

Dad's Eulogy

We want to thank you for coming today to help us honor and pay tribute to Craig Vernon Wentz. My name is Derek, and for those who don't know me, I am Craig's eldest son. Dad thought the movie Chariots of Fire was a classic. In the movie the great Olympic runner Eric Liddell spoke of how to run a straight race: "I want you to do more than just watch a race, I want you to take part in it ... a race is hard, requires concentration of will, energy of soul"

If life is like a race, Dad did more than just watch, he actively took part in it. Dad was not afraid to face challenges. Dad exhibited concentration of will and energy of soul. In reflecting upon Dad's life, I wish to focus on just two traits: loyalty to friends and love of family. Though I could discuss many more traits including Dad's love of learning and teaching the gospel, his devoted service to others, and his tireless work ethic, those traits were manifested in Dad's loyalty to friends and love of family.

Let us set the stage with a brief review of Dad's background. Dad was born on July 19, 1941, to Hugh Vernon and Evelyn Gledhill Wentz, in Richfield, Utah. Dad grew up in Orem Utah and graduated from Orem High School. He served in the South German Mission, where he developed a profound love of the German people and ever after spoke with great reverence for his time in Germany. After his mission, he obtained his

undergraduate degree in History at Brigham Young University. At BYU he was President of the Samuel Hall Society. After graduating from BYU Dad was accepted to both Brown University and the University of Washington. Ultimately, Dad chose to attend the University of Washington and obtained a master's degree in history.

While studying at the University of Washington Dad met Mom, Mary Carole Harper. Dad and Mom were married and sealed in the Salt Lake Temple on September 12, 1969. Together they raised five children: Derek, Christian, Jonathan, Adam, and Katie. Dad spent countless hours with us children engaging in activities such as wrestling with us when we were young, working on pinewood derby cars, working in the yard, attending our sporting and school events, fishing and camping trips to the Uinta mountains, taking us to sporting events, and wonderful family vacations.

Dad attended Law School at the University of Utah where he was a member of the Law Review and published an article. Over the span of forty years Dad practiced law in Seattle, Washington first as an associate with Shidler McBroom Gates & Baldwin and lastly from 1987 to retirement at Christensen & Jensen in Salt Lake City, Utah.

In an attempt to shine a light on the type of man Dad was, I have decided to use, with permission, heart felt notes from three individuals Dad worked with at Christensen & Jensen. Notes

from two fellow attorneys Nate Alder and Heidi Goebel as well as a note from Joni Reese, a member of the firm's support staff. All three notes provide insight into Dad's loyalty to friends and love of family.

Thoughts from Nate Alder:

I love Craig. I know he loved me. I loved our time together. We had many good times. I can't think of a bad time. I was proud of Craig. Proud to introduce him as my friend, mentor, colleague, law partner. We worked on some hard cases together. We had lots of laughs. He was good to me. I tried to be good to him. Craig had a sparkle in his eye that was somehow connected to white pearly teeth and a broad smile. His face just radiated. No one ever saw Craig for anything but tall, dark and handsome – he was all those. He was a man who stood tall as an example, as a symbol of who I wanted to become, and he was a man of striking image and demeanor, true professionalism, hard work, ethics, intellect and genuine nature, and of course handsome with his natural good looks, again from those eyes and that smile. Every single person here wanted to have time with Craig, be his friend, be part of his world. Without exception, Craig was beloved. He's such a good man. I have no doubt about Craig's standing in this world – he's at the very top of the people I know and admire.

. . . . I am not on target to achieve his greatness, yet I hope somehow to stay on his path and shoot for half the father he is, half the husband he is, half the grandfather he is. I see him as a great family man. I know he was a tremendously talented lawyer.

I know you are a family of great faith – Craig’s legacy and gift to you.

(Thank you Nate.)

Thoughts from Joni Reese:

I was so sorry and so sad to hear of your Dad’s passing. He was one of the great ones here on the earth and was truly such an example of Christ in my opinion. I will forever feel so blessed to have known your Dad. I feel like the world was a much better place because of him. I will always cherish my association with him. I know he is in a better place for him but for me there is an empty hole. He was such a great example to me of everything good. I had once asked him for some advice on a personal matter. He called me in his office and talked to me about what I needed advice on. He had a legal pad in his hand and wrote notes on it. He said he would get back to me. A couple days later he called me back in his office and had done quite a bit of research on the pros and cons of my dilemma. I knew that he put much thought into giving me the best advice he knew and all the research he had done. I truly loved him for that. It touched my heart deeply that he would care so much about my personal life. An Attorney here at the firm recently said, “Why don’t we all try to be just a bit more jovial, a little kinder, and more attentive to one another’s situation? It would please Craig Wentz to no end.”

(Thank you Joni.)

Heidi Goebel's thoughts:

I thought I'd take this opportunity to try to let your family know how much your dad meant to me.

I had the pleasure of working for/with your dad from the date I started at the firm until his retirement. For my first four years at the firm, I worked closely with Craig. I had thought about giving up the practice of law before coming to the firm because I was tired of working with arrogant, self-centered louts. Craig was the opposite of the lawyers I had worked with before, and working with him rekindled my interest in the practice of law. I enjoyed coming to work again. I watched Craig treat everyone with the same level of respect you would offer to the President of the United States.

What I miss the most about working with Craig, however, are the talks we would have once we had finished talking about the project at hand. I spent countless hours in Craig's office listening to what mattered to him the most - his family. Craig was one of those lawyers who loved the law, but that love was nearly eclipsed by his love of his family. He would talk about his hopes and dreams for all of his kids. Never have I met someone who seemed to feel as blessed to be a part of a family as Craig seemed to feel to be a part of yours.

I've missed Craig every day since he retired. I think of him often and think of how fortunate I was to have him as a mentor and role model. I hope to be the kind of parent to my young boys that I saw Craig was to his children. I hope someday to be the kind of lawyer he was. To be able to check my ego at the door and to treat others with a respect they may not have earned. To see the best in people.

Thank you for sharing your father with me. I am a better person for having known him.

(Thank you Heidi.)

In closing, to use the words of Marianne Clay, a German bookkeeper who worked at the Shidler, McBroom firm in Seattle with my Dad: Auf Wiedersehen Mr. Wentz.