

The Commercial Record

August 27, 2015

In Person

After 65 Years, He Still Loves The Law And Politics

By Jim Morrison
The Commercial Record Staff



Edward Marcus

Principal, Marcus Law Firm

Age: 88

Experience: 65 years

Ed Marcus has been a real estate attorney and campaigner for Connecticut democratic office-seekers for 65 years and he intends to remain active in both areas - even as he approaches his 90th birthday. He's met every democratic President since JFK, though Bill Clinton is his favorite so far.

Q: What drew you to the practice of law?

A: I majored in political science at Yale and was interested in law and politics, liked constitutional law and had no problem talking in front of an audience. I felt it was something I could do well. I was involved athletically, I played baseball, basketball, football. I grew up in Brooklyn, went to Yale at the age of 17 and never left.

Q: Why real estate?

A: It was something that just happened. We've always done litigation and I was approved early on by title insurance companies in 1958. We currently represent all of the people who purchase tax liens in the state. Selling tax liens works well for the municipality. It's actually better for the taxpayer as well because they can enter into a payment plan, which they can't do with a municipality. We also do a great deal of civil litigation.

Q: Which cases stand out from your long career?

A: One of the things my office did in the last year was we had foreclosed on a note one of our clients had purchased from Chase. There were guarantors attached to it. We sued for a deficiency. We won in Superior Court, lost unanimously in Appellate and finally won unanimously in the Supreme Court. The banking industry was very happy about it. We created new law. That case involved a claim of almost \$1.5 million.

We've had other things we've done related to air rights. Nothing is routine. Any time you go to court, you cannot warrant what the result will be. We've had a pretty successful run, though.

Q: You've also been active in Connecticut politics. How did that come about?

A: I became friendly with an alderman in New Haven who became a judge while I was in law school. I ran for the board of aldermen and won in 1951. Then I bought a house in a different ward in 1953 and won again. Neither ward had ever elected a Democrat before that.

Later, I was elected to the state Senate and became the majority leader. I ran a number of presidential campaigns, some successful, some not. I became the Democratic state chairman from 1992-2000. It was a great run and great fun, but required being out three to five nights a week and a lot of weekends. I would recommend it to anyone. It's where the rubber hits the road.

Q: What are some of the stories from that time that you remember most?

I certainly had a good relationship with both of the Clintons. When Bill Clinton was running for president in 1992, he once called my house late at night and my wife answered the phone and asked him what the call was about. He thought it was pretty funny.

In the case of Gov. [Dannell] Malloy, I came out for him when he was at 6 percent in the polls. I felt he had what it took to get there and I think he's done a great job.

The first U.S. president I met was John F. Kennedy; he came in and spoke for me when I was running for the state senate in 1958. I thought he was extremely charismatic and also very down to earth and easy to talk to. Not full of himself. I thought he was doing a great job as president and it was a total shock when he was assassinated in 1963. I've met every democratic President since then.

The last time I was at the White House was when Clinton was in office, in 2000. He was my favorite president. He had unique charisma and he was very human and easy to know and talk to. I brought my youngest daughter to the White House to meet him and she wanted him to sign

something for her history class. She gave it to him in the receiving line and he signed it and had it sent to her the next day. Hillary would always spend five minutes talking to her whenever we were together.

I love being involved in politics, and I don't ever intend to not be involved with it.

Marcus' Top Five Favorite Things:

1. Politics
2. Swimming every day
3. Playing tennis every weekend
4. Going to court occasionally
5. Family