

## **A. RICHARD CAPUTO**

(March 9, 2020)



A. Richard Caputo died after a brief illness. He served as a judge on the United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania for the past 22 years.

He was born in Port Chester, N.Y., was raised in Rye, N.Y., and graduated from Brown University and the University of Pennsylvania Law School. After law school, he served in the Judge Advocate General's Department of the United States Air Force for three years and was honorably discharged as a captain. Thereafter, he entered the practice of law with the firm of Shea & Shea, and in 1973, the firm became known as Shea, Shea & Caputo. Over the ensuing years, he was an active trial lawyer and general practitioner. In 1997, he was nominated to the federal bench by President Clinton, and after senate confirmation, served as a federal district judge.

During his career he served as a public defender and as a member of various community organizations. He was a director of the Stegmaier Brewing Company and Unifax Inc. He was a founding director of the Luzerne Foundation and a founding director of Huntsville Golf Club. He also served as a director of the Federal Judge's Association and was a member of the Third Circuit Committee on Model Civil Jury Instructions.

He had a keen interest in cars, and often drove simply for pleasure along the country roads in Pennsylvania, New York and Connecticut.

He enjoyed the game of golf, and was a student of its history, mysteries and traditions, and like all who loved the game, engaged in the life search for the unattainable; the perfect swing. While he found the game elusive, he looked forward to the next round with the enthusiasm and hope that it would be his best.

He relished his role as mentor to his law clerks and often commented that the special association he had with his clerks was a special privilege and benefit of being a judge.

He believed in education as necessary to a civil democracy and subscribed to the view that religion provided the moral standards of a civil society. Language and the ability to communicate were important to him. Indeed, he was fascinated by words and how they were used, in everyday life, in books, in the media and as tools of humor.

He believed in civility and the free exchange of ideas, and that this be done respectfully and that those who engage recognize that disagreement is inevitable, yet that friendship should endure beyond disagreement.

He viewed his role as a federal judge as a part of the continuum of judges who have served the nation by assuring that the Constitution protected the rights of the individual against the unauthorized or excessive use of government power as well as assuring that the Constitution protected the minority from the tyranny of the majority, and at the same time balancing the rights of the individual with the needs of a lawfully ordered society. He held the view that the federal

judiciary was the heart of our ingenious system of government. He also believed in the anonymity of federal judges, and preferred the media reporting that "a federal judge" upheld and safeguarded a particular constitutional right, rather than that a named judge had done so.

Above all, he loved his family and took great pride in their accomplishments. Most of all, he felt the satisfaction of knowing that they were good and decent people.

Judge Caputo is survived by his wife, the former Rosemary Shea; their children, Lisa Caputo Morris and her husband, Rick; A. Richard Caputo Jr. and his wife, Laurie; and Christina Caputo Gilbert and her husband, Jerry. He is also survived by grandchildren, Drew Morris, Caroline Morris, A. Richard Caputo III, Jackson Reed Caputo, Leah Caputo; Lauren Gilbert and Katy Gilbert.

Funeral services will be private at the convenience of family.

Arrangements are by Harold C. Snowdon Funeral Home, Inc. Shavertown.

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