

Reproduced with permission from Digital Discovery & e-Evidence, 14 DDEE \_\_\_, 06/19/2014. Copyright © 2014 by The Bureau of National Affairs, Inc. (800-372-1033) <http://www.bna.com>

### **Richard G. Braman, 1953-2014, Founder of Sedona Conference®**

Richard G. Braman, Founder and Executive Director Emeritus of The Sedona Conference®, passed away June 9 after an extended battle with cancer.

Braman's life and legal career were dedicated to finding solutions, bridging gaps and fostering cooperation between attorneys and parties in litigation and discovery.

Braman graduated from University of Minnesota Law School in 1978, and, throughout his career as a practicing attorney, he represented both plaintiffs and defendants in antitrust, IP and other complex business litigation. Prior to founding The Sedona Conference® in 1998, Braman co-chaired the Antitrust Practice Group of the Minneapolis law firm of Gray Plant Mooty.

Jonathan M. Redgrave, of Redgrave LLP, told Bloomberg BNA June 10 that he met Braman around 1992 and they would eventually become partners at Gray Plant Mooty. Redgrave described Braman as an energetic and passionate person, who was full of ideas and zeal, yet also had a great sense of perspective.

"He sought to find the middle ground in an increasingly polarized and politicized world," Redgrave told Bloomberg BNA. "He challenged the 'Rambo' warrior mode of litigating by actively promoting 'cooperation' as a better way to represent clients and keep the civil justice system accessible, affordable and reasonable for all."

**'Legal Giant' Dedicated to Cooperation.** Braman's role in promoting "cooperation" in litigation, and particularly in discovery, may be the professional accomplishments for which he is most remembered. Many of his peers attribute their professional growth and dedication to the concept of cooperation as an outgrowth of their relationship with Braman and his devotion to "finding the middle ground" in litigation and the law.

The focus on "cooperation" has also found its way into the proposed amendments to the Federal Rule of Civil Procedure, where the Civil Rules Committee members have included the principle as one of its goals and inspirations for altering many of the discovery-related civil rules.

Jason R. Baron, of Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP, called Braman a "legal giant."

"He deserves enormous recognition in being the visionary behind The Sedona Conference®, which included his spearheading the movement emphasizing the importance of dialogue and cooperation in eDiscovery," Baron told Bloomberg BNA June 10. "All of us who knew Richard cherished our friendship with him and we will miss him terribly."

Redgrave echoed Baron's sentiments regarding Braman's unwavering passion and dedication to creating a more cooperative, reasoned approach to law making.

"He sought to build an organization dedicated to the reasoned and just advancement of law and policy," Redgrave said. "And despite challenges, Richard did not yield in that quest or his passion for making others and the world around him better."

Bloomberg BNA eDiscovery Advisory Board Member Conor R. Crowley, of Crowley Law Office, also shared with Bloomberg BNA Braman's incredible ability and dedication to advancing cooperation and justice.

"Richard had the amazing ability to bring together lawyers with diametrically opposed points of view and lead them towards a consensus approach that advanced the practice of law, benefitting not only the lawyers but also their clients and ultimately the entire civil justice system," Crowley said. "He was a true inspiration to me both professionally and personally."

**Legal Visionary Who Loved Jazz, Law.** Braman was also an avid lover of music, and prior to joining Gray Plant Moody, he operated a nationally-renowned jazz club.

In addition to being known as for his visionary nature, Braman was motivated by a love for the legal profession. "Richard was a visionary when it came to the law but more importantly he was a dreamer at heart; he had a vision about what the law would look like if it were reasoned and just and he dedicated his life to doing what he could to move the law, and especially the law regarding electronic information, in that direction," Bloomberg BNA eDiscovery Advisory Board Member Kevin Brady, of Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellott LLC, told Bloomberg BNA. "The level of respect and the amount of influence that the Sedona Conference® has today in the legal community and the judiciary, in particular, is a direct result of Richard's vision, passion, dedication and unique ability to bring together a community lawyers and judges who are 'realists' and find the 'dreamer' in each one of us."

Sherry B. Harris, of Crowley Law Office, told Bloomberg BNA that Braman always had a 'Sedona Hug' for everyone and offered them warmly.

"*Synchronicity—The Inner Path of Leadership*, by Joseph Jaworski, which Richard recommended years ago, talks of 'helping others to break free of their limits,'" Harris said June 10. "His wisdom, keen wit and leadership have been an incredible inspiration with impact beyond measure, and he helped many 'to break free of their limits.'"

In 2013, Braman was named by *The American Lawyer* as 'one of the 50 most innovative people in Big Law in the last 50 years.' Clearly, his friends and peers would agree.