

**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
DISTRICT OF OREGON**



June 16, 2023

Retired United States Bankruptcy Judge Randall (Randy) Lawson Dunn, District of Oregon, died at home on June 7, 2023. Judge Dunn was known for his quick wit and keen intellect. Before, during, and after his service as a judge, he maintained an infectious laugh that endeared him to others.

Judge Dunn was initially appointed on Feb. 1, 1998, and was reappointed on Feb. 1, 2012. He was appointed to the Ninth Circuit Bankruptcy Appellate Panel (BAP) in 2006 and reappointed to the BAP in 2013. He served as chief of the BAP from Aug. 1, 2013, to July 31, 2016. He also served on the Ninth Circuit Conference Executive Committee as the bankruptcy representative.

Judge Dunn served on the Executive Committee of the National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges (NCBJ) for several years, including years as treasurer and, in 2010-11, as president. He was editor-in-chief of the NCBJ Conference News for one year and a consulting editor for several years. He was noteworthy for many years for delivering the obituaries of deceased bankruptcy judges at the annual meeting. Judge Dunn retired on Jan. 20, 2017, after 18 years of service.

“My friend and my colleague Randy Dunn and I got to know one another in the mid-1980s studying for the Washington Bar,” said retired Bankruptcy Judge Trish Brown, formerly of the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Oregon. “We tried for the same bankruptcy judgeship and told one another on the flight home that if we didn’t get it, we hoped the other would. He got that first one, and I got the next one. Years later I roasted him upon his retirement, and he unveiled my portrait at my retirement. He bonded with our daughter, Cory, when she was pretty young and was quite honored to officiate at Cory and Alex’s wedding last summer. Randy, you will be missed by all who knew your gentle, enthusiastic, and optimistic soul.”

“Judge Dunn approached life and his judicial and association work with enthusiasm, passion, and principles,” said retired Judge Joan Feeney, formerly of the U.S. Bankruptcy

Court for the District of Massachusetts. “He was a light among his colleagues in the judiciary, always joyful with a gleaming smile. He was positive in his approach to solving any problem, methodically analyzing all issues and options. He made his points with calm professionalism and kindness. In the many NCBJ projects I worked with him on, he emphasized the importance of collecting data and presenting detailed information as the best way to persuade another of one’s position and reach the right result. He was an adoring husband and father, tremendously proud of his loving, close family and beloved wife.”

“I first met Judge Dunn as a lawyer working on the Conference Executive Committee. He impressed me as wise and witty and kind,” said Judge Laura Taylor, U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Southern District of California. “But I got to really know him when I became a judge and joined him on the Bankruptcy Appellate Panel. Everyone will agree that his legal analysis was brilliant and his written decisions were of the highest order. But what I will remember most fondly are his humor, his many enthusiasms, and his love for his work and his colleagues. My dear friend Randy made us all better judges by example, support, and an occasional direct suggestion sent your way with a smile. He was my BAP big brother. I am blessed to have had him in that role.”

“Judge Dunn was a wonderful colleague,” said retired Judge Elizabeth L. Perris, formerly of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Oregon. “He was quick to volunteer. When he said he was going to do something, he always got it done in a timely manner. He was a real Renaissance man.”

“I will be ever grateful for having had an opportunity these many years to know, and to serve with, my dear friend Judge Randy Dunn,” said retired Judge Jim Pappas, formerly of the U. S. Bankruptcy Court, District of Idaho. “He truly was one of the best judges I ever encountered during my time on the bench. Judge Dunn invariably displayed a kind and courteous demeanor to all his colleagues, the lawyers and parties appearing before him, and court staff.

“He was blessed with a keen intellect, a no-nonsense, common-sense approach to deciding challenging issues, and an intimate familiarity with all aspects of bankruptcy law. But even more impressive, Randy also displayed incredible knowledge of such varied topics as classical music, ornithology and vintage horror movies. Not only a rock-solid trial judge, Judge Dunn was also a top-notch court administrator as evidenced during his years serving as chief of the oldest, largest and busiest Bankruptcy Appellate Panel in the country, a place where he championed the values of collegiality, consensus and respect among the member judges. In addition to working together, Julie and I will fondly remember the many hours we spent with Randy and Laurie at Circuit, NCBJ, and other conferences. We

will both deeply miss Randy and want to express our sincere condolences to his family. We have all lost a truly good person,” said Judge Pappas.

Judge Dunn was born in Gary, Indiana, in 1950. His family moved to Crown Point, Indiana, when he was in middle school. Judge Dunn graduated from Crown Point High School as co-valedictorian with five other extraordinary “straight A” students and served as president of his senior class. In 1972, he earned a bachelor’s degree in political science from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, and in 1975, he earned a law degree from Stanford University Law School. While in law school, he played clarinet in the Stanford orchestra, where he met his future wife, Laurie Loomis. They were married in 1976 and later had two children. Judge Dunn practiced law at Berman & Giaouque, an antitrust litigation law firm in Salt Lake City. In 1977, he moved to the Portland, Oregon, office of Copeland, Landye, Bennett, and Wolf, LLP to work on the business side of the small transaction-oriented firm. There, his practice focused on corporate/business, securities, and bankruptcy law, and he ultimately became the managing partner of the Portland office.

Following his retirement, Judge Dunn was appointed as a member of the American Bankruptcy Institute’s Commission on Consumer Bankruptcy. Initially, he served as chair of the commission’s Chapter 7 committee. After many intense and productive meetings over a period of approximately two years, the commission issued its final report and recommendations. Judge Dunn served as line editor for the report, and he noted with particular pride that the Wall Street Journal’s business reporter told him and Professor Bruce Lawless, the primary author of the report, that she read it from cover to cover and did not find any typos.

Judge Dunn was a man of many passions besides the law. During the years 1977-1982, he played clarinet for the Salem (Oregon) Symphony, and, during the years, 1982-2008, he played clarinet for the Portland Opera Orchestra. He served as president and board member both for the Beaverton Arts Commission and Portland Festival Symphony. He also served as a Portland Columbia Symphony Board member and on its Finance Committee. Judge Dunn was an avid gardener who delighted in explaining to visitors the plants and shrubs that thrived under his care. He loved birds and kept a life list, sometimes traveling internationally to add newly encountered species. He was well known for his colorful sweaters and ties that matched his sunny disposition.

Judge Dunn is survived by Laurie, his spouse of some 47 years, their two adult children, Cadence and Andrew, and grandson Julian, born in 2022. Even though Julian was half a continent away from his grandparents, he was the subject of daily photo posts that loaded into an electronic display screen. This was much appreciated by Judge Dunn.

There will be a celebration of Judge Dunn's life later this summer. Donations may be made in Judge Dunn's name to the Portland Opera <https://secure.portlandopera.org/donate/q/donate-now> or Portland Audubon <https://audubonportland.org/ways-to-give/tribute-gifts/>.