

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

MEMORIAL SERVICE

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George M. Baurkot, Esquire  
Paul A. Florenz, Esquire  
Harold J. Funt, Esquire  
Robert H. Littner, Esquire  
Walter E. Morrissey, Esquire  
Eric R. Shimer, Esquire  
Charles A. Wilkinson, Esquire

Tuesday, September 17, 2019

9:00 a.m. Courtroom #1

Northampton County Courthouse

669 Washington Street

Easton, Pennsylvania 18042

1                   JUDGE BARATTA: Good morning. Welcome  
2 to the Northampton County Bar Association's annual  
3 memorial service. This is an event that we hold  
4 obviously every year in which the Bar Association  
5 honors and celebrates the lives of our recently  
6 departed members.

7                   For those of you who are not lawyers,  
8 family members, and friends who might not be here,  
9 the lawyers we celebrate today were lawyers who  
10 first began practicing when this was still a small  
11 county. These lawyers knew each other intimately  
12 and knew the judges very well. They socialized  
13 together. They shared a professional camaraderie  
14 and respect and they also enforced their own code of  
15 conduct and expectations.

16                  Now, although this Bar Association is a  
17 professional society and we're trained to pursue  
18 justice through the legal system, we are also  
19 members of a professional family. A family that's  
20 bound together in public and community service. We  
21 help others in need. We help to keep our community  
22 safe and strong. And in doing so, we create  
23 lifelong friendships which we share success. And  
24 today, as part of that camaraderie, we celebrate our  
25 deceased members and mourn our loss.

1           Shortly, we will be reminded about  
2 members whom we have known very well and some who we  
3 may not know as well. Some of the lawyers you'll  
4 hear about today have led quiet, humble,  
5 professional lives. Others may have had remarkable  
6 professional achievements and success. Some of our  
7 members have lived amazingly rich and private lives.  
8 And others have sired diverse and successful  
9 families.

10           From time to time, we may also learn  
11 about intimate details about their lives that were  
12 instrumental in forming their character, and to give  
13 you a better perspective and insight as to who they  
14 were.

15           Today, one of the honorees is George  
16 Baurkot. And I just want to take a moment just to  
17 speak a little bit about Mr. Baurkot. I had the  
18 privilege of knowing Mr. Baurkot my entire life. He  
19 was one of my father's best friends, and they went  
20 to law school together at Georgetown. And my first  
21 memory of Mr. Baurkot was that he and my father were  
22 talking about wiffle ball at the complex in  
23 Washington, D.C.

24           Over the years, I knew George's family.  
25 We socialized together as families. And when I

1 became a lawyer, my father used to drag me along  
2 with him to lunch. And oftentimes we would go to  
3 lunch with Mr. Baurkot. He was always a part of my  
4 life.

5                   However, when my father died 25 years  
6 ago, I became even closer to George. He took me  
7 into his inner circle. George had a very big inner  
8 circle, family and friends who he cared about and  
9 watched over him. And he was constantly asking me  
10 how I'm doing and what's going on and how was the  
11 family and things of that nature.

12                   I just enjoyed the idea that George  
13 stayed connected with lawyers, besides me, many  
14 lawyers -- Judge Panella was one of them. Judge  
15 Koury, Judge Murray -- who frequently interacted  
16 with Mr. Baurkot. Not because of our professional  
17 duties and responsibilities, but just because he  
18 cared and he wanted to have a personal connection  
19 with all of us.

20                   But George was a really interesting  
21 guy. I don't want to say crazy, but in some ways  
22 George was a bit crazy. He had the best sense of  
23 humor, very sarcastic but not in a condescending  
24 way.

25                   Now, let me just tell you a couple

1 quick stories that will better describe George. And  
2 I know I'm not going to step on Danny's stories  
3 because these are my stories. But as a lawyer, I  
4 frequently went to George's office, sometimes two or  
5 three times in a week if we were working, either  
6 helping one or the other with a legal matter.

7           And when I would go into his office it  
8 was just a mess. He had OCD and you couldn't be in  
9 there. There were piles of papers against every  
10 wall and every room. Just loose papers. The TV  
11 would be on, and it would be on with no sound. I  
12 think it's the off-track betting channel. That  
13 would be running constantly. And that TV was  
14 trained on George's desk. And you walk in there,  
15 and there were just diverse people coming in and  
16 out, everybody talking. Usually demanding things.  
17 And George trying to deal with all kinds of people.

18           And I also remember that a lot of times  
19 there would be this guy in a white sleeveless  
20 t-shirt, old man, sitting on George's couch. Just  
21 sitting there, like a cigar store ending. Except he  
22 was alive. So his name was Ivan. And Ivan had no  
23 place to go, so he just used to hang out at George's  
24 office. And sometimes he'd run errands and do  
25 things for George. But he just liked hanging out in

1 George's office.

2           So these people would be coming in and  
3 out of George's office. He did a lot of  
4 transactional work, real estate, liquor licenses and  
5 things like that. And his clients never had  
6 appointments, they would just run in and George --  
7 they would scream at him about some problem or they  
8 wanted some advice. And sometimes it would be about  
9 a real estate transaction and he would turn to  
10 Theresa, his secretary, and say, Theresa can't you  
11 find that for me? And Theresa would throw her hands  
12 up in the air and say, George, how the hell do I  
13 know where it is. Look at these papers. You had it  
14 last. You find it. And then George would like turn  
15 to me and say, I can't fire her, she's the only one  
16 who knows the combination to the safe.

17           That was George. George also, at one  
18 point, in this life had a scare with regard to lung  
19 cancer. He has spots on his lungs, and his doctor  
20 was sending him to New York to see a specialist. So  
21 a bunch of George's friends were driving him in.  
22 George had his x-rays with him and he took his  
23 x-rays out and was holding them up. And there were  
24 apparently little spots on the x-rays. And George  
25 reached into his pocket and he handed one of his

1 friends white out and said, see what you can do with  
2 these spots.

3 He was just a great guy, and we're all  
4 going to miss him. I especially will miss him  
5 because he filled a big void for me when my father  
6 dies. So that concludes my story.

7 All right. Now, we're going to begin  
8 with the presentation in honor of our deceased  
9 members. We will start first with Danny Baurkot,  
10 George's son.

11 MR. BAURKOT: Esteemed members and  
12 everybody else here today. I just want to thank you  
13 all for coming. Judge Baratta, thank you for those  
14 kind remarks about my father. I can't tell you how  
15 much I appreciate that.

16 George Baurkot was born in 1934 here in  
17 Easton, the son of Lebanese immigrant parents,  
18 Raymond and Margaret Baurkot. He grew up on 4th  
19 Street, which at that time was the heart of the  
20 Lebanese community in Easton. His father, Raymond,  
21 with no more than a grade school education, began  
22 selling beer shortly after he came to America in  
23 1929 and eventually purchased an Anheuser Busch  
24 Distributorship. In addition to becoming a  
25 successful businessman, Raymond Baurkot was known

1 for his benevolence and philanthropy. He was looked  
2 upon as the patriarch of the Lebanese Community in  
3 Easton having helped many other Lebanese find a home  
4 in this country. Dad looked up to him very much and  
5 he greatly influenced the man that Dad would become.

6 Dad was a member of Our Lady of Lebanon  
7 Maronite Catholic Church and both his faith and his  
8 Lebanese heritage were very important to him.  
9 Growing up in Easton, Dad was very close to his  
10 siblings, Unis, Sanna, Sammy and Raymond.

11 Dad graduated from Seton Hall  
12 University in 1956 and was all set to attend Seton  
13 Hall Law School that September. He was working one  
14 day that summer on one of his Father's beer trucks  
15 and was spotted by Attorney Charlie Hogan from the  
16 second floor of the old Drake Building, where  
17 Charlie's office was located. Charlie Hogan was  
18 Jimmy and Billy Hogan's father and Theresa's  
19 grandfather.

20 Charlie called down to Dad and asked  
21 about his plans for law school. When Dad told  
22 Charlie that he was going to be attending Seton Hall  
23 Law School in a few weeks, Charlie told him in no  
24 uncertain terms, "No you're not. You're going to  
25 Georgetown Law School with Jimmy down in D.C." And



1 that's what happened. It turned out to be a great  
2 decision for Dad as he and his great friend, Jimmy,  
3 roomed together at Georgetown and then graduated  
4 together in 1959.

5 Dad married Patrice Mahon Baurkot in  
6 1958. It has been a difficult few months for our  
7 family with Dad's passing in April and Mom, sadly  
8 leaving us just one month ago. She was truly a  
9 great woman in her own right and we were lucky as a  
10 family to have shared with Mom and Dad a celebration  
11 of their 60th wedding anniversary last August.

12 Dad loved Mom very much, but she still  
13 could not escape his penchant for teasing as anyone  
14 who happened to stop by our house while we were  
15 having one of mom's cooked meals for dinner was  
16 always implored by Dad to join us because, as he  
17 would explain to them, "why should we be the only  
18 ones to suffer?"

19 Mom and Dad had five children in six  
20 years: George, myself, Bobby, Mary Sue and David.  
21 And we were not very well behaved. In fact, we were  
22 pretty bad. Judge Roscioli and Attorney John Lushis  
23 were neighbors of ours growing up and can attest to  
24 our less-than-stellar reputation in the neighborhood  
25 and the fact that at one point or another in our

1     respective childhoods, all five Baurkot kids spent  
2     time on the FBI Watch List -- or at least we should  
3     have.

4     But as bad as we were, Dad still spoiled us as kids.

5             Mom and Dad had 15 grandchildren:

6     Elizabeth, Patrick, Mary Catherine, Sophia, Elena,  
7     Juliana, Christopher, Christina, Nicholas, Matthew,  
8     Anthony, Ava, Adam, Ryan and Shannon.

9     And one great grandchild, Addison.

10            If you think Dad spoiled us, you should  
11     have seen the way he spoiled every single one of his  
12     grandchildren. They affectionately knew him as  
13     Gidho, the Arabic term for grandfather.

14            His love for his grandkids was  
15     unconditional. They could do no wrong in his eyes.  
16     Needless to say, he dealt with his own children  
17     quite differently for our behavioral transgressions  
18     when we were growing up. But we deserved it. Trust  
19     me.

20            Shortly after graduating from  
21     Georgetown, Dad formed the law firm of Malos,  
22     Baurkot & Baratta with his good friend, Renald  
23     Baratta, Judge Baratta's father. Dad always spoke  
24     fondly about Renald and raved about his remarkable  
25     courtroom presence. "Renald could charm the birds

1 out of the trees." He would often say. He  
2 practiced there for a few years before starting his  
3 own practice just across the street from this  
4 courthouse.

5 After graduating from Law School  
6 myself, I worked for a firm in New York City for  
7 five years. I left that practice in 1992 to join  
8 Dad, and we proudly hung the "Baurkot & Baurkot"  
9 sign across the street from here. It was the best  
10 decision I ever made. I learned more from Dad over  
11 the past 25 years than I could have ever learned at  
12 the New York firm.

13 As chaotic as things could get in our  
14 office on a daily basis, Dad's cousin, Teresa, and  
15 my sister-in-law, Becki, kept things in order over  
16 the years. We were incredibly lucky to have them.

17 His open-door policy brought many  
18 people into the office. The flow of traffic in the  
19 office boggled my mind at times. So many facets of  
20 Dad's personality were on display on any given day  
21 in our office with the different people that came in  
22 with such a wide array of legal problems and issues.  
23 He truly amazed me with the way that he was able to  
24 handle the chaos and even embrace it at times.

25 Dad loved his daily routine and never

1 wanted to stray from it. No greater evidence of  
2 this could be seen than his Cal-Ripken-like streak  
3 of eating lunch at Oscar's every day for almost 30  
4 years straight. Oscar's was owned and run by Oscar  
5 Canone, his wife, Chris, and his children, Joe, Sam,  
6 Jimmy and Rosie.

7 Dad and Rosie had a great relationship  
8 and were constantly teasing one another over the  
9 years. Dad represented Rosie at an unemployment  
10 compensation hearing on one occasion, years ago  
11 after Rosie was let go from her job at the old Orr's  
12 Department Store on Northampton Street.

13 I wish Dad could be here with Rosie to  
14 tell the story because their respective versions of  
15 the story were drastically different. Rosie's  
16 version has her as a free-spirited, young woman who  
17 was let go because she brought too much joy to the  
18 office. She recounts how Dad showed up late for the  
19 hearing and asked opposing counsel for a pen and  
20 piece of paper to write on. Rosie thought she was a  
21 sure fire winner, though, when Dad walked into the  
22 courtroom and the Judge said, "Hey, George, how you  
23 doin'?"

24 On the other hand, Dad's version of the  
25 story has him showing up well prepared for the

1 hearing, and after Orr's laid out its case of Rosie  
2 playing music too loudly on her transistor radio and  
3 being late for work a little too often, Dad put  
4 Rosie on the witness stand.

5 Dad began by asking; "Ms. Canone, You  
6 weren't late 30 out of the last 90 days at work,  
7 were you?"

8 Rosie shot back: "Yes, I was."

9 Dad was taken aback by her response,  
10 but forged ahead: "Well you weren't playing music  
11 loudly on your radio at work, were you?"

12 Rosie shot back again: "Yes, I was."

13 At which point Dad asked the Judge for  
14 a brief recess to speak with his client to which the  
15 Judge said, "I think you need one, George."

16 Dad got Rosie out in the hall and said: "Rosie,  
17 what the hell are you doing to me up there, you're  
18 killing me."

19 And Rosie said: "George, what do you  
20 want from me, I'm under oath, I can't lie."

21 I don't think I have to tell you that Dad's  
22 relationship with the Judge did not help Rosie in  
23 this particular instance.

24 On another occasion, Dad represented  
25 his friend, Joe Marchi, at a Social Security

1     Disability hearing. Dad may have been laying it on  
2     a little thick when recounting to the Judge the many  
3     ailments Joe had, including congestive heart  
4     failure, diabetes, lung issues and so on. Dad  
5     looked over at the table and was surprised to see  
6     Joe crying and immediately asked the Judge for a  
7     recess. When they got out into the hall, Dad asked,  
8     "Joe, what's the matter? Why are you crying?" And  
9     in between sobs, Joe said, "George, I didn't know I  
10    was that sick, am I dying?"

11             Over the years, I think Dad represented  
12    half the Lebanese community and the rest of the  
13    population in Easton at one time or another for a  
14    speeding ticket or some other motor vehicle  
15    infraction. And in 99 percent of those cases, was  
16    able to work out a plea to 3111(a), a violation that  
17    carries zero points on your driver's license.

18             In fact, on one occasion Dad was  
19    appearing before Magistrate Judge Gay Elwell on a  
20    speeding ticket. And before Dad arrived, Judge  
21    Elwell was told by the younger police officer that  
22    was prosecuting the case that he wasn't sure if he  
23    had ever met Dad. Judge Elwell said to the officer,  
24    "Just look up 3111(a) in the Pennsylvania Vehicle  
25    Code and you'll see his picture right there."

1           On those rare occasions when a plea  
2 deal to 3111(a) could not be struck, the testifying  
3 officer was usually in uncharted waters with Dad.  
4 While attempting to present his or her case, Dad  
5 would continually interrupt the Officer's testimony,  
6 asking, "Are you finished, are you finished?"  
7 Flustered and thrown off by Dad's intrusive and  
8 incessant tactics, the officer would invariably  
9 forget to testify to one or more of the required  
10 elements of the offense, the case would get  
11 dismissed, and out the door we would go.

12           He had it down to a science, and while  
13 his technique was a bit unorthodox, it was always  
14 with the best intentions. To zealously represent  
15 and advocate for his client. Although the reality  
16 is that he was simply in a rush to get out of there  
17 so we could get back in time for lunch at Oscar's.

18           While time doesn't permit me to recount  
19 to you all the stories, I can assure you there are  
20 many more. Inevitably, Dad's health and memory  
21 began to fade on him in recent years. He was a  
22 proud man and fought hard, coming into the office  
23 every day, both when he battled cancer years ago  
24 and, more recently, when time began to take its toll  
25 on Dad's body and memory. He did not want to accept

1 the fate that had befallen him at the end.

2 About a year or so ago, Dad and I went  
3 to see his physician, Dr. Manja, to attempt to  
4 assess the extent of his memory loss and to see if  
5 we could somehow stave it off. At the beginning of  
6 the office visit, Dr. Manja gave Dad three words to  
7 remember to see if he could recall them at the end  
8 of the visit. Something along the lines of house,  
9 cat, and tree. Dr. Manja left in the middle of the  
10 appointment to take an urgent phone call. The  
11 second he left our examination room, Dad immediately  
12 turned to me and said, "Quick, Danny, what were  
13 those three words I was supposed to remember?"  
14 So you see, even unwittingly at times, Dad kept his  
15 sense of humor until the very end.

16 In finishing up, it's important for me  
17 to convey how important this Bar and you people were  
18 to Dad. The members of this Bar, this Bench, and  
19 the people in this Courthouse, whether it was tip  
20 staff, the sheriff's office, recorder of deeds,  
21 prothonotary or the register of wills, you all  
22 treated him so well over the years and he  
23 appreciated it very much. He not only knew the  
24 names of most of the people in this court house, he  
25 knew your stories because it was important to him to



1 know them. You mattered to him and he wanted you to  
2 know that.

3 A little over one year ago in this  
4 Courtroom, during his induction ceremony as  
5 President Judge, Judge Koury kindly spoke about how  
6 Dad mentored him and many Lebanese and other  
7 attorneys in this area over the years. I was moved  
8 to tears as many of you here today so graciously  
9 honored him with a standing ovation. He was  
10 somewhat uncomfortable though, as he was a very  
11 humble man and never one to seek the spotlight.

12 I grew up wanting to be just like him.  
13 It's the reason I became an attorney in the first  
14 place. He was an inspiration to me personally, and  
15 he always made me want to be a better attorney and a  
16 better person.

17 Over the years, George, Bobby, Mary  
18 Sue, David and I saw firsthand many acts of  
19 kindness, generosity and charity from Dad in the  
20 office and at home, but he never did them for show  
21 or adulation. He was a great example to each one of  
22 us and we are so thankful and so proud that we were  
23 able to call him our Dad.

24 Thank you.

25 \* \* \* \* \*

1                   JUDGE BARATTA: We now recognize  
2 Attorney Constantine Vasiliadis.

3                   I'm sorry. Judge Koury has some brief  
4 remarks as well.

5                   PRESIDENT JUDGE KOURY: We have  
6 gathered here today to recognize and pay tribute to  
7 the members of our Bar Association who recently  
8 passed away.

9                   On behalf of the Court of Common Pleas,  
10 I would like to offer my condolences to the families  
11 and friends of our departed members.

12                   Judge Baratta is the presiding judge  
13 here today and has spoken on behalf of the Court of  
14 Common Pleas. However, I would like to say just a  
15 few words regarding the late George Baurkot, a man  
16 who I admired and respected since I was a child.

17                   George Baurkot was one of my mentors.  
18 He was an inspiration for several generations of  
19 Easton's Lebanese community, as he was the first  
20 parishioner to attend and graduate from law school.  
21 He was a man of unparallel character.

22                   George was a very special man. To  
23 understand what made George such a special person,  
24 you need look at who were his parents and how he was  
25 raised. George's father, the late Raymond Baurkot,

1 immigrated to the United States in July of 1929,  
2 just three months before the start of the Great  
3 Depression and four years before the end of  
4 prohibition.

5           Like many immigrants, Raymond came to  
6 the United States with very little. He came in  
7 search of a better life, and he believed that in the  
8 United States, one could better himself through hard  
9 work and perseverance. In 1933, in the middle of  
10 the Great Depression and just as prohibition was  
11 coming to an end, Raymond believed that there would  
12 be a void in the beer industry.

13           At the age of 20, Raymond opened a  
14 closet-size beer wholesaler next to his mother's  
15 butcher shop on North 3rd Street in downtown Easton.  
16 He was the only employee. And as they say, the rest  
17 in history.

18           Raymond transformed this one-man  
19 business into a thriving company. But Raymond and  
20 his wife, Maggie Baurkot, never forgot their humble  
21 beginnings and they never let their children forget  
22 it either.

23           It was these parents, Raymond and  
24 Maggie Baurkot, who's kindness, humility, and  
25 generosity touched entire generations of Easton's

1 Lebanese Americans in Easton. It was those parents,  
2 Raymond and Maggie Baurkot, who taught George to be  
3 respectful and polite. They taught him to serve God  
4 by serving his church and his fellow human beings.  
5 They taught him not to be concerned with the riches  
6 of this world. And they taught him that the only  
7 thing that one takes with them from this life is the  
8 strength of his character and his good deeds.

9           Throughout his life George helped so  
10 many people with legal issues, often asking nothing  
11 in return. It has been said that the true measure  
12 of a man's character is how he treats someone who  
13 can do him absolutely no good. If we measure  
14 George's character by that standard, it certainly  
15 must have been one of the strongest around.

16           George Baurkot crammed a lot of living  
17 and a lot of work into his 84 years. He rose from  
18 very modest beginnings to become a pillar of this  
19 community. He was a respected member of the  
20 Northampton County legal community. He was a  
21 devoted husband, father, and grandfather. He was a  
22 loyal friend to many. He was an inspiration for  
23 several generations of Easton's Lebanese community,  
24 as he was the first parishioner to attend and  
25 graduate law school.

1           William Penn once said, "He who does  
2 good for good's sake seeks neither paradise nor  
3 reward, but he is sure of both in the end."

4           Throughout his life, George Baurkot did  
5 good for good's sake. He sought neither paradise  
6 nor reward, but I am confident that in the end he  
7 received both.

8           George was a polite, respectful, kind,  
9 humble, generous, and gentle man who loved to help  
10 others, and we can learn from George Baurkot. So  
11 what can we learn from George Baurkot? We learn  
12 that we should always be respectful and polite. We  
13 learn that we should never forget our humble  
14 beginnings. We learn that the only thing one takes  
15 with them from this life is the strength of his  
16 character and his good deeds. And we learn that  
17 every so often nice guys finish first.

18           May George rest in peace.

19                   \* \* \* \* \*

20           JUDGE BARATTA: The Court now  
21 recognizes Constantine Vasiliadis.

22           MR. VASILIADIS: Thank you, Your Honor.

23           May it please The Court, members of the  
24 Bar, family and friends of the attorneys that we are  
25 memorializing today. I have the honor, though

1       sadly, to tell you something of Paul Andrew Florenz.

2                       Although The Court and older members of  
3 the Bar knew Paul, many of the younger lawyers may  
4 not have had that opportunity to know or interact  
5 with him. That is unfortunate because Paul was a  
6 gentleman, an outstanding lawyer, and one who was a  
7 joy to practice with.

8                       He had an office practice that centered  
9 on wills, trusts, estate administration and business  
10 law. Paul was a member of this Bar nearly 40 years.  
11 His journey to Northampton County from his native  
12 Maine began at Dickinson College, where he met and  
13 later married Jane Kolb, the daughter of the late  
14 Jacob Kolb, an esteemed and respected member -- 50  
15 year member -- of our Bar.

16                      At Dickinson, Paul had a double major  
17 in English and Geology. Upon graduation, Paul and  
18 Jane went to Hawaii for a year where he pursued his  
19 interest in marine geology. Fortunately for the  
20 law, he changed direction. And after a year went to  
21 New England School of Law.

22                      Paul, after graduation, began his  
23 practice with the firm of Kolb, Holland, Antonelli &  
24 Heffner. And thereafter, he and Jake practiced  
25 together until 1991 when Paul and Jake merged our

1 practices.

2 To his clients, Paul was not only a  
3 trusted advisor and counselor, but also a warm,  
4 caring friend. If there was any description of  
5 Paul's character, it was that. Warm and caring.

6 Paul represented a wide variety of  
7 clients that included Lehigh University, Moravian  
8 College, car dealerships, Lutheran Manor, as well as  
9 innumerable estate planning clients.

10 Paul was a fixture in adoption court,  
11 where his expertise helped create many new families.  
12 At the heart of all of his client relationships was  
13 a genuine regard for the welfare of his clients.  
14 And they loved him.

15 Paul, although was he not aggressive,  
16 his toughness was shown at the very end of his life  
17 when he was in court representing the interest of  
18 his clients almost into the last week before he left  
19 us.

20 Practicing law with Paul was an  
21 unrivaled pleasure. His dry sense of humor shared  
22 at the end of the day -- of a long day -- helped put  
23 into a proper perspective why we were lawyers.

24 Who can forget Paul in his vintage  
25 Santa Claus hat handing out presents at the office

1 Christmas party. And of course, the office always  
2 rang in the new year with a glass of Paul's bourbon  
3 egg nog, painstakingly prepared the night before and  
4 he assured us, taste tested to ensure that it was  
5 perfect.

6 No birthday party for the office staff  
7 was complete unless there was cake and a rousing  
8 birthday song led by Paul in his melodious voice.

9 Paul gave generously of his time and  
10 talents to many civic groups. He held leadership  
11 positions with the Bach Choir, the Lutheran Home,  
12 and the Bethlehem Rotary.

13 Paul was a loving family man. He and  
14 his wife, Jane, raised three wonderful children,  
15 Andrew, Katie and Martha. Who are a credit to their  
16 parents and their community. Paul spoke often about  
17 how proud he was of them and their accomplishments.

18 Andrew, a career army officer.

19 Katie, a former marine and State  
20 Department Officer.

21 And Martha, a nurse and personal  
22 trainer.

23 Paul had a profound effect on all who came in  
24 contact with him. Jane and his children miss him.  
25 I miss him. The Northampton County Bar is a better



1 organization for his participation and his  
2 contributions to it and the legal profession.

3 Thank you.

4 \* \* \* \* \*

5 THE COURT: The Court now recognizes  
6 Kristie Beitler.

7 MS. BEITLER: May is please The Court,  
8 Judge Panella, members of the bench, members of the  
9 Northampton County Bar Association, family and  
10 friends. Thank you for the honor to speak today  
11 about Harold J. Funt.

12 I had the honor and privilege of  
13 working for and with Harold Funt for the last 15  
14 years. Harold passed away June 27th at the age of  
15 72. Harold, or Hal as we called him at the office,  
16 attended the University of Pittsburgh, where he  
17 earned both his undergraduate and juris doctor  
18 degrees.

19 After graduation, he began working on  
20 the staff at PA Legal Services and later served as  
21 the Executive Director of Lehigh Valley Legal  
22 Services.

23 After Hal's passing, several attorneys  
24 approached me and remarked to me, I remember when  
25 Hal hired me at legal services. It was so nice to

1 hear that, besides me, Hal had given so many other  
2 attorneys the opportunity to start their legal  
3 careers.

4 Hal was very proud of his work through  
5 Legal Services and being known as Legal Services'  
6 pioneer.

7 Hal began in private practice with his  
8 best friend Lee Rothman, after his time at Legal  
9 Services. Unfortunately, Lee Rothman also left us  
10 in 2017.

11 In 1991 Hal became a sole practitioner  
12 and also served as a Juvenile Master in the Lehigh  
13 County Court of Common Pleas. He remained a sole  
14 practitioner for a few years before forming  
15 Margolis, Duckworth & Funt; and in 2000, Mosebach,  
16 Funt, Dayton & Duckworth.

17 Also in 2000, Hal served as the  
18 president of the Bar Association in Lehigh County.  
19 Over the years, Hal was very involved in many  
20 community service activities. Recently, he was very  
21 active in the Bethlehem Rotary, serving as the  
22 treasurer last year.

23 Although around the beginning of 2019,  
24 Hal started commenting he was semi-retired whenever  
25 he took on a new case, he was really working full

1 time. No matter how many times he would say he was  
2 semi-retired, he remained dedicated to his practice  
3 until the time he was hospitalized in late April.

4 As many of you know, Hal focused  
5 primarily on family law during his 47-year career in  
6 civil litigation. And he represented countless  
7 numbers of clients during their most trying and  
8 emotional times. Hal never took that responsibility  
9 lightly and served them all with integrity and  
10 empathy.

11 The evidence of Hal's impact on his  
12 clients became clear when I started the daunting  
13 task of cleaning out his office a few weeks ago.  
14 Tucked inside his bottom desk drawer were several  
15 thank you notes he accumulated throughout the years.  
16 Anyone in this room who practices family law knows  
17 that sometimes it is difficult to have happy  
18 clients. While we frequently receive emails and  
19 letters from clients complaining about the court  
20 process, the other party or opposing counsel,  
21 letters and thank you cards are the affirmation that  
22 you're doing right by your client.

23 I'd like to share just a few of the  
24 kind words written to Hal. One client wrote: "Just  
25 wanted to let you know how truly thankful I am for

1 you for taking on my case. I was so scared, but  
2 after meeting with you and then today in court, I  
3 feel safe again. I know it's your job, but it's my  
4 life and I appreciate your sensitivity."

5 Another client wrote: "I respect and  
6 admire you as an attorney, but more importantly as a  
7 person and a friend."

8 And I believe this thank you note most  
9 embodies Hal's demeanor towards his clients: "Thank  
10 you so much for your expert counsel, your  
11 encouragement, your support, your honesty, and your  
12 listening ear, especially when I went on and on. I  
13 also appreciate all the hand-holding you did. As  
14 well as all of those pep talks. I suddenly feel why  
15 at the age of 46. In case you have had a bad day  
16 and wondered why you ever entered law, please  
17 re-read this letter."

18 I will always remember the talks I had  
19 with Hal. In the beginning of my career when I was  
20 shadowing Hal in court, I can recall the very first  
21 day I started with him. He brought me here to this  
22 courtroom and we had a family law case.

23 When I would shadow Hal in court, we  
24 would discuss the case, and Hal would always make  
25 sure I understood what transpired. Usually when one

1 of us would return from court, from a particularly  
2 interesting client meeting, we would debrief. We  
3 would talk about the meeting, about a particular  
4 moment, or maybe even gossip about the other side.

5 Hal also loved to catch up and talk to  
6 his colleagues outside the courthouse. If Hal got  
7 on the phone with a friend or a colleague, it was  
8 shoes off, feet up on his desk, and continuous  
9 laughter from his office.

10 Hal was truly a gentleman, a devoted  
11 husband to his wife, Carol, of 33 years. A proud  
12 father to Jessica, Thomas, and Michael. And a  
13 doting grandfather to his four grandchildren, and to  
14 his four-legged best friend, Leo.

15 He was proud of the accomplishments of  
16 his children. And would often be seen at a lacrosse  
17 game that one of his grandkids was playing in. Hal  
18 and his family were also so very kind to my children  
19 as well.

20 I will miss Hal not only for his  
21 kindness, his mentorship, his love of silly things  
22 like the General Hospital soap opera, Broadway show  
23 tunes, the Pittsburgh Panthers and Rays Pizza. But  
24 most importantly, his guidance and sage advise.

25 Hal always told me to maintain my

1 integrity with the court, always be prepared, and  
2 most importantly never send an email or a letter  
3 when you're mad.

4 In recent years, Hal sometimes  
5 questioned the lack of manners among lawyers. And I  
6 know that if there was one thing he would like  
7 members of the legal profession to remember about  
8 him is that he treated his colleagues with respect.

9 Consistent with his family wishes, I  
10 ask that each one of you pass on a random act of  
11 kindness, whether it be in your professional or  
12 personal life.

13 I will remember all the lessons he  
14 taught me and continue to employ them in my practice  
15 of law. And I hope that each of the young members  
16 of the Bar also take his thoughts to heart.

17 I speak for all the attorneys and staff  
18 at my firm when I say that Hal will be so very  
19 missed. His presence was always known whether he  
20 was yelling from his office to his long-standing  
21 paralegal to bring him the file or to get somebody  
22 on the phone. If he laughed, his hearty belly  
23 laughed, everyone in the office heard it. It's very  
24 quiet in our office now, but we're trying to move on  
25 from that. His son, Michael, has just started with

1 us and we're very happy to have him. Hal was a  
2 great attorney and an even better man. And it had  
3 been an honor to learn from him and work alongside  
4 him.

5 Thank you.

6 \* \* \* \* \*

7 THE COURT: We next recognize Attorney  
8 Hank Barnette.

9 MR. BARNETTE: Good morning, Your  
10 Honor. May it please The Court, members of the Bar,  
11 the families of the deceased members of the Bar we  
12 recognize this morning, and the ladies and  
13 gentlemen. It truly is a very great honor to be  
14 present in this courtroom on this occasion to speak  
15 in memory of the deceased members of our Bar.

16 While I'm privileged to comment on one  
17 Robert H. Littner, may I also pay my very deep  
18 respects to the others who have died and are being  
19 recognized and their families. And in particular,  
20 Charles Wilkinson and Walter Morrissey, with whom I  
21 had the pleasure of working with at Bethlehem Steel.

22 Bob Littner passed away just over a  
23 year ago at the age of 86. He was the son of a  
24 doctor and a nurse. He was the husband of Jean  
25 Littner and father of Wendy Littner Thompson and

1 Robert V. Littner, who is a member of our Bar.

2 Bob had four grandchildren.

3 Jenine, his wife; Rob, his son, and his  
4 wife, Jenine, and his two children, Maxine and Grace  
5 are present with us this morning.

6 The Barnette family has known the  
7 Littner family for more than 50 years. One of the  
8 first families we met when we came here from  
9 Connecticut. And over this time, we have known the  
10 family in very different ways. And I expect many of  
11 you have known at least some of those ways. So  
12 share with me, for just a minute, about whether you  
13 have known Bob and the family, as a husband, as a  
14 father, a grandfather, and a distinguished lawyer.

15 A senior law firm partner, leader of  
16 our Bar. Some believe the dean of the trust and  
17 estates practice. A long-serving officer and board  
18 member of Saucon Valley Country Club. The most  
19 loyal of the alumni of Lehigh University.  
20 Lehigh recognized Bob with many prestigious awards.  
21 But his best recognition from Lehigh was that he  
22 attended more than 50 Lehigh/Lafayette football  
23 games. After those games, whatever happened on the  
24 field, Lehigh won that evening.

25 He had been part of the legal and



1 voluntary service to many nonprofit's, especially  
2 with his work ethic. And he was a very good  
3 athlete. Particularly tennis.

4 Bob was a graduate of Liberty High  
5 School, Lehigh University, Georgetown University Law  
6 Center. He was a member of this Bar since 1957, and  
7 he had also been a member of the Supreme Court of  
8 Pennsylvania and the Supreme Court of the United  
9 States.

10 He was, in fact, a family and lifetime  
11 long residence of Bethlehem. I just -- I'd just  
12 like to make some brief comments on two different  
13 subjects sort of -- about Bob as the person, and Bob  
14 as the lawyer.

15 My first is Bob the landlord. Leaving  
16 Bethlehem Steel and beginning my practice with an  
17 international law firm, it was really helpful to  
18 have an office in Bethlehem. And Bob suggested that  
19 I consider 512 North New Street. And it worked out  
20 very well, and I'm still there.

21 And Bob, as the landlord, had three  
22 very specific instructions. One, pay your rent on  
23 time. Two, replace the paper in the copy machine if  
24 it runs out. And three, if you're the last one out,  
25 turn the lights out and lock the door. That's

1 pretty good landlord advice.

2           Bob was a good tennis player. And so  
3 was Jean. And he was often called from the courts,  
4 EBB Littner. EBB Littner. Every ball back. And  
5 when the serve was on, look out.

6           Even the food enthusiast -- some of you  
7 know that he loved good food, and we would have  
8 regular lunches weekly over the years at some very  
9 nice places. One particular place, Bob would look  
10 at that menu, everything on it, carefully, and then  
11 he would order pizza.

12           Not just any pizza. He would say, put  
13 some hamburger on it. And at this present time, the  
14 Littner Hamburger Pizza is one popular dish.

15           He had a wonderful sense of humor.  
16 Even in his last days as I was visiting with him in  
17 his home, I kid with him on a couple of subjects. I  
18 said, Bob, there's a vacancy on the Court of Common  
19 Pleas in Northampton County, are you considering it?  
20 He said, no, you know I'm qualified, but I might be  
21 a little too old.

22           When I asked him about a trip abroad  
23 was being planned, he very seriously said, "No.  
24 It's too long. I'll just stand by the phone in case  
25 you need anything.

1           Bob the lawyer -- Bob was, of course,  
2 the senior partner of Littner, Deschler & Littner  
3 Law Firm. He founded this firm in 1976. He's  
4 worked with Mike Deschler for over 40 years. And  
5 they're joined now by their two sons, Rob and Matt.

6           As the years have passed, my personal  
7 legal experience, in private and corporate practice,  
8 non-profit public service, it's become increasingly  
9 clear to me that we can always identify good  
10 lawyers, great lawyers as several characteristics.  
11 And in four -- just that stand out in my mind -- and  
12 the first, of course, is integrity.

13           The second is you follow the law. But  
14 the third all important -- whatever your knowledge  
15 of the law is, your experience and your ability to  
16 solve problems. It's often said there really is  
17 only two kinds of lawyers. There are complicators  
18 and problem solvers. Bob was a problem solver.  
19 Extraordinarily complex issues, and you have to  
20 clarify any decision with which he recommends.

21           And the other service Bob was answering  
22 emails and telephone calls. And Bob was absolutely  
23 unlimited in his capacity to render service.  
24 Weekend meetings, midnight calls, 3 a.m. trips to  
25 the emergency room.

1           Jean was often helpful in also  
2     answering phone calls, while she did not know the  
3     names of the clients, or the legal issues involved.  
4     Bob would sometimes come out for different events.  
5     And we often kidded him that if anyone ever had a  
6     place reserved in heaven, Bob did because of the  
7     service that he had rendered. Bob was truly a very  
8     distinguished lawyer and a great lawyer.

9           So may I just close this by -- because  
10    you can continue to discuss -- I could continue to  
11    discuss these great lawyers we're recognizing this  
12    morning with great honor to have these brief  
13    comments. We've lost an exemplary husband and  
14    father and grandfather, a very distinguished lawyer,  
15    a great lawyer who cared about his family and his  
16    friends and his law firm and his clients, this  
17    community, and those that he served.

18           His law firm -- and I'm associated with  
19    the firm -- was of a high quality of work at the  
20    firm, and it's reputation and Bob's founding of the  
21    firm and his leadership of that firm, is a wonderful  
22    legacy. For Bob and the firm, thank you, Your  
23    Honor.

24                   \* \* \* \* \*

25           THE COURT: The Court now recognizes

1 Ned Morrissey.

2 MR. MORRISSEY: If it pleases The  
3 Court, members of the Bar Association.

4 Ladies and gentlemen, I want to thank  
5 you today for the honor to speak about my father,  
6 Walter Edward Morrissey. I wanted to do two things  
7 -- share two things with you today.

8 One was a little bit of background  
9 about my father. And then, like Mr. Barnette shared  
10 some of the characteristics that make a good lawyer,  
11 as a non-lawyer, I wanted to share three  
12 characteristics about my father -- three little  
13 stories that I think really exemplify some unique  
14 characteristics that lawyers as a fraternity, if you  
15 will, I think, share in common.

16 My father was born on January 19th,  
17 1948 in Bennington, Vermont to Gerald and Phillis  
18 Morrissey. He was one of seven children, almost  
19 nine two miscarriages. Grew up in town. Went to  
20 the catholic high school. Was an all-state  
21 linebacker and then went to Harvard University,  
22 where he graduated in 1970. Started working for the  
23 Bethlehem Steel corporation. And then in 1974,  
24 graduated from Georgetown Law School.

25 That's when he moved here to the Lehigh

1 Valley and the Northampton County area. And served  
2 as an immigration lawyer for Bethlehem Steel for  
3 over 30 years. After that, he worked for a few  
4 years with Thomas, Thomas & Hafer. And then finally  
5 for the last ten-plus years, he was in his own  
6 private practice in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

7 He was the president of the Saucon Valley Community  
8 Center for over ten years. And he raised three  
9 boys, myself and my brothers, Andrew and Robert.

10 And two wives -- two marriages, my mother, Kim, and  
11 my stepmother, Theresa Morrissey.

12 So that gives you a little bit of  
13 background on my father, but I want to give you,  
14 from a non-lawyers perspective, some of the things  
15 that throughout my life I noticed about my father  
16 that I think really exemplified a lawyer. One was  
17 -- and Judge, you shared a somewhat similar story  
18 earlier -- was a tendency towards an incredibly  
19 brilliant mind but perhaps a bit disorganized.  
20 The story you gave about the pile of papers really  
21 hit home immediately for me because as my dad was  
22 struggling -- he suffered a major stroke in November  
23 of 2018 -- I'm sorry. November, 2017.

24 You know, towards the end, one of my  
25 brothers and I went to his office in Bethlehem and

1 started cleaning things out. And he had a main  
2 desk, a table very similar to the table in front of  
3 me here, and there was a pile that was large enough  
4 that if my dad had been sitting across from a  
5 client, they would have had to look around to speak  
6 to each other. And as we sorted through it, I said  
7 to my brother, this is -- this is like a timeline  
8 almost. We start at the top and we're at 2017. By  
9 the time we got to the bottom, I think it was 2008  
10 or something like that.

11 So one of the things that I think my  
12 dad exemplified, and what I think a lot of lawyers  
13 share, is that brilliant mind but disorganized at  
14 times. But that was the really great thing about  
15 him, and I know in his years at Bethlehem Steel,  
16 there was no one more that he appreciated than his  
17 secretary, Jan. And as a family member, I know we  
18 appreciated it more -- his secretary Jan because she  
19 helped organize dad.

20 The second example would be a -- an  
21 almost desire to argue. My dad would find that  
22 little difference and all of a sudden he and I would  
23 be arguing. He and I saw eye-to-eye on most things,  
24 but I remember particularly a debate -- or to put it  
25 more apply, a shouting match -- we had back in the

1 -- in 2012, when the election was going on.

2           And my dad and I saw eye-to-eye about  
3 99 percent when it came to politics. But on this  
4 particular occasion, we were talking about some of  
5 the candidates and we had a disagreement, and I mean  
6 a shouting match. And boy could he argue. Because  
7 we agreed on about 99 percent of everything about  
8 this particular candidate, that one percent he found  
9 and we argued for about a good half an hour.  
10 Literally, yelling at each other. But at the end, I  
11 remember that the really neat part of my father --  
12 and I think about lawyers, too -- is at the end,  
13 finally there was silence and we both turned to each  
14 other and said, what's for dinner? So that was the  
15 second thing I remember about my father that I think  
16 is distinctly characteristic of a lawyer.

17           The third one, and I want to apologize  
18 to the officers and the Court right off the bat  
19 here, but my father had -- to put it lightly -- a  
20 reputation to have a lead foot. I have never known  
21 any person who even comes close to the level of  
22 aggressive driving that my father was known for. We  
23 would always make camping trips way earlier than we  
24 were supposed to. But he was a great guy, he was  
25 just not patient.



1           And I remember one very distinct time  
2 where he did get pulled over for speeding, and  
3 without question he was speeding. And he had some  
4 very unique choice words for the officer who pulled  
5 him over. I will not repeat them, but needless to  
6 say, the officer kind of stopped, paused and was  
7 really processing what he had just heard. And said  
8 back to my father, what did you call me? And it --  
9 you could tell in the officer's face that it wasn't  
10 just that it was probably not something particularly  
11 common or respectful, but he was even more amazed by  
12 the words that my dad used. He was creative in that  
13 sense. And I think that's one of the unique  
14 characteristics that my father had, an incredible  
15 way with words that I think he shared with many  
16 members that are here today from the Bar  
17 Association.

18           So in closing, I again want to thank  
19 everyone for allowing me to speak today. My father  
20 was an incredibly passionate lawyer. You know, I'm  
21 still finding yellow legal pads all over the place.  
22 All over the place. They are completely illegible,  
23 but they are completely filled out, pads and pads  
24 and pads. He was very proud to be a member -- a  
25 lawyer at Bethlehem Steel and he was very proud to

1 be a part of this Northampton County Bar Association  
2 and the community as a whole. So today, I want to  
3 thank you in honor of my father, Walter Morrissey.

4 \* \* \* \* \*

5 THE COURT: The Court now recognizes  
6 Michael Santanasto.

7 MR. SANTANASTO: May it please The  
8 Court, Judge Panella, Judge Leeson, fellow  
9 attorneys, family of Eric Shimer, his wife Barbara,  
10 son Willie, daughter Susie, and fellow friends of  
11 Eric's who are with us here today.

12 My name is Mike Santanasto, and I offer  
13 the following in honor of a friend and mentor, Eric  
14 Shimer.

15 It is a precious time to remember Eric,  
16 his personality and professionalism. Personally, I  
17 have known Eric nearly my entire life as my brother  
18 and his son William were the same age. Generally,  
19 everyone who wrote about him here from his  
20 experiences in the Vietnam War as well as his deep  
21 devotion and specific endeavors.

22 Aside from his legal career, Eric spent  
23 time filling in as a substitute teacher, performing  
24 unique in-class presentations, especially during the  
25 Veteran's or Memorial Day activities.

1           He served on communities and boards  
2 such as Northampton County Home-Rule Charter  
3 Commission, the Honor Guard, Jaycees, and the  
4 Korean/Vietnam Veteran's Memorial. Eric possessed a  
5 keen sense of citizenship and duty, serving  
6 honorably in the Vietnam War, where he saw combat,  
7 became known in his squad for his uncanny accuracy  
8 with an M79 grenade launcher.

9           Eric was drafted while in law school,  
10 and returned to law school after recovering from the  
11 near-deadly wounds he suffered on August 20th, 1969,  
12 in the Battle of Death valley. That day, he was  
13 shot through the upper arm and through his chest  
14 laterally. Shattering his sternum into his lungs.  
15 That day he was not expected to live, but he defied  
16 the battlefield prediction, eventually returning  
17 home to begin his career and life which brings us  
18 here today.

19           Although his stay in Vietnam ended in  
20 that battle, he continued to battle the physical,  
21 mental and emotional toll that combat takes on its  
22 participants. Eric spent a significant amount of  
23 time assisting other veterans with difficulty  
24 navigating their continuing care in the VA system,  
25 especially regarding disabled veterans.

1           He also openly acknowledged and  
2 discussed the difficulties associated with coming  
3 back from a war-time environment. In his own words,  
4 "Worse than the physical pain is the emotional pain,  
5 the normal reaction to the violent death of a buddy  
6 is the first feel of shock, then numbness and then  
7 grief. The worst reaction comes last and continues  
8 for a very long time, guilt. For what? For being  
9 alive, when others who are just like you are taken  
10 by a violent death."

11           He wrote those words for a two-part  
12 special for the Morning Call from 2005. It's a  
13 wonderful and insightful read. It also displays his  
14 excellent writing skills, and I encourage everyone  
15 to read it.

16           As an attorney, Eric practiced  
17 primarily in the trust and estate realm. And took  
18 the helm of Raymond Haggerty Jr.'s firm after the  
19 late Ray's premature passing in 1984. Emblematic of  
20 Eric's morality, he assisted Ray's widow yearly  
21 until the day he died, helping in any capacity he  
22 could, investments, taxes and general counsel. And  
23 kept a strong relationship with Ray's family.

24           My professional relationship with Eric  
25 took off like many professional relationships

1 involving attorneys do; an inquirement by a  
2 professional liability underwriter. The underwriter  
3 inquired that Eric needed a capable attorney to take  
4 over his practice as he eventually became disabled  
5 before he passed. He clearly ignored the capable  
6 part and asked me whether I was willing to serve in  
7 that role, which I gratefully accepted. From that  
8 point on, I became familiar with the practice,  
9 following his intake analysis and approach with  
10 clients.

11 He kept a prestigious file, color-coded  
12 in a single stack, based upon the subject matter.  
13 Eric retired from the practice of law in 2012, and  
14 gave me the honor of closing up any of the files or  
15 taking over all of his clients. This was the  
16 fertilizer that the seed of my young law firm needed  
17 to grow and grew from. I will be eternally  
18 grateful.

19 Eric's humor and intelligence were on  
20 full display during one such client meeting during  
21 the transition period, where I was becoming  
22 acquainted with his clients in preparation for his  
23 retirement. The client asked, "Do I need some of  
24 that elder care planning where I keep all my money  
25 and the government pays for me when I need to go in

1 the nursing home?"

2 Eric calmly said, "I don't practice  
3 that kind of law, it's a conflict of interest."

4 The client thought about it for a  
5 moment and said, "Conflict of interest, how, what do  
6 you mean?"

7 He goes, "I'm a tax payer."

8 The client thought about it for a while  
9 and after an explanation from Eric and in more  
10 layman's term about what it means to do such  
11 planning, the client offered unappreciative  
12 laughter.

13 This dry humor was the highlight of  
14 knowing Eric. He had a fantastic sense of dry humor  
15 that most people would not expect from a decorated  
16 combat veteran, a trust and estate attorney. But he  
17 would routinely deliver belly laughs.

18 For those of you who were acquainted  
19 with Eric's humor, you will certainly agree with me  
20 that after one of Eric's jokes, you'd be rolling on  
21 the floor.

22 Eric's jokes were very complicated and  
23 he often used -- and was conversing in foreign  
24 languages, French, Spanish, Latin, some Italian. I  
25 would describe his intelligence as classical --

1 classically educated individual. Eric liked  
2 conversing in critical thought analysis and had a  
3 nearly photographic memory.

4           Lastly, I'd like to acknowledge again  
5 the love of Eric's life and his family. His wife  
6 and sometimes paralegal, Barbara; his son, Willie;  
7 daughter, Susie; and his two grandchildren, Jacob and  
8 John, who he cherished.

9           I will conclude with Eric's own words  
10 that he inscribed on the night -- on the side of his  
11 helmet over 50 years ago, half sarcastically half  
12 earnestly, God avec nous. Or in English, God with  
13 us.

14           Thank you.

15                           \* \* \* \* \*

16           THE COURT: The Court now recognizes  
17 Lisa Spitale.

18           MS. SPITALE: May it please The Court.  
19 Charles Wilkinson's family was unable to be here  
20 today, however, they did submit a brief statement  
21 they asked me to read.

22           Charles A. Wilkinson was 91 when he  
23 passed away peacefully on Tuesday, January 15, 2019.  
24 He was the husband of the late Alyce P. Wilkinson.  
25 Born in Bethlehem, he was the son of Dr. Charles H.

1 Wilkinson, D.D.S., and his wife, Annette. Charles  
2 liked to be known as Charlie. He was a local in  
3 that he lived in downtown Bethlehem, attended  
4 Moravian Prep, and later graduated from Lehigh  
5 University class of '49, where he received a BS in  
6 psychology.

7 Charlie used to walk back and forth to  
8 class every day across the old New Street Bridge,  
9 which was replaced by the Fahy Bridge in the 1970's.  
10 Fortunately, one of the toll keepers was also a  
11 Lehigh student who sometimes let him cross without  
12 paying the pedestrian toll, which was a few pennies.

13 He went on to earn his law degree from  
14 Temple University in 1969. At the time, Charlie was  
15 working full time as a senior patent agent for  
16 Bethlehem Steel at the Homer Research Labs site on  
17 South Mountain. He commuted after work to Philly to  
18 attend Temple Law School at night. In order to keep  
19 up with his studies, his wife Alyce would read aloud  
20 his law texts and record them on cassettes. Charlie  
21 would listen to the texts on the way to and from  
22 Temple. In a way, Charlie and Alyce were the  
23 precursors of Audiobooks although they never  
24 researched to see if this was patentable.

25 Charlie honorably served his country in



1 the United States Navy during World War II. He  
2 worked for the patent department at Bethlehem Steel  
3 beginning in 1955, and retired as a Senior Patent  
4 Attorney in 1982. During this time, he worked on  
5 many improvements to the steelmaking process, and  
6 products such as the wire rope or strand used in  
7 suspension bridges throughout the United States.  
8 At one point in his career, he was considered one of  
9 the leading authorities on steel cable.

10 He went on to private practice  
11 specializing in patent and trademark law for an  
12 additional 30 years, mainly in Bethlehem. During  
13 this time, Charlie particularly enjoyed working with  
14 individual inventors and small companies and  
15 teaching them the basics of how to protect their  
16 inventions, designs, logos, and other creative work  
17 through the patent, trademark, and copyright  
18 process. His son, Clinton Wilkinson, maintains that  
19 practice today.

20 Charlie was admitted to practice before  
21 the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit;  
22 U.S. District Court, Eastern District of  
23 Pennsylvania; U.S. District Court, Eastern and  
24 Middle Districts of New York; U.S. Supreme Court;  
25 and U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. He was a

1 member of the Northampton County Bar Association,  
2 Pennsylvania Bar Association, New York Bar  
3 Association, and International Trademark  
4 Association.

5 He was also a member of the Lehigh  
6 Valley Engineers Club. He enjoyed running, hiking,  
7 and sailing, and particularly liked to spend free  
8 time near the ocean at his summer home in Avalon,  
9 New Jersey, where he was a summer lifeguard in his  
10 teenage years. His love of books and reading was  
11 legendary.

12 Throughout his life, Charlie loved to  
13 read and collect books. He enjoyed technical texts  
14 on subjects like chemistry, archeology, engineering  
15 and physics. Today, among the vast library he left  
16 may be one of the most comprehensive collections of  
17 volumes devoted to the life and work of Albert  
18 Einstein in the world.

19 Thank you.

20 \* \* \* \* \*

21 THE COURT: Ms. Spitale is also the  
22 president of the Northampton County Bar Association,  
23 and she would like to make final remarks on behalf  
24 of the Bar Association.

25 MS. SPITALE: It is an honor to stand

1 on this day and a privilege to be in front of  
2 family, friends, and former colleagues as we pay  
3 tribute to the remarkable lives and enduring  
4 legacies of George Baurkot, Paul Florenz, Harold  
5 Funt, Robert Littner, Walter Morrissey, Eric Shimer,  
6 and Charles Wilkinson.

7 I'd like to thank each speaker for the  
8 recollections that they have shared as well as those  
9 who helped organize this event. To each attorney in  
10 the room, the recollections you heard today remind  
11 us of the importance of what is often a hectic and a  
12 chaotic career. With family and friends and the  
13 community and in pursuit of our passion and lives  
14 outside of this profession, I encourage each of you  
15 to use the stories that you heard today in an  
16 attempt to pursue what you love and in an attempt to  
17 improve your community and make your own mark on  
18 this world.

19 Also, understand the importance of  
20 building and maintaining relationships with family,  
21 with colleagues, with the Bar, and with this Bench.  
22 Thank you for being here today, and I ask everyone  
23 to join us for refreshments in the jury lounge.

24 THE COURT: Before we recess, I have  
25 the pleasure of introducing the President Judge of

1 the Superior Court, Judge Jack Panella.

2 JUDGE PANELLA: Thank you. Good  
3 morning, everyone. As I travel around the state, I  
4 quickly realized how special the lawyers and the  
5 judges are in Northampton County. Because I was  
6 very privileged to be a member of this Bar  
7 Association, I wanted to add that the Superior Court  
8 thanks them for their service.

9 My great condolences to the members of  
10 the families of all of our deceased members. And  
11 just in closing, I have to tell you how blessed I  
12 was to have known George Baurkot. Thank you very  
13 much.

14 THE COURT: All right. Ladies and  
15 gentleman, we are in recess. There will be a  
16 reception for everyone in the jury lounge, which is  
17 right down the hall.

18 When we recess now, it will be in  
19 memory of George Baurkot, Paul Florenz, Harold Funt,  
20 Robert Littner, Walter Morrissey, Eric Shimer, and  
21 Charles Wilkinson.

22 Thank you very much.

23 **(The proceedings concluded.)**

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