



Railsplitter Obituary



The Honorable Rudolph T. Randa

Entered into the fullness of Eternal Life on September 5, 2016, at the age of 76. He was loved and will be missed by his wife of 39 years, Melinda, and his sons, Rudolph and Daniel.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Rudolph F. Randa and Clara Randa (nee Kojis), his sisters Joan Hertl, Susan Krebsbach and Claire McKeown, a month old brother Michael Randa, and his nephew Paul Linn. He is survived by his wife, his two sons, his brothers-in-law, Patrick McKeown, Richard Kresbach, Thomas Westland and Emil Matera, and his sisters-in-law, Beatrice Krebsbach, Marilyn Westland and Lynn Matera. He is also survived by many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Judge Randa was born July 25, 1940 in Milwaukee. He attended local public schools and graduated from Riverside High School with honors and as Class President. He earned a bachelor's degree with honors from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in 1963, and he graduated from the University of Wisconsin Law School in 1966. His love of country and belief in service led him to enter the U.S. Army in 1967, eventually rising to the rank of Captain and Company Commander. For his service in Vietnam, he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal with 5 campaign stars, the National Defense Service Medal and the Vietnam Campaign Medal.

Following his discharge in 1969, he was appointed to the office of the U.S. Attorney General in Washington D.C. In 1970, he returned to Milwaukee, where he joined the Milwaukee City Attorney's office. He then served successively as a Milwaukee Municipal Judge, a Circuit Court Judge and a Wisconsin Court of Appeals Judge. In 1992, Judge Randa was nominated to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin by President George H. W. Bush and confirmed unanimously by the U.S. Senate. He served as Chief Judge of this court from 2002 to 2009. In 2002, he was appointed by Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist to serve on the Codes of Conduct Committee of the Federal Judiciary. He remained on this committee through 2008.



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As a judge, his passions were freedom - especially political freedom – and justice, which he believed were embodied in the Constitution and American history. His fondest moments were the swearing in of new citizens, which offered him the opportunity to express his conviction that citizenship was both a great gift and a solemn responsibility. He believed that justice must be joined with mercy. He often took a personal interest in his defendants, and many letters of appreciation from them attest to his support and guidance long after sentencing. He especially enjoyed performing marriages, frequently adding humor to the seriousness of the commitment.

Randy was a devoted husband and father, and believed strongly in the value of family. Among his most cherished memories were moments with Melinda, Rudy, and Daniel, with whom he shared his love of music, keen interests in world and national affairs, and of course the Packers. Gatherings at his home with his many relatives were very special to him.

Judge Randa was loved and respected by his many friends, who will long remember him for his integrity, sincerity, humor, and strong religious faith. He had a zest for life and his poker parties for his law clerks were sought after invitations. He delighted in a cigar in the company of his many friends and family. There was always room for an extra guest at his dinner table. Faith was central to his life and he was a daily communicant at Old Saint Mary. He lived his faith and encouraged others to find strength through religious devotion.

He cared deeply for Milwaukee and his fellow citizens and took great pride in being an American. He was the recipient of many community awards, among them Rotarian of the Year. He relished 4th of July celebrations at which he took great delight in conversing about American history, the Constitution, and the Founding Fathers; he invariably ended with a rousing chorus of ‘God Bless America’.