



Haywood Daniel "Dan" Droze Jr.

May 12, 1936 - October 20, 2024

Haywood Daniel "Dan" Droze, Jr. passed away peacefully at his home in La Plata, Maryland, on October 20, 2024, surrounded by his loving family. He was 88 years old.

Born on May 12, 1936, to Alma Faye (nee Penninger) and Haywood Daniel Droze Sr., Dan grew up in southeast Washington, DC, where he excelled as a three-sport athlete (baseball, football, and track). Dan was an All-American football player at Anacostia High School and All-High for three consecutive years, playing for legendary DC coach Zuzu Stewart.

He threw the first interracial high school touchdown in 1954 at Griffith Stadium, regarded as "the most significant high school sporting event in D.C. sports history." Among numerous honors, the Touchdown Club of Washington named Dan 1954-55 DC High School Player of the Year.

Dan received a scholarship to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, playing under famed Coach Jim Tatum. At Carolina, Dan was also a member of the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity and the folk music group "The Four Downs," playing banjo, harmonica, and vocals.

After graduating from UNC in 1959, Dan joined the Marine Corps, playing baseball and football in the U.S. Armed Forces Inter-Service Sports Council

league. While in service, he was stationed at Guantanamo Bay during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Dan always considered his time in the military one of the greatest honors of his life.

Following his time as a Marine, Dan played for the champion semi-pro Virginia Sailors, the Washington Redskin's "taxi squad."

In 1963, Dan met a kind, beautiful flight attendant named Rosemary Meenan, and they married. Known to clear a dance floor with their fancy Shag dance moves, Dan and Rosemary had four children and built their hilltop home on three acres in rural Maryland. Dan stepped into the business world soon after marrying Rosemary, beginning his career at Johnston Lemon and continuing over the years as a financial advisor with some of the most well-respected firms in Washington DC: Chas. P. Young, Legg Mason, and Wells Fargo Advisors.

Dan's most treasured role, outside of his family, was as Coach. In 1968 he began his 25 years coaching the defensive backs at Georgetown University. Known as the coach of uniformity & conformity, and loved by his players despite his toughness, Coach Droze had a tight hold on travel dress code, punctuality, and codes of conduct, sometimes running his D-Backs into the ground with wave drills if they'd been out past curfew. He was also known for his endearing sense of humor, sending pitchers of milk to his players when he caught them drinking beer at The Tombs the night before a game.

In the 1970s, Dan and Rosemary were known for producing his entrepreneurial "Redskin's Monday Night Warm-Up Show," a weekly football dinner event held at local Washington area hotels. Hosted by Redskin greats Mark Murphy, Pete Wysocki, Rusty Tillman, and Dan Ryzcek, special guests, including Joe Theismann, Art Monk, Sonny Jurgensen, and Billy Kilmer, joined each week to discuss the weekend's game.

Dan will be best remembered as a great connector, always bringing people together. He had one of the first consumer car phones installed in 1980 and said he enjoyed his long commute to DC because he spent the time calling those he cared for, just to check in. Countless players returned the love, staying in touch with him long after he retired from coaching in 1993. Even after his Alzheimer's diagnosis, players called regularly, traveled to visit him at his home, and sent video messages from afar for his 80th birthday. Those calls, visits, and videos were priceless for Dan and his family.

When Dan retired at 79 after his diagnosis, daughter Desma and her husband Ed became his full-time devoted caregivers. He lived an incredibly rich life with Des, Ed and their boys by his side. They enjoyed Friday evenings at Dan's favorite BBQ spot, harmonizing to his favorite Kingston Trio songs, as well as watching lots of baseball, the '24 Olympics, and Taylor Swift's Eras Tour—like so many good dads, he loved watching Taylor with his daughter!

Despite the progression of the disease, Dan's joy and gratitude never diminished. He loved living and maintained, until the end, his good nature, his love for family and friends, and his undeniable desire to stay connected.

Predeceased by his wife Rosemary (in 2019) and his brothers Jerry (in 2010) and Ron (in 2013), Dan is survived by his four children: Drew (Virginia) Droze of Berkeley Springs, West Virginia; Stasia (Jim) Droze Jost of Kailua, Hawaii; Desma (Ed) Droze Andres of La Plata, Maryland; and Derk Droze of Copenhagen, Denmark. He will be greatly missed by his seven grandchildren: Axel, Colin, Liam, Colette, Noah, Catie, Kasie (Brandon) and great-grandson Enzo.

Dan's specific wish was not to have a funeral, but instead, a festive gathering

to celebrate rather than mourn. The Droze Family is planning Dan's Celebration of Life in early January 2025 and has requested military inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery. More details TBA.

Tribute Wall

DJ

“ Dan, was my financial advisor from 1996 until he retired. I live in San Diego and he would call frequently and start the conversation with, “Is the surf up?” He and my dad were friends when my dad lived in Alexandria. Dan was a wonderful person! I hope he and my dad are enjoying a beer somewhere!

Deborah Jezior - July 04, 2025 at 09:19 PM

GF

“ Dan was a colleague of mine for several years at Legg Mason where we each worked as Financial Advisors. I remembered Dan as an extraordinary high school football player who became a record setting running back for Anacostia in the DC High School Championship Game where he scored 6 touchdowns. He was recruited by legendary coach Jim Tatum at North Carolina then became a Marine Corps officer following graduation. He continued his football career with the Quantico Marines as a backfield teammate of South Carolina’s famed King Dixon who became a lifelong friend. Dan was very proud of his Marine Corps service!

At Legg Mason Dan was famous for bringing a \$100 million account from the State of Florida into the firm as well as working tirelessly to assist many PEPCO workers fund their retirements.

Dan will be fondly remembered and dearly missed.

Semper Fi and fair winds, Marine!

Gerald B. File, Major, USMC; Sr.VP, LeggMason Inc.

Gerald File - February 22, 2025 at 09:29 PM

SD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



SDroze - October 28, 2024 at 01:28 PM

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“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



SDroze - October 28, 2024 at 01:26 PM

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SDroze - October 28, 2024 at 01:25 PM

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SDroze - October 28, 2024 at 01:25 PM

SD

“ <http://georgetownfootball.blogspot.com/2024/10/h-daniel-droze-jr-1935-2024.html>

SDroze - October 28, 2024 at 12:57 PM

VS

“ I was a classmate of Danny's. He was a special friend and a wonderful person. My sincere condolences to his family. Ginny (Curran) Saalman

Virginia Saalman - October 27, 2024 at 05:25 PM

CS

“ Coach Droze was tough but fair. He had an amazing sense of humor even when maintaining the tough-coach persona. And he was quite kind as well, actually...at least I remember him being so to me. His signature saying, "Uniformity and Conformity", has stayed with me more than 30 years. He was a good man and I have nothing but good memories of him. My sympathies to the family.

CSkoff - October 25, 2024 at 05:37 PM

DD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Drew Droze - October 24, 2024 at 03:59 PM