

I first met Mike Goetze January 2, 1973, one month after being hired by telephone, without ever once meeting in person.

Like so many others in this room I began work at CFCW as a news reporter.

As a young person in the early 20's and eager to learn the business I became very frustrated adhering to Mike's stringent work ethic.

Many times I thought of finding another job because Mike was such a tough, demanding son-of-a-gun.

Four years later I left CFCW for employment elsewhere.

That was 18 years ago and hardly a day has gone by since when I don't find myself reflecting on something that I learned from Mike.

I learned there is nothing wrong with demanding near perfection if the person making the demand is also constantly trying to achieve perfection.

Something such as the simplest grammatical mistake was not acceptable to Mike, nor should it be to anyone else.

I learned there is nothing worth doing that with just a little extra effort could not be done slightly better.

I learned that one can disagree as strongly as you might want on any issue but when that has been resolved all other dealings with that individual are unaffected.

Mike held no grudges.

Mike was a man of a stern exterior who rarely allowed his emotions to show.

But over the course of more than 20 years I got to know a devoted family man, one who was always deeply concerned about the welfare of friends.

He was not one to dwell on sorrow.

He talked a lot about his daughters and coaching their softball teams, his love for soccer and then there was the San Francisco Giants.

After family and work, Mike's greatest love and most often his greatest sense of frustration were the Giants.

It was his love for the game that produced the outrageously complicated baseball pool. We started the pool more than 20 years ago and still exists even though all the participants, other than the two of us, had changed.

It far pre-dated today's multi-million dollar rotisserie leagues.

Mike and I pre-dated the 6-49, pick three, sports select and all other legal sports betting that exists today.

Ours was the select 26, where on a daily basis for the better part of 23 years we would place a small wager on every baseball game, every day.

It was our means of keeping in touch to talk about issues ranging from family to work to politics and the media.

It allowed each of us to derive a little pleasure out of two sometimes stressful lives.

One of the greatest voids in my life occurred on Wednesday of this week when I realized this wasn't going to ever occur again.

But as I felt sad, I reflected on how Mike would deal with the issue.

He wouldn't dwell on the sorrow but rather find a way to improve the situation.

I've resolved this week that's exactly what I intend to do. I want to find a way that what Mike has taught me and others, can be passed on to tomorrow's youth.

I want to ensure that level of perfection that Mike strived for and challenged everyone else to achieve will be fostered.

Much of today's society is simply content to let mediocrity be the norm.

Mike would not accept that and nor should we.

Rest in Peace my friend.