

For Love of the Game

By Lynn P. Ingram

Brian Einhorn doesn't have to do this. He has already done it all. He built a wildly successful law firm. He has tried hundreds of cases and has a sterling litigation record. And his courtroom legacy is secure. So why, at 72 years old, does he want to be the 79th president of the State Bar of Michigan?

Why does he want to spend the next 12 months traveling, speaking, and being pulled in a dozen different directions?

Simple. Because he cares.

He cares about the profession. He cares about the State Bar. He cares about the public. He cares about you.

Brian Einhorn is the consummate advocate, and for the next year he is our advocate.



Einhorn and girlfriend Meg Goebel stop for a photo during a bike ride along the Roaring Fork River between Aspen and Woody Creek, CO.

Protective Instinct

Protecting and helping people has always been in Einhorn's blood.

During college and law school, he spent six years between the National Guard and Army Reserve.

He also spent five years teaching civics and English to students in the Detroit public schools.

Einhorn jokes that he went to law school as a way to get out of Monday evening Army Reserve meetings.

"My week would fly by in about six seconds, but this one particular meeting seemed to last nine days," he recalled. "Then one day I was driving a colonel around and he said, 'If you get into law school I'll get you out of that meeting.' I immediately signed up."

Einhorn said he was always intrigued by the law and was "wired" to be a lawyer.

"I thought the law was a respectable profession," he said. "Lawyers level the field."

And Einhorn has been leveling the field ever since.

He spent three years handling personal injury defense cases for Plunkett Cooney before joining forces with Mort Collins in 1974 to form Collins Einhorn.

"Brian is a very giving person with a marvelous sense of humor."

Today the firm has 40 lawyers and a reputation as one of the best defense firms in the business.

Along the way, Einhorn built his own reputation as one of the best in the business, litigating hundreds of cases and winning most of them. He has also become known as the go-to guy for lawyers and judges who find themselves in a tough spot.

He has represented several judges in high-profile cases involving weighty issues such as "whether the lawyer advertising rule applies to judicial campaigns."

It doesn't, and it was Einhorn's work that changed the rule—Canon 7B(d).

Einhorn has also recently represented several high-profile clients who received significant media attention. As a result, people have asked him how he feels representing lawyers or judges accused of doing unsavory or unethical things—a question he welcomes.

"Like doctors, lawyers and judges are sued every day," he said. "Oftentimes they're accused based on emotion as opposed to

reason, and they need help defending themselves. In order for the system to work and for the truth to come out, there must be objective advocates on both sides."

It's that sense of objective advocacy that makes the system work, and makes Einhorn so successful.

Behind the Curtain

Despite all of this, Einhorn is often misunderstood.

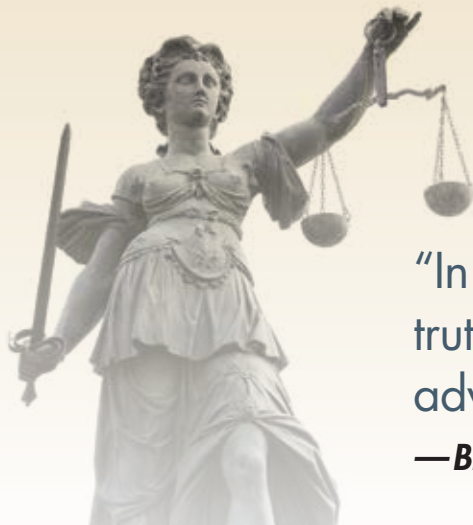
His bluntness, combined with his dry sense of humor, has caused some to label him "grumpy," "prickly," or "curt."

But those who know him well say that what you see at first is certainly not what you get in the long run.

"Your first perception is not him," said his girlfriend, Meg Goebel.

On the contrary, Goebel noted, once you get to know him you find that he's "generous," "funny," and "youthful."

"Brian is a very giving person with a marvelous sense of humor," she said. "Everyone



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—**Brian Einhorn**

adores him, especially younger people. He defies his age and is a blast to be around.”

Outgoing State Bar President Bruce Courtade could not agree more.

“Brian tells you what he is thinking and is not one to go along for the sake of getting along,” he noted. “And he will stake a position—even an unpopular one—if he believes he is right.”

However, Courtade said, as gruff as Brian may appear, he cares deeply for the public and the profession and seems to be getting better with age.

“He is proof that you can grow older without losing youthful exuberance,” Courtade said. “Although he has had a long and distinguished career, he stays active, travels, skis, and maintains a practice that is the envy of those decades younger.”

The bottom line, Goebel said, is that even though some people may not like him, “everyone respects him.”

A Lawyer’s Lawyer

So what can we expect from Einhorn during his presidency?

For one, we can expect a president who is passionate about the law, respects the profession, and always has the best interests of the public in mind.

Michigan Court of Appeals Judge and State Bar Commissioner Michael J. Riordan called Einhorn “the proverbial ‘lawyer’s lawyer,’” adding that he strikes that perfect balance of improving the profession and protecting and serving the public.

He is “a zealous advocate for the profession, and whether one agrees or disagrees with him, he always champions what he thinks will best serve the public,” Riordan said.

Goebel said the State Bar is getting a president who “gets it,” who understands the bar, respects the profession, has “been



Einhorn with daughter Erin in New York at Erin’s first book reading on the publication of *Pages in Between*.

in the trenches,” and “has been involved in everything, and always succeeded.”

She also said he is highly responsive.

“If you have a concern or issue, he will respect you with his time,” Goebel said.

Einhorn plans to build on the momentum of Courtade and those before him, focusing particularly on improving the perception of the legal profession by looking at issues such as judicial campaign finance. This has become a big issue over the last few election cycles as Michigan’s Supreme Court races have become some of the nastiest and most expensive in the nation, and it’s starting to trickle down to the trial-court level.

The problem, Einhorn said, is that the donors paying for misleading ads can remain anonymous. He wants to do away with secret funding and protect the public’s right to know, not to mention the integrity of the bench.



Einhorn feeding the stingrays while scuba diving off of Cayman Island.

“Anyone running for judge should be transparent about where their campaign funds are coming from,” he said, explaining that this will increase respect for the judiciary and the legal profession.

“The public already has a poor image of lawyers, and some lawyers have a poor image of themselves,” he said. “I have a high respect for lawyers and what we do, and I plan to work hard to increase respect for the legal system and the profession.”

Brian Einhorn doesn’t have to do this. He just wants to. ■

Lynn P. Ingram is the State Bar of Michigan’s program development and communications manager. He is a licensed attorney and the former publisher and editor-in-chief of Michigan Lawyers Weekly. Lynn was the 2007 recipient of the Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association’s President’s Award for his dedication to the legal community.

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Congratulations to “The Chief”

Congratulations to “The Chief” (Brian’s nickname among his law partners) on his investiture as president of the State Bar of Michigan. A crowning achievement to a noteworthy career, and evidence that the State Bar presidency is not just for the young and the middle aged; old guys may apply!

—**Michael Sullivan** (*Einhorn’s partner*)

The best advice I can give you is to focus on our mission to protect the public and serve our members, and to take advantage of the sage advice provided by those around you, including your Board and the SBM staff. I hope you enjoy your year as much as I did, and that your experience meeting lawyers from around the state reaffirms your faith in the inherent good within our profession the way it did for me. I wish you the best of luck!

—**Bruce A. Courtade**
outgoing State Bar president

Brian Einhorn is not just a good lawyer and a good advocate; he is also a lawyer who cares. He is a lawyer who cares about his family, his friends, his law firm, other lawyers, judges, and the legal profession. As president of the State Bar of Michigan, he will have the opportunity to continue the State Bar’s efforts to make a difference in our profession.

—**Edward H. Pappas**
former State Bar president

Brian certainly is not a wallflower. He is a zealous advocate and passionate about the legal profession. A fine lawyer and person.

—**Hon. Michael J. Riordan**

Brian Einhorn is a passionate and outspoken advocate for the legal profession. His excellent sense of humor and keen wit keep him well-grounded. When Brian is not practicing law or visiting family, he is most likely skiing in Aspen.

—**Hon. James N. Erhart**

This is the 40th year that I’ve had the privilege to work with Brian. Over that time, I’ve come to admire his unwavering dedication and loyalty to his clients. He’s never avoided unpopular clients or seemingly hopeless causes. I’ll always be proud to tell folks he’s my partner.

—**Clayton F. Farrell** (*Einhorn’s partner*)

My “older” brother Bri, as I affectionately like to call him, has always been there for me, literally since the beginning of my life. To this day, he is the one I always go to for his trusted opinion. When my brother returned from the reserves, he decided to go to law school and wanted to do it his way. Our dad wanted to pay for it, but Brian was determined to pay for his own education, always respecting how hard our dad worked. If our parents were here today, they would be beaming with pride alongside me.

—**Fran Wolf** (*Brian’s sister*)

As the proud beneficiary of a lifetime of Brian Einhorn’s wisdom, generosity, and humor, I’m thrilled to congratulate him on becoming the next president of the State Bar of Michigan. My father has been known for many things in his career—building a law firm, fighting for clients in the courtroom, defending controversial judges—but I know him as the man who once flew to LA to support me when I had to give a crucial speech. He drove across the country in a rental car when airlines were grounded after 9/11 in hopes that flights would resume in time for him to join me for the Jewish holidays when I was living in Poland (he made it with hours to spare). And when my daughter was born in 2011, my father found a way, despite a jam-packed schedule, to be in New York to meet his first grandchild within an hour of her birth. He’s not just a devoted dad, he’s also a lot of fun at a party (and usually fast to pick up the check!). The State Bar of Michigan is lucky to have Brian Einhorn as its new president and I’m honored to wish him the best of luck in his new role.

—**Erin Einhorn** (*Brian’s daughter*)

Congratulations, Dad! We are proud of you.

—**Derek Einhorn** (*Brian’s son*)

