

Dan Brack Eulogy,  
by Fred Brack  
December 14, 2024

Welcome and thank you for coming today, whether out of love for Dan, respect for Dan, to show your support to his family, simply accompanying someone else who knew him, or maybe even a ticket for a free beer. I'm Fred Brack, Dan's father, and I am here with my wife and Dan's mother, **Kathy**; our daughter and Dan's brother, **Michelle**; Dan's wife and mother of his 3 children, **Reneé**; my sister **Betsy** and her daughter, **Christy**, who flew in from Colorado; and Kathy's brother **Ron** and his wife **Susan** from Savannah. And I'd like to acknowledge that a few of you drove or flew in from quite some distance, including family friend **Michael** from Texas – so thank you for coming.

Kathy and I would like to express our great appreciation to **Ryan Kolarov and his wife Jenn**, proprietors of this fine establishment, who offered this event space. Ryan and Dan were the best man at each other's wedding. Thank you, Ryan.

Dan's death was totally unexpected and an incredible shock to us. The details are not important, but the sequence was wrong, of course – child before parent – and that, along with the loss of a father to his children, is, perhaps, the hardest thing for Kathy and me to get over. BUT, today we don't want to dwell on the negative. Today we want to honor the LIFE of Dan Brack. We want to remember the joys of his life, the positive aspects, the love he had for family and friends, his talents and accomplishments, and some of the laughs he gave us. Those are the things we want to remember, and we encourage you to participate if you have something to add.

Dan was born 2-1/2 years after his sister right here in Raleigh, North Carolina, on November 17<sup>th</sup>, 1981, when we lived in the Stonebridge subdivision. He was a good swimmer and soccer player and made lots of friends. We had a tough year when we gave him a drum set, and he learned to play the guitar, too. Of course, as he entered his teenage years, he learned how to stress out his parents. There was the bottle of Jack Daniels under the bed and the pellet gun and, well, I never did figure out why I didn't find any Playboys. The funny

thing was that in recent years he enjoyed telling us about the things we missed!

Late in his high school years, Dan acquired his first dog, JoJo, who had been left in a box by the side of the road. Dan had been brought up with his mother's Seeing Eye dogs (there have been eight of them now), but this was his *own* dog. Never was there a stronger bond between man and dog. He loved that dog immensely. When he went to class in Wilmington, he used to leave the TV tuned to Animal Planet, and JoJo used to watch! When JoJo's time on earth was up, Dan scattered his ashes in the waters in Wilmington where they used to boat and play. This coming spring, Dan will be reunited with JoJo there.

Did you know that during high school Dan was a volunteer firefighter? He ran out on us at some inconvenient times, but overall it was a great experience for him, serving others.

It took a while for Dan to get serious about his education, but he liked nice things, and he realized he had to get a good job to be able to afford them. But it was more than that: he wanted the *right* job, one that he felt he would *really* enjoy doing. He decided he wanted to be a pharmaceutical rep. We don't know where that desire came from, but that's what he wanted. The problem was that getting hired as a rep required a year's experience first, but Dan didn't let that stop him from applying. He was flown to the west coast for an interview with Danish diabetes drug manufacturer Novo Nordisk. He was asked to prepare and give a pitch on one of their products to the interviewer, but time ran out and the interview ended without the opportunity to pitch it. So Dan said he would like to leave a copy of his presentation with the interviewer and handed it in along with a printed business card with the Novo Nordisk logo, Dan's name, the title of Sales Associate, and a Novo Nordisk email address. He got the job and experienced much success and many honors, including top regional and company salesperson awards. One of my favorite pictures of Dan is over on the table: it's him standing in the middle of a row of cheerleaders, ready to do a warehouse run-and-grab of merchandise as a sales contest reward.

After eleven years he wanted a change of careers, and he focused on a company named Intuitive Surgical, the inventors of the da Vinci robotic surgery machine. When the job offer came, it was in the Atlanta area, so Dan and Reneé hit the road. Again, he flourished, teaching surgeons how to use

the machine, oftentimes taking him out of town to remote locations or covering for other offices, particularly during the Covid years.

But like many young people today, things change, and people move on. Dan was beginning a new career with a Swiss company that was about to introduce a different type of surgical robot in the USA at the time he left us. He loved that job, and we were proud of him.

The interesting thing about Dan's development to me was seeing someone who struggled a bit academically but who flourished in the business world. He was a very dedicated employee, studying for and taking tests on advanced medical terminology and procedures, which made us very proud parents. Gosh, he was the one teaching surgeons how to perform their operations and using words we had never heard before.

While Dan and Renéé were living in Atlanta, Dan honed more skills. He got into sous vide cooking and bought a huge "egg" cooker on which he smoked wonderful meals out on the deck. He was quite the chef. And I don't know where he got those woodworking skills, but his cutting boards, one of which is on display here, were amazing. I didn't even know he was into photography, but Renéé brought some of his work to share with us.

We were proud of you, Dan. You made a difference. You married a wonderful, talented woman, who will always be our daughter-in-law to us; and you brought three delightful children into this world. Our grandchildren will look back and remember the fun trips to the park, the zoo, the museums, the gifts, learning to ride a bike with you, the fooling around, the tickles, the jokes, the shenanigans. We will treasure you through our grandchildren. Thank you for your time with us, Dan.

And now, hopefully some of you will be less long-winded than I was and share an experience or two you had with Dan. And again, thank you for coming today.