

Eulogy for Richard T. Plichta, Sr.

This is going to be one of the most difficult things for me to do, as I am prone to tears. A good friend of mine said that God gave me the gift of tears. I believe they are always tears of joy, inspired by God. I am sure that Dad is now with Mom in heaven. This is a cause for joy! To be finally home, in our heavenly home.

Dad's favorite saying was, "Of my 9 children, whom I love equally, I love you the best." He always wanted the best for each of us. So, I have asked each of my siblings to give me a memory to talk about in this Eulogy. But let me start by saying, some of Dad's favorite things were dancing and singing with us. He particularly was fond of the music of the Limelighters (Lollipop Tree), The Brothers Four (Viva La Compagnie), and the Kingston Trio (The MTA). He loved watching westerns, particularly, John Wayne and the Lone Ranger. TV shows like the Honeymooners. He loved board games like Rail Baron, Monopoly, Risk, etc., and he loved playing cards. Many of us remember nights playing Hand and Foot. Some our memories run concurrent, and I have had to cut them down just a bit so we will not be here for hours.

From Bobbie:

My most significant memory with Dad concerns a letter that I wrote to Dad, as I was preparing to go into the Navy. It is always difficult for a parent to "let go" of their first born. Dad had a difficult time of "letting go" of me. So, I wrote this letter to tell him I was confident of my own abilities, that I needed the freedom to do things on my own, and that whether I succeeded or failed, I had to own my own actions and make my life work around the decisions I had made. Dad kept that letter in his wallet for years. We were not able to find it among his things, so I suppose it was in his wallet when he lost it several years ago. I like to think he was proud of me for my assertiveness and my courage to leave the nest on my own terms. As the only child to follow in your footsteps: Anchors away! Love you, Dad.

From Gerianne:

I didn't know how much Dad loved me and respected me until I went into the Army and started receiving letters of encouragement from him. Even though he gave me a hard time about being a traitor for not going into the Navy, and called me the black sheep of the family, it was his way of trying to hold onto me. His letters truly helped me get through basic training. I was away from the family pretty much for 25 years while in the Army and after retirement when I remained in Europe. When I returned to NH in 2000, Dad and I developed a close rapport. He asked me to help him with the computer work and administrative tasks that he needed to accomplish with the Knights of Columbus, Pointers Fish and Game, his historian duties, his altar server training program and other commitments to the church and the community, etc. So, from newsletters, updated constitutions, and by-laws, to emails, research, and other correspondence, I became his gal Friday. I kept the calendar and showed up after my workday to assist with whatever tasks he needed. I learned so much about the organizations and causes that were so important to him. I came to truly admire his commitment to God, family, and Country. He poured love and honor and respect into everything he did. Love you to the moon and back, Dad!

From Jennifer:

This is what I learned from Dad, that shaped my character:

You have a duty to service, be it God, Family, Country and or Community. You will get out of it only what you put into it.

Honor your commitments, always do your best work, follow through, it is important. If you give your word, it is everything, keep your word.

Place your personal mark, by always leaving a person, place, or organization better than you found it. It shows you appreciate and care for others.

Respect other people. Respect has to be earned. You lead by example.

Dad was a good moral compass. He was my moral compass.

In these later years, as I became his care-taker, I became his faithful sidekick, "Kemosabe" which, according to the Potawatomi tribe in Michigan, means faithful companion or trusty scout. He started introducing me as Kemosabe to everyone. I am not sure whether this was a term of endearment or an insult. According to the Apache tribe it means "idiot". Hi Ho Silver! Love you, Dad!

From Rick:

Here are my memories of Dad. As a young teen, I would get up early, and Dad and I would have coffee and read the Boston Globe. There was not a lot of conversation. Just being together meant everything. There are so many more memories, concerning my sporting endeavors, college and raising my own family, but it would take all day to list them. Dad was a generous person with a big heart. He always offered to help anyone he could (co-workers, neighbors, etc.) Dad loved to go to yard sales, Zyla's and thrift stores. He wouldn't just get one item. He would get multiples of the same item to make sure he had one for each of his children. Play ball! Love you, Dad.

From Charlene:

It was September 2001, and Dad was taking me to Concord to file my husband, Scott's paperwork to bury him at Boscawen cemetery. Dad decided to take this time to talk to me about grief after losing a spouse. This was his way of showing me his compassion, concern, and care. I replied, "Don't worry about me, Dad, I have 2 kids to raise. Our family and God will guide me." To which he said, "I am glad your faith is intact, and you have not lost it. I was just making sure you're in a safe place." Dad was a man of few words, and this was the Dad I needed at that point. In that conversation, I knew he truly loved me regardless, and that he would be there for my children and I as we adjusted to our new normal. Now that I am a parent myself, I see why he did and said the things he did as a dad. Our parents shape who we are, who we become. We are better adults for having known him and his love for us.

Dad always said, "Blood is thicker than water and family comes first." Love you, Dad.

From Ted:

When it comes to Dad, we all know that he always was a firm disciplinarian with high expectations of us. He also had a fun side that showed quite often. What I remember from Dad was the encouragement he gave very often. The one time that sticks out in my mind is the day I came home and announced that I just enlisted in the Air Force. I never talked about going into the military, or to college, as I didn't really know where my future was going to take me. I stopped by the recruitment office and asked some questions. I knew that the Air Force was the best option to go into a field with computer technology, so I signed up. When I told Mom and Dad about it, they were very happy that I finally made a career choice, but Dad was also a bit quiet. Later that night, I was watching a Bruins game with Dad. It was just me and Dad. He asked me to get him a beer, and after a bit of a pause, told me to get one for myself as well. After a while, he said to me, "I would have preferred that you go into the Navy, but I am still very proud of you." This encouragement extended to when I was in the Air Force, when I returned home from combat, even as he observed me learning to be a good husband and father.

"My hope and prayer is that everyone knows and loves our country for what she really is and what she stands for."
Love you, Dad!

From Cathie:

My memories of Dad are of our family outings at Clough State Park. When we would go swimming, Dad would always pick me to be on his shoulders when playing "chicken" against Uncle Bob. This always made me feel special. Another close memory is about the Tony the Tiger Bank. Dad would place all of his change in the bank. Then every two weeks, he would have us guess the amount of money in the bank and whoever had the closest guess would win the money in the bank.

These fond memories show the carefree, fun-loving side of Dad. Bingo! We will miss you very much, Dad.

From Dan:

My father was a man who loved God, his family, his country and his community. He was sometimes a hard man, but I guess you would have to be to raise nine children and provide not just for their physical needs, but moral and spiritual needs as well. While he was a hard disciplinarian, we came to appreciate all that he was more and more. His lessons stuck with us as we became adults. He instilled in each of us good principles, and the desire to achieve, and to be the best we could be. The road to Hell is paved with good intentions. Make sure your intentions are honorable. Love you, Pops!

From Chris:

I learned to play chess at 4 years old. Dad taught me. I have vivid memories of Dad hunched over the board with his forefinger still on the piece he just moved. Looking at every angle, what sacrifices and what advantages would result, and every possible move that could be played after he removed his finger. There were no takebacks once you removed your finger from the piece. Sometimes, it was a swift decisive move. Other times, it was an agonizing wait in silence until he finished his turn. When it was my turn, he didn't counsel, didn't show me the pitfalls of a bad move. Once I removed my finger from my piece, then the "lesson" began. He didn't gloat (much), but he did explain as he captured my queen, how I failed to protect her. And the lessons were learned. Hindsight was 20/20. Know the cost of taking a risk. Be a good sport. "Checkmate," "Good Game" and a handshake. In retrospect, I marvel that he had time to teach me, never mind play chess with me. I cherish the time spent with the board between us. I play chess with my son. He is a great player, and he has learned all the strategies. I hope some of Pepere's lessons come through for him, too. Love you, Dad. "Checkmate"

All in all, Dad was well loved by his family, his friends, and his community. He instilled in us good morals, good character, great faith, hope, and love. He was a strong mentor for all of us. He lived by his word and all that he believed. He was a goodman and Father. So here is to a life well lived, raise your cup to Dad, "Viva la Companie."