

## **Hon. Edward P. Borrelli**

It is with the heaviest of hearts we share the news of Hon. Edward P. Borrelli's passing. His depth and breadth of expertise in judicial ethics matters were unmatched. Indeed, few have cared more passionately about ethics or devoted more time and energy to educating the judiciary about these issues. He was integral to every aspect of the work of the Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics for the past 22 years.

Beyond that, he was good company and a fundamentally decent human being.

### **Professional Experience**

Judge Borrelli retired as a full-time Special Referee in New York State Supreme Court, 9th Judicial District in September 2017 after a 41-year career in the NYS Unified Court System. As a Special Referee and trial JHO, Judge Borrelli was also assigned to the Supreme and Family Courts, Orange County and Family Court, Putnam County.

Judge Borrelli served as a Yonkers City Court Judge from January 11, 2000 through December 31, 2000 and again from May 14, 2003 through December 2003 (including service as Acting City Court Judge in Mount Vernon City Court).

Judge Borrelli presided over a wide range of proceedings and parts in the state court system, including civil and criminal jury and non-jury trials, high-exposure Supreme Court Civil matters, matrimonial proceedings, custody, visitation, child support and domestic violence issues as well as local night court, landlord-tenant and vehicle and traffic parts.

Prior to assuming judicial office, Judge Borrelli had served for nearly 23 years as the Assistant Director, Education and Training at the New York State Unified Court System. In that capacity, Judge Borrelli was responsible for the development and implementation of continuing judicial education and continuing legal education initiatives for the state's 1100 state-paid judges and Justices, 2200 Town and Village Justices as well as hundreds of Law Clerks, Court Attorneys, Family Court Support Magistrates and others who served in legal titles in the Unified Court System. Judge Borrelli also served as Staff Counsel to the UCS Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics, on the Judiciary/Agency Coordinating Committee, the City and District Court Operations Manual Committee, the Town and Village Justice Software Review Committee and with the City, Town and Village Courts' Resource Center.

After retirement from the Unified Court System, Judge Borrelli served as Counsel at McCarthy, Fingar, LLP, in White Plains, New York.

Judge Borrelli received a BA from Manhattan College (1973) and a Juris Doctor degree from New York Law School (1976). He was admitted into the New York Bar in 1977, the Bar of the District of Columbia in 1979 and was also admitted to practice in various federal courts including the Supreme Court of the United States.

## **A Special Focus: Judicial Ethics and Education**

At his death, Judge Borrelli was a voting member of the Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics and chair of its Judicial Campaign Ethics Subcommittee. He previously served as Special Counsel to the Advisory Committee and the Subcommittee from 2006 to 2017, and as a voting member of the Advisory Committee from 2001 to 2006, during which time he served as chair of the Second Department Subcommittee and also as the initial chair of the Judicial Campaign Ethics Subcommittee.

He was also involved in the implementation of judicial education programs for various court systems in other states and national judicial education organizations, including the New York State Judicial Institute, the National Association of State Judicial Educators, the National Judges' Association, the National Center for State Courts, the American Bar Association and the National Judicial College. Judge Borrelli guest lectured at Fordham Law School, Pace University School of Law, New York Law School, other area law schools and on behalf of many Bar Associations. He taught at UCS-sponsored continuing judicial education and continuing legal education programs around New York State.

It is difficult to overstate his contributions to the Advisory Committee; he was our “go-to” person for the very urgent or time-sensitive inquiries that often arrive at or after the formal deadline for each meeting. He was a frequent and popular lecturer and central to our judicial ethics education efforts, especially for town and village justices.

## **Devoted to Family, Italy, and Classic Cars**

Anyone acquainted with Judge Borrelli was likely aware of his deep devotion to his family as well as his love of Italy and classic cars.

Judge Borrelli is survived by his wife Cheryl, two children and their spouses, and three young grandchildren. He and his first-born grandchild had a particularly strong bond.



*Figure 1 With Granddaughter in May 2020 - their first reunion in 10 weeks*

Judge Borrelli also shared the following story about his father, which may help explain his love of Italy:

My dad was an extraordinary man. He left the hills of Italy outside Naples ALONE when he was 16 in 1921. No education. Substantially illiterate. His passport listed him as a Contadino, i.e., farmer. He came through Ellis Island. I have had his name engraved on the Wall of Honor at Ellis Island. He became a chimney sweep. He then bought a vacuum cleaner and started his own chimney cleaning business. His motto was "Chimney cleaning with modern equipment", the vacuum. He started working on coal furnaces and eventually evolved to oil burners and eventually gas furnaces. He expanded the business until he had a few employees but discontinued them because they never worked as efficiently as him alone. When I was a teenager he had me helping him by cutting and treading pipes. I often wonder if he needed the help or if his true motivation was to convince me to become educated rather than manual labor. I remember one of his greatest moments in life. When I was 9 he brought me and my mom back to Italy to meet the family. He spent a whole evening in the upscale rooftop bar of the then Mediterranean Hotel in Naples with bottles of champagne overlooking the Port of Naples from which he departed and toasting his fulfillment of the American Dream. He had made it.

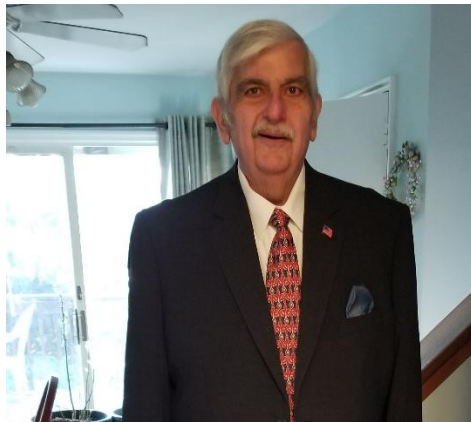
Judge Borrelli and his family made at least four trips to Italy between October 2015 and May 2019. He told a great story about visiting the small village where his father's family came from. As we recall it: Outside visitors are apparently not frequent in this village, and one of the village elders came out to see what this group of foreigners was up to. Serendipitously, the elder in question was also the village historian; as soon as he verified Judge Borrelli's genealogical bona fides, they were welcomed with open arms!



*Figure 2. The Adriatic Ocean from hotel in Portonovo Italy (May 2019)*



*Figure 3. Judge Borrelli's car club arranged a surprise car parade in May 2020 for a high school student who graduated without a ceremony due to the pandemic. (He drove his red 1968 Camaro convertible.)*



*Figures 4 & 5. Judge Borrelli in 2003 and 2022*

[Photo credit: All photos provided by EPB.]