

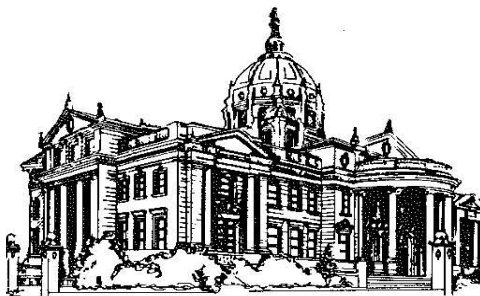
WASHINGTON COUNTY REPORTS

CONTAINING FOR TEMPORARY USE ADVANCE SHEETS OF THE DECISIONS OF THE JUDGES OF THE 27TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA AND THE OFFICIAL LEGAL NOTICES AND ADVERTISEMENTS OF THE SEVERAL COURTS OF THE COUNTY OF WASHINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA. Established March 31, 1920 as the **Official Legal Periodical** for Washington County, Pennsylvania. Owned & Published since January 1, 1958 by the **Washington County Bar Association**, 119 S. College St., Washington, PA 15301

Vol. 106 No. 23 – DECEMBER 18, 2025

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**SERVING THE LEGAL COMMUNITY
OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

MOTIONS COURT SCHEDULE

CR#/Suite#	<p>Complete info @www.washingtoncourts.us/101/Judges <i>Note Senior Judge Kathy Emery moved to CR#4/Third Floor/#3005</i></p> <p>COURTHOUSE CLOSED DEC. 24-25 BAR OFFICE CLOSED DEC 24-26.</p>
Costanzo, Valarie CR#7/1001	Motions Tu & Th at 9:15a.m. Motions in person, with sign up at least 24 hours prior to presentation. Judge of the Term, Criminal: March, May, July, Sept, Nov. For complete Standard Operating Procedures: https://www.washingtoncourts.us/194/Valarie-Costanzo .
DiSalle, John CR#2/2002	Effective July 7, 2025 , all Family Court motions presented on behalf of parties represented by counsel shall be handled remotely via email, fax or mail to chambers. Attorney must e-file all motions prior to emailing them to Judge DiSalle's staff. Counsel for filing party must notify all necessary parties that the motion is being filed and shall clearly indicate to the court whether the motion is contested. Contested motions shall include a scheduling order. Pro Se motions and emergency motions (i.e. those involving the health, safety and welfare of a child or risk of flight) shall be presented on Tuesdays at 9:15a.m. in courtroom #2 with requisite five (5) days' notice to all necessary parties.
Lucas, Michael, CR#6/1006	Motions 1st-20th of each month on M 1:15p and Tu-Fri 8:45a Civil Judge of the Term, 1st-15th of each month. Motions Court is held in person. Motions sign-up in person, mail or email. Original motion to be filed with Prothonotary prior to presentation and copy of motion delivered to chambers to arrive by noon (12:00p) the business day prior to the scheduled presentation.
Neuman, Brandon CR#1/2001	Tu, W & Th at 9:15a. Judge of the Term, Civil: 15th to the end of each month. Motions in person, with signup by Noon the business day prior to presentation; signup in-person, by mail, or by email. Motions submitted by mail or email: original to be filed with Prothonotary, copy to Judge's office. Uncontested motions dropped off or emailed to amber.ross, court.crier.neuman or law.clerk.neuman all @washingtoncourts.us. NO MOTIONS 12/23, 12/24, 12/25, 12/30, 12/31
McDonald, Traci CR#5/1004	Tu & Th 9:30a. Motions in person, with signup by Noon the business day prior to presentation. Judge of the Term, Criminal: Aug., Oct., Dec. See Standard Operating Procedures at https://www.washingtoncourts.us/258/Traci-L-McDonald
Pettit, Jesse CR#3/2003	Tu & Th 9:15a. Motions in person, with signup for Tues. motions by Noon the Friday prior and signup for Thurs. motions by Noon the Monday prior. See Standard Operating Procedures: https://www.washingtoncourts.us/375/Jesse-D-Pettit-Judge .

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Editor: Frank Arcuri, Esq.; Assistant Editor: Kathy Sabol, WCBA Executive Director.
Washington County Reports USPS 667-460. Subscription Rate \$85.00 for 52 Weekly Issues.
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OBITER DICTUM

From the ABA Journal Daily Newsletter: [1] From the Keystone Lex: Circuit Judge Matthew Thornhill of St. Charles County, Missouri agreed to a disciplinary disposition with the Missouri Commission on Retirement, Removal and Discipline after admitting that he dressed up as Elvis Presley and wore an Elvis wig in court on Halloween. The allegations of the complaint stated that the judge had allowed litigants to be sworn in using Elvis music played on his phone, played Elvis songs while entering the courtroom and while doing court business there, and made Elvis references in court “when such statements were irrelevant to the proceedings.” The Commission concluded that the conduct violated rules requiring a judge to maintain “order and decorum” and “promote confidence in the integrity of the judiciary.” Judge Thornhill wrote that he intended “to add levity at times when [he] thought it would help relax litigants” but conceded that he now recognizes “that this could affect the integrity and solemnity of the proceedings.” The Commission’s disposition provided that after serving a six-month unpaid suspension, the judge be allowed to return to the bench for 18 months after which he must retire and commit to never seek reelection. This disposition will allow the judge to retire after 20 years of service with full benefits. The disposition is pending before the Supreme Court of Missouri. [2] A former Arkansas Judge Chris Williams resigned from the bench in March, 2024 while under investigation by the Judicial and Disability Commission (JDDC) for multiple allegations that he violated judicial rules. In a press release at the time, the JDDC stated that the investigation was terminated as a result of the resignation. When judges in the circuit retire under normal circumstances, the local bar association pays for the creation of a portrait which is then installed in the courtroom in a ceremony. Given the circumstances of Williams’ departure, this did not happen. But Williams would not be denied. He paid for the portrait of himself and arranged for a secret ceremony to hang it in his former courtroom on a date that the other judges were away at a Judicial Council Meeting. When Administrative Judge Stephen Shirron learned of the covert installation he was enraged. “We cannot stand idly by and allow a celebration of corruption in our courtroom without speaking up.” While Judge Shirron could have simply ordered the portrait removed, he had a different treatment in mind - directing that a framed copy of the JDDC official press release be hung in the courtroom immediately below former Judge Williams portrait. Subsequently, the press release was removed and then reinstalled and then removed again at the direction of the County officials. Its current status is unknown at this time.

Note: Obiter Dictum does not necessarily reflect the views of the employees, officers, and/or members of the Washington County Bar Association. Obiter Dictum is not an editorial, it is a compilation of items about the law, attorneys, and related matters. It is not intended to endorse or promote any particular point of view.

NOTICE TO THE PROFESSION

Position Opening—Judicial Law Clerk to the Honorable Valarie Costanzo, President Judge

PURPOSE: To assist a Judge with research, writing, scheduling, and organization necessary to maintain and dispose of cases that are presented to the Courts for resolution.

BACKGROUND/SKILLS REQUIRED: A Juris Doctor degree from an American Bar Association-accredited law school is required. Must be able to perform legal research and write summaries and conclusions. Computer skills are necessary. Physical considerations. This position requires the ability to communicate effectively in person, by telephone and in writing. The individual must use a computer and, therefore, must possess finger dexterity and be able to interpret a computer monitor. Must be able to access file drawers; therefore, some bending, reaching and stooping may be necessary. Must be able to read legal research materials. The individual works in an office environment. Researches legal topics and drafts opinions and orders, as well as correspondence. Attends Court proceedings, including hearings, trials, routine motions, and pleas, as requested by the Judge. Organizes, schedules, and maintains the case list and briefing and argument schedules. Communicates with the public and attorneys, by telephone or in person. Attends conferences with the Judge, attorney and litigants. Attends educational sessions for civil, criminal, family court, orphans court updates. Performs all other duties and or special projects as assigned and on an as needed basis.

TO APPLY: Please submit a cover letter, resume, and writing sample to President Judge Valarie Costanzo. Do not submit an online application. Applications will be accepted by e-mail at jennifer.houpt@washingtontcourts.us or by mail at 1 South Main Street, Suite 1001, Washington PA 15301

NOTICE OF JAMES ROMAN

Register of Wills and Ex-Officio Clerk of the Orphans' Court Division,
Court of the Common Pleas, Washington, Pennsylvania

The following fiduciaries have filed their respective accounts in the
Office of the Clerk of the Orphans' Court of Washington County

ACCOUNTS FILED IN THE REGISTER'S OFFICE TO
JANUARY 16, 2026 AUDIT

AUDIT LIST

63-2024-0600 Estate: Irene Kathryn Amos
Accountant: Charles E. Amos, Executor
Attorney: Dorothy A. Milovac, Esq.

PARTIES INTERESTED ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT AN AUDIT LIST WILL BE MADE UP OF THE
AFOREMENTIONED ACCOUNTS AND THAT SAID AUDIT IS JANUARY 16, 2026 AT 9:30 A.M.,
COURTROOM #4, BEFORE THE HONORABLE KATHERINE B. EMERY.

JAMES ROMAN, Register and Ex-Officio
Clerk of the Orphans' Court Division of the Court of Common
Pleas of Washington County, Pennsylvania

Washington, Pennsylvania
Audit Date: January 16, 2026
Publication Dates: December 18, 2025 & January 08, 2026

Washington County Bar Association – Winter Bench Bar

Fri., Jan. 23, 2026 -- Hilton Garden Inn, Southpointe & ZOOM

REGISTRANT (please print): _____

PASCID#: _____

(Offerings may change due to registration #s, tech issues & other unavoidable factors) Indicate course & zoom or in-person attendance

	SEMINARS (topics/speakers/zoom subject to change).	REGISTER by 1/9/26	Time	In-person	Zoom
BG	"Bridge the Gap" – Amy Coco, moderator. Required by PA Supreme Court for newly-admitted attorneys prior to 1 st CLE compliance deadline (registration open only to newly-admitted attys).	4e	8a-12p		n/a
1a	Energy Law: "Old Leases: Validity & Termination" P Atencio	1s	8a		n/a
1b	"SCOTUS Case Law Update" C Woods	1s	attend		n/a
1c	"2026 in the Civil Division 'All is Well'" J Takah, Judge Lucas	1s	1 of 3		
2a	"Partition Actions" F Kosir	1s	9:15a		n/a
2b	"Occupational Fraud: Profile of a Fraudster" J Petrancosta, G Landgraf	1s	attend		
2c	"Autism: Clients & the Courtroom" J Torisky	1s	1 of 3		n/a
3a	"Access to Justice: Elder Law Services" Judge Lucas; K Gustine, K Hinkel, J Hale, M Mikluscak	1e	10:30a		
3b	"Beyond High Conflict: ACEs & Generational Trauma" Dr D Gilman	1s	attend		n/a
3c	"Criminal Law Update" J Mihalov, J Friedmann; Judges Costanzo, McDonald, Pettit	1s	1 of 3		n/a
4	★ Lunch, "State of the Judiciary," & Plenary CLE ★ CLE (12:15p): Inaugural William D. Phillips Symposium: "Balancing Advocacy & Ethics" PA Supreme Court Justice C Donohue; Judge Faldowski; Judge Gilman; J Gismondi; L Phillips, Mod.	1e	11:30a-1:15p		
5a	"Stress Management in the Legal Profession" C Sauers, S Brookman	1e	1:30p		n/a
5b	"e-Discovery" J Unice	1s	attend		n/a
5c	"Family Law Update" L Lyons, D Wolf, B Clancy, Judge DiSalle; K Bojarski, mod.	1s	1 of 3		
6a	"Benefits of Charitable Giving in Estate, Tax, & Financial Planning" A Walz, J Piszczor	1s	2:45p		n/a
6b	"Applied AI in the Practice of Law" M Gray	1e	attend		
6c	"DBoard Updates & Ethics Issues" R James	1e	1 of 3		n/a
7	"The Whiskey Rebellion: A Distilled History of an American Crisis" Brady Crytzer, author & historian (Wall St Journal's 2023 list of "Ten Books to Read," book signing to follow program)	1s	4p		
8	Happy Hour ~ in-person event limited to paid WBB/CLE registrants; others/guests \$40pp.*		5-6:30p		n/a

BRIDGE THE GAP (BTG): Practicing <12 months = \$50, >12 mos. = \$100
Lunch/Happy Hr included; no audit/CLE fees on morning CLEs (mark attendance above)

Bridge the Gap = \$ _____

SPECIAL PRICE ALL DAY WBB →

Same price in-person or zoom; mix & match any/all 7 CLE credits at the same price
In-person ALL DAY WBB incl 7 CLE credits, breakfast, lunch, snacks, & happy hour

WCBA Mbr \$345 =
< 5 yrs in practice \$305 =
& Full-Time NPO/Govt/Ed Attys
Attys not WCBA \$545 =

A LA CARTE Registration / WCBA Mbrs: # _____ credit (7 max) x \$60/credit = \$ _____ =
Mbrs <5 yrs in practice, FT NPO/Govt/Ed: # _____ credit (7 max) x \$50/credit = \$ _____ =
Attys NOT WCBA Mbrs: # _____ credit (7 max) x \$95/credit = \$ _____ =
Audit (no CLE credit) & Non-Attys: # _____ seminar (7 max) x \$35/seminar = \$ _____ =
 Lunch ONLY \$25pp (no CLE); Happy Hr ONLY & HH Guests \$40pp = \$ _____ =
 OH WV = \$75 each state (flat fee covers any/all seminars) = \$ _____ =

A la Carte =
Per credit CLE fees
Audit / Non-Atty fee
Lunch fee (if no CLE)
Happy Hour Only / Guest fee
Add'l WV/OH CLE fee

\$ _____

Pay to "Washington County Bar Association" 119 S College St, Washington PA 15301
Ph 724.225.6710. Fax 724.225.8345. Email wcbawashcobar.org. No refunds after 1/9/26!

TOTAL DUE =

\$ _____

+\$50 late fee after 1/9/26

Pay by Credit Card Online (Calculate amount due [+ 3% cc fee]), user QR code or pay w/ link: <https://square.link/u/ma5bQTsl>

or Check # _____ **If paid online by credit card, please indicate Amount Paid: \$ _____ Date Paid: _____**



ESTATE NOTICES

FIRST PUBLICATION

Anderson, Daniel Evin
a/k/a Daniel E. Anderson
Late of McMurray
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1726

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executrix or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executrix without delay.

Executrix: Carol L. Anderson a/k/a Carol Lynn Anderson, 165 E. Highland Drive, McMurray, PA 15317
Attorney: Justin Ellis, Esq., Zacharia Brown Law Offices, 108 West McMurray Road, Canonsburg, PA 15317

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Baringer, Beverly A.
a/k/a Beverly Ann Baringer
Late of Coal Center, PA
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-19-0911

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: David R. Baringer a/k/a David Roy Baringer, 1000 Apple Dr., Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
Attorney: Kristen Anders Bojarski, Esq., 1131 Boyce Road, Suite C, Pittsburgh, PA 15241

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Baringer, Ora K.
a/k/a Ora Kenneth Baringer
Late of Coal Center, PA
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1720

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent.

Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: David R. Baringer a/k/a David Roy Baringer, 1000 Apple Dr., Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
Attorney: Kristen Anders Bojarski, Esq., 1131 Boyce Road, Suite C, Pittsburgh, PA 15241

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Capanna, Margaret D.
Late of California
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1681

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: Peter Capanna, 418 Malden Rd., Coal Center, PA 15423

Attorney: Lisa J. Buday, Esq., P.O. Box 488, California, PA 15419

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Capanna, Rosemary
Late of California
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1680

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: Peter Capanna, 418 Malden Rd., Coal Center, PA 15423

Attorney: Lisa J. Buday, Esq., P.O. Box 488, California, PA 15419

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Chester, Norman J.
Late of Cokeburg
Washington Co., PA

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Administratrix or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Administratrix without delay.

Administratrix: Kimberly Dawn Peters, c/o

Attorney: Frank Arcuri, Esq., 125 South College St., Washington, PA 15301

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Cimino, Esther M.
Late of Canton Twp.
Washington Co., PA

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executrix or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executrix without delay.

Executrix: Stacey Hillman a/k/a Stacey Kay Hillman, 148 Lakeview Dr., Washington, PA 15301

Attorney: Jeffrey P. Derrico, Esq., Greenlee Derrico Posa, LLC, 60 East Beau St., Washington, PA 15301

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Dinsmore, John Charles
Late of McDonald
Washington Co., PA

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Administratrix or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Administratrix without delay.

Administratrix: Deborah Dinsmore aka Deborah Lynn Dinsmore, 1619 Millers Run Rd., McDonald, PA

15057

Attorney: Thomas O. Vreeland,
Esq., Bassi, Vreeland & Assoc.,
P.C., 62 E. Wheeling St., Washing-
ton, PA 15301

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Downs, James A.

Late of McMurray
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1764

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: Mary Ann Campbell, c/o
Attorney: Timothy J. Giltinan, Esq.,
Two Gateway Center 603 Stanwix
St., Ste. 1679, Pittsburgh, PA
15222-1004

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Doyle, Mary Elizabeth

Late of Canonsburg
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1768

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Administrator CTA or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Administrator CTA without delay.

Administrator CTA: Thomas Joseph
Schneider, 1661 Beamer Ave., New
Kensington, PA 15068
Attorney: Elizabeth A. Male, Esq.,
CPA, 3925 Reed Blvd., Mur-
raysville, PA 15668

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Farabee, Donna J.

Late of Canonsburg
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1779

The Register of Wills has granted

Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: Deborah Farabee, 593
Western Ave., Canonsburg, PA
15317

Attorney: Kathryn A. Gioia, Esq.,
Bowles Rice, Southpointe Center,
1800 Main St., Ste. 200, Can-
onsburg, PA 15317

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Griffith, Carolyn

a/k/a Carolyn J. Griffith
a/k/a Carolyn Joyce Griffith
Late of Canonsburg
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1816

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: Chad R. Griffith a/k/a
Chad Ryan Griffith, 14625 Wishing
Wind Way, Clermont, FL 34711
Attorney: James P. Liekar, Esq.,
38 West Pike Street, Canonsburg,
PA 15317

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Huey, Robert William

a/k/a Robert W. Huey
Late of Centerville
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1400

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: Theresa Andler c/o
Attorney: Tracy L. Zihmer, Esq.,
Zihmer Law Firm, 3244 Washing-
ton Rd., Suite 210, McMurray, PA
15317

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Impiccini, Joseph Howard

a/k/a Joseph H. Impiccini
Late of Brownsville
Washington Co., PA

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executrix or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executrix without delay.

Executrix: Tammy Louise Impicci-
ni, 120 E. End Rd., Brownsville, PA
15417

Attorney: David Bayard Wolf, Esq.,
Wolf, Wagers & Wolf, 1500 Ash-
wood Dr., Suite 1501, Canonsburg,
PA 15317

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Lyle, Charles L.

a/k/a Charles Lee Lyle
Late of Avella
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1669

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: Gregory L. Lyle, 2019
SW 31st Ter., Cape Coral, FL
33914-4942

Attorney: Tamora L. Reese, P.O.
Box 35, Washington, PA 15301

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Mellars, Sharon D.

a/k/a Sharon Mellars
Late of Washington
Washington Co., PA

File No. 63-25-1604

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: Stacie Lynn Tenant a/k/a Stacie L. Tenant, 325 Duncan Ave., Washington, PA 15301
Attorney: E.J. Julian, Esq., 71 N. Main Street, Washington, PA 15301

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Mercier, Lonny L.

a/k/a Lonny Louis Mercier
Late of Mt. Pleasant Twp.
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1701

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: Lonna Washinski, 424 Valley St., McDonald, PA 15057
Attorney: Loretta B. Kendall, Esq., 364 E. Lincoln Ave., McDonald, PA 15057

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Miller, Annabell R.

a/k/a Annabell Ruth Miller
Late of Claysville
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1738

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executrix or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executrix without delay.

Executrix: Shirley Gullette, 202 Sawhill Road, Claysville, PA

15323

Attorney: John M. Smith, Esq.,
Smith Butz, 88 Center Church Rd.,
McMurray, PA 15317

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Pentecost, Martha Lynn

Late of Washington
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1502

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: James Webb Cameron,
c/o Attorney: Samantha J. Gagliardo, Esq., Denton Cohen & Grigsby P.C., Attorneys, 625 Liberty Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15222-3152

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Plunkett, Ruth

a/k/a Ruth C. Plunkett
Late of Township of Chartiers
Washington Co., PA

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: William Plunkett c/o
Attorney: Michael W. Nalli, Esq.,
Nalli, Elias & Associates, P.C., 150 Pleasant Dr., Suite 101, Aliquippa, PA 15001

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Podish, Vicki Ellen

Late of Washington
Washington Co., PA

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Administratrix or

attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Administratrix without delay.

Administratrix: Mykayla Podish,
485 Zediker Station Rd., Washington, PA 15301

Attorney: Kathleen Smith-Delach, Esq., Phillips Froetschel, 310 Grant St., Ste. 700, Pittsburgh, PA 15219

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Ralston, Robert E.

Late of Washinton
Washington Co., PA

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: John E. Ralston, 61 Campbell Lane, Avella, PA 15312
Attorney: Thomas O. Vreeland, Esq., Bassi, Vreeland & Associates, P.C., 62 East Wheeling St., Washington, PA 15301-4804

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Wright, III, William R.

Late of Canonsburg
Washington Co., PA

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Administratrix or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Administratrix without delay.

Administratrix: Dannika Leah Black Wright, 123 Smith Street, Canonsburg, PA 15317

Attorney: Angela D. Kusturiss, Esq., Kusturiss Law Firm, 12 North Jefferson Ave., Canonsburg, PA 15317

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

Zaimis, Carol Lynn

Late of Canton Twp.
Washington Co., PA
File No. 6325-0790

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Administrator or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Administrator without delay.

Administrator: Rebecca Marie Teet,
375 Rose Ave., Harrison City, PA
15636

Attorney: John K. Puskar, Esq., 157
S. Main St., Washington, PA 15301

WCR Vol 106 Issues 23,24,25

SECOND PUBLICATION

Belfiore, Philip J.

a/k/a Philip Belfiore
Late of Borough of Canonsburg
Washington Co., PA

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Co-Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Co-Executor without delay.

Co-Executor: Matthew S. Belfiore
aka Matthew Scott Belfiore, 27
Maryland Ave., Houston, PA
15342, David B. Belfiore aka David
Brian Belfiore, 230 Alexander Ave.,
Strabane, PA 15363,
Attorney: Jeffrey P. Derrico, Esq.,
Greenlee Derrico Posa, LLC, 60 E.
Beau St., Washington, PA 15301

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Carroll, Jean J.

Late of Washington
Washington Co., PA

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to re-

quest all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: M. Marie Ewing aka
Mildred M. Ewing, 129 Wellington
Ave., Washington, PA 15301
Attorney: Jeffrey P. Derrico, Esq.,
Greenlee Derrico Posa, LLC, 60 E.
Beau St., Washington, PA 15301

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Gallimore, Dawn D.

a/k/a Dawn Darlene Gallimore
Late of Canonsburg
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1721

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Administrator or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Administrator without delay.

Administrator: Christopher Daniel
Taylor aka Christopher D. Taylor,
261 Hooks Lane, Canonsburg, PA
15317

Attorney: Christine Brown Murphy,
Esq., Zacharia Brown Law Offices,
108 W. McMurray Rd.,
Canonsburg, PA 15317

WCR Vol 106 Issues 22,23,24

Gomez, Frank

Late of Canonsburg
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1739

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executrix or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executrix without delay.

Executrix: Susanne E. Gomez,
728 Mission Hills Drive,
Canonsburg, PA 15317
Attorney: Eva H. Ahern, Esq.,

Peacock Keller, LLP, 95 West Beau
St., Suite 600, Washington, PA
15301

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Gwilliam, Ralph M.

a/k/a Ralph Marshall Gwilliam
Late of Hickory
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1618

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: Ralph W. Gwilliam II,
140 Avella Rd., Hickory, PA 15340
Attorney: Glenn A. Smith, The El-
der Law Offices of Shields & Boris,
1150 Old Pond Rd., Bridgeville, PA
15017

WCR Vol 106 Issues 22,23,24

Kay, Carolyn Joanne

a/k/a Carolyn J. Kay
a/k/a Carolyn Kay
Late of Washington
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1714

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executrix or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executrix without delay.

Executrix: Donna M. Jones c/o
Attorney: Stephanie M. Sewak,
Esq., Law Office of Stephanie M.
Sewak, P.C., 90 W. Chestnut St.,
Suite 606, Washington, PA 15301

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Naylor, Vaughn T.

Late of Scenery Hill
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1722

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Deced-

dent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Administrator or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Administrator without delay.

Administrator: Virgil Thomas Naylor, 1525 E. National Pike, Scenery Hill, PA 15360
Attorney: James P. Liekar, Esq., 38 W. Pike St., Canonsburg, PA 15317

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Nickerson, Martha A.

a/k/a Martha A. Collins
Late of Bentleyville
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1728

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Administrator or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Administrator without delay.

Administrator: Sherif Collins, 5413 Count Turf Rd., Virginia Beach, VA 23462

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Palfreyman, Erin Catherine

Late of South Strabane Township
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-01718

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Administratrix or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Administratrix without delay.

Administratrix: Betsy Anne Eakin, 20 Valley View Dr., Washington, PA 15301
Attorney: Mark S. Riethmuller, Esq., Speakman, Riethmuller & Allison, 6 S. Main St., Suite 614, Washington, PA 15301

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Raymond, John

Late of Washington
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1740

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Administrator or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Administrator without delay.

Administrator: Angela M. Raymond, 819 9th St., Irwin, PA 15642
Attorney: Kevin M. Hanley, Esq., 3367 Indian Ridge Dr., Moon Twp., PA 15108

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Rose, Willa P.

a/k/a Willa Rose
Late of Canonsburg
Washington Co., PA

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: Michael S. Rose c/o
Attorney: Frank Arcuri, Esq., 125 South College St., Washington, PA 15301

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Shonts, Lori Jean

Late of Coal Center Borough
Washington Co., PA

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Administrator or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Administrator without delay.

Administrator: Chad Oliver Shonts, 108 Federal St., Coal Center, PA 15423
Attorney: Phillip C. Hook, Esq., 430 East Oakview Dr., Suite 101,

Waynesburg, PA 15370

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Trembach, Patricia J.

Late of Washington
Washington Co., PA

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executrix or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executrix without delay.

Executrix: Judy A. Brunasky c/o
Attorney: Frank C. Roney, Jr., Esq., 228 South Main St., Washington, PA 15301

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TRUST NOTICE

TRUSTEES' NOTICE

Elizabeth Peduti Revocable Living Trust dated May 7, 2002 amended October 12, 2018. Elizabeth Peduti, late of Marianna, Washington County, PA, died September 21, 2025.

All persons having claims against the trust are requested to make known the same to the undersigned or their attorney and all persons indebted to the decedent are requested to make payment to the undersigned without delay.

Frank Peduti, Co-Trustee
837 Monterrosa Drive
Myrtle Beach SC 29572

Sharon Laughner, Co-Trustee
2104 East National Pike
Scenery Hill PA 15360

Dorothy A. Milovac, Esquire
Peacock Keller, LLP
95 West Beau Street
Washington, PA 15301

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THIRD PUBLICATION

Baumgartner, David Kevin

Late of Washington
Washington Co., PA

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Administratrix or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Administratrix without delay.

Administratrix: Audrey D. D'Emilio aka Audrey D. D'Emilio, 1120 Sparrow Rd., Norristown, PA 19403
Attorney: Thomas O. Vreeland, Esq., Bassi, Vreeland & Assoc., P.C., 62 E. Wheeling St., Washington, PA 15301

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Davis, Alan Cyrus

a/k/a Alan C. Davis
Late of McMurray
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1695

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: Tracy A. Davis, 173 Roscommon Pl., McMurray, PA 15317

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Farabee, Douglas E.

a/k/a Douglas Eugene Farabee
Late of Canonsburg
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1682

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Administrator or attorney, and all persons indebted to

the decedent to make payment to the Administrator without delay.

Administrator: Deborah E. Farabee aka Deborah Eileen Farabee, 593 Western Ave., Canonsburg, PA 15317

Attorney: Kathryn A. Gioia, Esq., Bowles Rice LLP, 1800 Main Street, Suite 200, Canonsburg, PA 15317

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Himich, Paul Peter

Late of New Eagle
Washington Co., PA

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: Mark Himich, 309 6th Ave., New Eagle, PA 15067
Attorney: Blane A. Black, Esq., 223 Second St., Monongahela, PA 15063

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Izzo, Richard T.

a/k/a Richard Izzo
Late of Carroll Township
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1574

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Administrator or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Administrator without delay.

Administrator: Lorraine Kapolka, 210 Jackson Ave., Rostraver Twp., PA 15012

Attorney: Mark E. Ramsier, 823 Broad Ave., Belle Vernon, PA 15012

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Johnson, Adda May

Late of McMurray

Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-1727

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: James Harry Hixon a/k/a James H. Hixon, 211 Ridgeview Dr., Venetia, PA 15367
Attorney: Donald B. Formoso, Esquire, Peacock Keller, LLP, 95 West Beau St., Suite 600, Washington, PA 15301

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Maggs, Donald Christopher

a/k/a Donald C. Maggs
Late of Borough of Finleyville
Washington Co., PA
File No. 63-25-0813

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Executor or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Executor without delay.

Executor: Charles L. Murray, 763 Steiding Church Rd., Swanton, MO 21561
Attorney: Joseph M. Loy, Esq., 1624 Duchess Lane, Pittsburgh, PA 15236

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Ondulick, Janice L.

Late of Charleroi
Washington Co., PA

The Register of Wills has granted Letters on the Estate of the Decedent. Notice is hereby given to request all persons having claims against the decedent to make known the same to the Co-Executors or attorney, and all persons indebted to the decedent to make payment to the Co-Executors without delay.

Co-Executors: Keith Anthony Ondulick, PO Box 213 Rt. 88, Chester Ave., Roscoe, PA 15477, Daniel Brian Ondulick, 631 McCrea Ave., Donora, PA 15033, Attorney: Herman J. Bigi, Esq., Bigi & Walsh, 337 Fallowfield Ave., Charleroi, PA 15022

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CORPORATION NOTICE

LAWRENCE J. MAIELLO, ESQUIRE, MBM LAW, Attorneys, SouthSide Works, 424 South 27th Street, Ste. 210, Pittsburgh, PA 15203.

Notice is hereby given pursuant to the provisions of the Fictitious Names Act of Pennsylvania that an application for registration of a fictitious name was filed in the office of the Department of State of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the conduct of a business under the fictitious name of **SUNSET ELECTRIC** with its principal office or place of business located at 100 Commercial Boulevard, Washington, PA 15301. The names and addresses of all entities who are parties to the registration are: **SUNSET POWER, LLC**, 100 Commercial Boulevard, Washington, PA 15301.

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NAME CHANGE NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on the date of September 19, 2025, a Petition was filed with the Court of Common Pleas of Washington County, Pennsylvania, Civil Division, at Docket No. 2025-6025 by the Petitioner **Brianna Nicole Knizner** for a change of name to Brianna Nicole Capecea.

The court has fixed the date of January 26, 2026 and time of 9:00 am in the morning in Courtroom #1 in the Washington County Courthouse, Washington, Pennsylvania, for the hearing on said Petition. Any and all persons interested may appear and show cause, if any, why the request of the petitioner should not be granted.

WCR Vol 106 Issue 23

MEMORIAL MINUTES — HON. JOHN FREDERICK BELL

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF WASHINGTON COUNTY
PENNSYLVANIA
CIVIL DIVISION

IN RE: State Bar Admission 121 May 1965

MEMORIAL MINUTES OF THE HONORABLE JOHN FREDERICK BELL

RECORD OF THE MEMORIAL MINUTES IN THE ABOVE CAUSE, BEFORE THE HONORABLE VALARIE COSTANZO, PRESIDENT JUDGE; SENIOR JUDGE KATHERINE B. EMERY; JUDGE JOHN F. DISALLE; JUDGE MICHAEL LUCAS; JUDGE TRACI L. MCDONALD; JUDGE JESSE D. PETTIT; IN COURTROOM NO. 1, ON NOVEMBER 6, 2025

Reported by: Jennifer M. Gale, Court Reporter

Lodged in the Office of the Prothonotary on this 16th day of December, 2025

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PROCEEDING

(Whereupon, the proceedings commenced at 4:03 p.m.)

PRESIDENT JUDGE COSTANZO: Thank you for joining us today as we come together to honor and remember the Honorable John Bell and the contributions he left behind.

Before we begin our reflections, I am honored to introduce the president of the Washington County Bar Association, Deana Stephens.

MS. STEPHENS: Good afternoon. May it please the Court, and welcome to the members of the Washington

County Bar Association, colleagues, guests, and friends of the Honorable Judge John Bell.

I will now ask Tom Vreeland, chair of the Bar Association's Legal History and Biography Committee, to introduce the speakers and any guests for today's memorial minute.

MR. VREELAND: Thank you, Madam President. May it please the Court, ladies and gentlemen, honored guests, family members, I would like to recognize the following persons here in the audience today.

We have the wife of John Bell, the Honorable Janet Moschetta Bell. And I would like to recognize the Honorable Debbie O'Dell Seneca, former judge in the Court of Common Pleas of Washington County, and the Honorable Gary Gilman, former judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Washington County.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my privilege to speak today in honor and in memory of the Honorable John F. Bell. I would like to introduce the first speaker for this afternoon, who is Brian Simmons. Brian H. Simmons in the firm of Buchanan, Ingersoll, and Rooney in Pittsburgh. Brian.

MR. SIMMONS: Thanks, Tom.

Good afternoon. May it please the Court. As Tom was saying, my name is Brian Simmons, and I am a shareholder in the law firm Buchanan, Ingersoll, and Rooney in Pittsburgh. Before that, back in the mid 90s, I served as Judge Terputac and Judge Bell's law clerk while they were senior judges.

Mrs. Bell and Judge Bell, I still call her Mrs. Bell instead of the Honorable, but Mrs. Bell and Judge Bell pretty much adopted me as their own son. And I am honored and delighted to be here today in front of you all.

Before I speak about my own cherished thoughts and memories of Judge Bell, I have been tasked with reading into the record the highlights of Judge Bell's obituary, which was beautifully written by Mrs. Bell.

The Honorable Retired Judge John Frederick Bell, age 88, died peacefully at home on December 18th, 2024, with his wife and son at his side. He was born on June 24, 1936, in Emsworth, Pennsylvania. He was the son of the late Rosanna Cronauer Bell and Winfield Scott Bell. Ultimately, Judge Bell's family moved to Washington, Pennsylvania, which soon became his chosen home for life.

Judge Bell married Janet Moschetta Bell in June of 1982. They have one son, John Winfield Bell, a Broadway music director and conductor.

Judge Bell was a graduate of Washington High School, Washington & Jefferson College, West Virginia University Law School, and attended the Judge Advocate General Core Military Law School at the University of Virginia. A member of ROTC at W&J College, Judge Bell continued his military career after law school by joining the Judge Advocate General Corps of the United States Army, attaining the rank of Captain. There, he was privileged to serve with renowned military law judge Colonel Reid Kennedy, who remained a friend and mentor for life.

Bell was honorably discharged from the Army in 1965 and returned to Washington County to launch his law career. As a nod to Bell's military experience and to his strong personality, his brothers-in-law, all of whom he was very close with, affectionately nicknamed him "Colonel," and the moniker remained for life.

Bell was admitted to practice law before all the Courts of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, all the Courts of the State of West Virginia, and in front of the United States Supreme Court.

Judge Bell set up a private practice in Washington in 1965, but quickly pivoted to public service, becoming an Assistant District Attorney and soon thereafter the First Assistant District Attorney of Washington County from 1966 through 1975.

Judge Bell built a reputation for outstanding courtroom skills, an even temperament, a keen knowledge of the rules of evidence, and a respect for law enforcement. He was privileged to have worked alongside Special State Prosecutor Richard A. Sprague of Philadelphia in the prosecution of the infamous Yablonski murder trials in the early 1970s. It was a source of great pride for Judge Bell that when he ran for Judge in 1975, Colonel Kennedy and Attorney Sprague, both highly distinguished, spoke at his testimonial dinner endorsing his candidacy for judge.

Bell was elected Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Washington County in 1975, and he served two terms from 1976 through 1995 in the criminal, civil, and juvenile divisions.

Sorry. My mouth is getting dry reading.

The majority of his judicial career was spent in criminal court, where Bell presided over many of the most serious and notorious trials in Washington County history. Judge Bell worked tirelessly alongside a skilled and devoted staff, and they ran a highly productive and effective courtroom and chambers. As a Senior Judge from 1996 to 2013, part of which I spent as his law clerk, Judge Bell accepted assignments in Washington and other counties throughout Pennsylvania. He always answered the call of duty without fear or hesitation. During his Senior Judge years, he was also an Adjunct Lecturer at Washington & Jefferson teaching Business Law, and at California University of Pennsylvania teaching Criminal Law.

In his younger years, Judge Bell enjoyed an active volunteer life with many community service and social organizations, such as Chairman of the Washington Democratic Committee, a Democratic State Committee man, Vice Chairman and Chairman of the Washington County Heart Fund, a member of the Washington County Cancer Board, an advisor to Washington County's Child Welfare Agency, a committee man on Child Abuse for the Mental Health Association, and member of the Board of Directors of the Washington Community Theatre, and a lifelong member of the American Legion and the Elks.

Judge Bell was recognized with various awards for his contributions to Washington County, to the Courts, and to society in general. For example, Judge Bell received a Certificate of Meritorious Service from the Washington County Bar Association to, quote, "state that in performance of his duties during his two terms in office, he reflected the highest credit on the judicial system of Pennsylvania," end quote.

He also received a Distinguished Service Citizenship Award from the U.S. Army for, I quote, "outstanding and meritorious service to humanity," a Service Award from the Washington County Juvenile Probation Department, and a Distinguished Law & Justice Award from the County Detectives Association of PA.

Judge Bell was serious about his work, but he was also serious about having fun. He had a keen sense of humor. His ever-burgeoning treasure trove of jokes and witticisms, all delivered with impeccable timing, were well known and circulated throughout the courthouse and the streets of Washington.

One of Judge Bell's greatest joys was watching his son perform on Broadway, at the Kennedy Center, and at theaters around the country. To have some summer fun with his young son one year, Bell even joined the cast of the Washington Community Theater's production of Annie, playing the role of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, one of his personal heroes.

In his own words, Judge Bell said that he lived, quote, "a fulfilled life." He served the public and his country, upheld the rule of law, loved his family dearly, prayed faithfully, and kept his sense of humor sharp to the end. John Bell died in total peace.

With having now read the highlights of Judge Bell's obituary, I would now like to take a few minutes to share my own thoughts and musings of Judge Bell.

Once in a great while, a total stranger walks in your world who changes the trajectory of the rest of your life for the better. Judge Bell was one of those strangers for me. In the summer of 1996, I had just finished my first year of evening law school at Duquesne and was still living at home in Eighty Four, Pennsylvania, when I received a phone call out of the blue from Judge Bell. He introduced himself and informed me one of his friends told him that I went to law school at night and worked full time during the day.

Judge Bell also explained to me that he and Judge Thomas J. Terputac -- God rest his soul -- had recently become senior judges in the Court of Common Pleas of Washington County. They needed a law clerk and wanted to know if I would be interested since I went to law school at night. He also informed me the pay would be \$50 per day. The county could only afford to pay me for three days a week and there would be no health benefits. Still couldn't say no to him.

At that time I was working full time during the day as a special projects manager at Chambers Development Company. The pay and benefits were good, and my aspiration at that time in life was to become general counsel of

Chambers Development Company sometime after I graduated from law school.

Nevertheless, I was intrigued by Judge Bell's phone call, and we agreed to have lunch at the Union Grill the next week. As all of you can imagine, Judge Bell was a joy to have lunch with, and I decided after speaking with my parents to join Judge Bell and Judge Terputac as their law clerk.

Aside from marrying my beautiful wife, it was the best decision I ever made. Judge Bell and Judge Terputac were both wonderful to work with, and I learned areas of the law that I never dreamt existed. In fact, the job was so enjoyable that I began coming in four or five days a week, despite the fact that I would only get paid \$50 per day for three days.

Judge Terputac and Judge Bell were always incredibly nice and patient with me as I was just a law student at the time. I hadn't even graduated from law school. But Judge Bell and I forged a special bond that would grow stronger and stronger as I continued to serve as his law clerk and eventually as a loyal friend and mentee.

As an example of this special bond being forged, Judge Bell and I would eat lunch practically every day at Brother's Pizza across the street from the courthouse. We talked about cases we were handling, but, more importantly, we simply laughed together nearly the whole time about one thing or another.

Another example of this bond being forged is when Judge Bell asked if he could monitor some of my law school classes at night after we finished a full day of work at the courthouse. The law school, of course, said yes to this arrangement. The next thing you knew, Judge Bell and I were leaving the courthouse most days at 4:15 to join Mrs. Bell at their home for a quick dinner before we ventured into Pittsburgh for my classes, most of which were about three hours long.

I will never forget the incredible dinners that Mrs. Bell cooked for us before Judge Bell and I headed into Pittsburgh for nearly three hours worth of classes. Excuse me. I will also never forget the witty banter we all exchanged over dinner with Judge Bell typically being in the middle of it all. It was simply a delight to share time with Judge Bell and Mrs. Bell. We were all becoming fast friends.

One of the best stories and laughs that Judge Bell and I shared as far as him attending evening law school classes with me centers upon the front passenger seat of Judge Bell's Volvo that we drove into Pittsburgh nearly every night.

On the way home one night, the front passenger seat in which I was sitting started to become warmer and warmer. I told Judge Bell my seat was getting hot for some reason, and began to laugh. The laughter was caused by the fact that Judge Bell had accidentally turned on the seat warmer on the front passenger side. At that time, as a country bumpkin from Eighty Four, Pennsylvania, I didn't even know seat warmers in cars existed. Judge Bell and I just laughed and laughed all the way home, mostly of him making fun of me, but it was all good natured.

During my third year of law school, Judge Bell encouraged me with an interview with a number of Pittsburgh law firms to work as a summer associate the summer before my fourth year of evening school in Duquesne instead of working with Chambers Development Company again.

Judge Bell was kind enough to write me letters of recommendation to each of the firms I was interviewing at. I was blessed to receive a number of summer associate offers, I am sure, in large part, because of the recommendation letters Judge Bell wrote for me. And when it came down to accepting one of the offers, Judge Bell was instrumental in telling me which offers he would seriously consider and which offers he would not. I ended up picking the law firm Judge Bell preferred for me, and more than 27 years later, I am still at that same law firm instead of Chambers Development Company or one of its successor companies.

Once I started working full time at the firm, Judge Bell and Mrs. Bell never left my life. They were there for my wedding. They were there after my wife and I started having children. And they were there to see me become a shareholder in the law firm Judge Bell preferred for me many years prior.

Mrs. Bell and Judge Bell also watched my children grow up and took a special interest in both of them. Indeed, my kids' favorite trips were to Judge Bell and Mrs. Bell's house. And my son could play chess with Judge Bell, and Mrs. Bell could dote on my daughter. Those were always special visits full of love and laughter that I and my wife and my children will never forget and treasure forever.

I will also never forget and treasure forever every second I spent with Judge Bell, whether in court, at Brother's Pizza, in his Volvo with heated seats, at Duquesne Law School, at his house, or over the phone. He was a kind, wonderful man who loved and entertained his family, his friends, the law, and humankind in general.

Thank you, again, Mrs. Bell, for affording me the honor and privilege of leading off this memorial minute for Judge Bell. We all loved him and will forever miss him. Thank you.

MR. VREELAND: Thank you, Mr. Simmons.

I would now like to recognize the Honorable Debbie O'Dell.

JUDGE O'DELL SENECA: Good afternoon, Your Honor, Your Honors, the Honorable Janet Moschetta Bell.

This will be emotional for me too, Brian, only I am going to -- I thought Herman was going to go first and give family background. I am going to do it a little different. I am going to take you on a history lesson 51 years ago.

It was 1974. I was 20 years old, and Frank Mascara was serving his first year as county controller in this building. At that time, everything in the county was in this building. And I was -- this was between WVU and going to law school at Duquesne. So Frank offered me a job as an intern in his office. And I think it is ironic that we are in this room for a couple of reasons. One, because Frank and his cast of characters, who you are going to learn about, was one faction in the political scheme in the county at that time.

And right sitting over here was Charlie Sweet, who was the unofficial head of the other faction. And Frank's office was downstairs. If you get to the bottom of the stairs and go towards that end, it was on the right. And everybody was crowded in there. And Mr. Bigi and Mr. Melenzyer were his solicitors. And Charlie Goletski (phonetic) was his budget officer. If you want to hear those stories, talk to Herman.

And Michael Flynn was the county chairman, and he was down here. So we get through this summer, and that is when I got to meet Charlie Sweet, which was a shock for any young person going to law school because if you didn't know Charlie, you missed a character. And Charlie and Frank -- I always thought it was a game. There was always a tension. And Frank would send me up to this courtroom and make me count the lights that were out because he didn't think Charlie took care of his courtroom. And there was always a battle between the two of them.

And every day, if we had a chance, we would go to the GW, down in the basement to the Cherry Restaurant and have lunch. And that is where I met the Honorable John F. Bell.

So, as Brian said, John was probably the wittiest person in the Bar Association. He was quick. He was funny. He was usually kind, but sometimes over here not so much because they just knocked heads all the time. And Frank agitated a little bit.

So I am going to turn the page. I went to law school. I get a call. It was from my parents. My parents were Herman's first clients. And they were very, very close to Frank Mascara. In fact, my dad was one of his first investors in his firm. So naturally, whoever was in that faction was who we would support. So we get a call. And we were told John F. Bell is running for judge. I go home right after the first year and there is this big bell in my parents' business in the front door. It says, "Bell for judge." So I knew what side we were on. And we were campaigning and, folks, that is when politics were fun. Right, Herman? That's when politics were fun. So we campaigned and John got elected, which everybody was happy about.

And then we kind of turn the page, 1977. And this is when my story really begins. I get a call from Max Morgan, ladies and gentlemen, and was a county commissioner downstairs at that time because Mike Flynn had already retired. He was gone.

And that was the wrong camp. And I couldn't understand. I just started practicing law and I don't know why I am getting a call from Max Morgan. So I said, well, you got to go. So I walked in. And I introduced myself to his secretary. And he opens the door and tells me to sit down. I shook his hand. I said, "Mr. Morgan, I don't know why I am here because everybody knew I was with Herman, and I was with Frank, and I was with John. And he said, "I want to be the first commissioner to appoint a woman lawyer to work for Washington County."

Now, mind you, I just hung up my shingle. So even though he was in the wrong camp, I was listening. I said, "Okay. What do you want me to do?" He said, "It is a part-time position in the public defender's office. It pays \$9,000 a year." I don't remember if there were benefits, Brian. "And you can start Monday."

So I went back to my office and I said yes. I did not talk to John, by the way, at the time. I did not talk to Herman. I went ahead and took the job. I walk in; John was the head of the public defender's office. And he wasn't happy about a woman joining his firm. His firm. He considered it his firm, so he gave me Judge Simmons -- assigned me to Judge Simmons.

Now, you older members of the bar know that Judge Simmons was up there and he had juvenile court. So if Paul had five cases, he did five cases. If he had 100 cases, he did 100 cases. So a lot of the lawyers assigned to him weren't happy because he would be here until 9:00 at night. Not so when Debbie was Assistant Public Defender because Paul and I had an understanding. And a few months later, I get a call from the Honorable Judge John Bell. It was like *déjà vu*. He said, "Debbie, come to my office."

Now, John was way over there in that corner. And for those of us that are old, remember the setup. John had one office. His staff, those of us that eventually became part of his staff, the stenographer sat next to the window. I, as his first law clerk, sat right in front of his door, and his Joe -- I can't remember Joe's last name. Joe -- he was a character. Joe was his court crier. And he sat there practically in the hall. Now, over here, picture this. This hallway here, Judge Sweet's chambers were here. There was a stenographer here.

The only copier in the entire courthouse was right there in the hall. And then he had two members of the Court Administrator's Office there. So we had to run all over the place just for Charlie Sweet. I go in to see Judge Bell. And I said, "What do you want to see me about, Your Honor?" He said, "I need you to do something for me." And like I said, it was *déjà vu*.

I said, "What do you want me to do?" He said, "I want you to quit the public defender's office." I had only been there a few months. I said, "Why do you want me to do that?" He said, we are going to create law clerks in Washington County." And I said, "You don't have law clerks?" "No." Judge Sweet didn't believe in law clerks. His secretary helped him do research.

I said, "What makes you think I can help you do that?" And he said, "Because Max Morgan likes you for some reason." And I said, "Well, that's not necessarily true. I am in the wrong camp." And he said, "Yes, but if you have Max on your side, Judge Sweet is not going to back this. Please do this." I said, "Okay. What are we talking about?" And he said, "What do you make in the public defender's office?" And I said "\$9,000, but it's part time." He said, "Okay. I will give you \$11,000. Full time."

I said, "I don't think I can live on that, John." And he said, "Well, we will work something out." So, lo and behold, within a couple of months he worked his end of it. I talked to Max Morgan. Judge Sweet did not fight it. Eventually, in a short period of time, all the judges had law clerks.

So my deal with John was I would stay one year. And there was a reason because of Mr. Bigi sitting right there. And John said, "Okay. Okay. That will work. That will work." And when a year came and I wanted to quit, John was mad at me. And John never got angry very often. He was just a delight to work with and work for.

So I said, "Okay. I will stay a little longer until we find you a law clerk." And I believe -- and Jack can correct me if I am wrong, I think it was Dan Wayland that followed me. So when Dan came and I got to leave, I said, "John, there is a race coming. And I am chomping at the bit." So John let me go gracefully even though he pouted a little bit, and I went to work -- no, he did too, went to work on Herman Bigi's district attorney's race. Again, ladies and gentlemen, that is when politics was fun. So long story short with that, race is over, Herman wins by a very narrow margin. And it went to court.

Back in those days, we had court en banc, which I never liked because, basically, the judge who heard the case would sit and preside and the other two usually nodded and bobbed and then they let that judge write it and here we go. So I thought it was a waste of time, waste of client's money, and you knew what the result was going to be.

However, John wasn't happy with the result, and I will tell you why. For those of you who weren't familiar with that election, there was a woman by the name of Josephine Vincent from Canonsburg. She lost in the primary, and

so she decided she was going to run for the office again, a row office, as an independent. Not only an independent; she created her own party. She had friends that did that.

So when the balance came out, it was democrat, republican, Josephine Vincent. What happened was Judge Sweet made a determination. If you voted straight democrat and you voted for Josephine Vincent, all of those ballots got thrown out. So the election was upended. Due respect to you, Jesse, John Pettit won the election.

Well, I can tell you, my friend Herman Bigi wasn't going to sit for that. And so he was going to take an appeal. In those days, in 1979, you went directly to the Pennsylvania Superior Court.

John calls me again. You know, I had written opinions and helped and worked in research with him for a year and a half. And he said, "I am going to dissent on this." That made me very happy. And he said, "I would appreciate if you help me write this opinion because I know how you write." So there was a couple of us that did it. And we gave him a draft opinion, and he reworded it and put the things he wanted into it and edited it. And it went up. It was two to one.

It went to the supreme court. And they heard it very rapidly. And they said, no, you can't disenfranchise voters, basically. It was a unanimous decision. And in the end, Herman won by just a couple of votes. He will tell you exactly how much it was.

So a group of us ended up working in the DA's office with Herman. And that gave me the opportunity to practice directly in front of John. And I will tell you, those were probably the more delightful times than even working with him.

He was brilliant. And he was talented. He was prepared. And he was the wittiest person I ever knew. We laughed a lot. Come see me at some point and I will tell you about a very infamous letter he received from Judge Sweet and his response. When he retired, you know, he served here as a senior judge for a long time. And it was great to work with him. He was always so accommodating, and you could go to him for advice.

And when he retired I was going to have a stamp made because of that letter, but out of respect to you, Janet, I didn't do it. We just laughed about it. And I will say that when he got ready to retire, I couldn't even imagine this bench being without him because, as far as I was concerned, he was the standard bearer. And his legacy lives on.

Thank you, Mr. Vreeland, for giving me a chance to share that.

MR. VREELAND: Thank you, Judge O'Dell. I would now like to recognize Herman Bigi.

MR. BIGI: May it please this Honorable Court, members of the Washington County Bar Association, the family of John Bell, Judge Janet Moschetta Bell, all of the friends and people who have come here today to honor John Bell.

I dare say that I have probably known John Bell longer than anyone here, including Janet. John and I go back to law school. Now, you all know when you started law school and you were a freshman? Well, I was a freshman and John was a senior and all of you judges know how you felt on that first day. You envied those seniors that were going to graduate because you didn't know if you were going to make it or not because the prof looked at you and said, "Okay. Look to the left, and look to the right. One of you is not going to be here." Well, I figured that is going to be me. All right. But John took me under his wing. And he showed me how to brief a case. I didn't know what briefing a case meant, but I spent a year with John because he graduated and went on to JAG, Judge Advocate General Corps. So I remained. Of course, I had two more years to go.

So John finally came out of the military. And we renewed our relationship. He occupied the -- across the street, the Trust Billing. He, Tom Terputac, Sandy Finder, two great lawyers. Two great trial lawyers.

So anyway, John and I got a little bit involved in politics and campaigned for Jesse Costa. Jesse won. So he appointed John and I as ADAs. Richard DiSalle was our first assistant. So he assigned -- my first case was a homicide case. John and I joined together and prosecuted that case. And we did get a conviction. We tried a couple of more cases together.

Now, along the line, Richard ran for judge and was elected.

John Bell became the First Assistant. And along came the Yablonski murders, if you remember those. Jocko, his daughter, and wife were murdered because Jocko Yablonski was running for president of the United Mine Workers. So John handled that case along with Richard Sprague, the famous prosecutor from Philadelphia. And they succeeded in convicting every one of the people involved in that triple homicide.

Now, John got the idea maybe that he was going to run for judge. And I just didn't picture John campaigning. He was kind of a quiet guy professionally, but I will tell you about his personal life after a while.

Well, anyway, Frank Mascara, we had one heck of a political group. We called it the Mon Valley Political Action Committee. Frank Mascara was John Bell's chairman of his campaign. Well, you know it was a tough campaign because George Hanna was a judge. And George Hanna was a very good judge and a good person.

I remember staying up all night in the courthouse here because it didn't seem that John was doing that great initially. But he finally started surging ahead and won and became a judge of Washington County.

Now, John is my cousin, of course. And he was tough on me. And I tried some cases before Judge Bell. And you defense attorneys know that if you don't have the facts on your case, you try that case at the appellate court because you may get it reversed up there. And I never let John forget this. I said, "John, get rid of that prosecution complex." So I tried that. I defended that case and I tried it for the Superior Court.

Well, the jury convicted this character in no time. I took the case. And I loved that I got John Bell reversed. You know? So the case was tried again. The guy is convicted. He is in jail again. Okay.

Now, you know John had a very light side. All those that knew him here, he was a tough judge. They called him the hanging judge. And he was.

But anyway, we had a cabin in Everett, PA. It is five miles from Bedford, which is the county seat of Bedford County. It's been there since 1934. A group of guys, my dad included, my uncle, and some others, built this cabin. And it is still there today. So John told me he liked to fish. I said okay, so we took John fishing with us for the weekend, my dad and some other guys.

Do you know what John's -- all of you anglers sure know what a fishing tackle box is. It's a big metal box. And you have your lures, your sinkers, and everything in there. Do you know what John Bell's fishing tackle was? A Tip Top plastic bag, empty bread bag. In there he had a couple of bobbers and anchors and sinkers and so forth. Okay. But I must say, eventually he did get himself a nice tackle box. Well, we kind of made fun of him in a good way, Janet. Okay.

Anyway, a couple of stories that I never let John forget. John and I took the boat out fishing. Now, the Juniata River, about waist-deep, that's all, a very slow-moving stream. So John said, "I will row. I will take that part." Okay. Fine. You know, we get in the boat. It looked like a nice place to anchor. I said, "This looks like a good place, John. I think we are going to catch some fish here." So John said, "Okay. I will anchor." I heard a splash. Okay. So we are fishing. After a while I said, "John, you know, the environment has changed here. It doesn't seem like we are in the same place where you allegedly anchored." Well, what happened is he threw the anchor in all right, but it weren't connected to the boat, so we lost the anchor. Now, he was a good fisherman.

One more story, Janet. Janet knows this story. John, my dad, and I were on-shore fishing. So John said, "I am going to take the boat out myself if you guys don't want to go out because I think that's a nice place," about a 45-degree angle from where we were.

He thought he had seen some fish jumping. "Do you want to go with me?" I said, "No, you go ahead, John. Go ahead." So John gets in the boat and he rows out. Now, this time, of course, he anchors no problem. But you know he did the thing a fisherman and all you who fish should not do. He took up in the boat. Now, we watched him, say, about 40 yards away. He goes back and goes with it. He goes out of the boat, down into the water. Janet knows the story.

He comes up, his glasses hanging on his ear. He had a hook in his hand. It's a superficial wound, of course. So

John came back in, of course, but those are just a couple of amusing stories. John was a pretty good fisherman. And you know what, when John was languishing, his illness, he wasn't doing very well, we would still be going up to the camp. And I would take my cell phone -- hi, Janet -- and I would take a picture. And I would pretend like I was some type of announcer, and I would talk about where the famous angler -- international famous angler John Bell fell in the water. And I would send that to John. And Janet would show him. And, you know, I felt good because I got some laughs in the last few days of his life. And I felt good about that.

Anyway, John did get a nice tackle box. He showed he was a good fisherman, Janet. He didn't fall out of the boat anymore. And he made sure when we anchored that the anchor was tied to the boat. But I am going to miss John, of course.

He was both a very austere, serious, tough judge, but get him away from the bench, he had one heck of a humor, a one heck of a personality. He liked to tell jokes. He liked to make fun of himself. You know, John served his profession honorably. He served his country honorably. And as we say to all veterans at these ceremonies, which I have attended many, very many of my veteran friends, John, job well done. Rest in peace. I salute you, sir. Thank you.

MR. VREELAND: Thank you, Mr. Bigi.

I will now like to recognize Frank Magone -- I'm sorry. Michael Fagella. Michael.

MR. FAGELLA: I will try to be brief.

Judges, fellow attorneys, I succeeded Debbie as Judge Bell's law clerk. There were two spots open as law clerks, one for Judge Bell and one for Judge Terputac. Dan Svidro and I, on the same day, we came and interviewed. And we interviewed with each judge. And at the end of the day, Judge Bell called me up and he says, "Well, you know, we liked you both. And I will take you."

Now, I always think I got the better end of that deal because, well, as much as I like Judge Terputac, I didn't want to spend the next five years handling the Ciapponi estate when I could and did work with Judge Bell's staff. They became like a second family. Judge Bell was great. Great mentor, very hardworking, knew everything about criminal law. And he would also -- he was fun to be with. He would make fun of himself, make fun of the attorneys. He would really explain the cases to you, tell you how to pick a jury, who he liked, who he didn't. I never had trial tactics. Everything I learned about trying a case I got from Judge Bell.

And a lot of the cases were very impactful. I mean, there were interesting cases. A lot of times when you would go to your annual CLEs with the PDAA the DA's Association, they would be cases Judge Bell decided, and that is a real treat to somebody starting law. He was also good to me in that, with his help, I was appointed magistrate back in the '70s. And he helped me and guided my way. He was a true friend.

Now, as a judge, he really fit as a judge. He was a no-nonsense guy, but a lot of decisions, he was not always for the prosecution. I know that may be hard, especially for Mr. Blackwell, to believe, but every now and then he would find adversely to the prosecution.

He -- his courtroom -- a no-nonsense judge in this very courtroom, when you walked in, he was in charge. You know, if the attorneys would get a little testy, he would call you up, knock that stuff off. You would be wise to do that. Just one example. When they first initiated guidelines, Judge Bell sat me down as a law clerk. He said, "Go down to Pittsburgh. See what this is all about."

I come back up. I said, well, there's these guidelines. You have to stay within this range. And back then it was very basic. I said, "If you deviate from that, you have to give your explanation." Well, that burned him up. "You mean to tell me I got to answer to some judge in Philadelphia? Nobody is going to tell me what to do with my cases." That is the guy he was. Now, he did follow the guidelines, but it shows you his confidence. He was quick. He didn't need second thoughts once about a ruling. He made his decision and that was it.

Now, I too remember when he retired, and this is probably the only time I disagreed with him. When he retired, I said, well, you are going to be missed. He said, "Nah." Excuse me. "They won't miss me." You know, "The system of each goes on." And I think he was wrong in that he is missed. And that is all I have to say.

MR. VREELAND: Thank you, Mr. Fagella.

May it please the Court, I have received three pieces of correspondence that I have been asked to read into the record. And at this point I would like to do that.

The first letter is from **Frank Magone**. Frank was a member of the Washington County Bar Association. His letter reads as follows:

"I initially met the Honorable John F. Bell and his wife, the Honorable Janet Moschetta Bell, in 1978 when I started my legal career as one of the first law clerks in Washington County, along with the Honorable Debbie O'Dell Seneca and Janette Baisley, Esquire.

"Judge Bell was a mentor to me in both the law and life. He was everything that a judge should be: highly respected and intelligent, firm and decisive. He always upheld the rule of law. He was also everything that a husband, father, and friend should be: kind, compassionate, loyal, and supportive. Judge Bell had a tremendous sense of humor. To me, Judge Bell and Judge Moschetta Bell, were royalty. He had a deep love for God, Judge Moschetta Bell, and their son, John.

"I am truly blessed to have known Judge Bell. Sincerely, Frank Magone, Esquire."

The second letter is from **Frank Kosir, Jr.** Frank Kosir, Jr. is a member of the Allegheny County Bar and frequently lectures during winter bench bar -- at our winter bench bars in January on different aspects of real estate law and so forth.

Frank Kosir sent me this letter:

"Good evening, Tom." He says, "I am unable to attend the Memorial Minute for Judge Bell this Thursday. And I hope that the below can be read into the record:

"You could say that Judge Bell was my first law professor, as the first two law courses that I ever took were his Business Law I and II classes during my senior year at W&J. Judge Bell was an engaging and thoughtful professor who cared deeply for his students. During the spring 1998 semester, Judge Bell cancelled class for one day and instead invited the entire class to attend oral arguments in his courtroom. Afterwards, he said that he looked forward to each of us appearing before him someday. It took approximately five years before I had that opportunity, and his first comment to me was, 'What took you so long to get back here?'

"When a dear teacher, friend, or colleague passes on, we often reflect upon how their presence impacted our lives. I can honestly say that Judge Bell had a profound impact not only on my professional life, but also my personal life. In May of 2005, I was tasked with presenting an uncontested motion and Judge Bell was serving as Judge of Term. I arrived at his courtroom at the scheduled time and found the doors locked. Sitting there on the bench was an incredibly attractive young lady attorney, whom I proceeded to spend the next fifteen minutes speaking with.

"Eventually, Judge Bell arrived, and I departed the courthouse that day with my signed order and her phone number. I married that lovely young attorney in 2008 and, seventeen years and two daughters later, I remain forever grateful to Judge Bell for not being on time that morning.

"Judge Bell was a true gentleman, a dedicated public servant, and a man of honor. His contributions to both the legal profession and to our community cannot be overstated. May his memory be a blessing.

Frank Kosir, Jr."

The last letter I have to read is a letter that was provided to me by the Honorable Janet Moschetta Bell. And this letter is from **John Woodward**.

John Woodward is currently a professor at Boston University. And he was a lifelong family friend of the Bells. John Woodward was the son of John Woodward and Olga Woodward, the former recorder of deeds here in Washington County. Janet related to me and shared with me the fact that when John Woodward was a little boy and Olga Woodward became the full-time recorder of deeds after her husband had passed, there was nobody to watch

the little boy during the day. This was before day care and preschool and all of that kind of stuff. So John Woodward, the little boy John Woodward, Jr., came to work with mommy.

And when she was busy, she would bring him up to John Bell's courtroom, and John would watch him. So this is a letter from John and his wife to Janet. And it is John and Shirley:

"Janet and John, Shirley joins me in expressing our condolences on your loss. We regret that we could not be at the funeral service.

"Something tells me the judge would prefer that I have a drink in his memory in London, which I have done repeatedly over the past few days.

"Your text informing me of his passing hit hard. When I saw John in New York City in November, he told me of the marked physical decline of the judge," John meaning John, Jr., Janet and John's son. "But I guess sometimes we, or at least I in my case, can understand things conceptually but not in reality.

"For me, the judge's passing is the end of an era. He was in so many ways my last link to the rough-and-tumble world of Washington County politics that I had experienced as a boy.

"I knew and respected and loved the judge since I first met him as a young child. I think my father introduced me to him at Paul's -- wasn't that the blind proprietor named Paul? -- at the snack stand at the courthouse when I was eight. He must have been the assistant DA for Jess Costa in those long-ago remarkably vivid days in my memory.

"The judge was the embodiment of the rule of law, love of family, dedication to community, and decency. In our current political age where, sadly, crassness and arrogance are associated with desirable leadership qualities, the judge epitomized the old-school and true-school values of respect for others and humility.

"His sense of humor was unparalleled. Quick witted, funny, but never mean-spirited. He could laugh at himself. He understood human nature, which is why he was a great judge. I will miss him. I am blessed to have so many positive memories of the judge. They make his loss easier to accept. Please know that Shirley and I are thinking of you at this difficult time. Sincerely, John and Shirley Woodward.

I would now like to recognize the Honorable Janet Moschetta Bell.

JUDGE MOSCHETTA BELL: May it please this Honorable Court, family, friends, and colleagues. The first chapter of my life with John Bell began right here in the Washington County Courthouse, Courtroom No. 3. Our professional and personal lifelines began to intersect after law school and working at a couple of clerkships in Allegheny County and spending a year in the Attorney General's Office. I returned to Washington County to practice law in 1977 and '78.

John was on the bench having been elected in 1975 in an exciting campaign where my brothers were some of his greatest supporters. John told my brother Jerry to tell me that I should apply for an assistant district attorney's job with DA Jess Costa, and that I would gain important trial and courtroom experience in that way.

I wrote a letter of application enclosing my resume. Jess scheduled a meeting. And without more he said, "Moschetta, I hear you are a workhorse. Judge Bell is a workhorse. I am assigning you to his courtroom, which very active. Okay. Now, get to work." I thanked him. And that was the only directive that I ever had from Jess. And that is just the way things rolled in those years.

I began my assignment immediately. My job is part time at about \$7,500 per year. And I worked more than full time to cover the load. On pleader days we did 20 in the morning and 20 in the afternoon. We litigated along with the criminal defense bar every motion imaginable in criminal court. We did nonjury and jury trials, post-trial motions.

John's knowledge of the Pennsylvania Rules of Evidence was superior to anyone I had ever worked with. I admired the depth and breadth of his legal knowledge, his easy but commanding control of the courtroom, his respect for attorneys and litigants, his commitment to doing justice with each and every case, and, when appropriate, his sharp wit and humor, and, finally, his ability to sum up everything in a few words.

In those days, every case file was paper. At day's end, I carried a stack of files back to the DA's office to the first floor. Now, John sat all day in one of these comfortable chairs provided for the judges. I, however, in three-inch heels, stood all day at the bar on those marble floors. I barely got to the front door of the DA's office and the secretary would tell me that Judge Bell was on the phone for me. He wanted me to join him for dinner. I accepted, and that began the first chapter of our story together that lasted nearly 48 years, counting courtship and marriage.

As our relationship blossomed, I was not able to work in his courtroom anymore, and I was assigned to other judges. Eventually, I left the DA's office and moved on. We married in June of 1982, and 11 months later, our wonderful son arrived.

John was a strong judge and person. He worked every day whether he was sick or well. He did not take any vacations during his first four or five years on the bench. When we married, he was in his sixth year on the bench. He would take only a one-week wedding trip.

John carried a heavy load of criminal cases and was assigned to nearly every criminal homicide case from first-degree death penalty cases to general homicide. He had been the first assistant DA for years, and criminal court was where he liked to be. Of course, he handled many other assignments, but he was happiest with his criminal work.

Very few judges granted changes of venue or venue motions filed by defense attorneys in high-profile cases. These were cases where the defense alleged the pretrial publicity was so extensive that it impacted the defendant's ability to be fairly judged by his peers locally. When he thought appropriate, John granted such a motion in a very few high-profile, first-degree death penalty cases.

Roland Steele and William "Tippy" Wallace come to mind. In those cases, jurors were selected from surrounding counties but bused to Washington where they would be housed in hotels for the entire trial. Three meals a day have to be provided. All publicity was screened and prohibited. Jurors would come down with medical, dental, family issues, and they all have to be handled properly and timely during the night so that the trial could proceed the next morning. Think of managing 16 out-of-town guests during a first-degree death penalty homicide trial. John and his staff worked long hours together. Nobody complained. It was important and exciting work.

Yes, you have heard about John's sense of humor, his wit, his storytelling ability, and his prized treasure chest of jokes, which he constantly updated with the late Judge Richard DiSalle.

The two of them would call each other frequently, never talking about cases or the law, always swapping the newest and the funniest stories and jokes. Their laughter was contagious.

John loved music, but the sound of laughter was his favorite music and medicine. When I gave John a handful of pills in those last months, he would say, "Janet, you know what the best medicine is, don't you? Laughter. Not those pills."

John kept the music playing in our relationship from day one to the last day. For, you see, John reached and touched people from all walks of life through his humor. He made people laugh and created a feeling of warmth and fellowship with those around him.

Our life story ended December 18th, 2024. John told me that he wanted me to continue living and creating a life of joy and happiness for our son and for myself. I promised him that I would do my best, that I would try to keep the music playing for the remainder of my life.

Today is the end of the last chapter of our story together, fittingly, right here in the courthouse, where it all began, but the love continues on. John's last words to John Winfield and me were so poignant that I would like to share them with you today. He said, "I love you both deeply. I want you to enjoy the remainder of your lives. I enjoyed my life. I am joining my mother and my dad, my two sisters and my brother." And with all of the confidence in the world, he said, "I will see the two of you again on the other side." Now, those are the words of a profoundly loving and forward-looking man.

Let me conclude by saying John led by example. He provided John Winfield and me a live tutorial on how to pass with dignity, grace, faith, good humor, and in total peace. Thank you for your attendance here today and especially for those who shared their memories of my husband, John F. Bell. Thank you, very much.

MR. VREELAND: Thank you, Judge Moschetta Bell.

I would be remiss if I didn't say a few words. And Janet reminded me of what those words could be. I practiced in front of John Bell from almost the first moment after I was admitted to the bar. I defended and represented the defense in three capital cases in front of Judge Bell over the course of approximately four years.

The first capital case was less -- well, almost a year out of law school. And Judge Bell was an efficient, friendly, sense-of-humor judge, but Herman referred to him as a hanging judge. We all referred to him at the time as the super prosecutor. Judge Bell had the knack for making up for what the DA perhaps or what the assistant DA didn't do in court to make the case move forward and to also achieve the prosecutor's requested result.

The first capital case ended in a hung jury. Defense one, Judge Bell zero. The second capital case ended up in a conviction and a death penalty. Direct appeal to the Superior Court overturned the death penalty. Defense two, Judge Bell zero.

The third case ended up with a prosecution victory. Death penalty appeal to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, an affirmance of that appeal of the death penalty. And roughly 22 years later, I think it was, the Third Circuit Court of Appeals overturned the death penalty. And the defendant still remains, to this day, in prison for life. But I had to look at this as defense three, Judge Bell zero.

John Bell was always kind to me. We had a good relationship in court, out of court; as everybody has indicated, a sentence of humor, quick wit. And I treasure my friendship with John Bell even though we were always on the opposite side of this bar in this courtroom. John Bell was a good man, a good father, and a good husband. And I cherish the moments I had with him both in argument and in friendship.

May it please the Court, any comments?

JUDGE LUCAS: May it please the fellow members of court, Judge Moschetta Bell.

Sometimes you never know how much a person influences you until you try to do what they did. I first met Judge Bell when I was a precocious eight-year-old boy brought to this courthouse by Melvin Bassi. It was during the summer vacation and my parents were friends of his, so he brought me here to meet a whole cast of characters. I met Shirley Inferdel at the sheriff's office, Olga in the recorder of deeds office, and then Mr. Bassi brought me upstairs to a courtroom to meet a judge that he was very impressed with.

And when we walked into the courtroom, he was doing a sentencing. After the sentencing, we went back into chambers, and I met Judge Bell. He was very kind and engaging and funny. After the visit he closed by asking me, "Now, what did you learn today?" I was a brash, as I said, precocious city kid. And I blurted out, I thought you were kind of light on the sentence. He roared with laughter. And that was the first lesson.

The second time I met John Bell was 17 years later in this courtroom when I fought and tried my first case in this courthouse. It was a big case. Really big case. I was representing a person who was seeking to adversely possess a victory garden on a paper street in Ellsworth.

He ruled against me. I appealed to the Superior Court. He was affirmed. Lesson number two was then learned: He read case law very closely, very fine distinctions. And I learned that day and from that experience that if I was ever going to represent a client and win in the courtroom, I needed to read case law like John Bell.

Over the next many years, I appeared in front of him hundreds of times. Initially, as a private defense attorney and then as a prosecutor. He had an encyclopedic knowledge of the rules of procedure and the rules of evidence.

In contested proceedings, if the jury wasn't there, the first five to ten minutes was his recitation of the procedural history, and if there had been prior evidentiary proceedings, he would concisely summarize testimony of witnesses by name, and often did that without a note.

Now, he combined those skills with his dry wit. It oftentimes disarmed anxiety-ridden lawyers who were about to surrender to the urge to let that inner beast out in court. He would, in a calm and firm manner, with all of those skills at his disposal, diffuse time bombs that include repetitive arguments, ad hominem attacks on each other, and even some table pounding.

For me, the countless lessons that I learned while appearing before him was probably the greatest law school or greatest training for anyone who wanted to take the bench. In 2014, when I took the bench, I realized just how much effort, work, trial and error a young judge would have to go through to try to do what he did in the courtroom every day.

Now, there are some of you in this room, and I can look at you, but I won't call you out, who probably saw Bill Mazerowski play second base. Those of you know well what I am about to say. It's that the great thing about Maz was he could make something look routine that others had to make look spectacular. John Bell was the Maz of judges. He made it look easy.

He was so skilled in his craft that you didn't really appreciate in the moment just how good he was. So in closing, Janet, I want to say to both you and John how much I appreciate the many kindnesses over the years. I appreciate his patience with that petulant eight-year-old; his patience with that brass, young, wannabe trial lawyer; his patience with that overworked and stressed-out prosecutor, and to the young judge he looked in on from time to time and took to lunch at the Elks to meet all of his buddies. I most appreciate the example he demonstrated daily in practicing the craft of being a judge, a great model for anyone who aspires to do it. Thank you.

JUDGE EMERY: I was elected as a judge to fill the vacancy of Judge Bell's decision not to seek retention. So I had big shoes to fill. He welcomed me and helped me in so many ways. He had his staff prepare transcripts and orders covering all kinds of motions in criminal court because I was going to take over some of his docket, but I learned the most about Judge Bell after he left as a full-time judge.

He was on the bench for 20 years and did criminal most of the time, I believe. And he had this reputation of being very strict and straightforward and tough. But as defendant after defendant came before me, I learned how much they respected him. They felt heard by him. They would say that. Now, they didn't agree with the sentence, let me assure you of that, but they felt that they got a fair shake from him as to the actual hearing. And there are many nonjury trials I saw through the years that he found in favor of the defense. So he really had this wonderful reputation that will live on.

His self-deprecating humor and funny stories, he always lit up the room, wherever he was. And his legacy for Washington County will be forever remembered by the court and a lasting legacy for the justice of Washington County.

JUDGE DISALLE: Good afternoon, everybody. I was privileged to know Judge Bell since I was a child. He and my father, Richard DiSalle, as you heard, were great friends. They were assistant DAs together and colleagues together, and they golfed together. And we, my brother and I, got to play in a foursome with them a few times.

And although my dad and John Bell were avid golfers, they weren't really good golfers. The only one that had any skill on the golf course was my brother, Fran. But it was a memorable time. We had the utmost respect for him.

The two of them making the jokes together on the golf course and for the rest of their lives right up until the end, they were sharing those jokes. I could never understand, one, where they got them and, two, how they could remember the details of those jokes. My father, even as he started to slip a bit, could still remember a joke more than anything. But I had the utmost respect for them. And like I said, they were both assistant DA's together. And Mike Figone and I had to constantly be reminded that we had missed the golden age of the DA's office, that we could never aspire to what they had accomplished in their day.

But his legacy was impeccable. Whenever you came to chambers, invariably, he was standing there or sitting reading the advanced sheets. He also had the latest case law at his fingertips. And he remembered it chapter and verse, so there was no disputing the law with him. Even though he had known me since a child and we were -- he was friends of our family, I didn't get any quarter if I was late or misquoting law or what have you. He would call me on it. I tried my first jury trial in front of him, and I tried criminal and civil.

I remember one particular incident. It was a more serious case. And I was downstairs trying to prepare a witness. And I come up, and we were on a break. And I come up and not only is he on the bench waiting for me, but the whole jury is in the box. And I go, oh, boy. He is admonishing me. "We are ready. Where are you, Mr. DiSalle?" But it was really an honor and a privilege to have known him and also be a colleague of his and a colleague of Janet's.

And I recall my mother hosting a dinner where -- a historic moment with John Bell and him having Janet Bell over. And that may be one of the first dinners that they had together. So it was an honor and a privilege for me and for my family to have known him. It was an honor to practice in front of him. It was an honor to call him colleague, and it is an honor and a privilege for all of us, and all of the members of the bar, to have his legacy and to be a part of that. Thank you, very much.

PRESIDENT JUDGE COSTANZO: I first met Judge Bell when I started my career in the district attorney's office some 30 years ago. As a young prosecutor, I remember the initial intimidation I felt when appearing before him. And he had a very stern demeanor, which commanded respect. And to be totally honest, a little bit of apprehension, actually, a lot of apprehension in those early days. But as I grew to know him, I came to see beyond that initial impression that I had.

Judge Bell was not only fair and witty, but also a mentor who guided me with his kindness and with his wisdom. In time, I realized the strength of his character and the genuine care that he had for the law and for everyone that appeared before him. He was a role model who shaped not only my professional journey, but also my perspective on what it means to be a compassionate and a fair judge.

As we remember him today, we celebrate not just his legacy in the courtroom, but the positive impact that he had on all of us. May his memory continue to inspire and guide us all. We will conclude this proceeding today. And we will do so in the memory of our departed colleague, the Honorable John F. Bell. All rise.

(Whereupon, proceedings concluded at 5:21 p.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence are contained fully and accurately in the stenographic notes taken by me of the hearing of the above-cause and that this is a correct transcript of the same.

/s/Jennifer M. Gale

JENNIFER M. GALE

Court Reporter

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