In Memoriam – Joe Brown

by Charles McGarvey
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Our association has lost another long-time member and past association executive secretary, Joe Brown. It was so long ago, I can't remember the first time I met Joe, but my first impression never changed. He was a calm, quiet, and respectful person. I don't know if he ever knew what anger meant.

I guess I wasn't the only one who had the same impression of Joe, as within a minute of sending out an email that Joe had passed away, there were two responses. The first was from Chuck Mooney of MPC Group, *"What a true and good person. I had tremendous respect for Joe. He will be missed ",* and the second from Matt Miller of David Miller and Sons, *"He was such a nice man".*

Other responses said the same things in different ways, but what struck me was Chuck and Matt's immediate responses to the news of Joe's death. This spoke volumes about people's respect for Joe.

My most memorable conversation with Joe occurred last year at an association meeting. I was talking to Mike Donnelly about a leaking roof, and I quoted a statement by one of America's greatest architects, Frank Lloyd Wright.

I have quoted his statement many times and to many different building owners when investigating roofing system leaks that never seem to get fixed in contemporary or modern building designs. I think most roofing contractors can relate to the statement attributed to Mr. Wright,

"If the roof doesn't leak, the architect's design doesn't go far enough".

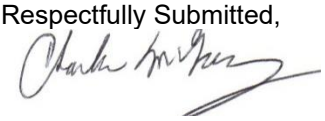
Mike Donnelly laughed and told me Joe Brown had actually met Mr. Wright while working on a new building construction at Beth Sholom Synagogue, Elkins Park, Pa., which is now registered as a National Historic Landmark. Joe confirmed the story. He was just out of high school and working as a painter with his father when Mr. Wright came to inspect the construction progress of the building.

Wow!! I actually talked to someone who met one of the greatest residential and commercial architects to ever design buildings in America.

Knowing Joe and finding out that he spoke with Frank Lloyd Wright may be as close to greatness as I will ever get.

Rest in Peace.

Respectfully Submitted,



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