

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF LYCOMING COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE: RESOLUTIONS IN THE DEATH OF : NO. CV-2021-0004

CHARLES A. SZYBIST, ESQUIRE :

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

BEFORE: THE LYCOMING COUNTY BENCH AND BAR

DATE: Tuesday, June 15, 2021; 4:00 p.m.

PLACE: Lycoming County Courthouse  
Courtroom No. 1 (via Zoom)  
48 West Third Street  
Williamsport, Pennsylvania

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REPORTED BY:

LINDA S. WETTLAUFER  
Official Court Reporter  
Lycoming County Courthouse

Linda S. Wettlaufer, RMR  
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Lycoming County

P R O C E E D I N G S

JUDGE BUTTS: Welcome everyone. This afternoon we have the privilege of holding a memorial service for a long-time member and former president of the Lycoming County Law Association, Charlie or Charles A. Szybist.

We recognize and appreciate the attendance of Charlie's family and the members that are here to join us for this memorial service. All five of his children are here, Mary, Mark, Kathy, Bob, and Jim. So welcome to all of you for being here and being present to celebrate this day with us.

On April 26th of this year, I appointed a committee to prepare a report and resolution recognizing the life and accomplishments of Mr. Szybist. Ironically enough, I and Tammy Taylor are the co-chairs of that committee; and we served along with Mark, his son, Mark Szybist, and DJ Page and Kate Shimer.

So I'm going to recognize myself as one of the members to present the resolutions. But I also wanted to mention that I know that Judge McCoy is here; but, unfortunately, Judge Lovecchio is out of town on vacation. Judge Tira is in a custody trial and is, unfortunately, probably not going to be able to be in attendance here; and the same with Judge Linhardt.

So they all express their condolences to the family, and they want to say that they're very sorry that they weren't able to join us here today. So with that, I will read the resolutions that were prepared by the committee.

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1           The Honorable Nancy L. Butts, Judge, President Judge  
2 of the Court of Common Pleas, appointed the undersigned  
3 Committee to draft appropriate resolutions memorializing the  
4 life of Charles A. Szybist, Esquire. And that would have been  
5 on April 26th of this year.

6           These resolutions were drafted and to be presented at  
7 a special session of Court to be held on June 15th, 2021; and  
8 the committee reports as follows:

9           Charles Alfred Szybist was born on October 13th, 1928,  
10 in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. He died on February 3, 2021, at  
11 the age of 92.

12           He was the elder of two children born to Mary Victoria  
13 Krezmer Szybist and Stanley Joseph Szybist. In addition to his  
14 parents, he was preceded in death by his sister, Rita Mae  
15 Szybist Reichard.

16           He grew up in Newberry across the street from the  
17 Sweet's Steel Plant and the Armour Leather Tannery. He played  
18 baseball for the Holy Rosary parish team and became an Eagle  
19 Scout. During high school, he worked at the Home Dairy; on  
20 summer breaks from college, he worked for the Pennsylvania  
21 Railroad in Newberry.

22           He graduated from Williamsport High School in 1946.  
23 He attended the University of Pennsylvania with the support of a  
24 State Senate scholarship awarded by Senator John Snowden,  
25 graduating in 1950 with a degree in chemistry. He enrolled at

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1 the Temple University School of Law and received his law degree  
2 in 1952.

3 He enlisted in the United States Air Force and  
4 received an Honorable Discharge with the rank of Second  
5 Lieutenant in 1953.

6 When Charlie returned to Williamsport, his first  
7 attorney position was with the firm of Bidelspacher and  
8 Bidelspacher. One notable case from his early years of practice  
9 was a court appointment to represent George "Junior" Taylor, who  
10 was charged with, and subsequently convicted of, the murder of  
11 alleged communist William Walter Remington at the Lewisburg  
12 Penitentiary.

13 In 1969, Charlie married Carla Gerber and together  
14 they were devoted parents to five children: Mary Carla, Mark,  
15 Kathleen, Robert and James. In the 1970's and '80's, he  
16 attended countless ball games, concerts, plays and performances,  
17 always putting his children first, and then putting them all  
18 through college. Carla passed away in 2013.

19 Charlie eventually established his own law practice in  
20 Williamsport, first working in the Penn Tower building and then  
21 relocating to 423 Mulberry Street where his practice remained  
22 for the rest of his legal career. For much of his career, he  
23 specialized in collections, a field he learned about from law  
24 school friends. No one wanted to get into collections work in  
25 Williamsport, he said, because it was seen as "grubby". He did

1 the work with honor and compassion.

2 Primarily a solo-practitioner, Charlie mentored a few  
3 associates from time to time including Joel McDermott and three  
4 members of our Committee, Nancy Butts, Kate Shimer, and his son,  
5 Mark Szybist.

6 Charlie eventually specialized in bankruptcy law and  
7 served as a Chapter 7 bankruptcy trustee for the United States  
8 District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania for many  
9 years beginning in the 1980's. One of the more notable cases he  
10 was trustee for was United States versus Zerbach and Mervis,  
11 involving the sale of Taylorcraft Aviation Corporation. The  
12 Defendants were convicted of bankruptcy fraud.

13 Charlie was especially proud on December 21, 2020,  
14 when he moved the admission of his daughter, Kathleen, to the  
15 several courts of Lycoming County. He was proud, once again, on  
16 December 13, 2004, when he moved the admission of his son, Mark.

17 Charlie was a dedicated and active member of the  
18 Lycoming Law Association, serving as its president in 1972. At  
19 the 2003 annual banquet, Charlie was honored as a 50-year member  
20 of the organization. He was recognized at the 2008 annual  
21 banquet as a past president and at the 2015 annual banquet for  
22 his military service.

23 Charlie was also devoted to civic life in  
24 Williamsport. He was an active member of the Holy Rosary and  
25 St. Joseph the Worker Catholic communities. He served as

1 Executive Director of the Williamsport Parking Authority, Bowman  
2 Field Commissioner, and Assistant City Solicitor for the City of  
3 Williamsport. He was a member of the Ross Club, the Polish  
4 Club, the Knights of Columbus, the Williamsport Jaycees (Junior  
5 Chamber of Commerce) and the Young Men's Republican Club.

6 **AND NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that as a result of  
7 the passing of Charles A. Szybist, the Bar of Lycoming County  
8 has lost a respected and conscientious member who upheld and  
9 exemplified the highest traditions of the legal profession;  
10 Williamsport has lost a valued participant in the community; his  
11 family has lost a devoted, kind and loving father and  
12 grandfather; and his friends and acquaintances have lost a fine  
13 gentleman.

14 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that we, the undersigned,  
15 joined in by all members of the Lycoming County Bar, do hereby  
16 recognize and mourn the passing of Charles A. Szybist.

17 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this Court and this Bar do  
18 hereby extend to Charles A. Szybist's children and grandchildren  
19 our deep and heartfelt expression of sympathy.

20 **AND BE IT RESOLVED FINALLY** that this Resolution be  
21 spread at length upon the records of the Court of Common Pleas  
22 of Lycoming County, and that copies be sent to his children and  
23 published in the Lycoming Reporter. Respectfully submitted,  
24 myself; Tammy Taylor, Esquire, co-chair; Mark Szybist, Esquire;  
25 Magisterial District Judge Allen P. Page, III; and Katherine R.

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1 Shimer, Esquire.

2 So I'm going to defer any comments that I make until  
3 the very end with the judicial comments. So, Tammy, Ms. Taylor,  
4 I'm going to turn it over to you.

5 MS. TAYLOR: Thank you, Your Honor. I just want to  
6 make one correction because Kathy was probably shocked when you  
7 said he moved her admission in 2020. It was really 2000.

8 THE COURT: I'm sorry. I misspoke. I'm sorry. I  
9 apologize.

10 MS. TAYLOR: May it please the Court, fellow members  
11 of the bar, and friends and family of Charlie Szybist. I knew  
12 Charlie all my life. When I was born, my father owned a gas  
13 station in Newberry; and Charlie was a regular customer.

14 And in the early '70's, it appeared that the  
15 off-street ramp for the Fourth Street ramp from Route 15 was  
16 going to take my dad's business. And I'm guessing, because I  
17 was very little, that he and Charlie had a discussion about the  
18 fact that he was going to need a new line of work.

19 And so a partnership was formed. And Charlie and my  
20 dad purchased Park Pizza over by Memorial Park, and my dad  
21 started making pizzas. And Charlie and my dad also had other  
22 rental properties. I know there was a house behind the pizza  
23 shop. There was also a farm in Jersey Shore and various other  
24 rental properties.

25 And I was little, but there was occasions where my dad

1 had to go to Charlie's office. And it was usually on Saturdays,  
2 and he took me with him. I had no idea what Charlie did. I  
3 didn't know why we went there.

4 I didn't know what they were talking about. But I sat  
5 in the chair, and Charlie sat behind a desk with large amounts  
6 of paper. And he always wore a sweater. At least my memory is  
7 he always had a sweater that was sort of like a V-neck with  
8 buttons.

9 And I just sat there and listened to them talk, but I  
10 didn't really know what was going on. And my dad had a pick-up  
11 truck. And so sometimes Charlie would ask my dad, I guess, to  
12 meet him in various locations; and I would go along. And I  
13 didn't know why we did that either. But looking back, I'm  
14 guessing it had something to do with his collections work.

15 I have a couple of specific memories of that. And one  
16 of them is we went to a building in -- well, it was like a house  
17 in South Williamsport. And there were all of these candles in  
18 boxes. And we carried all of these candles out and put them in  
19 my dad's truck. And Charlie gave me a candle that was shaped  
20 like an ice cream cone. And that was before my father opened  
21 Sunset Ice Cream, so it was kind of funny.

22 When my father and Charlie sold Park Pizza, they  
23 continued to have rental properties throughout Lycoming County  
24 and mostly Williamsport; and they continued that for 40-some  
25 years up until my father passed away in January of 2019.



1 But after I got older, I didn't have occasion to go to  
2 Charlie's office much; and I didn't have occasion to see him  
3 much until I started working for Scott A. Williams after I got  
4 out of college. And Scott's office then and still is on the  
5 corner of Fourth and Mulberry.

6 So many times I would see Charlie walking to the  
7 courthouse. I might be done with a title search and Charlie was  
8 in the recorder's office, and we would walk back together. So I  
9 did have brief time with him when I worked for Scott A.

10 And then when I became a law clerk to Judge Smith,  
11 Judge Smith called me into his office one day and he said we  
12 need to find somebody to move your admission into the court.  
13 And I said I have just the guy. And I called Charlie. He  
14 agreed to do it, and he moved my admission into several courts  
15 of Lycoming County in January of 1995.

16 After my clerkship, I went into private practice with  
17 Bill Miele and Vanessa Danielle. Vanessa had quite a busy  
18 bankruptcy practice, but I was not involved in it. And one day  
19 when I got to the office, Bill said to me, Vanessa can't come  
20 today; and she has a bankruptcy meeting in front of Charlie  
21 Szybist, you're gonna have to go.

22 And I said I've never been to a bankruptcy hearing; I  
23 don't know what to do. And he said oh, don't worry about it;  
24 it's a creditors' meeting. Creditors never show up. The only  
25 creditor that ever comes is Sears. And I already checked; they

1 don't have any debts with Sears. Don't worry about it. Nothing  
2 is gonna happen, just go.

3 So I took the file, and I walked up the street. It  
4 was at City Hall which is where Charlie held the meetings. I  
5 went into the room, and I sat down with my client. And when  
6 Charlie saw me come in he sort of looked over his glasses,  
7 probably thinking what is she doing here; she's never been here  
8 before. But he nodded.

9 And I sat there with my client until the time came  
10 when he called my name. My client and I rose and went to the  
11 table. And I noticed that there were other people rising at the  
12 same time and coming forward; and, lo and behold, they were  
13 creditors.

14 And I didn't know what to do. And I think Charlie  
15 knew that, and so he handled it. They started asking my clients  
16 questions, and Charlie put a stop to it. So I was very grateful  
17 for Charlie on that day. I can say that he was somebody that I  
18 always admired, and I would just offer my sympathy to his  
19 children. Thank you.

20 THE COURT: Thank you. Mark, as a member of the  
21 committee, would you like to speak now?

22 MR. MARK SZYBIST: Sure. I don't want to say too  
23 much. I met many of you while working for my dad. I worked for  
24 him for about nine months from 2000 to 2001 and then  
25 after -- that was before I became a lawyer, and then after law

1 school returned and worked with him from 2005 to about 2010 and  
2 had the pleasure to meet many of you while working for him. I  
3 am very touched to see all of you here today.

4 Yeah, it's difficult to choose words. I'll admit that  
5 I grew up not knowing what I wanted to do but for a long time  
6 knowing that I did not want to become a lawyer. My dad and I  
7 often did not see eye to eye on things when I was a kid. And,  
8 in fact, you know, we never saw eye to eye on certain things.

9 But, you know, our relationship deepened over the  
10 years and never so much as when I worked for him and came to  
11 really respect him and love him in a new way, especially because  
12 of, you know, the -- you know, both the honor and the integrity  
13 and really truly the compassion with which he practiced law.

14 It sometimes seemed to me -- yeah, my dad and I  
15 clashed most often over political matters; and I often -- but  
16 irrespective of the politics, you know, in his personal  
17 relationships and in his work and as a lawyer he was really just  
18 fantastic, a man of integrity and honor and decency. And I  
19 learned a great deal from him, both about how to be a lawyer and  
20 how to be a man. So thank you for doing this memorial service.  
21 Thank you Judge Butts and Tammy and Judge Page and Kate Shimer  
22 for being on the committee. And I will stop there. Thank you  
23 all.

24 THE COURT: Thank you. Mr. Page.

25 MR. PAGE: Yes. May it please the Court, members of

1 the bar, friends, and especially family, I was fortunate to know  
2 Mr. Szybist not only professionally but also as a neighbor and  
3 fellow athlete. Although, he resided about a block away from me  
4 he was not usually seen just strolling the neighborhood. He was  
5 frugal. And often we were the only two passengers wearing a tie  
6 on the seven a.m. city bus to downtown.

7 But almost every noon he was a water walker at  
8 Lycoming College. We were both grandfathered into Lyco's Noon  
9 Club. And, as I said, each noon he would walk the small end of  
10 the pool 45 minutes. And as I joined him on return walks to his  
11 office, we would solve problems of city government; and he would  
12 draw on his days as a solicitor.

13 We enjoyed discussing his current reads as well as  
14 some movies. And he was particularly entertained by Shawshank  
15 Redemption and gave me a copy of the video and said you've got  
16 to watch this movie.

17 So I walked by the house frequently with my dog, and I  
18 will miss him. But I have tremendous and fond memories of our  
19 sporadic but pretty regular get-togethers. Thank you.

20 THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Page. Ms. Shimer.

21 MS. SHIMER: May it please the Court, members of the  
22 bar, family, I am touched to be a member of this committee. I  
23 remember on my first day on the job as an associate in Charlie's  
24 office, he came to me and he said the bankruptcy code is the  
25 most confusing piece of legislation I have ever read. But I

1 will tell you this, if anybody knew how to decipher that mess,  
2 it was Charlie Szybist.

3 He was good at explaining. I learned what I cannot  
4 tell you. The man knew so much about the code, bankruptcy in  
5 general. He was tremendously prepared always, whether he was  
6 representing a client at a 341 meeting, AKA a creditors'  
7 meeting, or whether he was acting as trustee.

8 I can also remember watching Charlie. He would open  
9 each file on his 341 schedule, and he had a color-coded list of  
10 questions that he wanted to ask each client. This preparation  
11 on his part was tremendously helpful to me as a practitioner,  
12 not only as his associate but later because I knew how to  
13 prepare, I knew what questions he was looking to ask, I was able  
14 to tell my clients this is what's going to happen, this is what  
15 Mr. Szybist is expecting, this is what you need to bring with  
16 you.

17 And never in my appearances in front of him was there  
18 any real difficulty with the meeting itself. And, as a matter  
19 of fact, I found myself amazed -- and I do not mean to seem  
20 critical of other trustees in front of whom I appeared; but  
21 their preparation, to me, was lacking compared to the way  
22 Charlie did his work.

23 He was the most gracious gentleman. And when I was in  
24 my own practice, I did not fear to call him if I had a question.  
25 He was very, very helpful, always very kind. It could be a

1 question of substantive law. A couple times I asked him ethics  
2 questions that he knew the answers to right off the top of his  
3 head. So I really, really appreciated knowing Charlie Szybist  
4 and working with him.

5 One thing Allen alluded to a little while ago about  
6 the fact that he and Charlie were members of the Walker's Club  
7 at Lycoming, I knew that Charlie would take his lunch hour and  
8 go to the college and I thought swim. So I stand corrected on  
9 that.

10 But even so, one thing that taught me was take time  
11 away from your desk. Don't bend over your desk 24 hours a day.  
12 Don't eat lunch at your desk or, you know, at least take some  
13 time and maybe come back and eat lunch at your desk which was a  
14 great lesson for me because it helps you with burnout more than  
15 I can say. And as a solo-practitioner that was a very, very  
16 valuable lesson.

17 So, again, I cannot express any appreciate for the  
18 gracious way I was treated and all that I learned from Charlie  
19 Szybist. Thank you Judge Butts and Tammy for asking me to be a  
20 part of this committee. And my condolences to the family.

21 THE COURT: Thank you. The Court approves the written  
22 report and resolution of the committee and enters the follow  
23 order:

24 **AND NOW**, this 15th day of June, 2021, in consideration  
25 of the resolutions presented by the committee and appointed to

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1 draft resolutions in the death of Charles A. Szybist, the said  
2 resolutions are adopted; and it is ORDERED AND DIRECTED that the  
3 resolutions herewith submitted and attached be adopted as an  
4 official expression of the Lycoming County Law Association and  
5 this Court and that the same be spread upon the records of the  
6 Court and that copies of this resolution be delivered to the  
7 families of Charles A. Szybist. And it is further ORDERED AND  
8 DIRECTED that said resolution be entered at large upon the  
9 record of the Court and that it be printed in the Lycoming  
10 Reporter.

11 Judge McCoy, anything you would like to say?

12 JUDGE MCCOY: Thank you, Judge Butts. Though I have  
13 practiced law for a long time and have been on the bench for  
14 awhile, I never really had any interactions with Charlie. Our  
15 types of practices were complete polar opposites, and he never  
16 had occasion to appear in my courtroom doing any family law  
17 matters.

18 Probably my most contact with him was I'm -- I don't  
19 know if this is a fact; but I would have to guess that he missed  
20 very few bench/bar committee meetings. He seemed to always be  
21 at the bench/bar committee meetings, and that is as far back as  
22 I can remember attending as an attorney and then as a judge. He  
23 always filled everyone in on what might be happening in the  
24 bankruptcy world or the other areas of law that he may have  
25 touched.

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1           We've been doing a lot of these memorial services  
2 lately which is, to me, very sad. And when I think of, you  
3 know, kind of the pillars of our law association, those, you  
4 know, attorneys who were the older members and who were around  
5 forever, he was definitely one of them. And I'm very saddened  
6 to see that we are losing so many of them, especially in the  
7 recent couple years. So my condolences to the family. Though I  
8 did not know him, I definitely knew of his reputation, his  
9 character. Thank you.

10           THE COURT: Thank you, Judge McCoy. I am lucky enough  
11 to have two roles here as to essentially run the special session  
12 of court here today but also speak as an individual who was  
13 touched by your father and our colleague, Mr. Szybist.

14           I don't think I ever called him anything but  
15 Mr. Szybist, whether I worked with him or he appeared in front  
16 of me as a judge, because that's the type of respect he  
17 engendered from me. He was -- just as Judge McCoy alluded to,  
18 he was an elder statesman in the bar.

19           And when you worked for Judge Smith you -- as I did,  
20 like Tammy did, you had all these older members of the bar  
21 coming in. And they'd come in, and he would close the door.  
22 And they would have this conversation that you know they were  
23 enjoying themselves. And then they would come out, and I would  
24 be introduced. And I'm thinking I'm never gonna remember these  
25 people.



1           And so when it came time for my clerkship to end, I  
2 really -- and he knew this. I really wanted to go into the  
3 district attorney's office. But at the time there was no  
4 positions open. So Judge Smith and Charlie and I had had a  
5 conversation, and he had agreed to take me on as an associate.

6           And Mr. Szybist was great. He showed me the work that  
7 needed to be done. He was patient with me. And I was  
8 reflecting back on some of the stories that I remember  
9 overhearing at the office. And the Taylorcraft aviation case  
10 was huge where he was presented with a situation and he didn't  
11 know what to do and he was on the phone with the FBI all the  
12 time.

13           And then he would talk to me, because I had formerly  
14 been in the public defender's office, about the law enforcement  
15 part of it and the criminal part of it. He was very excited  
16 about it. And then he was gracious enough to allow me to work  
17 part-time in the district attorney's office while I was an  
18 associate with him.

19           And I was still doing my trial work there, and I  
20 remember he would send me out on these different commercial  
21 trials. And one of the cases, he told me after the fact that he  
22 had met with the clients and he had shared with me that he had  
23 gone over with them that this is what we are suing for; but it's  
24 really not a winnable case. So I'm gonna send my new associate  
25 out with you.

1 Well, of course, you know how it ended, I win the  
2 case. So they were so excited. They wanted to take me out to  
3 lunch because Charlie told them they weren't gonna win and they  
4 won. And I just thought, well, that was just me. I just like  
5 going to trial, and I like to win. And when I came back and I  
6 told him that I won, he was speechless because he just didn't  
7 think that was possible with the facts and everything presented.

8 So it was just so wonderful to work with him and to  
9 get to know Carla and to get to know the kids, who I had the  
10 pleasure of working with Mark at the theater. And they lived  
11 around the block from me on Walnut Street. And it was just an  
12 awesome opportunity.

13 So when I was offered the chance to work full-time in  
14 the DA's office, I was really -- it was really difficult to say  
15 goodbye because he had been so supportive. And I never had  
16 imagined working in civil law in my career because when I went  
17 to law school I fell in love with criminal and just kept working  
18 in that area the whole time.

19 But having him sponsor me as a member of the Federal  
20 Bar which was beneficial to me when I was in the district  
21 attorney's office writing briefs on federal habeas petitions and  
22 just the fact that he was just a kind and thoughtful person who  
23 would ask for my input in something, it was an experience I  
24 didn't imagine I would have and one that I am so grateful that I  
25 had the opportunity to have because it made me a more

1 well-rounded attorney that I never thought I needed to be until  
2 I was presented with the opportunity.

3 So just as Judge McCoy says, sitting here, doing all  
4 of these special sessions of court is so -- it's gratifying  
5 because we get to celebrate people who have meant so much to our  
6 community as lawyers and judges; but it's so sad in that now we  
7 don't have the opportunity to grow with them even further. And  
8 we have to make a point of remembering the commitment, the  
9 dedication, they had to the practice and to our community as  
10 lawyers and judges.

11 So I'm grateful that all of his children are able to  
12 be here today to hear the impact that he made on all of us. And  
13 I'm very, very sorry for your loss. He was a wonderful human  
14 being, and I am blessed to have had the opportunity to work with  
15 him.

16 So any members of the family who would like to speak  
17 at this point, I would turn it over to you. And then after you,  
18 then any members of the bar. And I know Michelle Frey, the  
19 Lycoming Law Association Executive Director, does have at least  
20 one statement from an attorney she would like to read. How  
21 about, Michelle, why don't you lead us off. How's that sound?

22 MS. FREY: That sounds good. I have a statement from  
23 Mike Wiley who is an exceptional orator, and I'll try to do him  
24 justice as I read his words here today. He wrote initially that  
25 he wanted to express his regret for his inability to attend and

1 participate in the memorial service this afternoon for Charlie  
2 as he's scheduled for a matter in Snyder County Court this  
3 afternoon. So I'll read his words now.

4 While my interactions with Charlie professionally were  
5 limited, I truly enjoyed my conversations with him both  
6 generally and with respect to happenings in our community.  
7 Charlie had been one of the city solicitors prior to my time on  
8 the Williamsport City Council, and he continued to follow  
9 closely what was happening in the city after he resigned from  
10 his position. I would contact him frequently with questions,  
11 and we would have good conversations regarding the direction of  
12 city government and our community in general.

13 Later on, he became a frequent participant in a lunch  
14 meeting held at the Shamrock one Friday a month. The most  
15 recent incarnation of the usual crowd consisted of former Mayor  
16 Rafferty, former city finance director Bob Fox, Norm Lubin,  
17 Charlie Szybist and myself. I always looked forward to Charlie  
18 attending because of his commentary and his sense of humor which  
19 was usually on the very dry side.

20 While COVID put a pause on these gatherings and we had  
21 not met since his passing, I look forward to having an  
22 opportunity to share memories of Charlie with that group as  
23 well. We all held him in high esteem and truly enjoyed his  
24 company.

25 While Charlie is known to the bench and bar to his

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1 dedication to the profession and longevity in practice, I will  
2 always remember him as a devoted family man and engaged and  
3 concerned about what was best for our community. He was a kind  
4 and thoughtful man who will be long remembered and truly missed.  
5 J. Michael Wiley.

6 THE COURT: Thank you, Michelle. Jim, I think I saw  
7 you unmute.

8 MR. JAMES SZYBIST: I just wanted to thank everyone  
9 for all of this, all the nice memories. And the law community  
10 was a huge part of my dad's life and interacting with all of  
11 you; and it's -- so thank you for that. And it's really nice to  
12 hear some of these memories.

13 Tammy, I remember the sweater that you were talking  
14 about. He wore the sweater in the evenings and on Saturdays  
15 when he went to the office. During the week, he was always in a  
16 sports coat or a suit.

17 And, Judge Butts, I remember your living right around  
18 the corner; and I believe you had at least one German shepherd,  
19 maybe two. And my dad was very enamored with the fact that you  
20 taught them commands in German I believe. So he was very  
21 enamored with that. So it's nice to see people and hear their  
22 voices and say that to all of you.

23 THE COURT: Thank you. Mary.

24 MS. MARY SZYBIST: Yeah. I just want to say it means  
25 the world to be here and to hear all of these words about my

1 father, so thank you. And I'll echo Jim and Mark, that being a  
2 part of this law community in Williamsport meant so much to him.

3 And I'll just share one little anecdote in  
4 relationship to that. In the last year of his life one of the  
5 most animated I saw him was having a conversation with Annabelle  
6 Miller. And they were remembering the old courthouse.

7 And they were going floor by floor, office by office,  
8 remembering who was where and who was a sharp dresser and who  
9 had a good sense of humor and who was well organized and their  
10 just joy of being part of this larger community and knowing each  
11 other. It just clearly brought him a sense of joy. So I just  
12 want to say thank you everyone.

13 JUDGE BUTTS: Thank you. Kathy.

14 MS. KATHLEEN SZYBIST: Yeah, I don't have a whole lot  
15 to add. Thank you for doing this. I feel like I learned more  
16 about my father just through these stories, and it's very  
17 meaningful. And I think we appreciate that. And so just thank  
18 you. Thank you for helping with the memories, helping with the  
19 closure.

20 MR. ROBERT SZYBIST: Lastly, just hearing these  
21 stories is both therapeutic and helps us to grieve. And just to  
22 echo, the community was a big part of his life, the law  
23 community, and his pulse for how he interacted with the world.  
24 And you all know that. But just to have this to honor him is  
25 special to all of us, so thank you.

1           THE COURT: You're welcome. Is there any member of  
2 the bar that would like to say a few words? Mr. Carlucci?

3           MR. CARLUCCI: Thank you, Your Honor. Bill Carlucci.  
4 I will direct this to Charlie's family. Several folks this  
5 afternoon mentioned that their contact with Charlie was mostly  
6 personal, they didn't have a great deal of professional contact  
7 with him.

8           I, in fact, did have a great deal of professional  
9 contact with him because, like Charlie, I do grubby work; that  
10 is, I do some collection work. Charlie ordinarily in my  
11 experience would represent small businesses, occasionally what I  
12 refer to diminutively as human beings; and I ordinarily was  
13 representing financial institutions. But we did the same kind  
14 of work, and occasionally we were in cases against each other.

15           More often than not, I saw him at the bankruptcy  
16 court. He and I both attended bankruptcy hearings pretty  
17 regularly when they were in Lycoming County. And I can tell you  
18 five things that were consistently true about Charlie.

19           First of all, he was consistently a gentleman; that  
20 is, never raised his voice, never bickered, never talked over  
21 anybody else, never cut off anybody else, never lost his temper,  
22 none of that. You would think logically, well, lawyers all act  
23 like that. No, they don't. Charlie was a gentleman from soup  
24 to nuts.

25           Number two, Charlie knew his case. He knew the

1 strengths of the case and the weaknesses of the case. When the  
2 judge would ask him a question, he would answer the strength of  
3 his case and the weakness of his case and that was it. Again,  
4 you would think, well, lawyers all know their cases. No, they  
5 don't.

6 Number three, Charlie didn't take it personally.  
7 After 42 years of practicing law, I am tired of telling lawyers,  
8 you know, it's a job, take a breath. Charlie understood that.  
9 He understood that his responsibility was to do the very best he  
10 could for his client given the facts of the case and that his  
11 client was not better off if he would start screaming. He  
12 understood that. And, again, you would think, well, all lawyers  
13 understand that. No, they don't.

14 Number four, Charlie did not say stupid stuff; that  
15 is, when he was talking to a judge he said what he thought made  
16 sense. And he was almost always right. And when I tried to  
17 make a point, he would agree where I was right and disagree  
18 where I was wrong; but he wouldn't say things that would cause  
19 anybody in the room to roll their eyes, which I assure you in  
20 courtrooms happens all the time.

21 And, finally, Charlie did something which logically  
22 you would think lawyers would generally do and in my experience  
23 they generally don't. If I had a hearing involving Charlie, I  
24 know that the day before the hearing I was gonna get a  
25 phonecall. And Charlie was going to say, Bill, we have this



1 hearing tomorrow; I'd like to tell you what I'm thinking.

2 He would tell me his position. He would tell me how  
3 the case could be resolved. If I would agree to that, I would  
4 say, yeah, I think we can do that; no, I don't think we can do  
5 that. So when he walked in front of the judge he wanted to be  
6 able to say Mr. Carlucci and I have spoken about this, and this  
7 is where we agree and this is where we disagree.

8 He didn't want to walk in and have the Court think  
9 that he didn't start thinking about the case until five minutes  
10 before the hearing. He wanted to know what I was thinking, and  
11 he wanted me to know what he was thinking because he intuitively  
12 understood that it would go better.

13 Now, frankly, I worked with him in what I'm going to  
14 call the later part of his career. I don't know whether he was  
15 born with all of those qualities; but I will tell you that in my  
16 experience, in my cases, he had it. He had it going on. He  
17 knew what he was doing. He got to the point, and then he moved  
18 on. Frankly, he was fun to work with. That's it. Thank you,  
19 Your Honor.

20 THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Carlucci. Mr. Greevy.

21 MR. GREEVY: Initially, unlike Allen Page, I live  
22 about a half a block north of Charlie, as Allen on the other  
23 side. And I can remember many a happy night when he would be  
24 coming home from a meeting that he had and perhaps me coming  
25 home from a meeting and I'd be walking the dog. We would stand

1 out on the sidewalk, socialize a little bit, and solve the  
2 concerns of the city. He always seemed to have a real finger on  
3 the rumors and the stories around town, and we certainly had a  
4 good interaction that way.

5 We got to know Charlie and his family very well. We  
6 socialized in their home, and they also socialized up in our  
7 home with our children and with ourselves. And I had an  
8 opportunity a couple times even when Charlie was in the twilight  
9 of his years that he would come up for dinner once in awhile.

10 Professionally, I knew him certainly as everyone else  
11 as a very guiding bankruptcy expert. In my younger days I had  
12 the privilege, he appointed me a couple times as trustee on a  
13 couple of cases that were before him; and he would guide me  
14 through that. And, thereafter, I handled a few bankruptcies but  
15 got out of that area very quickly, probably by the early '80's.

16 But Charlie and his family have been a real delight in  
17 my life and certainly in my neighborhood as I have noted. And I  
18 certainly have appreciated the opportunity to know them all and  
19 certainly to know Charlie.

20 And I am very much touched by some of the comments  
21 that have been made by a number of others here. Certainly, they  
22 have different perspectives on Charlie. And that's one of the  
23 strengths of this kind of proceeding, Your Honor. And I  
24 appreciate the opportunity to be part of it at this point.  
25 Thank you.

1           THE COURT: You're welcome. Anyone else?  
2       Mr. Collins.

3           MR. COLLINS: Yes. Thank you. I am kind of struck  
4       when I look at the screen of how involved Walnut Street from  
5       Skip Greevy to Gary Weber just up the street, Allen Page, as  
6       Skip just described, Judge Butts used to be in that  
7       neighborhood. And I'm about a block or so up from Gary just off  
8       of Walnut Street, so a pretty good representation. And then  
9       when you take the five squares of the Szybist kids, that's a lot  
10      of people from that neighborhood. And that's what struck me. I  
11      mean, Carla and Charlie, they were extremely, extremely good  
12      parents; and you can tell that.

13           And sometimes it was hard to keep track of the kids  
14      because there was five of them. But they were all interesting  
15      and obviously well loved. And both Carla and Charlie did one  
16      hell of a job.

17           Unlike what somebody said, I never called him  
18      Mr. Szybist because from being a young attorney a long time ago  
19      when I met Charlie, it was Charlie; and he kind of made sure of  
20      that.

21           And some of my most enjoyable interactions, a little  
22      bit legal, not like Bill described, but we used to go -- I'm  
23      looking out the window here at the back of Franco's. And we  
24      used to have mornings there for coffee. And it was always very  
25      enjoyable because his wealth of knowledge as described about

1 legal things and bankruptcy and -- but his wealth of knowledge  
2 of sports to me it was just so much fun to be able to sit down,  
3 even though he was a Phillies fan, and to talk with him about  
4 those things.

5 As Mark said at the end of his remarks, he used a few  
6 adjectives one of them that struck me -- oh, before I say that  
7 though. You called Allen Page and Charlie Szybist walkers; but  
8 I still felt they were swimmers. Because I was over there to  
9 play basketball and those two guys were always in the locker  
10 room and they did have swimming trunks on. So to me they were  
11 swimmers.

12 And Charlie, as you know, had difficulty walking those  
13 last several years; and he would walk slowly. But there he  
14 would be almost maybe three days a week at least and get in that  
15 damn pool which was not the warmest pool in the world and do his  
16 exercise. And I was pretty impressed. I wish I could match it  
17 now. But he really was something.

18 But as I started to mention, when Mark mentioned some  
19 of those things about his dad, he used the word decent. And,  
20 you know what, that was Charlie Szybist. He was a decent  
21 fellow. Thanks.

22 THE COURT: Thank you. Mr. Baldys?

23 MR. BALDYS: Thank you, Your Honor. Charlie and I  
24 were in the same book club about 20 years. Since 1999, we had  
25 been in the same book club. And sort of similar to what some of

1 the other activities that had been mentioned today he -- until  
2 the last couple years he was there every month. So he always  
3 came.

4 He had always read the book, which I can't say myself  
5 I've always read the book. He always had read the book, and he  
6 could always talk about the book. So as busy as he was, that  
7 was one aspect of that, his just being there.

8 And really there -- the meeting last month of the book  
9 club, one of the people in the club -- there's ten people in the  
10 club -- said, you know, not really being -- not really being  
11 cued by any particular thing he just said, boy, I miss Charlie  
12 being here at the meetings; he had a lot to offer. And that was  
13 so true.

14 There was -- back in I'm gonna say about 2004 we got  
15 into a situation where there was some aggressive -- Mark, you  
16 mentioned politics -- some aggressive political discussions.  
17 And I could not always tell where Charlie was coming from in  
18 terms of policy issues; but he would ask a question or slightly  
19 change the subject. And he did help to ensure that we retained  
20 civility among a few people who could get carried away with the  
21 passion of politics.

22 So he was -- he was very -- and I was active in the  
23 Democratic party; and I knew that Charlie was or had been a  
24 Republican. But he -- he always asked me -- he asked me about  
25 the local party, about the personalities there. He was so

1 interested in that stuff. And state committee, he asked me  
2 similar things about people I would run into there. And so that  
3 made for some very good discussions.

4 Sometimes we would ride in the same car to the  
5 meetings, and I can't ever remember getting into any dispute  
6 with Charlie about political issues. That's the funny thing,  
7 you know. It was very fact based.

8 The other thing I want to mention is that you  
9 mentioned sports, and Mike mentioned his allegiance to the  
10 Phillies. And one day I said to Charlie, did you see the  
11 Phillies game yesterday. We had meetings on Monday so that  
12 would have been a Sunday I was asking him about.

13 And he said, you know, see is not the right word. I  
14 like to listen to baseball on the radio. And I think he may  
15 have gone on, I can't be sure of this, to talk about how well  
16 they do the play-by-play on the radio. But just an interesting  
17 comment. He was a great guy and family member. Children, I'm  
18 very sorry for your loss. Thank you, Judge.

19 THE COURT: Thank you. Robin Read, I think you  
20 unmuted first.

21 MS. READ: Okay. Thank you, Your Honor. I, like Bill  
22 Carlucci, had a lot of contact with Charlie professionally. And  
23 I started doing bankruptcy work in 1991. And I was originally  
24 very intimidated by Charlie because he was so knowledgeable, and  
25 he was the bankruptcy guru in Williamsport. And I really knew

1 very little about the bankruptcy code, but it was necessary  
2 because of the collection work that I was doing to learn it.

3 And about after the third contact, maybe the fourth, I  
4 learned not to be intimidated by Charlie because he was so -- he  
5 was so sweet and very knowledgeable. He was never  
6 condescending. He was always a good mentor to me. I always had  
7 the ability -- he made it very clear that I could call him if I  
8 had any questions or concerns or wanted to work through  
9 something.

10 And over the years we would talk many times on  
11 business, and our conversations would usually devolve to  
12 personal issues, gossip about what was going on with the firms.  
13 I was always surprised how chatty Charlie could be because just  
14 to meet him it doesn't look like he's got a chatty personality.  
15 So I was always kind of surprised by it. But I had many, many  
16 good conversations with Charlie over the years.

17 And as he was aged, he would walk down the street,  
18 down Fourth Street, to the creditors' meetings; and he would  
19 always be pulling his case behind him. And I kind of tried to  
20 time my trips up to the creditors' meetings so that I would meet  
21 him on Fourth Street. And I always asked him whether I could  
22 help him, and he always declined. He was just such a gentleman  
23 that he just felt that he should be able to pull his own bag up  
24 to the creditors' meetings.

25 So he was a kind and sweet gentleman, and he taught me

1 a lot over the years about bankruptcy and practicing law. And I  
2 just really miss him. Thank you.

3 THE COURT: Thank you. Ms. Jacques, you are next.

4 MS. JACQUES: Yes. I knew Charlie through Judge Smith  
5 because they were great buddies, and I worked for Judge Smith  
6 for a long time. I also knew him from Lycoming College swimming  
7 pool where even in his old age he would get in that pool, and  
8 it's very cold, and he would walk. He couldn't swim anymore;  
9 but he would walk up and back for a good twenty minutes, half an  
10 hour.

11 But mostly I knew him as a neighbor. I lived across  
12 the street from him. And he and Carla were always very nice to  
13 me and my family, and they would bring things over to us. And  
14 they took an interest in my kids. And they took great pride,  
15 both of them, in talking about their kids.

16 And I was always very impressed at how high achieving  
17 all their kids were. And I asked Charlie once, what was your  
18 secret, how did you do that, how did all of your kids come out  
19 so good. And he thought for a minute; and he said, well, let me  
20 tell you, with being a parent there is a big margin of error.  
21 He said you can make a lot of mistakes, and they still turn out  
22 okay. So I always -- that was very comforting to me because I,  
23 myself, had made a lot of mistakes.

24 And I'll tell one more story which is what Carla told  
25 me once. Because I guess all the kids are very close in age



1 together, and there were five of them. And she had quite a time  
2 sometimes handling them all. She said one time all five of them  
3 were crying. And I lined them up from oldest to youngest, and I  
4 want through one at a time and said what do you need. And after  
5 she took it, what do you need, what do you need, what do you  
6 need, all five of them. So, anyway, they loved you guys a lot;  
7 and they were very proud of you guys. That's all I have to say.

8 THE COURT: Thank you.

9 MR. ELION: So, Mike, you gotta add me to the Walnut  
10 Street crowd. I lived at 1005 Walnut Street for about 12 years  
11 down from everyone else. So, anyway, the way that I first met  
12 Charlie was in 1976. I just had gotten to Williamsport, opened  
13 a practice with no clients, didn't know anyone. And I had  
14 accumulated a number of parking tickets.

15 So I didn't have any clients. I didn't have anything  
16 else to do. So I walked down to, I think it was, Mr. Eisenbeis'  
17 office. I think he was the --

18 JUDGE BUTTS: Go ahead.

19 MR. ELION: Am I okay here?

20 JUDGE BUTTS: Yes.

21 MR. ELION: Okay. So I go down to do something, and  
22 Charlie shows up. And he's the solicitor for the authority. I  
23 have a stack of tickets. And I said, Charlie, can we talk a  
24 little. So I go outside the office and I start to tell him, I  
25 said, Charlie, can we do something about this, I mean, these

1 tickets. He goes, look, he said, you were wrong. You owe the  
2 money. I have an obligation to my authority to make sure that  
3 you pay them.

4 I said, all right, Charlie. That was it. I failed in  
5 court my first experience. But he was right. And he was a  
6 gentleman as everyone says. It's a theme here. He was just top  
7 of the notch ethically, ethical.

8 But how we really got together professionally was back  
9 in 1996, there was a movement by the Park Home to demolish the  
10 Park Home. And Charlie was the assistant solicitor, and I had  
11 joined as an intervenor on behalf of Preservation Williamsport  
12 to stop the demolition of the Park Home.

13 And we had a trial in front of the city council. And  
14 we had a trial in front of Judge Brown. We brought in experts  
15 from all over the country. And this was a case of first  
16 impression. But not only in Pennsylvania, it was a case of first  
17 impression in the entire country. So we're getting phonecalls  
18 from all over because there was no real definitive definition of  
19 when you can tear down a structure of historic significance.

20 So Charlie and I spent a lot of time talking about  
21 strategies, getting experts together. And I didn't know he was  
22 a real history buff and a person that really cared a lot about  
23 historic preservation.

24 We eventually won that case. Judge Brown's opinion  
25 was essentially adopted in full by the Pennsylvania Supreme

1 Court. It's the law of Pennsylvania. And it's really the law,  
2 the seminal case, one of the seminal cases, throughout the  
3 country. And Charlie was very proud of that.

4 I just want to say one other thing. I'm a swimmer;  
5 and I bumped into Charlie all the time. I think, I don't know,  
6 maybe Skip was saying something about this. Even at the end  
7 when he could barely get around, he shuffled up to the East End  
8 and walked and constantly -- I had a lot of conversations with  
9 him. He's just a great guy.

10 And one other thing. I had some personal  
11 conversations, political conversations with Charlie; and I don't  
12 know -- I don't think anyone in the Szybist family is gonna  
13 agree with me. I think Charlie was a closet liberal. He was  
14 lot more liberal than most people thought, especially after we  
15 had a drink or two. He was a really fair man and a great guy  
16 and just a wonderful example of a human being and a very, very  
17 ethical lawyer. And I'm proud to have spent some time with him.  
18 Thank you.

19 THE COURT: Thank you. Is there anyone else? There  
20 doesn't appear to be anyone unmuting.

21 MS. WETTCLAUFER: Judge, can I say something?

22 THE COURT: Can you say something?

23 MS. WETTCLAUFER: Can I say something?

24 THE COURT: Sure. Actually, Linda Wettlaufer is here.  
25 And she is taking down the hearing right now. And she would

1 like to share something because I'll bet it's from her  
2 experience working in Federal Court. Okay. So let me -- what  
3 I'm gonna do is I'm gonna spin my computer around, so you can  
4 see her.

5 MS. WETTCLAUFER: You don't have to do that.

6 THE COURT: I'm going to.

7 MS. WETTCLAUFER: I just wanted to express my  
8 condolences to the family. I was Judge Thomas's court reporter  
9 in bankruptcy court for 20 years, and I did a lot of work with  
10 Mr. Szybist. And I believe I met Mark a couple times in court.

11 And I just -- everything that everyone has said,  
12 especially Mr. Carlucci, I can attest to all of that, very  
13 professional, very kind.

14 One thing that I -- what stands out to me is outside  
15 of the courtroom. I would pass Charlie on the street, and he  
16 would always say hello. And I'm just, you know, the court  
17 reporter in the corner that nobody pays any attention to. But  
18 he always acknowledged me outside of the courtroom, and I always  
19 appreciated that. He was very kind. So I just wanted to  
20 express my condolences to his family. Thank you.

21 THE COURT: I'd say that was a first, to have the  
22 actual court reporter who's been here in the courtroom have a  
23 unique experience like that. So I'm really grateful that you  
24 agreed to share.

25 MS. WETTCLAUFER: I'm thankful to be here doing this

1 today.

2 THE COURT: Oh, well, good. Thank you. Anyone else  
3 wanna say a few words? Okay. Well, it appears that we have  
4 come to the end. So this would now conclude the memorial  
5 service. I would confess something to the family, for some  
6 reason, and maybe it's my fault, maybe it's the county's fault,  
7 or it's a combination, that the recording was interrupted at one  
8 point and so I restarted it.

9 And so only a portion of this service is recorded for  
10 Zoom. But we do have the transcript of the hearing. So you  
11 will all have the opportunity to have that, have a copy of that,  
12 and be able to reflect and read on what everyone has said here  
13 today including the court reporter who will have a chance to  
14 transcribe her own words.

15 So I just want to personally thank everybody, once  
16 again, for participating. It's your comments, it's your  
17 participation in this, that really makes these memorial services  
18 so special to the family. I've been hearing from different  
19 members of families who have participated in these, and it  
20 really has meant a lot to them. So thank you all very much for  
21 attending and sharing. And this special session of court then  
22 is adjourned. Thank you all.

23 **(WHEREUPON, the proceedings were concluded at**  
24 **5:04 p.m.)**

25  
Linda S. Wettlaufer, RMR  
Official Court Reporter  
Lycoming County

C E R T I F I C A T E

I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence are contained fully and accurately to the best of my ability on the notes taken by me on the foregoing cause and that this copy is a correct transcript of the same.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Linda S. Wettlaufer, Official Court Reporter

The foregoing record on the proceedings of the above cause is hereby approved and **ORDERED AND DIRECTED** to be filed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Judge Nancy L. Butts, P.J.

Linda S. Wettlaufer, RMR  
Official Court Reporter  
Lycoming County