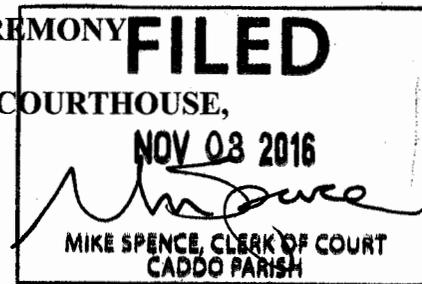


**MEMORIAL FOR ELIZABETH BAUCUM JOYCE
PRESENTED AT THE MEMORIAL AND RECOGNITION CEREMONY
OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
HELD IN THE SECOND FLOOR COURTROOM G, CADDO PARISH COURTHOUSE,
SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA, NOVEMBER 3, 2016
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE
SHREVEPORT BAR ASSOCIATION**



Elizabeth Baucum Joyce was unconventional. She did not live an ordinary life. She did not practice law in an ordinary way either.

Her reasons for going to law school were common enough. She finished college, loved English, writing and reading and had no idea what she was going to do with her life. Sound familiar? She also loved her grandmother, Frannie. Frannie thought law school was just the thing. Frannie's husband, Ralph Baucum, Sr. had started the Caddo Abstract Company and she saw Elizabeth as the perfect grandchild to follow in his footsteps. Elizabeth's maternal grandfather, Judge Watkins, had roots in the local legal community as well. He practiced in Minden but was probably best known for building Shed Road in Bossier Parish to help him get from Minden to Shreveport without getting stuck in the mud.

As with most things Elizabeth did, she excelled as a law student. I interviewed her for a clerkship at Blanchard Walker more years ago than I want to admit. She had outstanding grades and an enviable class ranking. We happily hired her. For me, practicing law was never as much fun as it was for the few years that I was able to practice with Elizabeth.

She loved to write. I am not sure that helping to write provisions of the natural gas tariff for what was then Arkla Energy Resources was exactly what she had in mind but that was what she was given to do and she did it exceedingly well. She made us all laugh with her wicked and quick wit. She was recently and happily married to Bill and she brought the joy she found in life into the office with her.

Sadly for us, she did not love the conventional practice of law. One of Elizabeth's finest traits was the courage to change things that needed changing. This included things in her own life that were not as she felt they should have been. So she left what many in her class would have thought was a dream job.

As she always did, she followed her heart. This time, it took her to volunteer work at the Lighthouse. She did not use her legal education the way most of us do but she used it nonetheless. She helped people who needed her and her understanding of the law was one of the skills that allowed her to do that. She helped Bill with contracts and legal questions that arose in

his early and very promising career. She frequently called to check herself when she wasn't sure whether the law might have changed or if she wasn't remembering something correctly. Her ability to continue to provide good advice was amazing.

Most of you know the heartache that Elizabeth experienced toward the end of her life. She loved her two children, Mary Katherine and Jack, more than life itself. I have never seen a more dedicated Mother. Witnessing Elizabeth watch her daughter suffer through her horrible illness was heart breaking. She dealt with it as she dealt with everything; with courage and selflessness. And just when you thought life couldn't give her anything else to overcome, she was diagnosed with ALS. Again, she handled this devastating disease with dignity and unimaginable strength. She wanted to see her son graduate from high school and grow into a man. And so she did.

Elizabeth's use of her legal education, as Elizabeth's life in so many ways, serves as a model for those who choose to do something different. She was perfectly capable of having a legal career that would have fit the conventional definition of highly successful. But Elizabeth defined success as being happy. And helping people who needed her is what made her happy. She was as comfortable with her Lighthouse kids as she was at the Emmys or with a Pulitzer Prize winning author.

I will close with a story that isn't so much about Elizabeth the lawyer as about how much Elizabeth will be missed. Among other things, Elizabeth and I share a love of good food. She told me more than once that I should go to a place in Northern California called Manka's Inverness Lodge. She and Bill and the kids had spent the best Thanksgiving ever there in 2002. Ten years later, I was reading my Bon Appétit magazine. It had an article by Michael Chabon. I knew he and his wife were close friends with Bill and Elizabeth so I read it.

When I got to the part where he said that in 2002, "a friend" he called "Mr. Robinson" to protect his privacy, "phoned to say that he, his wife and their 2 children were flying from their home state (east of the Sabine and south of the Ozarks) for a Thanksgiving weekend at Manka's," I knew that he meant Bill and Elizabeth.

Michael Chabon described the perfect Thanksgiving weekend, the food, the setting, the companionship, the time when Elizabeth's life was magical.

And then the story's tone changed. Those of us who were privileged to have Elizabeth in our lives will appreciate Michael Chabon's expression of loss as we approach this Thanksgiving.

I will use the Pulitzer Prize winning novelist's own words:

“Ten years have passed since that night at Manka’s Inverness Lodge. Mr. Robinson’s daughter was killed by a terrible disease and his wife has since fallen prey to another. And two days after Christmas in 2006, a massive tree fell onto the main building of Manka’s, damaging a water heater which started a fire and burned the old lodge to the ground. We can never go back, therefore, to the place as it was in its heyday, to the families we were in our prime, to the things we had all taken for granted up until that day.”

“And that, to me is the meaning of Thanksgiving. Of all the Thanksgivings before and since, the one spent at Manka’s stands out for me as the truest, even though we were far from our places of origin. Nothing lasts; everything changes. People die, and marriages dissolve, and friendships fade, and families fall apart, whether or not we appreciate them; whether or not we give thanks every waking moment or one night a year. For the act of returning to the same table, to the same people, to the same dishes—to the same traditions—can blind you to life’s transience. It can lull you into believing that some things, at least, stay the same. And if that’s what you believe then what have you got to be grateful for? None of our Thanksgivings are ever coming back; we’ve lost them. They’re gone. And so next year, let’s go somewhere with strange customs and unfamiliar recipes and the latest collection of ill assorted chairs, and give thanks—not for everything we have but for everything, instead, that we have lost.”

Kay Anderson

