

In Memory of COMMISSIONER CHRIS BEECROFT, JR.

BY NELSON SEGEL

The text below is a version of the eulogy written and delivered by M. Nelson Segel, Esq., at Commissioner Chris Beecroft, Jr.'s celebration of life ceremony. It has been slightly revised for print.

The silence was deafening. On December 26, 2016, Alternative Dispute Resolution in Nevada lost its most vocal advocate. Commissioner Chris Beecroft, Jr. passed away to the shock of everyone who had dealt with him.

Beecroft originally came into the public spotlight when it was determined that Commissioner Thomas Biggar had a formidable obligation dealing with discovery matters and a separate Arbitration Commissioner was desirable. In 2000, an announcement was made that the position of Assistant Arbitration Commissioner was available in the Eighth Judicial District Court. Beecroft applied and rose to the top of the candidates.

It was believed that the position would require a strong, dominant individual. Beecroft's friendly, courteous and helpful personality did not initially appear to fit the profile. Still, he was chosen to be the Assistant Arbitration Commissioner. In retrospect, Beecroft was the ideal person for the position and did a fantastic job.

He established policies and procedures to be followed. An orientation course was created and presented every other year to provide training to attorneys who wished to become members of the arbitration panels. Beecroft recommended that experienced arbitrators periodically take a refresher course.

He also understood that arbitration was one of many forms of alternative dispute resolution, and he pushed for the implementation of more alternative dispute resolution in the district court, creating options for litigants.

In 2001, a mediation program was developed, with Beecroft's input, and it was instituted in the district court. Beecroft became the Administrator, and his title was changed to ADR Commissioner.



In 2002, Beecroft, along with members of the judiciary and practitioners, was instrumental in the creation of the Short Trial Program that provided for the trial of de novo cases before pro tempore judges. Beecroft was appointed to administer this program as well.

As ADR Commissioner, Beecroft trained and developed a staff to handle the work in the ADR office. He also created procedures that enabled the ADR office to run smoothly. The efficiency of the ADR office was recognized by the court. In 2008, Beecroft was appointed Family Court discovery commissioner, and in February 2010, he was appointed discovery commissioner to handle discovery disputes for six departments in the Eighth Judicial District Court.

You would often hear him tell arbitrators and advocates, "read the rules. It only takes 10 minutes." Even though this was true, and reading the rules provided the answers, Beecroft constantly received calls regarding the handling of arbitration matters and graciously provided solutions.

Beecroft was a strong motivator, driven to assure that the programs he administered provided the benefit to the participants that was anticipated. He provided training and oversaw the arbitrators, mediators and short trial judges, but he never sang his own praises. If one of the programs he handled was praised, he would credit his staff. Through his direction, tutelage and supervision, the wheels continued to go round and did not fall off, no matter how quickly they spun.

For those who dealt with Beecroft, whether as advocates or neutrals, his efforts were appreciated. He was an extraordinary man who gave to the community. He has been described by many as a kind, thoughtful, enthusiastic doer. He was a true public servant. Commissioner Beecroft Beecroft will be missed; he was a tireless and ardent supporter of ADR and a great human being. **NL**

For a short biography of **NELSON SEGEL**, see page 14.