



Virgil Bryan Medlock Jr

October 19, 1937 - December 11, 2020

Virgil Bryan Medlock, Jr. (“Bryan”) passed away on December 11, 2020 at the age of 83. Born October 19, 1937 in Ada, Oklahoma, Bryan was educated in grades 1-4 by his mother, Alpha, and in grades 5-8 by his father, Virgil, in a one room schoolhouse in Lawrence, Oklahoma, a rural community near Ada, Oklahoma.

While living in Lawrence, Bryan attended junior high school and high school 8 miles away in Ada. He graduated Valedictorian of Ada High School in 1955 and attended Oklahoma University where he majored in Chemical Engineering, graduating third in his class in 1959. He was inducted into honorary scholastic fraternities Phi Eta Sigma and Tau Beta Pi and became a member of Beta Theta Pi, a social fraternity for which he served as Scholastic Chairman.

After obtaining his B.S. in Chemical Engineering, Bryan attended Oklahoma University Law School. During the three years of law school, he taught mathematics as an assistant instructor in the University’s Mathematics Department. He also served as the Managing Editor of the Oklahoma Law Review. Bryan entered the practice of Patent Law in Houston, Texas in 1962. That same year he passed the Oklahoma, Texas and U.S. Patent and Trademark Office bar exams.

Bryan moved to Dallas in 1966 to join the law firm of Richards, Harris and Hubbard which eventually became Richards, Medlock & Andrews. In 1996, the firm merged with Sidley Austin to create the only office at the firm to be devoted solely to Patent Litigation. Bryan specialized in Patent Litigation until his retirement from Banner Witcoff at the age of 80 years old. He is credited with being a pioneer in the trial of patent cases to juries. During his 55 year career, he received several honors including:

- One of D Magazine’s “Best Lawyers in Dallas”
- Texas Monthly Magazine’s ‘Texas Super Lawyer” (top 5% of profession) and “Top 100 Lawyers in Dallas/Fort Worth
- The International Who’s Who of Business Lawyers, published by Law Business Research Limited of London, England

- Chambers USA America's Leading Business Lawyers, "Best of Best," and Who's Who Legal (Patent 2007), published by Law Business Research Limited of London, England
- One of "Top 15 Business Defenders" in Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex, Dallas Business Journal, 2007
- Best Lawyers 2010 Dallas Intellectual Property Lawyer of the Year

Bryan has belonged to many professional organizations, including:

- American Bar Association serving as its Patent Litigation Committee Chair for 4 years;
- Texas Bar Association serving as Chairman of the Patent Law Section (the youngest ever to have been elected to that position); and
- American Patent Law Association

He was a Fellow of the Texas Bar Association and of the American College of Trial Lawyers.

He also chaired the Southwestern Legal Foundation's annual Institute on Patent Law for 27 years.

He enjoyed hunting, including 4 hunting trips to Africa 2 of which were with his son Virgil. He also enjoyed flying and was a private, single and multi-engine instrument rated pilot who owned several airplanes over the years from single-engine "tail draggers" to a twin – engine turbo prop capable of transporting his children and grandchildren on vacation trips. Flying was also a passion he shared with his son.

He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Nancy, who was the love of his life, his daughter and son-in-law Michele and Dennis Cassidy, Jr. and their children, Kevin and Clay of Highland Park, son and daughter-in-law, Dr. Virgil Bryan Medlock, III and wife Kelly and their children, Peyton and Emery of Highland Park, his brother, Dr. Richard Medlock and his wife Jean of Tulsa, and his cousin Marilyn Foster of Tulsa. In addition, Bryan leaves behind several loving nieces and nephews.

The full and wonderful life of Bryan will be celebrated with a private family gathering.

The family requests that instead of memorials or floral tributes, everyone who knew Bryan remember him as the funny, intelligent and caring person that he was and how much he meant to everyone.

Comments



“ I just learned today of Bryan's passing. He was a great guy and a fine lawyer, as I came to understand in clerking for his firm many years ago, in relying on him as local counsel in a jury trial in Dallas, and in many years of interactions at bar association meetings. I shall miss his smile and his quick wit.

Richard Beem - April 14 at 06:17 PM



“ I strongly concur with the others and had the same experience that Shawn eloquently presents. I clerked at RMA in the summer of 1987 during which I split time among many lawyers there, yet Brian still took time to allow me into his space. I still chuckle remembering a dinner with him at the French Room, where I felt out of place and he gleefully comforted me by reflecting that there really wasn't such a thing as being out of place. I was too naive then to realize how his background, and his work effort, had established such a big trajectory forward for him and the firm, but in hindsight they deserve all the kudos and he was a huge part of that. It was a wonderful opportunity, and had I known then what I know now I would've accepted the firm's offer to return as an associate, as he was the real deal.

Prayers and condolences to his family.

Stephen Levine - December 24, 2020 at 12:24 PM



“ I worked in VBM's group in the mid to late 1990s at RMA. He was slow to open up and let you in, but once he determined that you were "alright," that was it. He was a great guy and always good for a joke that couldn't be repeated. I'm a better person for having known him. I'm saddened to hear about his passing.

Shawn Sutherland - December 21, 2020 at 03:15 PM



“ My father was William (Bill) D. Harris, Jr., who practiced law with Bryan for many years when the firm was called Richards, Harris & Hubbard, then Richards, Harris, Medlock & Andrews. Bill considered Bryan to be one of the best patent trial lawyers in the United States. With others they built a powerhouse IP litigation firm. Most of the lawyers who later headed up IP sections at the big Texas law firms had started out with that small Dallas firm, which tried cases all over the country.

The firm leaders, including Bryan, also took seriously the practice of law as an ethical profession, and devoted much of their valuable time and talents to the community and the bar. As we lose lawyers like Bryan, an era comes to an end; the era of highly experienced trial practitioners who were fearless in the courtroom and tried probably hundreds of cases in a lifetime. Such a combination, at once a brilliant patent lawyer and also brilliant trial lawyer, was always rare, and now almost extinct.

On behalf of Bill's family, as his oldest son, I want to extend our condolences to Bryan's family, and offer this humble tribute to an obviously amazing man, from humble roots in a tiny Oklahoma hamlet, working his way to the highest order of international law practice. As his inspiring obituary demonstrates, he was a great family man as well, and so he leaves a shining legacy.



Wes Harris - December 20, 2020 at 04:13 PM



“ I am a patent attorney with Kimberly-Clark. I worked with Bryan during the early 2000s. Bryan's sense of humor still makes me laugh. I very much appreciated the experience of working with Bryan.

Alyssa Dudkowski - December 17, 2020 at 08:56 AM



“ It is with great sadness that I have just learned of Bryan Medlock’s passing. My very first job as a new lawyer, fresh out of law school, was as an attorney at Richards, Harris and Medlock, working with Bryan. What a fortunate opportunity to be able to work with and learn from such a talented and brilliant, and congenial and supportive, mentor. Bryan represented his clients with tremendous expertise and I wonder if he ever lost a case. But he also recognized the importance of mentoring those who worked under him. He would regularly allow me and other younger lawyers to present in court, knowing that he could do the job hundred times better, while recognizing that only by allowing us to attempt to perform would we ever able to approach the skill level that seemed to come naturally to him. His forever positive, confident and friendly personality, spiced with humor, was indeed very unique and will be greatly missed. Charles Cotropia

CHARLES COTROPIA - December 16, 2020 at 11:56 PM



“ Brian was a terrific lawyer and friend. His sense of humor was as good as his mind. He was happy and made those around him happy. I’ll miss him.

Rod Phelan - December 16, 2020 at 05:03 PM