

# Frankie's Eulogy for Jack Jackson

Good afternoon. I'm Frankie Jackson, Jack's daughter-in-law of 35 years, married to Scott, Jack's oldest son. It is an honor to speak on behalf of the family today as we pay our respects to **Jack** our Dad, our Pop, our Father-in-Law and special friend.

Jack is one of a kind. He is special to each and every one of us sitting here today. **On behalf of the family THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE!**

There is so much to say in such a **short** amount of time. **WHERE DO WE EVEN BEGIN?**

I will start by sharing a few personal stories to *illuminate* how *special* Jack was to each of his closest family members. I will start with Greer.

**Greer** shared one of her favorite things about Pop: his whistling. She said she would always know when Pop was awake or when he was near because she could hear his beautiful and quiet whistling.

It was such a comforting sound for her, and she absolutely loved hearing it. **If we could only hear Pop whistle one more time.** She says she miss that whistling so much.

Greer was named after Anneene and she was so special to Pop. He loved her and was so thrilled about her starting student teaching and becoming a teacher. Anneene was in the business of education. He knew how proud Anneene would be of Greer and so was he.

**Max** highlighted that Pop always had confidence in his grandchildren. He remembers when he was playing baseball in college. Jack loved the game. Watching Max play was one of many highlights in Pop's life. During a regional round of the baseball playoffs, Max was in extra innings of a winner take all game. He was up to bat with the bases loaded. He knocked in the winning run to send his team to the World Series. After the game he remembers everyone, especially his Mom, saying they couldn't watch because they were so nervous for him.

Pop was the one that said, "**Max wants to be in this spot; this is what every ballplayer dreams of.**" Pop knew, without a doubt, that Max would succeed in that moment; there was no doubt in his mind. Max says he will never forget how confident and proud Pop was of him. He knows *now* how important it is to have someone believe in you. Pop was one that truly believed in him. **If we could only tell Jack how much we appreciated him giving us endless and unconditional confidence one more time.**

**Toni** talked about when her late husband Dan was terminally ill. Dan didn't want anyone to come and visit him. No one knew what to say or what to do. Since Jack had taken such good care of Anneene, he was familiar with Dan's illness. Jack didn't take no for an answer. Jack would go over to their house. If the door was locked, he had a key. He would open the door and come right on in. He would walk into Dan's room and get in bed with Dan and watch TV.

She says they may have talked, or they may have just watched golf or other sports without saying a word. He would lay with him for hours. That meant so much to her. Toni remembers Jack calling Dan – **Dan the Man.**

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As **Toni** and I were talking this week she said, Jack was born way ahead of his time. He was all about promoting women's rights and career success. He shared home responsibilities. He treated everyone equally. He loved deeply and he was emotionally connected. If he loved you, he knew how to show it. Those that knew him knew exactly where they stood with him.

**Toni** also recalls the many great times at the lake house on Lake Livingston. Sometimes it's the smallest of things that leave the greatest impression. She said Jack would take her, Scott and Gregg out in the boat at dawn. It would be so quiet, so peaceful. Riding on top of the water at the break of day, the water was like glass. Sometimes they wouldn't say a word because it was so early (and of course they had stayed up way too late the night before). Jack would teach them to ski. He would sometimes let them drive the boat. He taught them to appreciate life and the importance of spending quality time together. When they would come back to the house, a big breakfast would be cooking – bacon, eggs, biscuits, coffee. Those were some of the best times of her life. **If we could only ride in the boat on Lake Livingston at the break of dawn one more time.**

**Jill** talked about a special time when Jack and Anneene stayed with Catherine when she came home from the hospital before Caroline. She said every Tupperware container would be opened where he was looking around for cookies, which, poor thing, she never had. He loved snacks. Later Anneene told her that Jack often made late night runs to the kitchen in search of cookies! She also shared how much Jack loved Catherine and Caroline. When they came into their lives, he was thrilled to have two new little ones in the family. He was especially happy for Anneene, and the joy they brought her at a tough time in her life. The girls adored them both and loved staying the weekend. **If we could only share cookies with Jack one more time.**

**Kendall** remembers when she told Pop that she and Derek were expecting a baby. He immediately said, "it's a girl." She expected that response because most of the time people said this since in our family, just about everyone is born a girl. That wasn't the reason for Pop. He told Kendall over and over, "I want to relive being a grandfather of a mini-Kendall."

He said, the day Kendall was born was one of the best days of his life. He said, if I could just have one more opportunity to have that feeling again..." He wore pink to the gender reveal and stood by that the baby would be a girl. His prediction was right, he got a mini Kendall in Dahl.

He loved the weekly pictures and videos that Kendall sent. He showered Dahl with snacks and gifts. He was never without a big panda bear, mini mouse or some other crazy toy he thought she might like. He treated her just like his other grandkids; like they made him the happiest person in the world. **If only every grandchild and future grandchild could experience the influence and gifts of Pop one more time.**

**Kevyn** shared a similar reflection. She says Pop always made her feel loved. He always made her feel special. He always took the time to try and understand her. He always made her feel like she made him the proudest grandfather in the world. Creating that feeling for people is not something anyone can create, but, Pop could.

*We never forget what someone says but we always remember how they make us feel.*

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That feeling, along with his charm, his wit, his ability to make any situation fun, and the high standards he set for us as a family, is what defines his legacy and is what she will most remember and miss.

**Kevyn** had a special bond with Pop because of her medical expertise as a nurse practitioner, she often served as a medical sounding board and helped Pop and Barbara with their health treatments. If we could only help Jack improve his health one more time.

**Karsyn** reminisces about a time when Pop and Barbara decided to buy a dog, after completely falling in love with Kevyn and Kyle's dog, Zaza. They wanted a malty poo as well. Pop did the research and found the perfect dog for Barbara but didn't realize that he would actually fall in love with two precious puppies when he went to pick up only one: It was a two for one special he thought. Pop and Barb called Karsyn one afternoon and said please stop by today, we have a surprise for you. When she got there, the most precious little fluff came running her way, and that's how Benny became a part of the family!

She also remembers visiting their home and it being filled with appetizers and free flowing drinks, great laughter, and unforgettable conversations. She might plan to go for a couple hour visit, but she would end up staying for hours – sometimes way past midnight – then she would be exhausted the next day. People from work would ask who she went out with the night before. And she would be completely honest with the fact that she had a grandfather that was truly the life of the party anywhere he went.

Right before she moved to Dallas, Karsyn went to spend the afternoon with him. They ordered BBQ, drank chilled wine, while Pop smoked cigars and drank icy scotch on the patio. Before she left, Pop's departing words were that he loved her, was proud of her for following her heart, and that he was so happy that she was happy. If we could only visit with Jack and have a drink out on the patio one more time.

For **Anneene**, Jack's cherished first love, we have a glimpse into what their life was like by the reminders from all their pictures. It was a life of love, laughter and fun. Jack set the standard for how a family should live. He set the bar very high! That is why we are so fortunate. We have an excellent model of a family man that will live with us forever and to be passed on to future generations.

Jack loved Anneene in sickness and in health and never wavered - not one day – not one time. I remember in the last year of her life we were having dinner. We were sitting at their dining room table and Jack tripped and fell to the ground. She gasped and burst into tears. He was the one hurt – not her. I said, what's wrong? She looked at me and said, do you have any idea what I would do without him to take care of me? That sums up his level of commitment to her and the kind of husband he was – even after 52 years.

A man that loved as deeply as Jack had room for two loves in his life. He spent the last 8 years of his life with **Barbara**. No one could take the place of Anneene but if someone could try, it was **Barbara**. He loved her dearly and she speaks of him as the love of her life. We are immensely grateful to have her in our family today. She recalls that Jack gave the impression of being tough, but he was a very compassionate man! Even though, they were together most of every day, when they laid down to sleep, he loved to tell her stories. He would finish a story about his life and ask her if she would like to hear another story and then he would start another one. They would talk for at least an hour before going to sleep, after being together all day.

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She reaffirms that this wonderful man loved his family and she is sure that people got tired of hearing him brag on them. To hear him talk, they were all intelligent angels walking around here on earth. He loved to tell people what each one of them did over and over! He also had to spice up everyone's accomplishments. This was one way he showed everyone how proud he was. **If we could only hear Jack tell one more story, one more time.**

And for **Scott**... there was a deeper level of connection. Jack always told Scott how proud he was of him. Jack loved our home. He would often say, you have something *really really special here* – and when he said it – it was with deep conviction. We knew he meant it. *He loved me and our family and I just knew I too was the most special one.*

One of the casual things I will miss most is listening to Scott and Jack on the phone. It's a testament of their relationship. I could always tell by the tone of Scott's voice who he was talking to when he was talking to Jack. His voice shifted. It was a different tone. It is difficult to find the exact word – it was lighthearted, happy, authentic. At least half of the conversation was laughter. I never knew exactly what they were talking about – part of it was small talk conversation, some was serious then there was always a little bit of gossip. You had better not tell one of them anything that you didn't want the other to know because rest assure – they would not keep it to themselves. **If I could only hear Jack talking to Scott on the phone one more time.**

Jack had a multitude of surgeries and tests over his lifetime. Jack told Scott the night before his test on Monday, August 19th that he could drive himself to the hospital with Barbara, but he wanted him there for Barbara in case it "was the big one." Scott met them at the hospital early the next day then stood by his side every day and into his final hours.

Scott knew how prideful Jack was. If Jack couldn't drink a cool glass of scotch, smoke a cigar, tell his family and loved ones how much he loved them, eat delicious food, sit out on the back porch and watch the golfers, he would not be happy.

The last thing Jack told Barbara as they were driving to the hospital on Monday, August 19<sup>th</sup> was, *don't worry honey, we'll be back on the patio by 5 this evening, having a glass of wine and watching the golfers.* Scott was left having to make the tough decisions that week. Jack trusted Scott to be that person. There's not a deeper level of respect or trust than entrusting another with your life!

*Death leaves a heartache that no one can heal. BUT Jack has left us **memories** that no one can steal.*

There is a **DASH** between August 26, 1936 and August 24, 2019. That small punctuation mark of the **DASH** represents Jack's entire life. It's what he did in between the time he was born until the time he made his transition on August 24<sup>th</sup>. There is no way to buy back a second of time. What we are left with is wonderful memories and life lessons that we can learn from him.

**We live life forward but understand it backward.**

Let the legacy of Jack's life influence the DASH in our lives. May peace be with each of us today!

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