

Sample Words of Remembrance

Thank you all for coming today. Special thanks to Jane who flew in from Spain and Joan who flew in from Texas. I'm sure your grandfather would be very happy you know you are both here today. I want to thank my sisters, Ronnie and Reggie, for making all of the arrangements for today – essentially carrying on with the very dedicated care they have both been providing my father in recent years. His quality of life was greatly enhanced over the past year as a result of the tremendous amount of time, effort, and loving care that you two so kindly provided.

My Father had a very complete and rewarding life after living to just over 94 years and raising four children, eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild. I wish I could have added to that the experience of another World Championship for the Phillies but that just wasn't in the cards.

He served in the Army in World War Two and then used his skills with machinery to spend 30 years as an employee at the Esso Refining Company which we know today as Exxon. As children, my sisters and I helped him on many occasions when he set up and orchestrated meetings of the Catholic Petroleum Guild. His additional participation in the choir and Holy Name Society at X. Parish in West Philadelphia are evidence of his strong belief in the need to give back through participation in service organizations.

In his later years, he was very invested in amateur radio and joined a local Mobile Radio Club, another public-service organization. He had always been interested in Morse code and radios. He eventually invested the time and effort that led to his licensure and, ever since he was a faithful member of the club who rarely missed the weekly Sunday morning "Check In" sessions.

There were very few times when he didn't have a pet of one species or another in his life. Usually, it was a dog or cat but there were a few Cockatiels that someone gave him a few years back. He turned the house in Paoli into a small aviary for two cockatiels for a number of years. One of the constant topics of conversation with him during visits was the menagerie of animals being raised by his grandchildren – he tried to follow the fate of every animal under their care.

My Dad was always up on the latest success, trials, and travails of his grandchildren. Because I was out of the Philadelphia for most of my adult life, I only found out about family happenings through letters or phone calls with my father and mother. I always got reports in minute detail about my nieces and nephews, largely, I believe, because my Father took such pride in the accomplishments of his grandchildren with no regard toward the nature of the their activity or the level of their achievement. At his house in Upper Darby, he kept a record of growth of each grandchild by marking their height on the wood molding of the door between the living room and dining room. Each of the grandchildren had their dedicated part of the molding where their height was ceremoniously recorded during visits. I believe he truly enjoyed being able to easily look from his reading chair in the living room and see a recorded history of his grandchildren's growth.

My father saw himself as a common, blue-collar kind of guy. He was very proud to be Irish, Catholic and a Democrat. He felt so strongly about those three pillars of life that he continued for the past 50 years to tease me about our different political views.

He loved the seashore and took the family to Wildwood every summer for a number of years. I always thought he was happiest when he was able to lead the simple life at the shore. He also took great delight in stopping by at least once to catch a show while at the shore.

Like all of us, my Father had his shortcomings, but these were balanced by virtues such as the compassion and care he showed for my mother. Dad became a dedicated and tireless advocate, caregiver and companion for Mom when her health declined a few years before her death several years ago.

I'll close by asserting that John Doe lived a good and full life. He was a dedicated husband and father who took care of his responsibilities and worked hard to provide for his family as he made his way through the challenges of life. He was always selfless where he could provide a service for others. He, in return, was well loved and honored, and took great satisfaction in his family's accomplishments. The world was a better place for his presence here.