



# Honorable John E. Fenton

AUG 24, 2014



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## **Honorable John E. Fenton**

AUG 24, 2014

**A**NDOVER-Honorable John Edward Fenton, Jr. 83, a resident of Andover, and a former long time resident of Lawrence, died on Sunday, August 24, 2014 at the Merrimack Valley Hospice in Haverhill. He was born in Lawrence on October 28, 1930 to Honorable John E. Fenton, Sr. and Elizabeth (McMahon) Fenton. Educated in Lawrence Schools a graduate of Lawrence High School with Great Distinction, Class of 1947. A graduate of College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, Bachelor of Arts, cum laude 1951, Boston College Law School, Chestnut Hill, Juris Doctor, June 1954, (ranked 2nd in graduating class), and Harvard Law School, Cambridge, Master of Laws, June 1955. Served as a First Lieutenant in the Judge Advocate General's Corps of the United States Army for 27 months. He was appointed Associate Justice, Massachusetts Land Court, May of 1974, Administrative Justice (Chief Justice), Massachusetts Land Court, September 1990; served until December 31, 1992. Appointed Chief Administrative Justice of the Trial Court, January 1992 by Supreme Judicial Court (position is now called Chief Justice for Administration & Management); served until August 1995. At Suffolk University Law School he was a Distinguished Professor of Law, 2000 to June 2013, Dean and Professor of Law, September 1995 to October 1999. Admitted to Massachusetts Bar on October 19, 1954; admitted to practice in the United States District Court, United States Court of Appeals, United States Court of Appeals, and the United States Supreme Court. General practice of law from 1954 to 1974 (except for period of military service) with Lawrence firm of Fenton and Elias. He served on such judicial committees as Chairman of the Advisory Committee to Study the Rules of Evidence; appointed by the Supreme Judicial Court. He is the Former Board Chairman and Trustee of the Holy Family Hospital and Medical Center, and affiliated corporations and former President, Director and Member of Planning Committee, Mary Immaculate Nursing & Restorative Center, Lawrence. Received such awards Doctor of Laws (Honorary)



## Obituary

**Honorable John E. Fenton**

Suffolk University, May 2011 and the Ralph B. Wilkinson "Good Citizenship Award", Presented by Greater Lawrence Chamber of Commerce, May 1974, "Distinguished Faculty Member Award" by Student Bar Association of Suffolk University Law School, 1970, Recipient of "Caritas Christi Medal" for distinguished service in health care field, of first "Lifetime Achievement Award" from Suffolk University Alumni Association, By legislative enactment, new court house in Lawrence named "Fenton Judicial Center" in honor of Judge John E. Fenton Sr. and John E. Fenton Jr. Original hospital building at Holy Family Hospital rededicated in name John E. Fenton Jr. and Recipient of Mary Immaculate "Sharing & Caring" Award-October 2012. He loved to travel with the Lanes and Rogers family to Florida, going to the Holy Family Hospital to meet with Bill Lane to discuss issues involving the Hospital and health care in general, Teaching Law and interacting with his students, watching his nephew Paul play baseball from little league through college. Going to Red Sox, Celtics & Patriots games and watching them on T.V. and trips to New York City with his family. He leaves his loving wife of 56 years, Theresa (Regan) Fenton, nieces and nephews: Patricia and husband Attorney John T. Pollano of North Andover, Thomas and his wife Leslie Martineau of Salem, NH. Grand nieces and nephews: Amy P. Pollano of Andover, Thomas J Pollano of North Andover, Paul M. Pollano of North Andover, Sarah and Megan Martineau of Salem, NH. John was a caring, loyal, generous and humble who like his father, John E. Fenton, could never say no to a kid. He will be greatly missed by his family & legion friends. He always had time to help people especially young people. Family and friends are invited to attend a funeral mass which will be celebrated on Friday, August 29, 2014 at 10:00AM at St. Augustine Church, 43 Essex St. Andover, MA, 01810. A burial will follow in the Immaculate Conception Cemetery in Lawrence. Family and friends are invited to call on Thursday, August 28, 2014 from 4:00PM to 8:00PM at the John Breen Memorial Funeral Home Inc. 122 Amesbury St. Lawrence, MA. For more information or to send an online condolence please go to: [www.breenfuneralhome.com](http://www.breenfuneralhome.com). Memorial contributions can be made to: St. Augustine Church, 43 Essex St. Andover, MA, 01810, Merrimack Valley Hospice House, 360 North Avenue, Haverhill, MA, 01830, or to the Lawrence Boys and Girls Club, 136 Water Street, Lawrence, MA, 01841.



## Tribute Wall

## Honorable John E. Fenton

ML

**Ms. Tina Lewis** posted:

I learned of Judge Fenton's death only a few days ago and I am deeply saddened by this news. I had tried several times to contact him this year, but I was unsuccessful. As his former secretary, he and I had many friendly conversations over lunch and in his office, whenever we both had a spare moment to share. I will miss him very much. My deepest condolences to his wife, Theresa and the rest of his family. He was a great man. MS. TINA LEWIS

March 7 at 8:00 PM

DN

**Delia O'connor And Tom O'neil** posted:

Dearest Theresa, We just today found out the news. Our love and thoughts are with you. John was a big feature in our lives, because of his manifest integrity, his larger than life presence in which one wanted to meet the mark, and his kind, wise tolerance when one fell short. Your love for one another was astonishingly evident, and a beacon. One of the nicest, not particularly serious attributes we remember is his unquenchable sense of humor and fun. Also I never saw him get flapped. He had judgment, and balance for the hard moments. He had that great smile, the laugh, the fine, bear-like demeanor. What a man. We will all miss him, even those who were on the periphery but great admirers. Delia O'Connor and Tom O'Neil

March 7 at 8:00 PM

MH

**Martin W. Healy** posted:

A gem of a man. Had the fortune to be his student at Suffolk Law and later worked closely with him for the Mass Bar Assoc. while he served as the first Chief Justice of Admin and Management. Not a better human being nor judge could be found during my 25 yrs at the Bar. A deeply caring and devoutly religious man. Knew the vulnerabilities, vagaries and injustices of life and lifted in a highly positive, gentle way everyone he encountered. God rest his beautiful soul! Your Honor, please pray for us often for help with our daily struggles.

March 7 at 8:00 PM

GR

**Gary Ritter** posted:

Judge Fenton was the best teacher I ever had. He made Evidence come alive at Suffolk. I am privileged to have served with him at the Lawrence Boys and Girls Club and to call him friend. John Fentons don't come along everyday. He will be missed by many.

March 7 at 8:00 PM



## Tribute Wall

## Honorable John E. Fenton

PH

**Peter Hewett** posted:

Eileen and I are saddened to have just learned of John's passing. Our deepest sympathies and sincere condolences to Theresa and family. I have great memories of John going back to the Howard Playstead aka Yellow Dump where I spent many happy days of my youth under the careful supervision then a young John Fenton, growing up on Saratoga Street and later as a student at Suffolk University Law School learning all about the rules of evidence from Professor Fenton. The Fentons wer always good friends of the Hewetts. John was exceptional and will be missed. Most respectfully, Pete and Eileen Hewett

March 7 at 8:00 PM

AR

**Alan Reffkin** posted:

Judge Fenton was truly an inspiration while I attended Suffolk 1958-1960. Throughout my legal career, and to this day, whenever I am confronted with a procedural issue I hear the voice of my then Professor John Fenton whispering in my ear. The rest then becomes crystal clear. I am only sorry that I never spoke with him directly after graduation on how great an impact his teaching had upon me throughout law school and my practice. One of a kind and one of the kindest people I will ever know. So sorry for your loss.

March 7 at 8:00 PM

TR

**Tom Reynolds** posted:

My sincere condolences to Theresa and family. I used to sit in on his class even though i had another professr for evidence class - his classes were that good. He had a passion for teaching which was obvious. I used to like joking around with him at law school after class. He will be sorely missed. Tom Reynolds

March 7 at 8:00 PM

DL

**David Lowy** posted:

He was a giant. There was nothing but goodness in Judge Fenton's soul. Although I never had Judge Fenton as a teacher and never appeared in front of him as a lawyer, Judge Fenton adopted me as a mentee as he did countless others. He was the most respected member of the Massachusetts Bar. The sadness of his loss is reflective of the human condition. Even somebody as vibrant and vital as Judge Fenton must someday day leave this earth. He leaves it with a legacy that will endure for the ages.

March 7 at 8:00 PM



## Tribute Wall

Honorable John E. Fenton

RR

**Ronald J. Resmini** posted:

August 28, 2014 Dear Theresa and family: My deepest and sincere sympathies, to all of us students he was King Arthur and Sir Lancelot of the round table. Perhaps his greatest trait is that he made you feel good about yourself and that you were special. I loved the man. He was not only my professor, but my friend. You may recall that more than 20 years ago I created the Resmini, Fenton, O'Brien Scholarship Fund. I have enclosed a section of a poem I wrote and posted on the Suffolk Bulletin Board where I poked fun at all the professors, but him. I did not realize that until I re-read it, he was the only one not satirized by me. He was, an always will be, the heart and soul of Suffolk. Below is the poem I referenced above: What about Fenton...his jovial manner Who came back from Hawaii a little bit tanner, Oh, that's not fair...the rest he deserved... Ask his wife, Theresa, she'll attest, be assured, The pied piper he's like?the students all follow From all the great advocates...their traits he has borrowed, An answer he will give you?a promise he will mean His interest for students is rated supreme, Some actually wonder if he's really that nice... ?Actions speak louder then words? will have to suffice He gave all of us more then we could ever return. He will remain in my daily prayers until we meet again. Sincerely, Ronald J. Resmini, Esq. Class of 1968

March 7 at 8:00 PM

KS

**Kevin Sullivan** posted:

Judge Fenton was the most unselfish man that I have ever met. He used his education, skills and personality to touch the lives of thousands of people. Everyone wanted to know or to be around Judge Fenton. He had real curiosity about his fellow human beings. The world will never quite fathom all the good he did during his lifetime, but those of us who sampled his generosity and his compassion know all too well that Judge John Fenton had no equals when it came to giving of himself for the greater good. My prayers are with the Judge, Theresa, Patty and John and all the dedicated nieces and nephews of this great American.

March 7 at 8:00 PM

TD

**Tom Donahue** posted:

please accept my sincere condolences. i was student from holy cross to suffolk law in 1961 and had professor fenton for several courses and he was the best. i have never forgotten the knowledge he gave us in class. saw him at several reunions and had happy memories. will remember him in our prayers . still in the practice and on occasion review his evidence notes. regards. tom and rosie donahue (class of 64)

March 7 at 8:00 PM



## Tribute Wall

## Honorable John E. Fenton

LS

**Leonard Smith** posted:

John was a great friend @ Holy Cross I remember playing softball in Lawrence in our summers and going to Rome on a memorable cruise in 1950. (I suspect you remember this Theresa!) My deepest sympathy to you on the loss of a very good man Len Smith HC'51

March 7 at 8:00 PM

TG

**Thomas Garvey** posted:

May I offer my sincere condolences to the family of the Honorable John Fenton from Thomas Garvey of Andover, MA

March 7 at 8:00 PM

WB

**William Bagley** posted:

I cannot express my sadness on hearing the news of Judge Fenton's passing. I had the great good fortune to study evidence under him. His remarkable intelligence and teaching was exceeded only by his sincere interest in his students. In later years I would occasionally encounter him and his kindness and interest never failed. As a fellow alumnus of Holy Cross I was especially proud of him and all that he achieved. Against that backdrop, I cannot imagine how much he meant to a family for whom he cared so deeply. Please be assured of my abiding appreciation, thoughts and prayers, William Bagley

March 7 at 8:00 PM

BH

**Barry Haight** posted:

To suggest John Fenton was a true gentleman and scholar would be an injustice. He was so much more. He didn't just set the high standard for all lawyers, he was that standard. In this day of created and false images, he was, in all respects, the real deal. I am blessed to have known him. Attorney Barry Haight Suffolk University Law School, Class of 1963

March 7 at 8:00 PM



# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Honorable John E. by  
contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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