

About 7 years ago Jack and I were at the AL public library for one of Kiwanis Thursday evening dinner meetings. I remember clearly -- sitting across the table from Jack. The conversation included Jack's statement that "Betty wants me to spend more time **out of the house.**"

So, I took that opportunity to share an idea I had to have some retired people assist us at the court **escorting parties from the courtroom to the clerk's office** so that the bailiff – who usually did that – could stay in the courtroom to perform other duties. As I recall Jack **eagerly accepted** the offer.

So for the last 7 years – up until as recently as about a little over a month ago – every Thursday from about 8 am to about 12:30 pm, **Betty was free of Jack** and for last several years Jack was free from the retirement home at Independence Village to rub elbows with criminal defendants, and attorneys, prosecutors, clerk of court and security staff, and our bailiff Mark Hagedorn and me.

I know that he cherished the opportunity to serve the court and the people who came before it. Jack would say that he was privileged to be with us at the court, BUT THE TRUTH WAS; it was our privilege to have him with us – to share his stories, his humor, his smile, his wisdom, his kindness, his vast knowledge and life experience.

My dad died when I was 22 years old (42 years ago). He was 47 years old and would be almost 90 years old today. So Jack was 5 years older than my dad.

As I prepared what I am telling you today, I realized that Jack has really been a **father figure to me**. He and I spent a lot of personal time over the past 7 years, more than just Thursday mornings at court.

We tended to pair up as volunteers for many Kiwanis projects – ringing Salvation Army Kettle bells, selling tickets at the Duck Tape Festival and at the County Fair. We've had a lot of quiet time together.

I consider myself fortunate and blessed to have experienced Jack and learned what a kind, articulate, thoughtful, compassionate and funny guy he was.

As these things go, had he not agreed to take on the volunteer bailiff role, we probably would **never have done it**. Instead, in 2015 the Ohio Supreme Court gave **special recognition to the bailiff program** and its 5 member team with a video story **highlighting Jack's role**. It's been shown on the Ohio Channel's cable broadcast and had seen with over 7,500 on-line views. The Ohio Supreme Court chief justice wrote a personal thank you to Jack and to each of the team members for their service.

That video shows Jack opening the court session. We would gather behind the secured door of the courtroom where, before entering the secret code to open the door, Jack would fix his collar, clear his voice, "Do I look alright" – open the door and in a loud voice so that those in the far back of the room could hear – "COURT IS IN SESSION ... (then with a dramatic raising of his arms to the heavens coaxing all to get up out of their seats Jack would demand) ALL RISE."

It always made me chuckle and smile.

I will miss you Jack.