

**Edward J. Rothman, Esquire**  
**Memorial Resolution**

DAUPHIN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION,  
Meeting in Special Session on August 23, 2023  
Courtroom No. 1, Dauphin County Courthouse

TO THE HONORABLE JUDGES OF THE COURT, our colleagues at the Bar and friends, we gather here to mark the passing of Edward J. Rothman, who died on January 12<sup>th</sup> this year at his home, at the age of 92. Ed was born in Baltimore, son of Abe and Evelyn Rothman. His family moved to Millersburg and later to Harrisburg. He had two sisters, Harriet Plesh and Marcia Kaplan – the latter some of you may recall as a local TV news personality. Through high school Ed was an excellent baseball and basketball player and highly competitive.

Ed served two tours of duty in the U.S. Army, the second tour as a courier in Japan during the Korean War. Ed then attended Dickinson College, graduating in 1955, Dickinson Law School, graduating in 1958, with an LLB degree, and was admitted to the practice of law in 1959. In his early years of practice Ed served as an assistant city solicitor and was in partnership with Moses (Buzz) Rosenberg, a noted real estate lawyer. Ed concentrated his practice in commercial collection and bankruptcy practice. Buzz and Ed joined McNees Wallace & Nurick in 1971, as the firm pursued a course of growth and increased specialization.

Over the years Ed became a well-regarded and very experienced member of the bankruptcy bar, as well as the go-to member of the firm when one needed advice in navigating the niceties of perfecting judgments, and then translating judgments into actual collection through levy and execution. In the bankruptcy court Ed particularly enjoyed practicing in the federal bankruptcy court chambers of the late Judge Robert (Bob) Woodside. And for those of you who never experienced him, Judge Woodside (affectionately called “Woodie”), always brought counsel into his spacious chambers and worked through the issues to seek a negotiated solution, telegraphing what he was inclined to do to get disputed matters resolved. The formal on-the-record proceedings in his

courtroom then tended to be a pro forma recitation of what had been worked out or at least forecasted in chambers. It was a process that was fairly informal and prompted professional collegiality and often a level of candor that wouldn't have been expressed in open court. He maintained a level of personal decency and served to calm the waters in what were often highly charged matters.

During most of his professional life Ed played basketball in an infamous noon-time pickup game at the downtown YMCA, often teaming up with the late Frank Haas. On that court he demonstrated an aggressive streak that belied his otherwise friendly dealings with others off the basketball court. By report he had sharp elbows and a reliable two-handed set shot. Ed was a good tennis player and partnered with his wife Harriet in tennis tournaments. He also played in the firm's annual touch football game, known as the "Turkey Bowl," well into his 60's.

Ed dealt with lawyers with other lawyers with candor and professional courtesy. Bob Chernicoff tells the following story: "Ed only got angry at me once. I had sent him a pretty aggressive letter and he called me. He said 'Tell me you want the letter back.' I asked why and he said, 'because if you don't take it back I'll have to send to my client and that will piss him off and we won't be able to get this case settled.' So, Bob agreed to take back the letter; he sent a more moderated one, and the case got resolved. It's a great illustration of Ed's ability to speak candidly and forcefully but at the same time to concentrate on resolution of the dispute and keep the case from escalating into further conflict.

Ed's bankruptcy work was mostly on the debtor side – and in Chapter 11 proceedings there are a lot of parties who have differing goals and conflicts about all sorts of things – some petty and some important – that need to be dealt with. Ed displayed a calm demeanor and dealt decently with other counsel and adverse parties. He concentrated on getting the matter concluded as effectively as he could. He was consistently known to be an excellent lawyer and, more importantly, a good and decent man.

And that fairly describes Ed: he was a good and decent man throughout his life. He was an active member of Beth El Temple and for many years led the morning minyan at the Temple. (For those who don't know the term, a minyan is a

group of at least ten persons who gather for worship – usually prayers at the start of the day). Ed also served as president of the Harrisburg Hebrew School. In an act of real generosity and humanity, Ed volunteered at the Harrisburg Hospital, making rounds of patient rooms, offering a word of comfort and cheer, and even balloon animals and a song to those who were hospitalized. Twenty years ago, he took a particular interest in daily cheering up Andrew Boynton, son of McNeese attorney Alan Boynton. Andrew was then a 10 year old, hospitalized with a ruptured appendix. As was likely the case with many patients, Ed’s visits were the highlight of the day.

Ed had wide-ranging interests; he enjoyed both baseball and opera. He also loved a good dry martini (and in the day, along with Frank Haas and Buzz Rosenberg often took lunch at the Locust Café and indulged that love, according to Eric Brossman who was amazed by their capacity to return to the office for presumably productive afternoon work.

Ed retired from McNeese at the end of 1996 and in his retirement he found great joy in continuing to volunteer at local hospitals, and particularly in singing for the residents of the Jewish Home.

Ed loved his family: he and Harriet had four children: Michael (who predeceased Ed), daughters Julie Goldman and Alyssa Segal, and son Albert. Ed is also survived by Harriet, his wife of 62 years, and three grandchildren.

WHEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Bar Association mourns the death of Edward J. Rothman, and extends to his wife and children our deepest sympathies. AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial resolution be placed on the records of the Dauphin County Court and the Dauphin County Bar Association.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David E. Lehman", written over a horizontal line.

David E. Lehman



Eric L. Brossman



Alan R. Boynton



Markian Slobodian



Robert Chernicoff



Michael A. Doctrow