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Good afternoon, everyone.

I’m Ethan, Mike’s son, and on behalf of my mom, Karen, and my sister, Julia, thank you for being here to celebrate my dad’s life.

Seeing this sea of team jerseys makes perfect sense. Dad believed a jersey wasn’t just fabric; it was community. If you ever walked into one of his stores, you know what I mean. He started with a single sporting goods shop after moving to Calgary—just one storefront, a lot of hustle, and a head full of ideas. He grew it into three true community stores, the kind where kids tried on skates and left with more than equipment—they left feeling like they belonged.

Dad was born in Winnipeg on August 17, 1965. He studied commerce at the University of Manitoba and then chased opportunity west. He built a life here with my mom—33 years of marriage—and filled it with the things that lit him up: Wednesday night curling, pickup hockey, backyard barbecues he approached like a science, and classic rock playlists that never failed to turn into singalongs. If you heard The Tragically Hip blaring from our car with the windows down, you didn’t need to look—you knew it was Mike.

He was a relentless optimist with a big heart, the guy who said yes when help was needed and then figured out the details. Little League coach. Organizer of equipment drives so every kid could play. He loved fair play and small wins, and he treated people like teammates—no benchwarmers in Dad’s world.

My favourite memory is a spur-of-the-moment road trip to Banff. He shook me awake at some unreasonable hour, tossed me a toque, and said, “Let’s catch the sunrise.” We raced the dawn, The Hip cranked up, windows down, laughing at the cold. We stood on a ridge as the light spilled over the peaks. He didn’t say anything profound. He just clapped me on the shoulder and grinned. That was

Dad’s way—show up, make it fun, and let the moment speak for itself.

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He was the king of the pep talk—the kind that made you believe you could try out, apply, speak up, rebuild, forgive. His booming laugh could reset a room, and his storytelling was legendary. He made strangers into friends and friends into family. He was also a devoted brother to his two sisters and a proud uncle to four nieces, who all knew they had a permanent cheerleader in their corner.

When Dad passed this January at 60, we were stunned by how many people reached out with the same message: “He made me feel part of something.” That’s a legacy you can build a life on.

If you have a moment later, stop by the memory table and look at the wooden sign from his first store. It’s a bit scuffed, the way good gear should be. He’d smile at that. And if you’re considering a tribute, the donations to KidSport would make him grin even wider—another kid saying yes to a team.

Dad led by example: work hard, include everyone, celebrate the little things, and always keep an extra burger on the grill in case someone drops by. We’ll miss his laugh and his stories, but we carry his playbook with us.

So today, in our jerseys, among teammates and family, we say thank you, Mike—Dad—for showing us how to make a community, not just a living. We’ll keep the music up, the windows down, and the welcome wide.

We love you.

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