



Dennis James Lehr

February 7, 1932 - April 12, 2026

Dennis James Lehr, a distinguished Washington, D.C. attorney and preeminent authority in banking and financial institutions law, passed away on April 12, 2026, at the age of 94, peacefully at his home of sixty years, with his beloved wife Enid by his side. A man of towering intellect, deep professional integrity, quiet courage, and devoted family life, Dennis leaves behind a legacy that shaped the landscape of American banking law for over five decades — and touched the lives of all who knew him.

Born on February 7, 1932, in New York City to Irwin Allen and Teeny (Schofield) Lehr, Dennis grew up in a household where the law was part of daily life. His father Allan and his Uncle Harvey, both lawyers, often brought their cases home where young Dennis would sit and absorb the arguments, the reasoning, and the language of the law. Dennis attended the prestigious Bronx High School of Science before going on to New York University, where he was Phi Beta Kappa and earned his Bachelor of Arts in 1954.

Before the law claimed him fully, Dennis was a professional musician.

Accomplished on guitar, bass, and drums, he led the Dennis James Orchestra, a band that played weddings and events throughout the New York City area and performed at resorts in the White Mountains of New Hampshire — where his group shared the stage in support of celebrated acts including the legendary comedian Henny Youngman and singer Harry Belafonte. His love of music ran deep; Dennis was also backstage on the opening night of Birdland, the iconic New York jazz club, alongside towering figures including

Miles Davis and Charlie Parker. Long after he hung up his instruments professionally, classical music remained a constant presence — always playing softly in the background of his office throughout his career. Dennis answered his country's call to service in the 1950s, serving in the United States Army Corps of Engineers under a special program — six months of active duty followed by five years of reserve duty — stationed at both Fort Dix, New Jersey and Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. It was characteristic of Dennis to fulfill every obligation with diligence and pride. He went on to earn his Juris Doctor degree from Yale University in 1957 — where he served on the Yale Law Review and was honored as a member of Phi Alpha Delta— and his Master of Laws from New York University in 1961. Dennis was admitted to the New York Bar in 1959 and the District of Columbia Bar in 1967.

Dennis began his legal career working for the New York office of the Securities and Exchange Commission. He then joined Borden and Ball for a few years before re-joining the Securities and Exchange Commission in their Washington DC office in 1963. From 1964-1967, Dennis serviced as Associate Chief Counsel at the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, where he also served as Legal Editor of The National Banking Review. It was during this time that he met John Warner, and the two became close friends. Warner later invited Dennis to join the firm of Hogan & Hartson. Dennis also served as an Adjunct

Professor teaching Federal Control of Financial Institutions at Georgetown University Law School from 1966 to 1970, and as Advisory Counsel to the United States Senate Small Business Committee from 1968 to 1969.

At Hogan & Hartson — now the global firm Hogan Lovells — Dennis built a storied career specializing in Financial Institutions Law, Corporate and Securities Law, and Banking Law. His work took him around the world — to Liechtenstein, Switzerland, China, and the United Kingdom — but most notably to Kazakhstan, where as part of an American Bar Association mission working alongside tribal leaders, government officials, and fellow lawyers to

help establish a banking system for the newly independent nation.

Yet for all his work representing powerful institutions, it was his pro-bono and advocacy work that Dennis held most dear. He took on the cause of the Passamaquoddy Indian Tribe, who were fighting to preserve their centuries-old cultural right to fish freely against opposition from local government officials. Dennis walked into court alone and told the judge simply: “I want to correct an injustice.” He won. His wife Enid reflected: “He was so proud of this in his lifetime. I think this is probably one of his finest achievements in law.” His representation of the Hopi Indian tribe in legal matters further deepened his connection to Native American communities and the American Southwest — a region that would later find its way onto his canvases. It spoke to who Dennis truly was — a man who, beneath the accolades and the boardrooms and the global assignments, always chose to stand on the side of what was right.

Dennis’s contributions to the legal profession were vast. He served as Chairman of the American Bar Association’s Banking Law Committee from 1986 to 1990, and as Chairman of the ABA Committee on Developments in Investment Services from 1990 to 1994. He served on the Council of the ABA Business Law Section, chaired the Federal Bar Association’s Banking Law Committee, and was a Public Member of the Administrative Conference of the United States from 1987 to 1994. He was a member of the Panel of Commercial Arbitrators of the American Arbitration Association and served on the Advisory Board of the Banking Law Institute at Southern Methodist University’s Graduate School of Banking. Martindale-Hubbell recognized him as a reputable lawyer of the highest standing.

In his later years, Dennis discovered yet another means of expression: painting. He became an accomplished artist, focusing primarily on portraits of his beloved family and sweeping scenes of the American Southwest — landscapes infused with the spirit and culture of the Hopi people he had come to know and deeply respect through his legal work. As with everything Dennis

pursued, he brought to his art the same curiosity, care, and quiet dedication that defined his remarkable life.

Above all, Dennis was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather. He is survived by his beloved wife of seven decades, Enid J. Auerbach Lehr, whom he married on June 10, 1956.

He is survived by his son Austin Windsor Lehr and his wife Deborah Berger Lehr, and their three children: David Connor Lehr, Jami Lehr Asokaraj and her husband Surain Asokaraj, and Anna Jo Lehr.

His son Bryant Paul Lehr, who predeceased him, is lovingly remembered alongside his wife Ellen Lishnoff Lehr and their children Andrew Lehr and Alice Lehr, who carry on Bryant's memory as a cherished part of the Lehr family.

Dennis is further survived by his daughter Amy Lehr Shriber and her husband Todd Shriber, and their children Theodore Shriber and Lily Shriber — whose own beautiful words about her grandfather capture his spirit better than any biography could.

Dennis James Lehr lived a life of extraordinary purpose — in service to his country, to the law, to justice, and above all to his family. Musician, soldier, scholar, advocate, artist, and above all a devoted husband and father — he was a man who lived fully in every chapter of his life. He will be profoundly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him.

Memorial contributions can be made to St. Judes Children's Research Hospital, WETA Public Television, or Beth El Hebrew Congregation in Alexandria, VA.

"If you should learn one thing from Dennis Lehr, it would be to expect the unexpected."

— Lily Shriber, granddaughter

A private funeral service for family was held on Friday, April 17, 2026, at 11:30

a.m. at Cedar Park Cemetery, Paramus, New Jersey.

Cemetery Details

Cedar Park Cemetery

735 Forest Avenue
Paramus, VA 07652

Tribute Wall

FT

“ *RIP Denny*



Frank Titus - April 26 at 10:15 AM

MP

I am writing my deepest condolences on behalf of my parents, Maggie and Bob Bloom. They have passed some years ago, but I know they would want me to reach out. Dad spoke of "Denny" often and I know they both enjoyed the time spent with Denny and Enid on the ABA convention trips. What a great time they had! I know what a hard time this is, but please try to remember all the good times you've had. Again, my deepest condolences, Michelle Bloom Ponsart

Michelle Ponsart - April 26 at 12:30 PM