EULOGY

FOR

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Hello everyone. It is said that people live on through memories made and shared and if that’s the case, our Uncle Tom’s life and spirit will have an impact on, and be with, all of us forever. Judge Thomas Dempsey was a fun, loving, caring, fair, solid rock to all he knew; kid at heart, giving of time, advice, home, love, knowledge. Everyone who knew him considered him to be completely genuine and fair; he always gave of himself 110% and, even though he was a judge by profession, “off the court” – in his personal life, he was never judgmental -although there were probably many opportunities for him to give his opinion. He was a well-respected man in the community, always busy with professional duties, yet from the moment he joined the family, that was it. He was ours, and we were his. I cannot picture Uncle Tom without seeing him laugh, helping, coaching, having fun with a bunch of kids.

Where do I begin to share the stories that convey the essence of this fine man? There are so, so many of them. My Uncle Tom & Aunt Mare were incredibly generous to our family, always wanting to take my sister's and my children on vacations. Although we can all imagine the “adventures” that occurred trying to keep 4-6 younger ones all happy at the same time, sometimes not so successfully, and when chaos ensued and the trips turned out to be a little “challenging” to say the least-okay, let’s admit it- at times **extremely** “challenging,” Uncle Tom and Aunt Mare always came back for more, and continued to take the children on trips. From the time that Uncle Tom entered our family he was fully invested in our lives. He was such a positive role model to all of us, and especially to my children and other family members.

Both professionally and personally, Uncle Tom was deeply aware that the legacy of life is in our children, and he devoted his life to mentoring and guiding young people. Whether Uncle Tom was interested in an activity or not, if one of the children wanted to do something, he was there to facilitate, be a guardian, make it happen. Brian, my oldest son, ''loved'' Ken Griffey Jr back when he played for Seattle; we were at the Hershey hotel on vacation with Uncle Tom & Aunt Mare, and the most amazing thing happened. Uncle Tom had a Limo gather everyone and take them to the train station where they took a train to Yankee stadium so that Brian could see Ken Griffey Jr play. The smile on Brian's face will always be embedded in my memories. My son Michael, whose passion was Ice Hockey, spent the better part of his life practicing in the driveway. Uncle Tom would come over and strap on the goal pads and help Michael with his game. This does not even begin to touch all that he did for his ''boys'' and ''girls''.

I'm honored that my Uncle Tom & Aunt Mare have allowed my sister & I, along with our children to be here to share precious memories. They have been at our sides through our journeys, both literal and figurative, and have definitely been unforgettable inspirations. I can honestly say that I am truly blessed that not only do I have great parents; I also have an Uncle Tom & Aunt Mare. What more could I ask for?

So many others have loving and respectful memories of our Uncle Tom as well. As a judge, he had a tremendous responsibility to conduct himself in a way that insured that justice was carried out, but he didn’t lose sight of the humanity of the person about to be sentenced. He had a way of meting out punishment while doing his best to still provide some kind of hope and support. That takes a rare kind of person-one who can see the entire picture and one who recognizes that in order to stop a vicious cycle, one has to try to speak to the **soul**-the real human being inside each one of us. In his profession as a judge **(if he had a special title, please use the full title**), he watched over his courtroom with a thorough eye, and ii seemed as if he were watched over as well…. just ask Bridget what happened when she had to go to court for fist fighting…the last person on earth anyone wanted to know about this incident was Uncle Tom, but of course, somehow his “angels” plunked him down in the one spot he wasn’t supposed to be in….ah… The luck of the Irish!

Yes, Uncle Tom took his role as judge very seriously, but he also appreciated irony, humor and he really knew how to see the comedy in a situation. Whether it was “cannonballing” into a pool filled with “ladies who possibly might not appreciate the finer points of cannonballing,” at Tamamint, or getting locked out of their hotel room within 10 minutes of arriving at the Hershey Park Hotel, Uncle Tom and Aunt Mare really knew how to take a joke-intended or not. Eddie can attest to that. Just ask him to describe that night at the anniversary party in that upscale retreat. Whoever could have imagined that yelling, “FIRE!!!” through a megaphone in the middle of the night could be so much fun? Wellllllllllll-not many people, but Uncle Tom had the vision to “appreciate” that stunt and turn it into a vehicle to spark a chuckle every so often-yes, he milked that story for all it was worth!

Jessica still loves to tell of the time she had the privilege of going to work with Uncle Tom. Her impressions, even as a child, were that the people at his office were very nice. As Jessica put it back then, she is still waiting to see her Uncle Tom “give someone life.” The truth is, Jessica, you’ve witnessed that countless times. Uncle Tom has given “life” to each one of us, and all of our lives are richer for the love and humor and guidance he so freely shared with all of us. Mariann (**Is this Mare? If so, please say Aunt Mare)** said it best when she recalled the words said by Uncle Tom’s mother on Aunt Mare’s first visit to meet his family. Uncle Tom’s mother said, ‘I have six children, not one a laggard, but this one, he’s one in a million.” Uncle Tom has proven to be one in a million to all of us. We love you, Uncle Tom, and thanks for being who you are, making endless and enriching contributions to each of us, and loving us back. We will always honor your life and spirit. Thank you all.