

In Memoriam

Mark Steiner

1963—2007

By *Stephanie A. Tsantes, Esquire*

I missed one of my annual Christmas traditions this year. For many years, I have looked forward to exchanging a batch of my mother's homemade baklava for Mark Steiner's homemade cookies, Lewes beach plum jam, and a candle. I think both Mark and I always thought we received the best end of the deal. Mark's cookies could put Mrs. Fields to shame. The cookies represented Mark's creative spirit—each batch was chock full of surprises—nuts, cranberries, chocolate. You never knew what was going to be in this year's batch.

Mark E. Steiner passed away at home on November 20, 2007 in Lewes, Delaware. After declining health issues rendered him unable to commit to employment, Mark spent the last several years enjoying life on Lewes Beach.

Mark was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts on March 5, 1963. He was the son of Edward J. and Marjorie (Wright) Steiner and was raised in Milford, Delaware. From an early age, he spent his summers enjoying the peacefulness of Lewes Beach. He graduated as class valedictorian from Milford High School. He attended the Governor's School of Excellence and Boys State. He graduated from Davidson College in 1985. He received a Juris Doctor from Villanova Law School in 1989.

Following graduation from law school, Mark clerked for The Honorable Randy J. Holland. Once admitted to the Delaware Bar, he worked for Duane, Morris & Heckscher in Wilmington, his family's business in Milford, and Moore & Rutt in Georgetown. Mark hit his stride in the legal profession when he

became an Assistant Public Defender in Georgetown.

During Mark's time as an Assistant Public Defender, he enjoyed the drama of the court room, and he relished the challenge of representing the "little guy." I remember many a night sharing dinner with Mark and his family where he regaled us with the drama of the day in court. I'm not sure whether Mark cherished a win in court more because of what he accomplished for his client that day or because he enjoyed beating his opponent. Either way, his client was always the better for his efforts. It seemed for a while that Mark had finally found his niche in the practice of law. Unfortunately for Mark and for the profession, Mark found his great joy in being a Public Defender at a time too late, when his declining health issues made this joy short-lived.

Mark's only love greater than his joy as a Public Defender was his daughter, Anna Kathleen Steiner. He loved going to the pool and the beach with Anna,

and the good times they spent by the water's edge on lazy days. Mark spent hours woodworking her a birthday present one year. Like his Christmas cookies, Mark treasured the homemade gift much more than the store bought one.

This year I traded my mother's baklava with Mark's daughter and her family. I was surprised to receive some Lewes Beach Plum jam and a candle. It was not quite the same without Mark's homemade cookies, but a tradition that I hope to carry on in his memory. ☠

