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In Memoriam

In Memory of Gary L. Bahr

Eulogy delivered at Memorial Service held for Gary L. Bahr in July 1999 in Bristol, Rhode Island

Anthony J. Santoro*

When Anita asked me to deliver the eulogy for Gary, I quite readily agreed, but wondered silently whether I could go through with it. I have my doubts even now. After all, I can scarcely remember a professional life without Gary. If he was not by my side physically, he was by my side spiritually. I started my journey in academia with Gary and expected to end it with Gary. It was not to be.

Gary was more than a colleague and a friend. He was an integral part of my family for almost thirty years. He was Uncle Gary to my children. He was my brother as we started our professional careers together. With Gary, I did not have to measure my words. I did not have to weigh my thoughts. We could agree or we could disagree. We were friends.

His passing has created a void in my life. Still, I firmly believe that we gather on these occasions not to mourn the death of a loved one, but to celebrate the life of someone who touched us in a very special way. While it may be very difficult at this moment for us to understand, the reality is that Gary still lives within our hearts and minds. The images we have of Gary will grow ever more vivid as time moves on.

I first met Gary about thirty years ago when we were both young assistant professors about to launch our teaching careers at

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William and Mary. I even remember our first exchange quite well. I had just been dismissed from a meeting of new university faculty and was looking for a place to eat lunch. My choices were the school cafeteria or the corner drugstore across the street from the university. Williamsburg in those days was not as well developed as it is today. The only place to eat lunch in the downtown area was the counter at the drugstore. As this was my first luncheon, I decided to try the drugstore and to my surprise noticed that hot pastrami was on the menu. I quickly ordered one, very pleased that I had something very familiar to embrace during my stay in the South. After ordering I noticed a rather imposing man take a seat at the counter to my left two seats away. I vaguely recalled seeing him at the faculty meeting, but did not know the department or school to which he was attached. In any event, my sandwich came. I stared at it in disbelief. Here was a hot pastrami served on white bread with mayonnaise. The shock was too great for my system. While I could tolerate grits, hot pastrami on white was another matter entirely.

It was then that I noticed that the man two seats to my left ordered a hot pastrami sandwich and he did so without a southern accent. I couldn't contain myself. I asked him rather loudly if he knew it would be served on white bread with mayonnaise. He did not answer me, he simply cancelled his order, moved closer to me, shook my hand and Gary became my friend forever. After having spent a year in New York City, Gary too was not pleased with hot pastrami on white bread.

During those years at William and Mary, Gary, Anita and I became quite close friends. Perhaps, it was because, of all the faculty at the law school, we were the least suited for Williamsburg and the culture of William and Mary College. Gary and Anita came to Williamsburg via New York City. I came via Boston and Washington, D.C. Life was rather slow for us.

But the slow pace of Williamsburg also afforded us the opportunity to learn about each other. Gradually, Gary revealed himself to me. I learned of his family—his parents, his aunts and uncles, of his adoption. I learned that at nineteen his father died and Gary was forced to take over his father's beauty supply business which then extended over three mid-western states. I learned of his first marriage which produced two wonderful children—Kary and Gary—whom he loved so desperately. I learned how he decided to

shed himself of the business to go on to college and then to law school. And, of course, I learned of his meeting Anita with whom for thirty years he was inseparable—even unto his last moment. His relationship with Anita is a modern love story.

Gary would paint such vivid pictures of his life that I began to think that we were boyhood friends and that I was witnessing events in Gary's life as they were unfolding. Through all of our conversations I could see all of those qualities which made Gary a very special person. Despite his rather large size, he was a very gentle man. He was kind. He was sincere. He was loyal. He was loving. More importantly, he was the kind of friend who helped shape my own character. He was the kind of friend from whom you could learn.

But I suppose what I will remember most about Gary was his sense of humor. For example, our big night out in Williamsburg was to go the Lums—a downscale version of Howard Johnsons—for dinner every Friday night. Lums was Williamsburg's best restaurant and hottest hot spot outside of the restoration. We would get there about 8 p.m. and stay right through closing at 10 p.m. or so. Then inevitably we would stand in the parking lot talking until the stroke of midnight simply because Gary wanted to say that we stayed out until midnight—a feat of which no other resident of Williamsburg could boast. I even remember, one evening, on leaving the Bahr's apartment after a particularly sumptuous banquet—you will notice that much of what Gary and I did was over a meal—taking the fifteen minute drive to my own apartment. During that time I saw not one living thing during the drive. I called Gary to tell him and I think at that point both of us knew we were ready to leave Williamsburg.

Though we separated from William and Mary—Gary going to Ohio and me to Massachusetts—my relationship with Gary was a very special one. We visited. We talked. And, whenever I needed him to come to my rescue he did. First, it was at the University of Bridgeport. I had just merged a law school with the University of Bridgeport and desperately needed some help. I called Gary and he came without hesitation. He was my rudder. He reigned me in when I had bad ideas and encouraged me when I had good ideas. Always he shaped those ideas. More importantly, he picked up the pieces so that the ideas could be implemented. Without him Bridgeport would never have been approved by the ABA. Eventu-

ally I left Bridgeport to go to Widener and once again I had to call Gary for help. I wanted very much to establish a spring admission program but desperately needed a faculty member to teach on Saturday mornings during the summers. For three years Gary commuted from Connecticut to Delaware to teach that course on Saturday mornings and I knew full well that he would much rather have spent that time in his beloved Maine with his even more beloved Anita. Yet, I needed help and he was there.

More recently, I came to Roger Williams University to start a law school. Again, I called Gary and he did not hesitate to come. Together, he and I and Christel Ertel and Bruce Kogan developed the concept of this law school. Again, he was my rudder. Again he picked up the pieces.

Every time without fail he came to my side when I needed him. His last duty was to establish a program in Lisbon that he knew I very much wanted for the benefit of our students, especially those of Portuguese decent. Again, he had to fill in the details.

I will miss him terribly, but as I said earlier the images are very vivid. I will always have pleasant memories of Gary. Some were very funny. I remember the time when Gary and Anita were visiting us in Connecticut at a beach house Pauline and I rented for the summer. There were eight of us present for dinner and Pauline decided that we were going to have lobsters. Apparently I had forgotten to pick up the lobsters so Pauline was compelled to go get them. As she was leaving I reminded her to count herself when she bought the lobsters. Gary decided to go with her to assure me that the count would be accurate. Well, they got to the fish store and Pauline very carefully counted the need for seven lobsters, apparently excluding herself. Gary very quickly double checked her math and counted the need for seven lobsters, apparently forgetting to count himself. Nevertheless the meal went on as scheduled and it was not unlike the parable of the Loaves and Fish. I think we could have fed twenty with those seven lobsters.

Some of my memories are very touching because of the kindness that Gary demonstrated toward my family and the gentleness with which we were treated.

Gary loved children and I know my children sensed that about him. I was reminded of that recently when I visited Gary and Anita in Maine and we spent two hours watching a video tape of Gary's brand new grandchild—Gary's granddaughter, AnnMarie.

I think her birth had to be Gary's happiest moment. We spent two hours watching these video tapes and Gary would jump up—Look she is going to flip over—Look she is going to pick up her rattle—Look she is sleeping. He was that excited.

Even more recently I was reminded of his love and devotion to children. Pauline handed me three pieces of paper she had pulled from her desk when we returned from Lisbon. Some twenty years ago Gary had the idea that my children needed to have an Easter egg hunt. Accordingly, he and Anita planted Easter eggs throughout our house while we were at church. He wrote a poem giving my children clues as to the whereabouts of the eggs. I think that poem reveals a very kind, loving human being. Let me read part of it to you

The Bunny has been here.
You can see that it's true
He left you good wishes
And Easter eggs too.

There are more eggs than you see
When you look in this nest.
Read the poem carefully
And you'll find the rest.

Lynne, you are oldest
So here's a new slant
If I were your egg,
I would hide in a plant.

A.J. is next,
The best of all boys
He'll find an egg
In a box full of toys.

Lauren, the Bunny knows
You will not boast
If you find your egg
Where Mom makes the toast.

And, of course, there's an egg
For Baby Anne.
She will find it
In a pan.

For Daddy's egg
He'll have to look.
It's hidden somewhere
Near a book.

And Mom's egg
You would never dream
Is hidden where
You put the cream.

It is very hard for us to accept the fact that Gary now exists only in our memories. Yet, for us he is just as real. He is still part of my life and will be forever. He knew how to make this a better world with kindness, gentleness, friendship, loyalty and love and as long as we remember Gary he will continue to be part of our lives still teaching us how to make this a better world.

I am thankful that I was privileged to have spent his last day with him. And it was a glorious day for him. Dean James P. White of the American Bar Association and I spent some time in his class. It was an absolutely superb class. Jim talked about it until he left Lisbon. We then had a wonderful meeting with the students who seemed to very much enjoy the program. Following that meeting we had a most agreeable luncheon with two of the Portuguese faculty during which we developed, I think, the foundation for a very strong program in Portugal. So, even on his last day, Gary was my rudder, steering the law school and University to even greater success.

And so, now we say good-bye to Gary, with thanks that we were privileged to have known him if only for a short time.

A Remembrance of Professor Gary L. Bahr

Bruce I. Kogan*

I first met Professor Gary L. Bahr in the summer of 1985 when he came to teach as a visiting professor at Widener University School of Law in Wilmington, Delaware. I was then a relatively new law faculty member running that law school's tax litigation clinic. Gary, who was teaching at the University of Bridgeport School of Law, agreed to teach at Widener that summer at the request of Widener's then Dean, Anthony J. Santoro. We had just started a Spring Admission Program at Widener and the SAP students, as they were called, were required to take Torts in the summer. The Dean was experiencing great difficulty enticing anyone on the Widener faculty to cover a course as substantial as Torts in an onerous ten week summer session. (I have often heard it said that the three most important reasons to leave law practice and go into teaching are June, July and August.) Gary, who had previously worked with Tony Santoro at the William and Mary and Bridgeport law schools, unhesitatingly agreed to give up substantial portions of his summer with Anita at their Maine cottage to teach in the SAP program.

That act of selflessness on Gary's part was completely typical of the kind, generous and giving individual that I came to know much better seven years later in the planning for the establishment of a law school in Rhode Island. But, I saw even at that early stage in our friendship that, other than Anita and his family, the one thing about which Gary most cared was teaching his students. When the Trustees of Roger Williams University decided to open a law school they wisely turned to Dean Santoro. After all, he had been instrumental in starting three previous law schools (Wethersfield, Bridgeport, and Widener-Harrisburg). The first person Tony

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Santoro called upon to help in starting the Roger Williams University School of Law was his old friend and colleague, Gary Bahr.

Tony Santoro's logic in soliciting Gary's participation in the Roger Williams project was flawless. Gary had been a law professor since 1970, teaching at William and Mary, Capital, Toledo and Bridgeport (later Quinnipiac). He had taught an incredibly diverse range of courses over the years, everything from Administrative Law to Torts, from Jurisprudence to Contracts and Commercial Law. He had served for a time as Dean Santoro's Associate Dean at Bridgeport. Gary's breadth of experience in legal education, the warmth and genuineness of his personality, and his willingness to do whatever it took to get the job done made him an ideal choice as a member of the founding faculty of the new law school. So it came to pass that Gary was designated to serve as the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at Roger Williams and to teach Contracts to the entering class in the Fall of 1993.

In the year leading up to the opening of the school, a powerful triumverate consisting of Tony Santoro, Christel Ertel, and Gary Bahr labored day-in and day-out to make the vision of a law school in Rhode Island a reality. Together the three of them hired the rest of the founding faculty, including Professors Barbara Bernier, Ray Gallagher, Richard Huber, Jonathan Mintz, Linda Mischler, Louise Teitz, Robert Whorf, Gail Winson, Michael Yelnosky, and me. Christel spent most of that year on the road recruiting an astounding entering class of one hundred and eighty students. That feat should probably go into some Hall of Fame given that the school was unaccredited, unknown and had no building (just a huge hole in the ground that I saw when I came up to visit the three of them in mid-December 1992). Tony Santoro, in addition to functioning as the unofficial general contractor on the building project, spent that year working with anyone and everyone who could possibly assist in making the law school a success. That group included Chairman Ralph R. Papitto, the university Trustees, the leaders of the local bench and bar, the A.B.A. accreditation authorities, state and local government officials, members of the press and even the owner of the Lobster Pot, if that was what it took. Gary Bahr spent most of that year working out the academic inner workings of the new law school. Gary's insights helped to inform almost everything about the academic plan for the law school, including the curriculum design, the course descriptions, the aca-

demic rules, orientation and countless other decisions that had to be made before the first student walked in the door.

I remember the end of the first night of orientation back in August 1993, when Christel, Gary, Tony and I went out to the Lobster Pot for dinner to celebrate the successful initiation of the law school. All of our spirits were high, but none higher than Gary Bahr's. Gary was energized by the prospect of teaching this bright-eyed group of pioneering self-starters who were taking as much of a chance on us as we were on them. Over the next six years, Gary Bahr contributed his heart and soul into the development of Roger Williams University Ralph R. Papitto School of Law. He served as the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for the first eighteen months of operation, in the process playing a critical role in assisting Dean John E. Ryan through our first A.B.A. inspection in the Fall of 1994. That important milestone out of the way, Gary requested the opportunity in January 1995 to return full-time to his first love, law teaching.

As Gary's successor in the Associate Dean's office, I regularly sought out his sage advice on some of the thornier problems that came across my desk. I also asked him to take on teaching a wide range of classes over the next several years as our student body and curriculum grew. While at Roger Williams, Gary taught Contracts, Torts, Sales, Jurisprudence, Legal Perspectives and Law, Language and Ethics. He also was the individual to whom I, as Interim Dean, turned to run our summer overseas study program in Lisbon, Portugal. Gary's enthusiasm for the Portugal project was boundless. He and Anita loved to travel anyhow, but this was going to be an opportunity to combine living in another culture with teaching his law students. Sadly, the Portugal experience was Gary's last.

As I sit at my computer during the 1999 holiday season, the morning following a wonderful alumni reception in Providence, I realize just how much Gary is missed. He would have loved to spend the evening with members of the first four graduating classes from the law school. He was a great big bear of a man, but he was as warm and caring as anyone I have ever known. His former students know how much he wanted them to learn and succeed. Gary would have taken as much pleasure in hearing about their new jobs and cases as the alumni would have in sharing their news with him. His colleagues miss his voice of experience in fac-

ing challenges that may be new for us at this fledgling institution, but which Gary had seen over and over again on the faculty at other schools. Finally, there are all those people who came to know Gary L. Bahr as a loyal and trusted friend, who will miss his sense of cheer at life's joys. I count myself in that number.

My Colleague, Gary Bahr

Louise Ellen Teitz*

I may not fill Gary's shoes, but I do fill his chair—the tall, high-backed black leather chair that Gary started with at Roger Williams in the Fall of 1993 when we all moved into the Law School building together. Last summer, Anita Bahr told me that I should take Gary's chair which would have no special significance to anyone else. The chair is no doubt quite at home in my office, which like Gary's office, is chock-full of books and papers, all in a proper place. Gary and I had an unofficial contest for office appearance, mine usually exceeding his for clutter. Unlike my office, where there is almost no square feet of unencumbered space or furniture, in Gary's office, one of the pair of cherry wood chairs was almost always clear and available for a colleague or student. Students knew that Gary had a clear seat for them and that Gary was available to answer their questions and more importantly, to listen and counsel, about life's difficulties, especially those facing a first-year law student. The students knew that Gary cared about them as people, not simply as faces in a classroom. Gary was a wonderful listener, a rarity today, and a listener who always had time for his students and his colleagues.

Like the students, I, too, often sat in the wooden chair across from Gary, sharing thoughts and seeking his advice to fix the world—outside or in. Sometimes the advice was about fountain pens (for which we both had a passion), potato chips or websites for chocolate. Sometimes the advice was more serious, such as when I would seek answers based on his long career and experience in academia. Nor did we always see things the same way. But Gary would always listen and advise.

We seek advice and support from those we trust and those with whom we feel safe. I knew Gary would keep my concerns and thoughts confidential, without my ever having to ask him to do so.

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More importantly, I knew that Gary would give me nonjudgmental advice—nonjudgmental when given, and even more unusual, nonjudgmental even *after* I chose a different path. I knew that whether I did what he counseled or not, he wouldn't change his willingness to mentor. Sometimes, when I swam against the current, his advice was "do what you think you need to do"—and I knew he would support my decision, even when he was going the opposite way.

So here I sit, enveloped by this roomy chair, trying to put into words the special gifts and talents that Gary possessed—his warmth, his caring, his wonderful sense of humor, his knowledge about a vast array of subjects (which never ceased to amaze me), his devotion to teaching, his zest for life. When we first started out here at the law school in 1993, Gary was part of the glue that held us all, founding faculty and students alike, together. I remember an early memo from Gary, reminding faculty members to erase the chalk board after each class. At the time, I remember being annoyed by what I found to be another unnecessary administrative missive. Of course, I did not think about the problem much, since everyone else got the same memo, everyone else erased the board, and I always started class with a clean board. But in retrospect, the memo was more an indication of Gary's personality, in that he was reminding us to think of others and trying to make us realize our obligation to the colleagues who come after us. At the end of each class now, being well-trained, I erase the board and smile, thinking of my own rather immature and petulant reaction to the memo in Fall 1993, of the many years that have gone by since then, and now, of Gary's absence.

So I have Gary's chair. The last definition in Webster's Dictionary (no, I will not add a footnote) for "chair" is probably the most important one: "any of various devices that hold up or support." When I am stuck or behind on a project (as is frequently the case) or when I am unsure of how to handle the latest problem or crisis, I sit back in the chair, knowing that I am safe and *supported* by the many years of good counsel Gary gave me, and surrounded by many happy memories of the first six years together here at Roger Williams—and sad that Gary is not here to share the next several years.

Goodbye to a Friend

Frank R. Chavez*

How is it that with so many words in the English language, we can seldom come up with a few, worthy enough to express our most sincere feelings? Maybe it's because English is a "technical" language and not so much one of "feelings," like perhaps the Romance languages of France, Portugal, Spain, or Italy. Or maybe it's because we just don't spend enough time writing things of the heart, expressing ourselves at the level of personal sentiment necessary to exercise our heart-brain muscles. Surely, Balzac, Camões, Cervantes or Verdi seem to have put the seat of passion into words expressing the sentiment of the soul. However, we on the North American continent are no strangers to pain, sorrow and loss. So I search to find the words that express my feelings: I miss my friend.

The best I can do is to tell you of the pleasure it was for me to get to know Professor Gary Lee Bahr. I will remember with gratitude his friendship and example.

Professor Bahr was a friend to everybody. It seemed that *everybody* loved this guy; and I got to know him better while in Portugal this summer. We typically ate at least one meal together every single day. Usually it was lunch because of our schedules, but there were lots of dinner occasions too. Generally speaking, he was always "up for something," even if it was just talking in the lobby of the hotel. Before long, the difficulty of Portuguese was noticeably giving way to his efforts to master it, and he could communicate in basic sentences with others in Portugal. He was genuinely interested in everybody. When he was with you it was as though you were the only other human being on the planet.

Sometimes, the cosmos conspires for your good and you get to rub shoulders with the great people that change this world for the better in the most time honored way: one person at a time. That's how I feel as I look back on my friendship with Professor Bahr.

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From my association with Gary (he insisted we call him by his *first* name) I learned that you can laugh at other people's jokes even when they aren't funny, mainly because it does no one any good to point out that it was a "corny" joke. He also quoted Flip Wilson's character "Geraldine" enough to make you want to watch the show again. My favorite lesson (rooted in law, of course) was that the most effective of all legal tools is to resort to "self help" whenever you need to get something done. Another of Gary's lessons was to have a constant gathering of friends and food for stories and laughs, with the apparent adage: "this is what makes life good."

One night in Lisbon we were on our way back to his hotel room to get my souvenir ticket from a bullfight. I told him that I thought he had a great marriage. He paused for a moment, then with the flair of a sage revealing one of life's greatest secrets said, "just remember to keep *humor* in everything, Frank, and the marriage will go just fine." Anita and he appeared in all respects to be connected from their souls. That's how I want to love and be loved. My favorite lesson comes from the friendship between Gary and Anita. The success of a man is measured not only by his education, wise money management and his ability to get along with his peers; but by the respect, high esteem and day-to-day tenderness with which he treats his wife.

I suppose that when someone passes away, you practically *have* to say things like "he was a great guy" or "he'll be missed by all," but even in doing away with the politically correct norm, you're left with good things to say about Gary.

I'm sure that none of us can forget one incident that took place one morning in his Torts class. As you know, in room 262 the students sit with their backs to the water. In other words, the teacher has a nice water view; the rest of us watch the teacher. One morning, Professor Bahr appeared to have some trouble completing his thoughts and finally said, in a tone of surrender, "OK, I can't take it anymore, I have to share with all of you what I think is just spectacular. Everyone take a moment, turn around and look out the window onto the water." We saw a beautiful ship with the sails set high and, although I don't drink much, I thought the ship looked like the one on the Cutty Sark bottle of whiskey (it's a green bottle with a yellow label). He then told us that often, ships and warships will cross our bay and when they do, it's really a sight to see. What we glean from this particular incident is that it was a

moment of “spectacular” beauty to *Professor Bahr*, and he needed to share it because that’s just how he is. (I suppose it would be more proper to say, “how he *was*” but that’s not my feeling). What great memories!

When I went to Portugal, I thought I’d only learn about the European Union, European Community law and the Treaty of Rome, and get to take lots of pictures. Instead, I’m different. My life is enriched because a person I knew added value to my life as a direct result of the great worth of his own. I am better for the privilege of knowing Gary as a “friend.”