Thomas Dean Cochran (obituary)

Sanford N Katz, Boston College Law School

Available at: https://works.bepress.com/sanford_katz/49/
As this issue was going to press we received word that Tom Cochran, the Immediate Retiring Chairman of our Section, had died. Tom suffered from diabetes and his general health began to deteriorate almost two years ago when he lost a leg through amputation. About six months ago, his condition, which had showed some signs of stabilization, began to worsen. Complications occurred and even though he tried with all his might and spirit to overcome the attacks on his body, he lost the battle.

Tom was a man of courage. Throughout his ordeal, he never lessened his positive approach to life. He thought of recovery and would not let his situation get him down. He did not engage in self-pity; he tried to make those around him comfortable and refused to accept signs of sympathy.

Tom was a leader. He was a born decision-maker. In his short life, he reached the height of his profession. He was on his way to becoming a national legal figure. The history of his bar association activities is startling. He chaired the Young Lawyers Section of the American Bar Association in 1969. Seven years later, he served as president of the Missouri Bar Association. Last year he was chairman of the Family Law Section of the American Bar Association. In that capacity he developed a plan for the growth of the Section. Our size, now 14,800 members and one of the largest in the American Bar Association, is due to Tom’s efforts. Tom was a member of the American Bar Association’s House of Delegates and chaired the Scope and Correlation Committee.

Tom was a religious person who was a high priest in the Reorganized Latter-Day Saints Church and served in many leadership roles in the church. He was a pastor of the Walnut Park congregation and was a member of the Center Stake Bishopric.
In Memoriam Thomas Dean Cochran

In addition to Tom's extraordinary abilities as a leader in both bar and church activities, he had a special warmth and a wonderful sense of humor. He made friends easily. He could laugh at himself. Those of us in the Section who were privileged to know Tom well and be counted as his friends feared that Tom's life would be shortened by his illness. But Tom would not hear of talk about this inevitable event. He would rather speak about plans for the Section and how it would overtake another section in membership size. At the time of his death he was still developing strategies to increase membership and was writing copy for flyers. What devotion to a project! What a man!

To Tom's wife, Sherry, and his two wonderful children, we say thanks for sharing Tom with us. We loved him and we shall miss his smiling face, his strong handshake and his good cheer.

We celebrate his life by dedicating this issue of the Family Law Quarterly to him.

Sanford N. Katz