

Hello everyone. My name is Will and I had the tremendous privilege of calling Ron Sickles, grandpop, for the past 27 years. It is an honor for me to speak on his behalf but first I want to truly thank each and every one of you from the bottom of my heart for being here today. It means the world to me and my family so thank you.

My grandfather was, is and forever will be my hero, my inspiration and my guiding star. There are so many moments that I could share and yet my mind kept coming back to one thing. He was a true gentleman..... a gentleman..... A gentle man. Sometimes I think that term has lost its value in today's world. To not only have the qualities of a man, but to conduct yourself with virtue and grace. In the good times and perhaps more importantly in the bad. And based on that definition my grandfather is not only the truest gentleman but also the greatest man I have ever met. Because he never tried to prove he was. He didnt need to. He lived it. Every single day. He never had to raise his voice, and yet you always listened to what he said. He never had to act tough and yet you knew his strength and what he had been through. He never looked down on anyone and yet everyone seemed to look up to him. He was, as Marcus Aurelius put it , the rock along the ocean that remained unphased by any wave or storm that came across him. The storms and waves wash away, revealing the rock unchanged.

Since my grandfathers passing I have thought a lot about the idea of how he faced death. How he made peace with this chapter after fighting for so long. And I have no doubt that when death came to bring my grandfather home, Grandpop greeted it the same way he treated everyone else in his life, with a smile on his face and kindness in his heart and with a warm handshake that said you are my friend. And that's why, while I am devastated that he is gone and I would give everything in this world for more time with him. All I can really feel today is proud. Proud of a man who did it right. Proud of a man who lived a life of character and morality. A man who never let the winds of life change how he sailed his ship. A man who I aspire to be even a fraction of. Always humble and kind.

And so, Grandpop, we thank you for every single second. Enjoy your rest, and we know we'll see you again a little ways down the road. We are eternally proud of you and we all love you. And to nana, thank you for being with grandpop every step of the way. Thank you for keeping the faith no matter how hard things got. And most importantly thank you for choosing, as you put it , that cute quiet boy in Matawan all those years ago. We love you endlessly.

Thank you very much.