

(I meant to fit this first part into the eulogy, but I ran out of time writing it.)

When I was attending the University of MN, I was fortunate enough to fly home for the holidays. My Dad would always be the one to pick me up. From the moment I entered his car, I already felt like I was home. I remember driving on I95, particularly at Christmas, looking out the window of his Toyota Supra, watching the holiday lights stream by. When vacation was over, my Mom always came with to send me off. I'd occasionally feel a butterfly or two on my way to the airport. My parents escorted me to my gate. I'd board the plane, seized my window seat, and looked for my parents. Most of the time I was able to spot them. I don't know if my parents could see me, but they always waved goodbye, and I back to them. Today, I imagine my parents standing together once again, and waving to me. I will always wave back even though I can no longer see them. I miss them so much.

My Dad (07/02/1943 - 07/07/2009)

After work, on Friday July 3rd, my Dad asked me to grab a bite to eat with him. He knew I was alone for the weekend, and he probably thought I'd like the company. So I suggested a place, and off we went. During dinner, we joked around, and talked about all sorts of things from politics to margaritas. We both thought for sure we'd be back since we enjoyed the meal so much. When it was time to pay the bill, my dad grabbed it, stuck his credit card in it, and pushed it towards the edge of the table, but closer to me than him. So I looked up, smiled and gently slid it back to his side. He knew exactly what I was doing, and we both had a good laugh.

The inside joke was... Back in the day my Grandfather had a salesman named Camille, and they would occasionally enjoy a meal together while they were on sales calls. So one day my Grandfather decided to discretely push the bill towards Camille to see what Camille's reaction would be. Camille slyly pushed it back to my Grand Pop, and the bill cautiously slid back and forth for several minutes until my Grandfather finally gave in and paid it.

Camille always expected my Grand Pop to pay for dinner, just as I had expected the same from my father. Not only did I expect dinner, but I expected to be sharing moments like this one for years to come. I expected him to always be there for me, or at least until I was ready to take on his legacy. I am not embarrassed to say that I am not ready.

I will never forget the way he took the lead in helping my Mom battle cancer. He did everything he could, and carried his family on his broad shoulders. The weight was never too heavy, and we all counted on him. He was incredible.

The battle with cancer was short, and new challenges appeared. Shortly after my Mom had died, my Dad found himself in a peculiar position. When Eric or I sought motherly advice, we'd find ourselves asking our Dad. Knowing this new challenge he faced, he kept a note my Mom had wrote to him displayed in his bathroom that said... "Make amends. Be more accepting and approachable. We're only on this earth a short time. The ride could be more enjoyable."

He did just that. Not that my Dad wasn't already caring, but during the last two years he became even more gentle and sensitive. He did everything from buying Talia seasonal dresses, to baking chocolate chip cookies. I saw him change before my own eyes. He did a great job at filling such a deep void. I was always proud of my Dad, but during the roughest of times, the way in which he cared for Eric, Sandra, Talia and I, not to mention the rest of his family and friends, makes me even more proud to say... He's My Dad.

He would do things for Eric and I that most fathers would never do for their children. And the more I've talked to people this past week; I've learned that he was a very special guy to so many more people. From his brothers and sister, to his in-laws; from his friends to his business associates; the stories I've been hearing are so touching. It all has made me miss him even more.

Although he was frugal towards himself, his generosity towards others was second to none. He was generous with his time, his gifts, and was always there to help a friend in need.

Almost every Monday night he visited my Grandmom in her nursing home. He wanted to be there for her and her children. He was often the first to visit people in the hospital, and stayed with them the longest. He felt it was the right thing to do. It was the way he was raised.

And to me... He was absolutely astonishing. When I mentioned I was working on a project at home like painting or landscaping, he never hesitated to ask if I needed help. In fact, he'd just say "I'll be there." Why is this astonishing? It wasn't the offer. It was the fact that his own home needed attention, but he'd postpone his projects, to make sure he was there for mine. He'd rather be helping me, than helping himself. Every time I'd go over his house, I'd say to myself, "I should be the one lending him my hand."

He always listened to my problems, and rarely mentioned his own. I remember shortly after my Mom had died, I was yelling at him to the point I was so angry, venting all my past, present and future worries. Rather than being upset with me, he called my wife to see if I was okay. He was always there for me, no matter how painful it was.

Not too long ago I thought to myself, "Sometime soon, I'd like to treat my Dad to dinner, or something else, so I'd spend some meaningful one on one time with him." I wanted to let him know how much I love and appreciate him. For his birthday two weeks ago, I bought him

Phillies tickets. The game is next Monday (07/20/09). Perhaps I was to have my moment with him then. Now I'll never know. So, before I continue, my one wish to pass along to each and every one of you, is to take some time this week to speak with the ones that you love, and tell them how you feel. Don't miss your opportunity.

His Granddaughter. What can I say? He was inspired by her. She kept him going. He loved Talia more than just about anything, and she returned the feeling. He'd try to come over at least every other Sunday. When he'd enter into my house, my daughter would see or hear him, drop everything, and run as fast as she could to him. Her greetings might have been my Dad's favorite part of coming over. She would yell a drawn out "Pop Pop" as she was running. He'd bend down to pick her up with a smile from ear to ear, and a gleam in his eye that reminded me of a child on Christmas morning. I remember him saying "Wow! That was some greeting." And then he'd chuckle.

Talia would make him do everything, and he loved it. On his last visit (06/28/09), they played outside for a little while. Then they came in and drew pictures, played with Talia's kitchen, and supervised a miniature puzzle town. Talia knew that when Pop Pop was over, it was playtime.

Every once and a while, I'd let Talia climb up onto my feet, hold her hands and walk around. She thinks it's so much fun, just as I did with my Dad when I was young. When he was last over, she somehow knew to climb up onto his feet, and off they went. I enjoyed watching that so much. It was as if I was watching myself 30 years ago. It truly gave me a small taste of what it was like to be his little boy.

As a child there are so many memories. At Christmas, my Dad and Mom would always make sure there were plenty of gifts under the tree. My Dad and I would build Lego spaceships, paint model airplanes, and play Intellelevision together. When I joined Cub Scouts, he involved himself. By no surprise he was the Treasurer. He helped me build and race pinewood derby cars. We always took home a prize. He went camping with me, even though sleeping in a three sided building in the middle of October wasn't his first choice of places to be. I remember one night it was so cold that he had to bring me into his sleeping bag just so I wouldn't turn to ice. It's hard to believe... he was about the same age as I am today.

Vacations with my Dad were the best. Besides Christmas and our birthdays, it was the one time of the year he spared no expense. Early on, we went to Ocean City, NJ. Morning bikes rides on the boardwalk, digging up sand crabs, constructing curly cue sandcastles, mining our way to China, and eating pork roll sandwiches on the beach were the best.

From there we kept heading south, and made three pit stops at Disney World. From Rehoboth Beach, to Ocean City MD, and then a final stop in Duck, NC. He loved the beach, and was very passionate about it. To him there was nothing better than sitting in a beach chair, listening to

the calming roar of the ocean, napping until he was too hot, and then jumping into the ocean to cool off.

I've always vacationed with my Dad. We had planned a family trip together on Labor Day weekend. It didn't matter that we worked together. I still enjoyed his company, and he enjoyed mine.

I recognize now, more than ever, that our relationship with each other was blessed. We saw each other all the time, yet we never imposed on one another.

Work... Some days were harder than others, but he always enjoyed what he did. He poured his heart and soul into Frankford Associates. He was very proud of Frankford, and all of the achievements that he, his dad, and his bother accomplished. He was also proud to have Eric and I there with him. He was always dedicated to see his sons become successful.

My Dad may have been one of the best sales people that I have ever seen in action. He conveyed sincerity and trust, and always delivered what he promised.

Part of the reason my Dad was great at sales was that he was always so engaging. He had the magic of being able to walk into a room and talk to just about anyone, in some meaningful and fun way. This past week, many people have come up to me and said they always looked forward to seeing my Dad. They said he brighten their day no matter the occasion. He loved his family and friends and took so much pleasure in spending time with them. He brightened my day, every day.

If I had just one more day with him,

- I'd tell him that I didn't realize how many people he has touched over the years, and because of this, he continues to touch me too.
- I'd tell him I will do my best to fill his immeasurable shoes during the remaining steps of my life.
- I'd tell him that no matter how hard I get kicked; I will be always there for our little girl, Talia. No matter what! Just like he was there for our family.
- I'd tell him that I have enjoyed seeing him almost every day, and would have liked to see him even more.
- I'd tell him he has been a great boss, co-worker and mentor, a best friend, and a fantastic father.
- I'd tell him he was the most wonderful Pop Pop a little girl could ever have.
- And most of all, I'd tell him that I'll always cherish my memories with him, that I am proud to be his son, and that I'll love and miss him forever. I Love You Dad!