

Remembering Steve Rizzi

By Steve Weinberg

Steve Rizzi was my lifelong friend and law partner. I called him “The Riz” or Rizzi. We met in 8th grade when our junior high schools merged into one and we all attended Maple Junior High. Steve went to Glenbrook North High School and then chose the University of Arizona.

Steve and I reunited at IIT-Chicago Kent Law School where Steve was a proud and energetic law student. He was excited to follow his father Dom’s career path. Steve learned his sense of justice and fairness from his father.

Steve Rizzi was a lawyer’s lawyer. He loved being a lawyer and he loved lawyers. He also loved to argue. Steve appreciated good lawyering even if it was coming from his opponent.

Steve was a personal injury litigator and distinguished himself as an excellent trial attorney. He never backed down from his position and he fought vigorously for his clients. Steve became President of the Decalogue Society of Lawyers where he worked to increase membership and Decalogue’s visibility and influence within the Chicago legal community.

Steve and I became law partners after about ten years of practice. Steve was a great law partner. Even though we had separate offices, Steve was the managing partner of our firm and he handled all of the issues relating to the firm. He was honest and forthright and gave our client’s a strong sense of confidence. Steve was always concerned with how I was doing personally.

Steve was a great springboard for legal theories, even in areas outside his expertise. One day Steve appeared at one of my trials and watched for an entire afternoon. After court Steve went into the jail with me and helped me prepare the client to testify. He wanted me to do well and also wanted to observe the way other lawyers prepared clients to testify. Steve was invaluable with his input offering his insights and suggestions often. What was more impressive was that Steve came to court again the next day to see how the client testified during the trial. I saw Steve’s face light up when I asked a question that he gave to me the night before.



If I was having a bad day, and there were many, there was no better person than Steve Rizzi to put things in the proper perspective. He always greeted me with a smile and he made me laugh. Steve and I were partners for 12 years. Steve left to accept a position with Meyers and Flowers, a respected plaintiff’s personal injury firm where he became a partner. Even though our partnership had dissolved, Steve remained the “civil division” of my criminal law firm, and we still referred cases back and forth.

I think of Steve everyday. I miss sharing the practice of law with him but most of all I miss his pride, enthusiasm and his friendship. RIP my old friend I’ll get it covered down here.

Steve Rizzi served as President of Decalogue from 2011-2012 and passed away September 17, 2017. Steve was widely loved and admired for his kindness, generosity and good humor, and will be greatly missed. May his memory be for a blessing.

To honor Steve’s memory and legacy, donations are being accepted by the Bright Start College Savings Plan on behalf of his daughter Rachael Rizzi.

Steve always placed great importance on education and higher learning, please help him bring his goals for Rachael to fruition.

To receive an invitation to make a tax free donation in Steve’s name, please send your full name, email address, and phone number to suzi@suzannestiefel.com



Steve, Rachael and Suzi at the 2011 Installation Dinner