

# Chicago Daily Law Bulletin®

VOLUME 165, NO. 162

LAW BULLETIN MEDIA

## Attorney remembered as divorce taxation expert

**SARAH MANSUR**

*smansur@lawbulletinmedia.com*

During Meighan A. Harmon's wedding reception, her Schiller DuCanto & Fleck LLP colleague David Hopkins approached her, wanting to have a deep discussion about the future of the firm.

Harmon was slightly distracted, but she appreciated his passion.

"He was invested in the legacy of Schiller DuCanto & Fleck in a very passionate way," she said. "He gave a lot to the support and evolution of the firm, particularly early on."

Hopkins, an attorney with Schiller DuCanto & Fleck since 1983, died on Aug. 7 at age 75, following a battle with cancer.

He is survived by his wife Marie and two children, Christopher and Melissa.

Hopkins earned his law degree from Columbia Law School and began his career at McDermott Will & Emery LLP.

Harmon said Hopkins' cheery demeanor was

always a ray of sunshine in the office.

"Even in the midst of a very stressful and sometimes acrimonious practice, he was a jovial and happy guy," she said.

Donald C. Schiller, senior partner at the firm, knew of Hopkins and his tax practice while he was still at McDermott Will & Emery.

"He had a sterling reputation as a lawyer and also was very knowledgeable and respected in field of divorce taxation," Schiller said.

At Schiller DuCanto & Fleck, Hopkins concentrated on divorce taxation and domestic violence issues. From 1980 to 1986, Hopkins chaired the American Bar Association Tax Section's Domestic Relations Tax Simplification Task Force, which drafted and proposed divorce tax reforms to the Internal Revenue Code.

Harmon described Hopkins as a "technician."

"He was extraordinarily good at drafting and sorting out the important details in cases," she said.



**Daniel Hopkins**

Hopkins' work in the area of domestic violence law developed because it was an issue faced by clients in his practice, Schiller said.

"There is as much domestic violence among wealthy people as there is among people generally," Schiller said. "David was seeing how some spouses, usually a wife, was victimized and helpless more or less because she couldn't get the help of law enforcement."

He was chair of the task force that helped rewrite the Illinois Domestic Violence Act. Hopkins also was a founder of The Weitzman

Center, which is an online support network for victims of domestic violence.

"He was a very decent man. Not only an honorable lawyer but a decent human being," Schiller said.

On top of his law career, Hopkins raised and bred English springer spaniels. He was active with the American Kennel Club and was a member of the board of directors for the organization's Canine Health Foundation.

Saranne C. Siewerth, who retired from Schiller DuCanto & Fleck in 2013, owned four dogs that Hopkins bred.

"He was very careful about the breeding of his dogs and he never ever let a dog go to someone who he had not personally interviewed," she said.

Hopkins' family has requested that in lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to: The American Cancer Society at [cancer.org](http://cancer.org) or to The American Kennel Club Canine Health Foundation [akcchf.org/how-to-help/donate/](http://akcchf.org/how-to-help/donate/).