

My Tribute to Dad:

Brad and I thank everyone for coming. We were lucky to grow up at Wood Lake, in Columbus, Indiana and we are beyond grateful for our parents and how they raised us. We deeply appreciate you all for coming to celebrate our father's remarkable life.

Senator Robert D. Garton.

A leader, a politician, educator, historian, loving husband, proud father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. Also, a very handsome pipe-smoking fashionable dresser, fisherman, public speaker, and avid book-reader, proudly reading 52 books every year making that weekly trip to our Columbus library.

Bob Garton was larger than life who always did the right thing. To me – he was “Daddy.”

My father's character and integrity were hallmarks of his professional and personal life. Whether it was leading the State Senate, the longest serving Senate leader in Indiana's history - and among the longest in our country - or by showing strong ethical standards for his family to follow.

Brad and I grew up with caring parents in a home built by love. Mom and dad were married 71 years. They showed us what it means to have loving relationships. A strong foundation - a keystone of strength and stability - we carry on in our own families.

Dad was a respected leader, yet what defined him most was something quieter and far more powerful: his unwavering character. His character wasn't something he talked about. It was something he lived. We saw it, every day. His honesty, his strength, and his humility.

We didn't just admire him -- we learned from him. And we carry him with us in the way we live our lives.

Dad's numerous political and community accomplishments give us enormous pride, but dad's greatest joys were not talking about HIS achievements, but those of his family in the deep love he had for us. Anyone who's had a conversation with dad knows family wasn't just important to him, it was everything.

He loved talking about mom's many accomplishments in art, music, and design, Brad's numerous awards as professor and Director of the Computer Music Center at Columbia or my work in television news, then teaching at Western New England University and in Italy. Brad and I *apologize* to those of you who had to hear so much about our lives -- which later included Jill and John's careers, and most recently -- his four grandchildren.

And Bo -- dad so enjoyed his football conversations with you before and after every game, especially about the Colts and Pats.

Dad was happy for his three great grandchildren - brilliant ten-year old Shai and beautiful five-year old Naomi, children of Lian and Itay. And Stefan and Alison's adorable son two-year-old son John, with one on the way I wish dad had the chance to meet.

We come from a small family. Mom and dad are only children. When Dad was a child, he almost lost his life. At the age of five he underwent an emergency appendicitis operation. Weighing only 30 pounds his parents didn't think he was going to survive. But because of that surgery nearly 90 years ago, dad went on to live an amazing life. From then on he was slim and throughout high school and college that was his nickname -- "Slim."

From his dad, Glenn, known as "Doc Garton" - a physician who practiced medicine for more than 50 years in Chariton Iowa - to his mom, Irene, the first female to serve on their town's Board of Education, dad grew up with a drive to succeed and most importantly, care for others.

He graduated from Iowa State. A Beta, where he met the beautiful, talented, and brilliant love of his life, a Pi Phi named Barbara. They married in 1955. Dad went on to serve our country as a First Lt. in the Marines. After service, he earned a master's degree at Cornell. Then, worked in PR at Procter and Gamble in Cincinnati, moved to Columbus, IN, to work at Cummins, and started his own consulting business. He entered politics and later served as an executive at Ivy Tech with more than 100-thousand students - overseeing its state-wide leadership training. He sure admired and has fond memories its late President John Poling.

One of **my** fondest memories with dad was our annual trip to the Indiana State Fair. It was our special father daughter day together. When I became older, I remember telling mom I wanted to go to a friend's house instead of a day at the Fair with dad. Mom with her one eyebrow that could raise to uncanny heights said Brenda...You know how much this day means to your father. Thank you, mom, for encouraging me to still go as a teenager, to keep that longstanding one-on-one date with dad.

Another fond memory was the pleasure and privilege of seeing dad's leadership firsthand when I was a college intern at the Senate for an entire session. He was a powerful man. Yet so humble, hard-working, and admired by all who knew him.

I wish we had people in politics today like Dad; so highly regarded on both sides of the aisle. A quality that earned him the recognition of being the "National Legislator of the Year."

Daddy had great friendships with his long-time fellow senators. It was like a fraternity. From fishing to talking politics, he had a deep respect for his friends – and they respected him.

Together, Mom and Dad had such close relationships in Columbus. They belonged to a Gourmet Club for 50 years with wonderful monthly gatherings at homes with the Bakers, The Watsons, Libkes, and Orrs. Thank you to the families for our thoughtfulness in being here - and also to our (make believe) extended family Brad and I grew up with the Mutz' - with our special times at Grandview and that Colorado Dude Ranch.

And – we will forever be grateful to Pete, one of dad's dearest trusted friends, for your touching remarks. And speaking of dear friendships – I know Dad's childhood friend from Chariton, Iowa, Dan Gullion, is on our streamed service this morning. That's a friendship dating back to the 1930's.

Dad had an incredibly strong work ethic. In fact, he was so honest he would never call a fish a four pounder if it was actually 3 pounds and 15 ounces.

Oh how dad loved to fish Wood Lake and his outings with Brad, Tom Boyle, and his Senate buddies to Canada and Maine and certainly with John during our visits home or at Berkshire Fishing Club in Massachusetts.

Dad took pleasure in quiet daily routines; working in the yard - picking up every last little stick after a storm - reading a history book in his favorite chair, smoking a good pipe on the front porch, shinning his shoes as if he was still in the Marines, and enjoying a great meal. He mostly loved sharing stories and jokes around our dining room table. Mom laughed each time Daddy told the same joke – as if she was hearing it for the first time.

Mom and dad loved each other dearly. There wasn't anything they wouldn't do for each other. Bob Garton was romantic, writing many poems and letters to mom over their seven decades together. They kissed each other every night before heading to bed. Perfect partners in life.

With his accomplished career as Senator and leading the Senate for some 30 years, Dad was an esteemed Indiana Law Historian and excellent speaker, delivering thousands of speeches over many decades. He was awarded the title world champion of public speaking. In fact, dad was one of the youngest winners ever in the history of the Toastmasters International public speaking contest that dates back to 1938. In Dad's award-winning speech called **The True Measure of a Man** Bob Garton compared a man's character --- to a watermelon.

Here's small a part of Dad's award-winning speech:

We can determine a good watermelon by measuring it; we can thump it to test for ripeness; we can record its length; its circumference. We can even place it on a scale and record its weight. But to find the true measure of the melon, we must slice it in two separate halves, scoop out and taste the red pulp inside. Then we can judge the merits of this particular melon relative to all other watermelons we have ever known.

And when we measure a man we do many of the same things.

A doctor thumps his chest to check him for his health. We measure his height; we place him on a scale and record his weight. BUT we can't slice a man in two and test the red pulp inside! What then is the True Measure of a Man?

Very simply, it's the length and the breadth and the depth of his character. Now unfortunately many people confuse character with personality. But personality is what we have on the outside. Character is what we have inside. Personality is what

we have when we're among others and character is what remains when the others have gone home.

When an architect designs an arch, he pays particular attention to the Keystone: the stone in the center.

Because it's the shape of the keystone that gives the strength, the stability and the beauty to the entire archway.

Each man is the architect of his own life. But the strength, the stability and the beauty of that life are dependent upon the form of his keystone: his character.

Within the frame- work of human civilization it's the collective strength of all men's characters that provide the muscle under the flesh of human history.

A man knows when he has character because he sees it reflected in the eyes of his children. Ah, the eyes of a little boy tell a great deal more about his father's character. But most importantly a man sees his character through the pupil of his own conscience.

Dad's famous speech ended with this:

When we're born, it's a miracle and when we die, it's a revelation! What happens in between is determined largely by a man's character. Character, the red pulp inside a man. Character, the true measure of a man.

What a speech, what a man, what a father who raised a family who respected him and loved him dearly. I love you daddy and we promise to take good care of mom, who moved out to Massachusetts, and I see every day as her apartment is five minutes from my house.

Mom is watching us on this streamed service and thank you Adetayo for being with her right now. Mom wrote the following message to dad for this service, which I'll now read on her behalf:

"I'm so amazed to think we were married for 71 years. You know the saying time flies when you are having fun...we really did have a fun life filled with adventure and love. We were true partners in every way - enjoying our friends in Columbus and across the state and even traveling the world together.

Although you won State and National Award after Award, we both knew our greatest award was being parents to our son, Brad - and daughter, Brenda. I

love that we were simply always known as "Bob and Barb." Bless you, my sweetheart. You will always be my hero. I miss you." Love, Barb.