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In Memoriam: Patrick M. Ryan

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IN MEMORIAM

PATRICK M. RYAN

CLASS OF 1969

EDITOR IN CHIEF

MARQUETTE LAW REVIEW, VOLUME 52

Born the grandson of Irish immigrants and the first in his family to attend college, Patrick M. Ryan was the chairman and managing partner of one of America's great law firms when he died unexpectedly of illness in August of 2007 at the age of sixty-three. These bookend facts speak volumes about the character and career of a consummate Marquette lawyer. Humble and accomplished, gentle and tough, empathetic and steadfast—Pat wove the threads of a complex spirit into a remarkable personal and professional life.

Others knew Pat longer and better than I, and it is with some trepidation that I presume to speak about Pat Ryan in these pages. But my claim to speak, like the claims of so many others, is hardly trivial. Pat hired me to advise him and his firm on a couple of matters. His respect for people, for the law, for doing what was right, shone through brightly in this context. What an inspiring client he was, making clear that his goal was to be faithful to the letter and spirit of the law and offering me his trust just as so many clients had placed trust in him. Believe me, it was humbling to advise such an honorable person and such an eminent lawyer.

Patrick M. Ryan, who was born in 1944, graduated from Marquette University Law School in 1969. He was editor in chief of the *Marquette Law Review* and a member of Alpha Sigma Nu, the honor society of individuals who distinguish themselves in scholarship, loyalty, and service as students at Jesuit institutions of higher education. After a clerkship on the Wisconsin Supreme Court with Justice Robert W. Hansen, Pat joined Quarles & Brady in 1970. His distinguished career as counsel to such clients as Fox River Paper Company, Fox Valley Corporation, M&I Bank, The Manitowoc Company, Mason Wells, Metavante, We Energies, and Weyco Group earned him a perennial listing in *The Best Lawyers in America* and the highest AV peer review rating by Martindale-Hubbell.

Quarles & Brady elected Pat as Chairman and Managing Partner of the firm in 2002. Under his leadership, the firm grew to its current size of over 400 attorneys and 500 support staff in six offices in Wisconsin, Illinois, Arizona, and Florida, and became one of the hundred largest law firms in the nation. During this period of steady growth, the firm pointed with particular pride to the advances that Pat led in supporting and furthering diversity and equal opportunity at the firm.

The funeral service at Gesu Church on the Marquette campus was attended by hundreds of mourners, who came to honor Pat and support his wife, Holly, and their family. Several family members and friends spoke of their sense of love and loss at Pat's passing. John Ryan spoke of Pat as the older brother much to be admired, a skilled and competitive athlete, an achiever, a loving brother and son and husband and father. The strong family bond was warmly expressed as well by Pat's children, Rebecca, Brendan, Abigail, and Lucas. Ann Murphy spoke of Pat as the law partner and leader who loved the great enterprise of Quarles & Brady and guided it with a moral compass that was true and with a genuine regard for others. Ann recalled Pat's embrace of a line by Emerson, "We must be as courteous to a man as we are to a picture, which we are willing to give the advantage of a good light."¹

Pat's fondness for the quotation is most apt. Much good light emanated from Patrick M. Ryan, illuminating the way for family and friends and colleagues and clients. We at Marquette Law School were particularly warmed by this light.

The closing pages of last year's volume of this journal include Dean Joseph D. Kearney's remarks at the 2007 annual dinner for the Law Review.² His theme was the Law Review's role as the essential memory for the Law School. Dean Kearney spoke of sitting in Gesu Church, next to Pat Ryan, when both were attending a funeral the prior winter for a much younger lawyer, who worked at Pat's firm and who himself had been editor in chief of the Law Review. The dean "reflected on how the coincidence of the careers of these former editors in chief of the Law Review demonstrated that Marquette Law School is still serving some of its historic purposes." He noted that while "[t]hese individuals accomplished themselves[,] . . . we did provide the start, and essential fuel, for their professional journeys." He concluded, "I am confident

1. RALPH WALDO EMERSON, *Behavior*, in *THE CONDUCT OF LIFE* (1860).

2. Joseph D. Kearney, *Law Review Annual Banquet: Remarks by the Dean*, 90 MARQ. L. REV. 1069 (2007).

that Pat would not object . . . to our taking some pride in the accomplishments of their post-law-school lives.”

And we do take pride. And so the passing of a distinguished Marquette lawyer will be marked and our memory of him made permanent in this distinguished journal.

MICHAEL K. MCCHRYSTAL
Professor of Law

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