

**MEMORIAL FOR
RANDALL S. DAVIDSON
PRESENTED AT THE MEMORIAL AND RECOGNITION CEREMONY
HELD IN THE FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
NOVEMBER 9, 2023
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE
SHREVEPORT BAR ASSOCIATION**



GOOD AFTERNOON YOUR HONORS, MAY IT PLEASE THE COURT:

Family, friends, and fellow members of the Bar: A few words about Randall S. Davidson, “Randy” to most of us, who passed away on January 7, 2023.

A Shreveport native, Randy attended Southern Hills Elementary School, Ridgewood Junior High, and Woodlawn High School. At Woodlawn, Randy was an offensive lineman for the Woodlawn Knights football team, winners of the 1968 State Championship. As Randy related to me, his job on the Woodlawn team was to keep quarterback Joe Ferguson’s uniform clean, which he did well. At Woodlawn, Randy was recognized as a National Merit Scholar. This recognition allowed him to attend Harvard College in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he graduated *cum laude* in 1973.

After Harvard, Randy came back to Louisiana to earn his Juris Doctor at Louisiana State University Hebert Law Center, where he graduated Order of the Coif in 1976.

On graduation, he returned to Shreveport and joined the law firm of Blanchard, Walker, O’Quin & Roberts. As Randy recounted to me, he came back to Louisiana because he wanted to be an oil and gas lawyer. And he had his wish. At Blanchard, he honed his skills working under such notable attorneys as Marlin Risinger and Robert Roberts III, applying his abilities to an array of projects and cases in the energy sector.

In 1981, he showed one of the traits that would characterize much of his career -- his independence. In that year, Randy left Blanchard Walker to form his own firm. He recruited for this endeavor attorney Ernest L. “Nicky” Nix, who would be his law partner for the next 20 years.

Randy’s founding of his new firm coincided with a time of great turmoil in the

local economy. The oil glut after 1980 caused a significant decline in crude oil prices, leading many energy firms to the financial brink. The Penn Square Bank failure in 1982 shook the energy lending market. During this time, Randy undertook a dizzying array of projects that established his expertise in Chapter 11 reorganization, debt workouts, and commercial lending.

The founding of Davidson & Nix was the starting point for a firm that would persist in one form or fashion for the next four decades to the present. Over the years, Randy employed or partnered with many attorneys. The current firm is comprised of Julie Blewer, Lake Hearne, Drew Martin, Davis Powell and myself. Besides the current group and Nicky Nix, Randy also practiced at different times with Allison Jones, who was his partner for three decades, as well as Tom Arceneaux, Jim Askew, John Hodge, Chris Slatten, Allen Cooper, Shannan Hicks, and Harold Bicknell.

Through all of this, Randy shared his life with his wife of 51 years, Sharon Parnell Davidson. Sheri and Randy married in 1972, and Sheri was with Randy through his legal education, his early career, the tumult of starting his own firm, and his three decades as founder and senior partner of his own firm.

Randy was devoted to Sheri and to their daughters, Megen and Alix, and their grandchildren. And to horses. To fully understand Randy, you must understand that the women of the Davidson family absolutely love horses. As a consequence, Randy developed an intricate knowledge of equine lore: acquiring and stabling; care and feeding; the logistics of horse shows; and the health and life cycles of these wonderful animals.

Randy immensely enjoyed having his whole family together. He and Sheri made annual trips with both of their daughters' families. These were big excursions, of the type depicted in movies – the whole extended crew under one roof for a couple of weeks in Vermont or somewhere similar. Randy looked forward to these trips and enthusiastically planned for them every year.

Practicing with Randy, one of the familiar rituals of the office was the annual round of Harvard interviews. For as long as I knew him, Randy was an alumni interviewer for Harvard College. For a few weeks every fall, a dozen or more aspiring Harvard applicants would appear

in our waiting room. Regardless of workload, Randy would block out an hour for each applicant, but the interviews would frequently go well over that, with Randy taking the time needed to give each person the same opportunity he had at that age.

Professionally, Randy's law practice was unique. As a lawyer, Randy was a man of extraordinary skill and ability. He could master the most complex subject matter and make sense of the most intricate transactions.

Randy could be tenacious and stubborn in his work; but at heart, he was a problem-solver. In his practice, he enjoyed nothing more than sitting down with his clients, talking through their issues, and trying to find the most direct route to resolution. He enjoyed the fray, but some of his favorite meetings with clients were with those who no longer needed his services – where he had brought his abilities to bear and resolved the particular difficulties that only an able lawyer could resolve.

Randy's practice was never cookie-cutter. The projects clients brought to him were almost always the "hard stuff." The loan with the unusual collateral. The case with the unanswered question of law. The business relationship that needed years to untangle. Randy dove into these matters with resolve, emerging with an appropriate resolution.

In later years, with the boom-bust cycles of the energy business, it was probably inevitable that Randy would delve back into the oil and gas realm in the early 2000s. Randy had spent much of his early career working for large energy concerns – but this time, his focus was primarily work representing landowners. Whether it was a bank, a gas company, or someone with a couple of acres in a shale play, Randy applied his full resources to client problems. He served on the board of the Louisiana Mineral Law Institute, but he also gave talks to landowner groups trying to navigate the maze of Louisiana mineral law. In the process, Randy contributed a great deal to our practice and to the development of our mineral and property law, but also to the public's knowledge of how that law works.

With his associates and staff, Randy was a good boss and good teacher. The phrase "the door is always open" is a bit of cliché, but with Randy it was literally true. As a young lawyer,

you could go to his office anytime during the day, and he would be happy to puzzle through a problem – whether it was something you were doing for him, someone else’s project, or even something not law-related. Indeed, there was sometimes a line at the door. Even late in his career, Randy was still very much in touch with his former life as a young lawyer, and he would draw on that experience advising others.

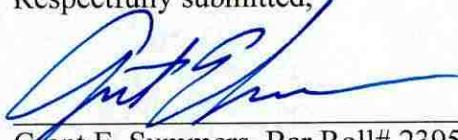
Randy was familiar with the grind of law, but he also knew when to step back and focus on what was important to him and those he loved. And he translated that into supporting the work-life balance of those who worked with and for him.

I practiced with Randy for 27 years. He was an unparalleled mentor, a great counsellor, an outstanding lawyer, and a good friend.

Your Honors, I now move to request that this Memorial Eulogy for Randall S. Davidson be duly recorded on this 9th day of November 2023, in Shreveport, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, and made part of the permanent record of the First Judicial District Court, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, and that copies be delivered to Randy’s family.

Thank you, Your Honors.

Respectfully submitted,



Grant E. Summers, Bar Roll# 23953