

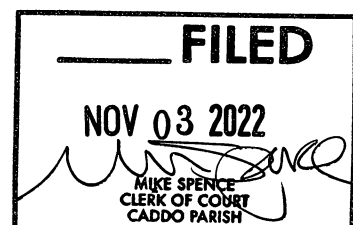
MEMORIAL FOR  
**RUSSELL OLIVER BRABHAM**  
PRESENTED AT THE MEMORIAL AND RECOGNITION CEREMONY  
HELD IN THE FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT  
NOVEMBER 3, 2022  
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE  
SHREVEPORT BAR ASSOCIATION

MAY IT PLEASE THE COURT:

It is my distinct honor and privilege to speak briefly about Russell Oliver Brabham, a fellow Gator, musician, and lawyer. Russ was born to Jean and Roy Brabham on April 7, 1952, which would have made him about 15 at the time Captain Shreve High School opened in 1967. That said, it is likely that he was in one of our alma mater's very first classes. It is not difficult at all for me to envision Russ as a high school student in the late 60s, where music and notions of equity and fairness abounded. If you had the occasion to know him, you would agree that he was a straight shooter who had no qualms calling balls and strikes and speaking truth to power.

After graduating from Captain Shreve, Russ attended Southern Methodist University in Dallas. Thereafter, he attended law school at LSU. He returned to Shreveport and practiced law for over 40 years. And during that timeframe, he was not only a blessing to our legal community, but he was also a blessing to our community at large. I learned this when I realized the various and sundry ways that our paths crossed within the community and the overlap of friends that we shared who had no direct connection to the legal community whatsoever. One individual that we held in common is my wife's aunt, Rachel Ginsburg. When Rachel learned that I was also a musician, she immediately asked if I knew Russ Brabham and whether I had heard his band, The Bucket List. At the time, I had neither met Russ, nor had I heard his band. But, I thought, "What a fantastic name for a band!" I would, of course, get to know Russ in later years, not merely as a lawyer, but as a contributor to our little slice of America.

However, as it regards our legal community, I am reminded of a specific instance when I passed Russ in the basement of the Caddo Parish Courthouse. Given his personality, he was the type of lawyer that would give his time freely to assist a younger lawyer such as myself. At the time of this particular encounter, I was in a jury trial, trying one of the most difficult cases of my career. He sat with me for almost an hour, dispensing pearls of wisdom in a very direct, non-condescending manner and I have never forgotten the fact that he gave of his time and knowledge when it would have simply been easier for



him to have said, "Good luck" and gone on about his business. Is this not what the practice of law is about? Older lawyers passing the gift of practicing law along to the next generation of lawyers. It is for this precise reason that, as I put more candles on the cake each year, THIS particular program...the Memorial and Recognition Ceremony, grows in significance to me.

I recall when I stood before the Bar as a newly minted lawyer. Like all of the young lawyers being recognized today, I had worked so diligently to get here, to pass the Louisiana bar after having attended law school in Virginia. But there I was on the precipice of a career that is truly a calling to service. Though I appreciated that element, what I did not fully appreciate was the swiftness with which these days pass. Russ got it. He understood that it was a marathon and not a sprint. He understood that one must achieve balance. He never took himself too seriously. And he contributed to our community.

In line with his lifelong passion of playing music, Russ was on the Board of Directors of Shreveport House Concerts, a monthly concert series that celebrates local musicians. That said, when he passed away, his family asked that, to memorialize him, in lieu of flowers, donations be made to Shreveport House Concerts, Inc., 1508 Fairfield Avenue, Shreveport, LA 71101. I kindly ask the same.

Russ died on April 26, 2022. He was preceded in death by his beautiful and loving wife, Kim; his parents, Jean, and Roy; and his siblings Wray and Laura Jean. He is survived by his daughter, Laura Claire; his brother, Roy; his nephew, Bennett; his nieces, Rachel and Ashley, and numerous friends.

A great lawyer. A great musician. And, most of all, a great man. In the end, is that not what it is all about? I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to serenade Russell Oliver Brabham. However, rather than taking resort to a song, I will share a poem by Robert Frost that captures the spirit that was Russ Brabham. The poem is entitled, "The Road Not Taken".

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;*

*Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,*

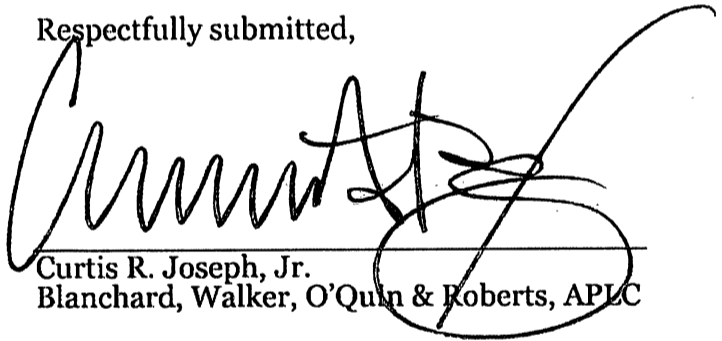
*And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.*

No doubt, Russ took the road not taken. And following his lead as a worthy trail guide is certainly at the top of my bucket list. I encourage the nine of you joining our wonderful bar to do the same.

In closing, I am honored to submit this memorial to the memory of Russell Oliver Brabham and move that this memorial be duly recorded and made a part of the permanent record of the First Judicial District Court in and for Caddo Parish and that copies be delivered to Russ' family and forwarded to the Louisiana Supreme Court for recordation.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Curtis R. Joseph, Jr.", with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Curtis R. Joseph, Jr.  
Blanchard, Walker, O'Quin & Roberts, APLC