

The Virgin Islands Consortium

'Farewell, Until We Meet Again': Family, Friends And Dignitaries Celebrate Life Of Julio A. Brady

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ST. CROIX -- "This is not a funeral; this is a celebration. [Julio Brady](#) deserves be celebrated."

Those were the words of Neville James, Senate President of the 31st Legislature, while giving his remarks on the life of Mr. Brady, the venerable former lieutenant governor and Superior Court judge. James' utterances would set the tone for what was an event filled with laughter, a kind of solemnness fixated on the greatness of Mr. Brady, sadness because he was no more, and joy as family, friends and confidants shared their favorite moments with a man they painted as leaving behind a legacy that should be carried on, according to Mr. Brady's wife, Gwendolyn Hall-Brady, by those who were positively

impacted by it.

And so it was, then, at the Holy Cross Church in Christiansted this morning. Mr. Brady's body laid at the entrance of the church while members of the community, both small and great, paid their final respects. One could say that the service began even before the priest ministered. One could also argue that multiple sermons recounting Mr. Brady's life were orated by Governor Kenneth Mapp, Mr. Brady's son and daughter, Joseph Andrew



eloquent, emotional and earnest

Funeral attendees listen as the

family, friends and colleagues of Julio Anthony Brady gave remarks.

The church overflowed with funeral attendees, and accommodations were made with two tents on the west-facing side of the house of worship, ahead of its grand entrance. Dignitaries both past and present filled the seats, too, and seemingly almost every Mapp administration department head was present.

Mr. Brady's son and daughter recalled their father's love for life and adventure, all while being an ardent servant of the Virgin Islands. Joseph Brady read aloud what he perceived his father would have said to those he left behind, including his surviving wife, who would be credited for giving him a second chance, and Allan Brady, brother of Mr. Brady, who would have been told to "adapt and be strong," and don't make haste to come on the other side. Besides, "your rum punch is much better than what they have here."

The gathering burst into laughter.

Also giving brief remarks were former Senator Holland Redfield, Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett and, of course, Mr. Brady's very close friend, Governor Kenneth Mapp.

The territory's leader did not prepare his remarks; instead he relied on experiences he enjoyed with Mr. Brady for the decades they knew each other.



Gwendolyn Hall-Brady, wife of

Julio A. Brady, reading her deceased husband's eulogy.

Mapp summoned outstanding moments like the time he and Mr. Brady ran for the position of lieutenant governor on opposing teams, and spoke of knowing what could capture the attention of his friend. He also said jokingly that Mr. Brady was the closest thing to being cheap, although he wasn't quite there (again, funeral attendees erupted into laughter), and told a tale of having to convince Mr. Brady to purchase a suit that costed over \$500, and a tie worth over \$100.

"Every time he would wear that suit and tie, he would give me a call and say, 'I'm wearing our clothes,'" Mapp said to an audience overwhelmed with laughter.

The governor continued with his seemingly endless stories of the Brady/Mapp adventures, including when Mr. Brady tried to teach him how to cook, and when he used the governor to collect past trials information at court dockets.

But if Governor Mapp captivated the crowd with his ability to lighten up the mood, Mrs. Brady drove home important traits of her husband all while directly mentioning none. A good husband, he was, because he took care of his wife. He embodied all that it meant to be a father because he made time to be there for his children. An exceptional cook, as made known by almost everyone who knew him. And a once-in-a-lifetime leader, because of the strong legacy he left behind.

"I am writing my Final Order. I have surrendered my life to God. My earthly sojourn is over and I am now resting peacefully in God's loving arms," said Mrs. Brady, giving her most accurate version of what her husband would say to those he left behind. "I most humbly thank each of you for your good works extended to me along my life's journey."

She went on: "None of us gets to decide our Alpha and Omega, our beginning and our ending. God alone is in control of our destiny. I have no regrets, for life owes me naught. God blessed me abundantly, far beyond what I could ever have wanted and most definitely, He fulfilled my needs in accordance with [Philippians 4:11-13](#).

"I bid my beloved Gwen, Julie, Andrew and you, the people of the Virgin Islands, farewell, indeed, until we meet again."