

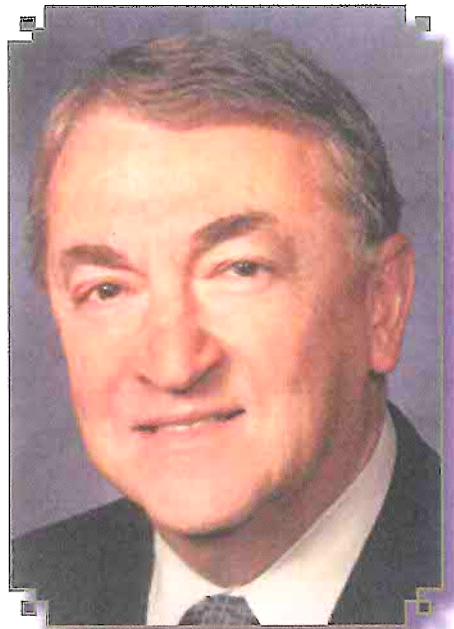
Jonas J. Gruenberg, Esq.

Indisputably, the Dayton Bar Association is a tapestry of personalities and heritages. Among us are the Dayton natives who returned from distant law schools to practice in the comfort and familiarity of home. There are those who attended law school at the University of Dayton, who remained here after graduation amidst supportive and welcoming alumni. Then there is the smaller group of lawyers who are neither Daytonians, nor graduates of the University of Dayton School of Law, who came to Dayton either by choice, or by accident, who grew to embrace Dayton, not merely as a splendid place to practice law, but to live, prosper, and ultimately spawn entirely new generations of Daytonians. To this smaller group belongs our Barrister of the Month, Jonas J. Gruenberg.

Joe was born in Tarnopol, Poland, on December 5, 1945. Fascinating in its history, Tarnopol has at various times been under Polish, German, Austrian and Russian rule. For a brief period after WWI, it was the capital of Poland. Today, Tarnopol, renamed Ternopil, is a major city in western Ukraine. Joe's Polish birth occurred during repatriation of his parents, Julius Gruenberg, M.D., and Maria Gruenberg, a nurse, from Russia. In 1939, Dr. and Mrs. Gruenberg fled Poland avoiding death that befell all but a few well hidden Polish Jews after the Nazis invaded in 1941. During WWII, Dr. and Mrs. Gruenberg served as medics in the Russian Army. After returning briefly to Tarnopol, the Gruenbergs relocated to a settlement of displaced persons in Vienna. In January, 1951, they emigrated to the United States, through Ellis Island, to Knoxville, Tennessee, sponsored by Julius' uncle, Max Friedman, a Knoxville jeweler and politician. As a Knoxville city councilman, Uncle Max had connections with U.S. Senator Estes Kefauver. Cleverly, Friedman with Senator Kefauver's assistance obtained visas for the Gruenbergs under an immigration law, which though expired, had an

unfilled Polish quota.

Joe recalls that upon his arrival in the U.S. he rarely spoke. German was his native language, but he avoided speaking it in post-war Knoxville. Once he became fluent in English, Joe never spoke German again. For Julius, arrival in the U.S. meant additional, but largely superfluous, medical training. Although the Tennessee Medical Board



recognized Julius' European medical degree, it did not recognize his internship or surgical residency, both of which had to be repeated despite Julius' skill and years of experience as a general surgeon. After suffering a heart attack at age 48, Julius wisely retreated from the stresses of a surgical practice. He undertook and completed a residency in psychiatry and devoted the remainder of his professional life to the Tennessee state mental health system.

Joe attended Bearden High School in Knoxville. He was one of only two Jewish kids in his class of 175. He was president of his class all four years, and lettered in basketball, baseball, track and tennis. Though

accomplished in his other sports, Joe chuckles about his tennis letter, because he and his teammates formed the team and were its founding members.

After graduation in 1963, Joe entered the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. At Penn, Joe earned a B.S. in economics and was a student of renowned economist, Robert Summers, father of Lawrence Summers, the controversial former president of Harvard University, U.S. Treasury Secretary during President Clinton's second term, and former chief economist of the World Bank. During his freshman year, Joe joined the Pi Lambda Phi Fraternity after being rushed by Ed Rendell, who later became the mayor of Philadelphia, Governor of Pennsylvania and Chairman of the Democratic National Committee.

The miles from Knoxville and fraternity life at the University of Pennsylvania did not dampen Joe's interest in Susan Goldberger, whom he had known since age 12. When Joe left for Philadelphia, Susan entered The Ohio State University. After completing her freshman year, Susan went to Israel to enter a leadership training program. Joe joined Susan in Israel the summer after his sophomore year. Joe proposed marriage at a resort in Eilat, a port city on the Red Sea overlooking Saudi Arabia, and the two were married in January, 1966.

Joe entered the second semester of his junior year at Penn a married man. Susan enrolled at Penn to continue her college education. During Joe's senior year, son, Mark, was born, and as graduation grew nearer, Joe decided that law school would be his next pursuit. He was accepted at three law schools choosing Vanderbilt due to its proximity to Knoxville, where his mother was battling cancer.

After his first year, Joe joined New York mega firm Shearman & Sterling as a sum-

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mer associate. During his second year, Joe was a staff member of the Vanderbilt Law Review as daughter, Lori, was born. He would later become the law review's case and notes editor. During the summer of 1969, Joe took a summer clerkship with Coolidge, Wall, Wood & Matusoff. Recruited by John Lombard, Joe quickly gained the favor of Pierce ("Pete") Wood, Robert Womsley and Hugh Wall, Jr. They introduced Joe not merely to the firm, but also to Dayton's finer offerings, and to several of the firm's enviable clients. When the summer was over, Joe knew that he much preferred Coolidge and Dayton to the likes of Wall Street. After the 1970 summer bar examination, Joe became the Coolidge firm's tenth lawyer.

Early in his career, Joe assisted Wood with commercial litigation, and Womsley and Wall, Jr., in their business practices. As Wood's retirement drew nearer, Roger Makley arose as the firm's "go to" trial lawyer, while Joe established himself as a specialist in the representation of closely-held family businesses. Out of necessity, Joe became proficient at tax, estate and succession planning. Mature beyond his years, Joe quickly became a leader within the firm. He was appointed to the executive committee at the tender age of 34, where he remained

continuously for the next twenty-six years. Over that period, Joe became a pillar of Coolidge's business practice and mentor to such accomplished Coolidge attorneys as J. Stephen Herbert, John C. Chambers and Shannon L. Costello.

As Joe's importance to the Coolidge firm grew, so did his leadership in our community. Over the past forty years, Joe has served on the boards of numerous civic and religious organizations, including the Dayton Ballet Association, the Dayton Art Institute, the Victoria Theater Association, the Jewish Federation of Greater Dayton, and the Temple Israel Foundation. He has also served on the boards of major health networks and educational institutions such as the Premier Health Partners Board and Executive Committee and the Wright State University Foundation Board of Trustees.

Not to be outdone by her husband, Susan was recognized by the Dayton Daily News as one of Dayton's Top Ten Women in 1997. In 2003, Susan received the YWCA's "Woman of Influence" award. Last May, Susan received Beth Abraham Synagogue's "Woman of Valor" award for her commitment and dedication to the Jewish community and the greater Miami Valley. These awards acknowledge Susan's years of service to such organizations as the Dayton Chapter of the American Red Cross, Ronald McDonald House, Daybreak, the Dayton Ballet and Temple Israel.

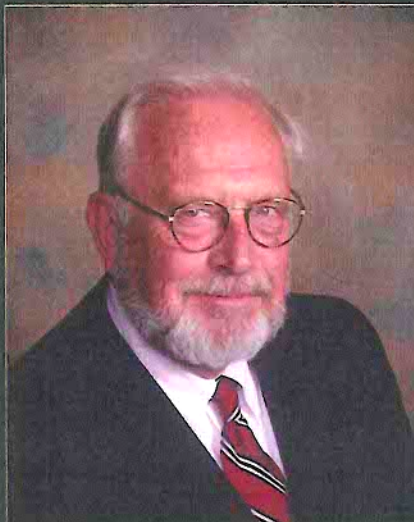
As mentioned above, Joe and Susan are proud parents to Mark Gruenberg and Lori Gruenberg Roth. Mark is an executive with Expedata, a Miamisburg tech firm offering business forms to over thirty industries. Lori is a business consultant in Carlsbad, California. Mark and his wife, Angela, have four children ages 16, 14, 12 and 10. Lori and her husband, Jonathan, have three children ages 19, 17 and 12.

After more than forty years, Joe's dedication to his clients, his firm, our profession and this community has not diminished. He is the consummate business lawyer, peaceful, dignified, candid and brilliant, without a hint of pretense. At age 67, Joe works full-time, and eschews discussion of retirement. He contends that, as long as he can practice effectively in the company of colleagues and support personnel he both likes and respects, the rewards of his law practice will overcome the temptations of retirement. Whether by design or by accident, how fortunate we are that Joe and Susan Gruenberg chose to call Dayton home.



*By Thomas J. Intili, Esq.
Bar Briefs Editorial Board
Intili & Groves, LPA*

Volunteers Needed **for the 2014 Robert N. Farquhar Highschool District Mock Trial**



The 2014 Robert N. Farquhar Montgomery County District Mock Trial Competition has been scheduled for Friday, January 31, 2014 at the Montgomery County Courts Building. The first trial will begin at noon, the second trial will begin at 2:00pm.

Information on the training session coming soon!

The DBA is looking for volunteers to sit as judges for this event. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Chris Albrektson at calbrektson@daybar.org.