

## Remarks at Steve Krane Memorial Service

BY STEPHEN P. YOUNGER

It is so hard to say goodbye to a friend...to a partner... to a son...to a dad. But it is far, far harder to say goodbye to someone who was taken from us too soon. We all have so many different emotions today – shock, sadness, fear, and even anger at how unfair this all is.

Although it is hard for all of you, Steve would want us to remember the good times – the fun – the many triumphs of his life – and try to move past our present emotions. In this spirit, permit me to share a few memories of Steve.

We first got to know each other over 25 years ago. We were both young law clerks on the NY Court of Appeals. We shared so many late nights in the Stack – before Lexis & Westlaw – and so many good times together. Back then, we all thought we knew much more than we did. In fact, Steve actually did know a lot more than his age would indicate.

Steve had been launched on his journey by his mentor and later law partner, Stephen Kaye. He was then serving for a newly appointed Associate Judge, the Honorable Judith S. Kaye. And so began a lifelong friendship and mentorship between Steve and the Kayes – who became a second family to Steve. But also so began a lifelong friendship and partnership between Steve and me. We all knew from the first moment we met him that Steve was a very special person.

He had that enormous intellect that analyzed every case down to the finest point. He had that instant recall that could draw out the last detail of a voluminous record on appeal. He remembered more than the rest of us had forgotten. He had that bigger than life personality that was so captivating. He was the true Renaissance man with commanding knowledge of so many fields.

And he had that razor sharp wit that kept us all entertained—and that never permitted him to take himself too seriously. We all knew then that Steve was going places.

But little did we know that he would go on to be the youngest State Bar President in New York History. Little did we know that he would become a true giant in the world of legal ethics.

Steve loved the law. Steve was truly a Lawyer's Lawyer. And, he loved the field of legal ethics. Whenever an Ethics issue came up, Steve could recite not just the pertinent subsection of the rules, not just the leading NY case, but also the minority view on that issue in Tennessee, or the dicta in a DC Bar Opinion that called the whole analysis into question.

This is why so many lawyers turned to Steve for important advice – and we know we Lawyers are the toughest of clients.

Oh, how Steve loved the Bar Association. He threw himself into every bar activity he could find. There was hardly a committee he didn't serve on—his appetite for Bar work was endless. From the very first time Steve set foot at our State Bar Center – as a new committee chair – to give a report to our Executive Committee – he knew he was making new friends. In his first State Bar President's message, Steve called this a case of finding "A long-lost family." As we all know, his love for the Bar Association would lead him to become the Association's 104th President – a role he called "Leading Our Family" of Lawyers. During Steve's tenure, he worked tirelessly to promote volunteerism among lawyers.

Traveling around the globe to address our members, Steve would fondly quote Winston Churchill's words: "We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give."

For example, he set up a committee to consider offering loan assistance to public interest lawyers, who often graduate \$100,000 in debt. The New York Bar Foundation will support his program with our memorial gifts in a new fund dedicated to Steve's name.

In the aftermath of the horrific events of September 11th, Steve's spirit of giving was so critical to our association – indeed to the world. Under Steve's incredible leadership, the State Bar joined with the Governor and the Chief Judge to assist the thousands of people affected by the terrorist attacks. Steve created a toll-free number for victims seeking answers to law-related questions and for clients seeking information about attorneys who worked near ground zero. And Steve rallied the state bar to help lawyers who had been displaced from their offices.

Steve frequently shared how etched in his mind were the faces of numerous attorneys who stood on line to offer their pro bono help to 9/11 victims, and who gave so unselfishly during one of our nation's darkest hours. As Steve said back in 2001: "It is a time to be proud" –of lawyers everywhere who came forward to help in the true spirit of Pro Bono and volunteerism.

And he closed by saying "we have the power as a profession to make this world a far better place." That was the optimism in Steve. Serving as State Bar President was a legacy that Steve always treasured. And, quite a legacy it was.

Steve was also a pioneer in the field of legal ethics. He chaired our committees on legal fee regulation, on cross-border legal practice and on multi-disciplinary practice.

And for many years, he chaired our Committee on Standards of Attorney Conduct that helped bring New York's Ethics Rules into the modern era.

Of course, when he presented the revised rules to our HOD, he had to wear his favorite Red Sox hat. As a member of the ABA's Board of Governors, Steve recently prompted an on-going study called Ethics 20/20, which is looking at how our Ethics Rules need to adjust to our global, technological world. Just last year, Governor David Paterson tapped Steve to serve on the Commission on Public Integrity. With confidence in our government institutions at an all-time low, who better to call on than Steve to help restore trust in the Pillars of our Democracy?

Steve was always quite willing to share his extensive knowledge with others. He taught Professional Responsibility at Columbia Law School and gave countless lectures on Ethics issues. As David [Lewis] mentioned, Steve loved to mentor young lawyers.

Steve had wonderful mentors—but he paid his debt back many times over. There are so many amazing lawyers who got their start working under Steve’s inspiration. Steve’s willingness to serve others is something we will always cherish.

For Steve, one of his crowning accomplishments was being listed by the Commission on Judicial Nominations as one of the recommended candidates for Chief Judge of NY— most importantly for him, at the time of his beloved Judge Kaye’s final re-appointment to the bench. I had the honor of announcing this accomplishment to Steve. I know how much it meant to him to be on the same stage as his life’s mentor, Chief Judge Kaye.

But his wit showed thru as always. I will never forget Steve’s retort. “Tell Judge Kaye the campaign begins now – and I can’t wait to beat her out for this treasured seat on the Court of Appeals!”

We all have touching memories of Steve that we will keep forever – the leisurely lunches “catching up”, debating the latest political campaign, his stories of chasing tornadoes, our rivalry over our favorite baseball teams, or most importantly crowing about the successes of our kids. And, we all know how proud Steve was of his children.

So, Faith, Liz and Cam: On behalf of the over 77,000 members of the NYS Bar Association, I want you to know that each and every one of us is here for you—with all of our love, our support and our care. Just as Steve has always been there for all of us.

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*Stephen P. Younger is the 113<sup>th</sup> President of the New York State Bar Association. He is a Partner of Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler, LLP.*