



In Memoriam Daniel J. Dykstra

*Kevin R. Johnson**

Dan Dykstra is the most decent person that I have ever known. We all mourn his passing. But Dan would want us to celebrate his life with his loving family, Lily, Dan Jr., Ann, and too many dear friends to mention. Dan had a zest for living. He enjoyed people. The wonderful memories of Dan that we have shared with each other since his death have made us all smile. I was not surprised to learn, for example, that Dean Dykstra was once seen handing out hot dogs to law students from the back of a flatbed truck at a party on a hot Friday afternoon in this very courtyard.

Dan was just plain fun to be around. People were happy to hear about his hole-in-one at El Macero. His springs in Hawaii and summers in Idaho with Lily always made for a good story during Dan's coffee hour in the faculty lounge. He even told stories about the fish "that got away," and some that didn't, in the stream near his cabin in Idaho.

Officially retired, Dan was still teaching when I came to Davis in 1989. He guided me on my first law review articles. Dan's influential scholarship included an article in the *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*. With his years of experience as a Dean, Dan helped navigate me to tenure. He was a mentor to many here in this audience just like he was to me.

A few years ago, the Dean's office informed me that, for budgetary reasons, I would teach Dan's Business Associations class the following

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year. Dan loved teaching and was a wonderful teacher. I was reluctant. Dan visited my office and told me that it was great that I would be teaching his course. He offered words of wisdom about teaching. He also gave me thirty years of *Business Lawyers*, a thick ABA publication, which immediately filled my then-empty office. "The Dean's office is in a bind. Thanks for helping them out," he said. Dan made it all easy. He was that kind of person.

In recent years, Dan often would cheerfully say, "what's the good word?" and ask about the current issue of the day in the Dean's office. Over the last month, out of habit, I have looked for Dan in the hallways of King Hall. Always reassuring, Dan said things like, "Yes, that trash pick up issue, we had that one in 1974. A real pickle." Talking with Dan always made me feel better. Dan was friend and mentor to many students, alumni, staff, and faculty. People of my generation remember where they were when they first heard that John F. Kennedy died. I will remember where I was and how Dan helped me get there, when I learned that he passed away.
