

## SIDNEY SIBEN'S AMONG US

### Announcements, Achievements, & Accolades...

**Howard B. Leff** has joined Quatela Chimeri, as senior counsel concentrating in the matrimonial and family law practice group. Mr. Leff brings more than 40 years of extensive state and federal court litigation, trial and appellate experience to the firm.

After 44 years of practice, with over 26 of them at Siben & Siben, **Edward J. Cohen** has retired and is moving to Flori-

da with his wife, Judy. He will be missed for his well honed legal skills as well as his wit.

### Condolences...

The Board of Directors, members and staff send their heartfelt sympathies to **David Mansfield** and his family upon the recent passing of his mother, Bernice Mansfield, at the age of 94 years.

**Jeff Guttentag** died on May 17 from Covid 19, after a month long illness. He was young, vital and a superb and caring Medical Malpractice/Personal Injury attorney. For years

he practiced with his idner and Larry Ros Recently he moved lences to his wife L

### New Membe

The SCBA extenc **Edinson I. Bolivar, L. Goetz, Katelyn I ert H. Frampton, Jaclyn T. Kramer, lani, Jennifer Rose**

## LETTER TO CHIEF JUDGE

### RANDAZZO & RANDAZZO, L.L.P.

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BY APPOINTMENT

May 12, 2020

Honorable Janet DiFiore, Chief Judge  
New York State Unified Court System  
Office of Court Administration  
4 ESP, Suite 2001  
Empire State Plaza  
Albany, New York 12223-1450

Dear Judge DiFiore:

Watching Your Honor's video message of May 11th, I was disappointed and disheartened by the announcement of "the New York State Bar Association's efforts, under the leadership of Michael Miller, immediate-Past President of the State Bar Association, and a long-time trusts and estates practitioner, to coordinate a pro bono effort in which surviving family members who cannot afford a lawyer will be represented in Surrogate's Court by volunteer lawyers who will also assist them with related issues and needs."

While I continue to applaud pro bono service and have and hope to continue to be able to provide such services myself, it is my genuine belief and a commonly-held opinion among colleagues that estate administration services, particularly with respect to probating a will or seeking the appointment of an estate administrator, is not a practice area that necessitates or merits pro bono services.

This remains true *notwithstanding* the unfortunate circumstances that may have precipitated the need for such legal assistance.

Typically, when an estate requires administration through the court system it is because the estate contains assets that need to be accessed by beneficiaries or distributees; an experienced attorney is usually retained to assist in navigating the process. Also typical within this practice area, attorneys readily forego payment for the professional services they provide in assisting a client in navigating the process until estate assets become available through the process. Accordingly, a proposed executor or potential administrator is seldom required to pay legal fees or otherwise expend personal funds (absent, typically, the Surrogate's Court filing fee for the estate) until estate assets become available. An

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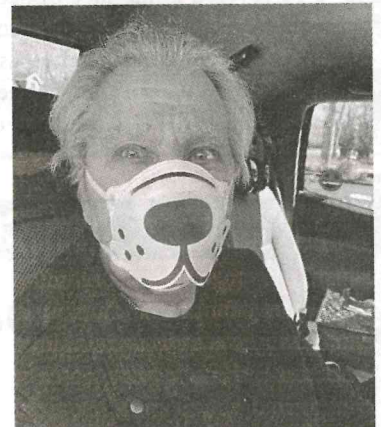
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### Bon App



SCBA member Annamarie Donovan and reopening of their son's restaurant The Rav

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## CONTRACT LAW