb was very competent, fair, and even-headed in that case.

I would like to close with just a couple personal observations. If one would talk before those who appeared before Judge Garb in a Courtroom, whether litigant, lawyer, or just observer, the descriptors such as intelligent, organized, hard working, fair, efficient, compassionate would be the words generally used to describe Judge Garb and his abilities. And those words are very accurate.

He was also, as I said before, a very principle man. Judge Garb also had a very paternalistic personality, and by that I mean very fatherly. He was very caring and often looked to the redeeming features of a person, especially when he was in Juvenile Court. He never turned an assignment down despite complexity or political risk, and even though he was all business in the Courthouse, I knew him to have a gentle humor. And when I say gentle humor, I mean he could find humor in every day life without depreciating others.

He was just an interesting guy and I

loved talking to him. We used to talk for hours about Court Administration. He was always concerned about the efficiency of the Court system and how we could possibly make it better. His paternalistic side really resonated with me, because I found myself wanting to do better and be a better Judge after I talked to Judge Garb. And some might say Judge Garb may have been a man of small physical stature, but he was a legal giant in the field of Court here in Pennsylvania.

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He was a good man, also, and if I may use a term that's fallen out of favor sometimes, I would define Judge Garb also as a man's man. He was just a neat guy to be around.

JUDGE SMITH: Thank you, President Judge Baratta. The Court now recognizes Attorney Daniel E. Cohen, who is going to eulogize Mark Refowich.

MR. COHEN: Good morning. May I please the Court, the Honorable Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of Northampton County, Judges Moran, Hogan, and Simpson, Elvira, colleagues, and friends of Mark Refowich.

Mark Refowich was one of the truly unforgettable characters of our generation. A graduate of Liberty High School, Pennsylvania State University, and the Law School of Temple University, he returned to the Lehigh Valley in 1965 and soon became the associate under the firm name of the late Herbert Fishbone, eventually partnering under the firm name of Fishbone and Refowich. They subsequently were joined by Judge William Moran for a period of time, and then Joel Scheer.

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Mark maintained a broad general practice with emphasis on criminal law and worker's compensation. In the late 80s, Mark struck out on his own and maintained a private practice, first by himself and then with his wife and soulmate, Elvira LaBarre. He served in the United States Army and Reserves, eventually attaining the rank of Captain. He was also an avid pilot. Our offices adjoined each other for almost twenty years. That recitation of these facts reveals very little about the person who was Mark Refowich.

The passion of Mark's career was criminal law, and he was passionate. As are

many in the practices of criminal law, he was experienced, extremely knowledgeable, and diligent. What was unique about Mark was the fact he was able to be so effective on both sides of the Courtroom.

First, at the beginning of his practice, he was the defender of those accused of a crime. Then he joined the District Attorney's office, eventually attaining the rank of First Assistant District Attorney and Senior Trial Counsel, then again in the 1990s as a defender of those accused of crime. He was never a full-time District Attorney or defender, but he probably tried as many cases as anyone who has ever graced this Courtroom.

As an advocate, he was passionate, aggressive, and sometimes combative and always prepared. Whether prosecuting or defending, Mark brought to the task intelligence, preparation, and commitment. Some might think that it's cynical that he could cross the aisle. To him it was the most natural thing in the world, because he truly believed everyone, defendant or Commonwealth, deserved the best representation he could get. And that's what

Mark gave them, the best representation they could get.

He never shied away from the difficult case, handling numerous murder cases as well as other major felonies. And whomever he was up against knew that they were going to be in for a fight. Some would say that Mark took himself too seriously, but I would counter that Mark took himself as seriously as you took him. He possessed an excellent sense of humor but was reluctant to let down the facade of touchiness. When he did so, he could be utterly charming. He would probably be private with that description himself.

A mentor from the very beginning of his practice, I came back to the county in 1968 to practice and I accompanied Mark to numerous hearings before many District Magistrates, or as they were then know, Justices of the Peace. Particularly involving those hearings surrounding the Pagan Motorcycle Gang. Those guys are some of the toughest people you will ever encounter. They were murderers, burglars, just plain thugs, and Mark handled them with toughness, fairness, and a totally no-nonsense

attitude. As a result, he was universally respected by his clients whether they were criminal defendants or victims in the DA's office.

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Over the next 40 years and more, he mentored many, many young attorneys of law, again on both sides of the aisle. He was always available to answer questions and discuss trial strategies. He was universally respected by members of the Bar and this Court, by the Appellate Courts of Pennsylvania, by the Military Courts where he also practiced very quietly and again very effectively. Elvira received many kind notes from members of the Bar Association, both from Judges and lawyers. From one of our Judges: I have many wonderful memories of Mark from my days as a young prosecutor. He was a wonderful trial attorney and an exceptional man.

Another of our Judges: I remembered him at the Call of the Arraignment list as the formidable prosecutor, defense lawyer, and a friend. From an attorney: I will always remember him as a good friend, skilled trial lawyer, a gentleman, and a consummate

professional. From another attorney: We will always remember Mark's kindness. He was always helpful to young lawyers, always willing to stop and answer questions. Finally, from a fellow attorney: Mark is the one who got me to switch hats from PD to DA in 1980. Despite his purposely gruff exterior, we all knew that he was a marshmallow inside, and I mean that in the nicest way possible. All of us knew he cared about us as people.

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Some of the Courthouse staff who called him a great man, kind man, a very special person, always a gentleman. One of the clerks from the Prothonotary's office reminded me that Mark would always yell 'service' when he came into that office, always creating smiles with his own smile.

the way which he answered the call of the trial list. To those who are not familiar with the process, our Court, at the beginning of each trial week and day, in this room, recites the name of each case and asks the responsible attorney to respond as to whether the case is ready for trial or not. invariably, Mark would

answer in a very consistent way.

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I ask the members of the criminal Bar, prosecutors, and Defense lawyers, on the count of three to tell me how Mark answered it and what his tone of voice was in each and every one of his cases: Trial. That's what he did and he meant it. He was always ready to go to trial and he was never intimidated. Mark was truly unforgettable, and he will not be forgotten. Thank you.

JUDGE SMITH: Thank you, Attorney Cohen. The Court now recognizes Adam Meshkov, Esquire, who is going to eulogize Jay Scherline, Esquire.

MR. MESHKOV: Thank you, Judge
Smith. Honorable members of the bench and Bar
Association, it is my great and sincere honor
to speak about my friend, Jay Scherline. As
indicated by Attorney Margle, there are more
active and more visible in the Lehigh County
Bar Association, and I was going to say some
words about that, but my sense is that most of
the people in this room have either heard of
Jay or met Jay personally, and he was just that
kind of guy.

When my wife and partner Eleanor Breslin and I started our practice here in the Lehigh Valley about five years ago, there were two people who really stood out and helped us along and essentially contributed and made us into the attorneys that we are and the people that we are. The first was Nick Zanakos, he is a 50 plus year member of this Bar. Nick was our first landlord. He provided us a location. And the second was Jay Scherline, and Jay Scherline provided us the community.

He was, himself, like a community, a one-man community. His personality, his enthusiasm, he was like a force of nature as he moved through the room. We met Jay and his wife Lori at a Bench Bar meeting in Washington, DC through the Lehigh County Bar Association. And I think we met them perhaps during the first night's cocktail hour and the connection was sort of immediate. Jay liked to talk and we liked to listen, and so it was a match made in heaven. And I think he gave me a stack of his business cards, perhaps, in the first -- maybe the first conversation, second conversation, something like that, and I still

have those.

In some ways, Jay and my personality couldn't have been more different. He was a very outgoing person, I'm not as much, but, you know, he afforded me respect and we developed immediately a sense of mutual respect. And he was that kind of guy with everyone, no matter what your standing was, no matter what your social background was. He was respectful towards all. So we established a personal -- a business relationship, rather, that carried very quickly into a personal one. One that I very much valued and will miss.

He and his wife Lori invited my family to break the fast at Yom Kippur after perhaps only knowing us a year. And that was something that we looked forward to and that we did do every year until his untimely passing. And the people that were in attendance were very telling to me of Jay and Lori's openness to the world, Jews of all backgrounds, all economic and social backgrounds, that he and Lori opened their home to.

So Jay was great and everybody that I ever met who he referred me to or he referred

to me or we had a mutual connection concerning echoed that same sentiment. And nearly every person, every potential client that he referred to me had had a personal conversation with Jay. And he just had that way about him. He touched everyone and he had the time for everyone, so it seemed.

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So I would say I came through Jay
Scherline or Jay referred, you know, me to you,
and I would say Jay's great, and they would
always say that's right, Jay's great. They
would always echo that exact same sentiment.
And you know, thinking about this talk,
thinking about what was it that made Jay great,
and his personality was obviously very
attractive. That's what attracted people to
him. But in my view, what really made him
great were his actions, and not necessarily his
words or his demeanor.

Jay was a doer, and like a lot of attorneys, he was constantly around. But I think the reason that he was running around was somewhat different than why other attorneys were running around. He was running around to make some type of contribution to the

community. He was overly involved in his community. In fact, he was the most community-oriented person I have ever met. He was a man of the people who gave back, I am certain, not only monetarily, but I know more importantly of his time.

He was active in the Miracle League for disabled children, very active, as mentioned, in the Bar Association of Lehigh County and various other community associations and activities. And I know this because he invited me to some of these events. And I know at an organizational level he gave back, but there were people that would come to my office through Jay who would recount to me that he had done some type of substantial legal work for them without any requests for a fee. That, to me, is pretty remarkable.

I mean, literally would file this and raise an estate for a widow without the request for a percentage or any type of monetary compensation. That's more pro bono than certainly I have done, but I think serves as a very positive example and resonated in my thinking about what to say today.

who cared deeply about his community and the people in it. He was a credit to this Bar Association, to our neighboring Bar Association, and to our profession. His passing has left a gap in our community and he will not only be personally missed by me, but by those that he represented and helped. I thank you for this opportunity.

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JUDGE SMITH: Thank you very much, Attorney Meshkov. It's now my opportunity to make a few remarks before we adjourn today, and I will remind you that there is going to be a reception in the jury lounge immediately following the Memorial Service.

What amazes me about Judge Garb is how he came later in life to the Northampton County Bench and quickly became one of the most beloved members of this Bench or of this Bar. There's no one that encountered him that did not leave without a great deal of respect. He is properly honored here today.

He became a mentor to me almost immediately because he just knew everything there was to know about being a Judge and about

being a good human being. As for Mark Refowich, there's one line I can never forget and that's: I need a tune up. No deals, I need a tune up. No matter what you would say to him.

And when I became a Judge, he was one of the few lawyers in Northampton County certified to handle capital cases, so I had several capital cases with him, and he had a few lines with respect to those, but most of those I can't say here, but they had to do with his clients and how he can't shine certain things.

Mark always took his job very seriously. He would not want anything to be sad today. He would expect us all to be laughing and to remember just what a great impact he left on this Bench and on this Bar and on the criminal justice system, especially here in Northampton County.

And Jay Scherline I did not know well other than his commercials, everyone knows Scherline and Associates. He was obviously a very successful not only lawyer and businessman, but obviously as a gentleman and

as a member of the community.

These are three giants of the law and we do honor them here today. And to the families, just a story the United States Supreme Court once said: The law is a jealous mistress. And we recognize that you had to surrender a lot of your time and sacrifice your time with these three men because we needed them, and they made a great impact here. And as much as you love them, they were also loved by us, and they will be remembered by us, as they are remembered by you.

Their names and stellar reputations are known beyond Northampton County, and these friends and colleagues will not be forgotten. They set the standards for others to emulate, and their memories will endure in the hearts of our Bench and our Bar.

As we adjourn today, may we go solemnly but also happily, remembering what they have done for us individually but also for the Bench, the Bar, and the citizens of Northampton County. Thank you very much.

(Memorial Service concludes.)

### CERTIFICATION

I.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the proceedings are contained fully and accurately in the notes taken by me in the above cause, and that this is a correct transcript of the same.

Date: <u>October 23</u>, 2013

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Mollie E. Shannon, RPR Official Court Reporter

II.

The foregoing record of the proceedings in the within matter is directed to be filed.

Date: <u>October 23</u>, 2013

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EDWARD G. SMITH, JUDGE