

Judge Raup: Caring, humble, wise, and uniquely impactful

Judge Thomas C. Raup, who died recently, made an impact on lives that is so large and broad-ranging that it is difficult to put in a box. So we won't try.

He left his mark on this area as a longtime judge in so many ways, making decisions in his courtroom that were firm and significant and based on consistency.

There was a sense that he held up the code of judicial objectivity about as well as humanly possible.

That's probably because Judge Raup, who grew up modestly in Jersey Shore, never left his humble beginnings. He knew who he was, was comfortable with it, and never forgot it.

The implant of compassion and curiosity led him to do special things in the courts, arguing strongly on behalf of troubled youth, building bridges between the courts and the local bar association, and drafting rules of evidence that were subsequently adopted by the Supreme Court.

That implant led him to special things outside of the courts, too.

The judge was an active participant in the Big Brothers Big Sisters program and took in several members of his own family when they needed an assist.

We are not talking a few months of commitment to these causes. We are talking about a lifetime of commitment.

But the best part of the entire story is that Judge Raup never wore his achievements or his goodness like a crown, holding it up for all to see. It was completely hidden, supplanted by a genuineness that made him approachable by any human being.

We all want to be like this.

Judge Tom Raup was.