



Thomas Dougherty

June 20, 1925 - August 20, 2012

Thomas J. Dougherty

Thomas James Dougherty, 87, a renowned and pioneering Washington D.C. communications attorney, of Murrells Inlet, South Carolina, died on Monday, August 20th, surrounded by his loving wife, Beverly, and his children. A true patriot, he was a strong, but gentle, loving man of great integrity, faith, and indomitable spirit. He was a diehard Redskins fan who loved to dance and talk politics. But he was perhaps best known and loved for his open, compassionate, Irish heart, twinkling eyes, and wonderful sense of humor.

Born June 20, 1925, in Grafton, North Dakota, he was the only son of Walter and Agnes Dougherty. His sister Diane died at age 8. He spent his early childhood in several towns in the upper Midwest before the family settled in his beloved Park River, North Dakota. He excelled academically and as captain and quarterback of his high school football team.

At age 17, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy, bravely serving in the Pacific through the end of World War II. After the war, he spent one year at the University of North Dakota, then transferred to The George Washington University, where he earned both a Bachelor's and a law degree and served as President of Sigma Chi fraternity. He began his legal career at Dow, Lohnes & Albertson in Washington, DC. From 1957 to 1961, he served as the legal assistant to

Robert E. Lee at the Federal Communications Commission, one of the FCC's longest serving members.

In 1961, he left the FCC to open the Washington, D.C., office of a growing media conglomerate, Metromedia, Inc., the nation's leading independent broadcasting company (and precursor to the current Fox Television Network). As Senior Vice President and Associate General Counsel, he was Metromedia's point man in Washington in charge of all regulatory and governmental affairs. He represented the company in matters at the FCC, in federal courts and before Congress. During his 26-year tenure, Metromedia expanded into one of the nation's leading communications companies with holdings that included television and radio stations; paging and cellular operations; outdoor advertising; and entertainment properties, including the Harlem Globetrotters and Ice Capades. Working closely with Metromedia's controlling shareholder, the late John W. Kluge, Dougherty was instrumental in executing Metromedia's 1987 leveraged buyout, one of the first transactions of its kind in the telecommunications industry and a template for many others that characterized this era.

Tom was active in his communities, serving on local community boards, as well as The George Washington University Columbian College of Arts and Sciences and Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church Administrative Board and Board of Trustees in Washington, D.C., where he also ushered for 40 years. He was a member of Congressional Country Club of Bethesda, and of Wachesaw Plantation Club and Belin Memorial United Methodist Church in Murrells Inlet, SC.

He was the proud patriarch of a beautiful family. He married his college sweetheart, Anne Lenoir Diffenderfer (1928-1996) of Washington, DC, in 1950, and together they had eight children: Thomas Jr., Scott, Craig, Anne, Diane, Paul, Sharon, and Melanie. In 1998, he married Beverly Laura Dodd of

McLean, Virginia. They moved to Murrells Inlet in 2005, where they made wonderful friends and shared many happy years. In addition to his wife, he is survived by 12 grandchildren: Chloe, Caroline, Thomas, Catherine, Craig, Anne, Christopher, John Jr., Luke, Catherine, Grace, and Grant.

Tom Dougherty touched the hearts and impacted the lives of all who met him. He is and will remain to so many a man who epitomized the Greatest Generation, with an unwavering love of country, sense of duty, dedication to service, and reverence for God. Tom approached all, regardless of station in life or point of view, with warmth, an open heart and great humor. His was a life well lived, and he will be dearly missed by all.

A memorial service will be held in Murrells Inlet, SC on Saturday, August 25 at 11:00 AM at the Belin Memorial United Methodist Church. Family and friends will also gather in Washington, D.C. at a later date to celebrate his life.

Memorial donations in his memory may be made to the Belin Memorial United Methodist Church music fund or to The Wounded Warrior Project.

An online guestbook is available at www.goldfinchfuneralhome.com/obituaries

Goldfinch Funeral Home, Beach Chapel is in charge of the arrangements.

Previous Events

Service

AUG 25. 11:00 AM (ET)

Belin Memorial Un. Methodist Church
PO Box 528
Murrells Inlet, SC 29576-0528

Tribute Wall

WH

“ Dear Beverly and family,

I have good memories of Tom's serving on the Metropolitan Foundation Board of Trustees, his many years of ushering, his generous support of the Church, and all the ways he contributed to the life of Metropolitan Memorial. Nancy and I have all of you in our hearts and prayers, and join with you in gratefully celebrating all Tom meant to so many people. We also join with you in commending him to the eternal life and love of God.

As always,

Bill and Nancy Holmes

William A. and Nancy Holmes - August 31, 2012 at 02:35 PM

RR

“ To Bev and all of Tom's children:

It is with a very heavy heart that I send Gail and my deepest sympathy. The picture on this website is a wonderful reminder of the man we all admired and deeply respected. From the time I arrived as Local Sales Manager at WTTG in March of 1969 until I left the company in 1983, Tom guided me with both professional and personal advice. There are so many wonderful memories of this man who from behind the scenes helped to orchestrate the fabulous growth of our company. There are just innumerable people whose professional lives he touched making us all better. I hope to see as many of you as possible when you have a memorial service for Tom in Washington, DC.

God Bless you all.

Kent Replogle

R Kent Replogle - August 22, 2012 at 04:33 PM

JC

It was my privilege to know him as a colleague and friend at Metromedia I met him in 1965 when I joined Metromedia at WTTG in Washington...A brilliant lawyer, great broadcaster, gracious gentleman and true friend to many...He was and will always be sui generis ,,,Jim Coppersmith...Marblehead Ma.

JAMES COPPERSMITH - August 23, 2012 at 06:12 AM