



## Hon. Francis Xavier Hennessy

September 11, 1930 - January 15, 2013

The Honorable Francis Xavier Hennessy, devoted husband, loving father, doting grandfather and gifted jurist, passed from this life on Tuesday, January 15. He was 82.

Judge Hennessy began his judicial service when he was appointed as a Judge of the Juvenile Court by then governor Ella Grasso in 1976. Through his judicial career he served as the first Administrative Judge of the combined Family and Juvenile Division of the Superior Court, served on the Appellate Session of the Superior Court, authored numerous opinions sitting by invitation on the Connecticut Supreme Court and served as Deputy Chief Court Administrator. He was elevated to the Appellate Court in 1994 and retired from the court in 2000. He continued his service as an Appellate Trial Referee until his death.

Judge Hennessy was a strong advocate for equal access to the courts for women and minorities, co-chairing the Connecticut Task Force on Gender Justice and the Courts, and Connecticut's Task Force on Minority Fairness. He was also recognized as a national leader in Juvenile Justice Reform, emphasizing rehabilitation over punishment for juvenile offenders.

In addition to his legal career, Judge Hennessy served his country with bravery in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. He received the Purple Heart and Combat Infantryman's Badge. He also served on the National Board of Directors of the American Heart Association, the Connecticut's State Library Board, on the Sheriff's Advisory Board, and the State Gaming Commission.

While in the private practice of law, Hennessy served as Democratic Town Chairman of Windsor and was an advisor to a number of statewide political campaigns including the gubernatorial campaigns of Emilio "Mim" Daddario and Ella Grasso.

Judge Hennessy leaves behind his wife of fifty-five years Mary Frances (Callery) Hennessy, his daughter Maura Hennessy Shaw and her husband Steve Shaw of Washington D.C., son, Mark Hennessy of West Hartford, son Matthew Hennessy and his wife Barbara of Hartford, and daughter Margaret Mary Hennessy Knight and her husband Tom Knight of Washington D.C.. He also leaves behind his grandchildren John Knight, Grace Hennessy, Teddy Knight, Finian Knight, Cormac Knight, and Patrick Hennessy.

Judge Hennessy was born on September 11, 1930, in New York City. He began his working career as a member of the Pipe Coverers Union, later graduated from Fordham University under the G.I. Bill and received his law degree from the University of Connecticut.

Calling hours will be from 4-8 p.m. Friday January 18, 2013 at the Molloy Funeral Home, 906 Farmington Ave. West Hartford and a Mass of Christian burial will be held at the Church of St. Timothy 1116 N. Main St. West Hartford at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday January 19, 2013. Entombment will follow in Mt. St. Benedict Cemetery, Bloomfield.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to St. Timothy Middle School, 225 King Philip Drive

West Hartford, CT 06117 or Lawyers for Children America, 151 Farmington Avenue, RW61

Hartford, CT 06156-3124.

# Cemetery Details

## Mount Saint Benedict

1 Cottage Grove Road  
Bloomfield, CT

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN 18. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Molloy Funeral Home  
906 Farmington Ave  
West Hartford, CT 06119  
(860) 232-1322

## Service

JAN 19. 10:30 AM (ET)

Church of St. Timothy  
1116 North Main St  
West Hartford, CT 06117  
(860) 233-5131

# Tribute Wall

SO

“ Dear Mary Fran and family,

*I was so sorry to hear of the death of your husband and father via NWCHS. I do remember Frank as the life of the party at so many gatherings. He is probably livening up things in heaven now!*

*Peace,  
Sr Doris Regan, O.P.*

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**Sr Doris Regan, O.P.** - February 03, 2013 at 12:13 PM

MM

“ Dear Mark,  
*Our hearts go out to you and your family during this difficult time.  
Mary Anne and Ed McTiernan*

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**Mary Anne McTiernan** - January 22, 2013 at 05:49 AM

KP

“ *I'm so sorry for your loss. I was a court reporter and worked with Judge Hennessy often from 1977 to 1979. I still remember how kind, funny and wise he was.*

*Kathy Pompa*

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**Kathy Pompa** - January 20, 2013 at 01:46 PM

KB

“ I was so saddened to read of Judge Hennessy's passing. I spent most of my career working with youths who, unfortunately, often ended up in his courtroom. Always he demonstrated compassion and understanding toward those young people -- and to the adults who were there testifying. As he dispensed wisdom and justice, the best interests of the child always was his primary concern.

Personally, one of my best graduate experiences was a course i took from him at Saint Joseph's. He never let us forget that juvenile justice was about human beings, and not just "cases".

And I never will forget his extreme kindness to me when he stayed after class to guide me through the justice system during a particularly messy situation that my family of origin was experiencing. I never could have afforded the amount of legal advice he gave me that night! And how could one ever put a dollar amount on the kindness he showed to a troubled graduate student? It was so typical of him. He was such a gentleman, and a gentle man. He will be greatly missed.

Karen Bartis

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**Karen L. Bartis** - January 18, 2013 at 11:55 PM

MP

“ Mrs. Hennessy, not sure if you remember me or not. I was the Manager of the bank on Franklin Avenue and every time you came in, I called you "Judge Judy". I was so sorry to read of your husband's passing. What a great marriage you must have had to stay together that long! Please know that you are in my thoughts and prayers.

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**Mariann Porter** - January 18, 2013 at 09:15 AM

NN

“ *Dear Hennessy Family,  
I was saddened to learn of the passing of Judge. As superintend of Long Lane School, I considered him a friend from whom I learned a great deal of the juvenile justice system. We attended conferences and other events together and he volunteered to be the MC of my surprise retirement party, which made it an unforgettable time for me. He had a quick wit and impressed all with his gracious and caring manner over the years. My condolences to the family; the State of Connecticut has also lost a very special person.*  
*Neil Nilson*

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**neil G. Nilson** - January 18, 2013 at 08:48 AM

RW

“ *Richard B. Woodworth lit a candle in memory of Hon. Francis Xavier Hennessy*



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**Richard B. Woodworth** - January 18, 2013 at 08:06 AM

RW

*Dear Hennessy Family. I was truly sorry to learn of Frank's passing. We have spent many a summer joking and sharing stories on the beach. His beautiful soul never had an angry word or negative remark about anyone. He was gifted with a warm and beautiful family who will carry on his rich heritage. God bless you all. Dick Woodworth*

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**Richard B. Woodworth** - January 18, 2013 at 08:10 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Hon. Francis Xavier Hennessy.



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January 18, 2013 at 06:28 AM



“ Dear Hennessy family, We were very saddened to hear of the loss of The Judge. Watch Hill beach just won't be the same this summer, He was a wonderful man and always had a smile for everyone, he touched our lives. We send our condolences, prayers and want you to know that you are all in our thoughts, Ethel and Wendy Cahoon

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**Wendy J Cahoon** - January 17, 2013 at 10:25 PM



“ Dear Mrs. Hennessy -you probably will not remember me-i was in your class 1956-7 at Mark Twain School in Hartford (the one in trouble all the time) I wish to express my condolences to you and your family-I remember you fondly. If you are half the mother as you were a teacher your children are very lucky indeed.

*Ellen M Kimball*

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**Ellen M Kimball** - January 17, 2013 at 09:15 PM

AE

“ He has a place in heaven! I appeared before him only once in Hartford in a family case but he stood out...kind, smart, down to earth, and brought a sense of dignity to it all. I send my sincere condolences to his family.

*Attorney Lorraine D. Eckert*

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**Attorney Lorraine D. Eckert** - January 17, 2013 at 03:29 PM

MC

“ To Mary Fran, Matt, Meg, and the rest of the Hennessy family. You have my deepest condolences on the loss of your husband and father. I have fond memories from my teen years of humorous interactions with the Judge---sometimes at Matt's expense. I know he deeply shaped who you all are, and for that I am so grateful. While I cannot be with you in person during this difficult time, you are all in my thoughts and prayers.

*-Maura Shea Crowley*

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**Maura Shea Crowley** - January 17, 2013 at 03:08 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Hon. Francis Xavier Hennessy.



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January 17, 2013 at 02:11 PM

JS

“ Dear Mary Fran and family,  
It is with the deepest regret and sadness that Mary and I received the news of Frank's passing. We will always remember him as a kind, generous, and sincere man who made time spent with him an interesting and most entertaining experience. His wonderful sense of humor and ability to bring a smile to everyone's face was a true gift to all of us who were lucky enough to share those good times. His love of family was always apparent and it was quite obvious that he loved the roles of husband and father.  
He had such a friendly and open way about him that it was often hard to remember the serious career and work that he did so successfully and dilligently for so many years. In a social setting he was always Frank Hennessy " good guy ". He has left us all so many pleasant memories in the stories and jokes that he told and in the way he always semed to find the humor and joy in daily living. I wish that we had been able to share that one last Christmas party at NWC with you both but my recent surgury made the travel impossible. I'm sure that he had a great time and helped others to do likewise. Please know that Frank and all of you are in our thoughts and in our prayers.  
Sincerely, John Shukie ( NWC Retired ) Baltimore Maryland

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**John C. Shukie** - January 17, 2013 at 01:53 PM

EP

“ *Frank Hennessy was a wonderful human being and a wonderful judge. As deputy chief court administrator, he helped the judicial branch to understand and to respond to the needs of all of those who require judicial services and want to provide judicial services, regardless of their gender or race or national origins. As a judge, he listened wisely, compassionately but realistically to the litigants whose problems we are called upon to resolve. As a colleague, he gently and insightfully helped all of us to do our job better. My heart goes out to Mary Fran and the rest of the family.* Ellen Ash Peters

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**Ellen Ash Peters** - January 17, 2013 at 12:21 PM

KC

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



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**Kerry Callaghan** - January 16, 2013 at 09:21 PM

PS

“ *My sympathies to each of you on the passing of your husband, father and grandfather. He was a wonderful man and I am richer for having met him all those years ago. My thoughts go out to you and if I can be of any assistance, please contact me at anytime.*

*Patty Knight Scholl  
Syracuse, New York*

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**Patricia Knight Scholl** - January 16, 2013 at 02:16 PM