

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

The Honorable Bruce F. Bratton

On March 10, 2022, Dauphin County lost one of its most academically brightest jurists. As a member of Mensa, Bruce was known for his curt wit, sarcastic questions and extremely expressive facial reactions. He was 72 year old.

Judge Bratton was born on June 25, 1949 to the late Edwin and Mary Bratton in Bratton Township, Mifflin County. He saw active duty in Vietnam, serving from 1969-70. Upon his return he graduated from Penn State in 1973 and went on to graduate law school from the University of Pennsylvania in 1976.

He began his 40 year legal career as an attorney with Meyers and Desfor. Two years later he formed the firm of Martsolf, Spade and Bratton. The partnership grew in 1984 to be Connelly, Martsolf, Reid, Bratton and Spade. His sarcasm and wit were exemplified by his drafting of the "Gazette". An internal satirical publication meant only for and restricted to the members of the law firm. Copies thereof have been lost for all time.

In 1986 that firm split and Martsolf and Bratton was formed where he practiced until Governor Tom Ridge's nomination and subsequent confirmation as a judge of the Dauphin County Court of Common Pleas in October of 2001. He was elected that November for a 10 year term and was easily retained in 2011.

His practice found him handling litigation in both civil and criminal matters. His mental acuity meshed well with his calm calculated skill in the courtroom.

During his time as an attorney, he served as Solicitor of the Dauphin County Controller's Office. He was elected as a Commissioner of Susquehanna Township. He also was a Master Mason in the Robert Burns Lodge.

Truly evidencing the nature and style of his wit and humor, one would find taped or framed cut out Dilbert comic strips hanging in his chambers. It was as if he had written them himself.

Judge Bratton was proud to have been an active service veteran. So when the Dauphin County Court bench decided to form a treatment court for veterans, Bruce oversaw and presided over that Court. His insight and compassion helped integrate VA services, county services and personal emotional support to our military.

In mid-2016, Judge Bratton began to sense the onset of Alzheimer's. It was a disease that afflicted both his parents and his brother, Barry. His professional pride and his keen ability, by which he had established such a high standard for himself, required his prompt resignation. Fellow judges, and I was one, tried to dissuade him from such an abrupt departure. But he would hear none of that. He expected excellence of product and thorough thoughtful reflection in all his cases and any diminution in that quality, he could not and would not accept.

Holly, his wife of thirty years, quite frankly, his best friend is here today. He also left behind his sons, Bruce J. Bratton and Rob Myers. We all have fond memories of a man who would not hesitate to make fun of positions or statements that were illogical or impracticable.

However, his jest was always good natured, which lead to much laughter, as he not only had us reflect on our stupidity, but laugh about it as well.

Holly gave me one of Bruce's tee shirts

For those in the back, it reads: I'll try to be nicer, if you try to be smarter.

During our monthly Judges' meetings, you knew that Judge Bratton was about to question and attack some established county or court position when he began with the phrase: " I know I'm new around here, but can someone explain to me why . . . " I would begin chuckling before he finished because I knew someone was about to attempt to support or rationalize an untenable position.

Judge Bratton made us rethink our direction, questioned our decisions, justify our assessment and rationale, all the while having a good laugh at ourselves.

Having gone on many scuba dives with Bruce and Holly, Barb and I sorely miss his warmth and friendship, his laughter causing episodes and I dearly miss my brother of the bench. We, as a Bar and community, have laid to rest one of our finest jurists.

We extend our deepest sympathies to his wife, Holly and his sons, to whom copies of this resolution shall be provided. The original and copies of this resolution shall be filed with the Office of the Prothonotary and in the permanent records of the Dauphin County Bar Association.

And I so move.

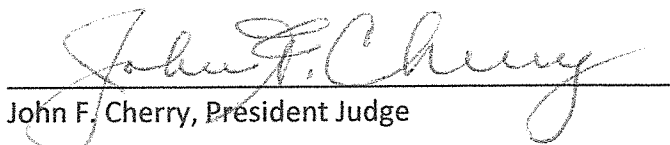
Respectfully submitted,



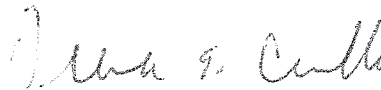
Scott Arthur Evans, Judge



Sharon M. O'Donnell, Esq.



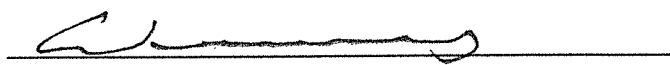
John F. Cherry, President Judge



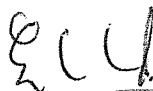
Deborah Essis Curcillo, Judge



Andrew H. Dowling, Judge



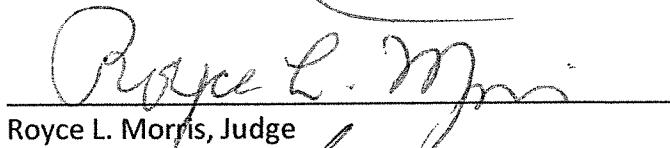
William T. Tully, Judge



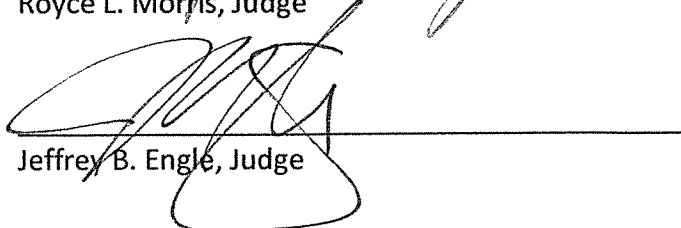
Edward M. Marsico, Judge



John Joseph McNally, Judge



Royce L. Morris, Judge



Jeffrey B. Engle, Judge