



Joseph K. Gordon

June 9, 1925 - October 5, 2015

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Joseph K. Gordon, Esq., of Haverford, Pennsylvania and Palm City, Florida, a highly respected attorney, banking executive and philanthropist in the Philadelphia region, passed away early Monday morning at the age of 90.

A 1990 Philadelphia Inquirer article featuring Mr. Gordon's role within the banking industry noted, "among his peers, he was seen as a gentleman and a scholar who worked harder and smarter than anyone else and set an example of unsurpassed integrity."

His family and friends viewed Joe, as he was called, in much the same way, as a gentleman, scholar and athlete. He led by example with personal integrity and resoluteness, in his profession, in his charitable work and on the playing field and golf course. While attending Episcopal Academy, he was given the fitting nickname of "The Judge" by his classmates, though he was also known to slip into the chapel at the end of the service since he lived so close to campus. Graduating from EA in 1943, Joe excelled in the classroom and on the playing field where he served as both captain of the soccer team and the Sports Editor of the student run newspaper, The Scholium. He would go on to

become a Trustee Emeritus and benefactor of Episcopal Academy. Joe then enrolled at Princeton University where he earned his undergraduate degree with the class of 1947. Mr. Gordon served three years in the United States Navy during World War II, including seven months on a light cruiser, before returning to finish college and earn his law degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1951.

Joe was a revered corporate attorney which included roles with Ballard Spahr through much of the 1950's and Montgomery McCracken, Walker and Rhoads LLP from 1990 on. Most notably, Joe served for 31 years (1959-1990) as chief counsel and Executive Vice President of the Philadelphia National Bank and its successor, CoreStates Bank, N.A. Among his major achievements while chief counsel was the creation of the bank's first credit card and its participation in the first nationwide credit card program (now known as "Visa"). Perhaps his most notable professional accomplishment was coming up with the legal framework that allowed for the creation of the multi-bank Money Access Center, or "MAC," automated teller network, a now ubiquitous term for ATM machines in the Philadelphia region, used by millions of people around the world. John Stefanowicz, a fellow attorney colleague of Joe's at CoreStates Bank notes "Joe was humble in his practice of law, not seeking accolades for his accomplishments but merely taking personal satisfaction in a job well done."

Mr. Gordon's sterling character and keen intellect led him to become involved in a broad spectrum of educational, cultural, political, social and medical-related causes. He served as a director of diverse groups such as the Committee of Seventy, Children's Services, Inc., Project HOPE (Health Opportunities for People Everywhere) and as Chairman of the Coughlin for Congress Committee during Congressman R. Lawrence Coughlin's twelve terms in office.

A longtime Emeritus member of its Board of Trustees, Joe Gordon served as Chairman of the Lankenau Hospital (now Lankenau Medical Center) and the Lankenau Hospital Foundation from 1984-1988 and as Chairman of the Main Line Health Board of Trustees from 1988-1998. Recognizing the potential benefits of Lankenau and Bryn Mawr hospitals joining forces, Joe played a critical lead role in the complex negotiations that resulted in the formation of Main Line Health in 1985, with Paoli Hospital joining a year later.

Jack Lynch, President and CEO of Main Line Health stated “Joe was one of the sharpest and most engaged minds I have ever been around in my thirty plus years in healthcare. He had the unique talent of being able to see complex issues before anyone else and be able to find brilliant solutions, like his vision to formulate Main Line Health in the mid 80’s. Those who knew Joe were blessed to be able to call him a friend.”

Phillip D. Robinson, President of Lankenau Medical Center said “Joe is truly one of the most iconic and honorable figures in the storied history of Lankenau dating back to 1860. The Gordon family’s philanthropic support has left an indelible mark on every aspect of our academic medical center. His leadership and presence around our campus will be greatly missed. This institution was incredibly fortunate to have Joe Gordon in our corner over these last nearly five decades. We wish the entire Gordon family our deepest condolences and share in their loss.”

Most central to the essence and meaning of Joseph K. Gordon’s life was his beloved wife of 56 years, Ray McLean Gordon, who passed away on the same day, October 5th, four years earlier. Joe and Ray deeply loved their children Sarah, Leila, Hunter and Scott. They were also the proud grandparents of Grace, Cooper, Marshall and Spencer Gordon and Clayton and McLean Dyer.

Perhaps the most enduring legacy a father and grandfather can have is best summed up in a collective quote made by his children in a 2006 dedication ceremony at Lankenau:

“Above all he is a family man...We the Gordon children are so amazingly lucky...we have...grown up under Joe Gordon’s tutelage. His, and our mother’s love and support have helped us immeasurably...have been a constant in our lives...giving us the foundation to go out in the world and be who we were meant to be...”

A service in memory of Joseph K. Gordon will be held at Gulph Mills Golf Club at 11:00 am on October 24th.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Joseph and Ray Gordon Chair in Clinical Oncology and Research at Lankenau Medical Center, 100 East Lancaster Road, Suite 564, Wynnewood, PA 19096.

Previous Events

Life Celebration

OCT **24**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Gulph Mills Golf Club
200 Swedeland Road
Gulph Mills, PA 19406

Tribute Wall

DP

“ Joe will continue to be in our hearts and wonderful memories. As has been stated several times, he was a true gentleman, smart but never egotistical, and his life was a great benefit to many, many organizations and people. May God bless Joe !
Doug & Karen Peters

douglas peters - October 11, 2015 at 09:47 AM