

My name is John Hutto and I am honored today to speak to you about my dearest of friends, Dennis Southern. My heartfelt condolences go out to Dennis' mother, father, and sister... his wife Debbie, his daughter Ashley and her husband Evan, and his grand daughter Alexis... as well as all of his other relatives and friends gathered here today.

True story... Last Monday evening, we were sitting out on our back deck with the Hamons (another couple very close to Dennis and Debbie) just relaxing and having a glass of wine... when a beautiful deer wandered into our yard... and for a brief moment... all of its beauty and glory belonged to our world. But then the deer just wandered away... although we wish it would have stayed with us... we felt so lucky just to have been with it a little while.

I keep waiting for my phone to ring... or for a voice mail from Dennis. He would always leave me the same message... "John, this is Dennis Southern, would you call me when you get a chance at 678-596-8815? Thanks". I once said to him... Dennis, why do you leave that same voice mail every time? I have known you for years... you call me 10 times a day... I know who you are and I now your phone number... he said, he just didn't want me to forget him.

Dennis and I have been the best of friends for many years now. But... Dennis was not only my friend, he was my confidant, my golfing partner, my business partner, advisor, buddy and in a most real sense... my brother in life.

I want to tell you a little about the Dennis that I knew... now, I believe that Dennis is actually with us here today... and so...Dennis... forgive me for telling these stories on you.

First and foremost... Dennis was a dedicated and loving family man. To his mother and father and sister... Dennis often spoke of how you influenced his life and how much he cared for you. To Debbie... Dennis adored you... you were the love of his life and he would do anything for you. Ashley ... you were his little girl... his bright star... and he was so proud of you. But the real gem... was Alexis. He was Papa to Alexis and I don't think there is anything he loved more than to think about Alexis. But I gotta tell you, sometimes it was down right embarrassing to me... (story of the business dinner)

Dennis was a highly religious and righteous man. He was a man of honor and integrity... a man of deep loyalty. People talk about these values... and they are easy to talk about... but Dennis lived them. He embraced them. The many awards and accolades he received during his career for his dedication and hard work ... and the respect people had for him... are a testimony to this. He was a stand up guy you could depend on and no matter what the consequences... Dennis would do the right thing. Many of the people that worked for Dennis over the years have contacted me in the last several days and they wanted you all to know that they thought Dennis was the best boss they ever had... because he cared about them.

Dennis loved sports and he was a ferocious competitor. He never would admit it but I think his favorite sport was playing the sizzling 7's slot machines in Las Vegas or Biloxi.... But seriously... he loved sports. Especially college football and most especially the Georgia Bulldogs... and any team who played against the Florida gators. Dennis also loved to play golf... a few months ago he joined our club... The Polo Club... and in those few months I think he played ... oh, 800-900 rounds of golf. How many of you, by a show of hands ever had the pleasure of playing golf with Dennis?.... Well, I think anyone who has would probably agree with me ... Dennis lacked just a few basic skills in this

game. As a matter of fact... Dennis had a favorite saying on the course... and I can repeat it here... his favorite saying was "You know John, I really suck at this game"... and I gotta tell you... I think he was right. Dennis would normally shoot in the 100-150 range.. but let me tell you something extraordinary that happened when we played about a week ago. (golf stories)... end with Dennis literally shot the best game of his life just short of a week ago.

All of you know about Dennis' positive attitude and contagious personality. He loved to laugh and he loved to make others laugh with him... he really enjoyed his friends... all of you sitting here in this room today. And I don't think that Dennis would be especially happy that all of us are sitting around grieving over him and our loss... I think that he would want all of us (and especially his family) to grieve... but get on with their lives, to be happy, to finish the work he started, and to always remember how much he cared for all of us. I think if he were here today, Dennis would want to say a few words. He's not able to do that... but I do think he is here with all of us and I picked out an old Navaho proverb that would be a message to all of us... and it goes something like this:

Remember Me:

To the living, I am gone.

To the sorrowful, I will never return.

To the angry, I was cheated,

But to the happy, I am at peace,

And to the faithful, I have never left.

I cannot be seen, but I can be heard.

So as you stand upon a shore, gazing at a
beautiful sea - remember me.

As you look in awe at a mighty forest and its grand
majesty - remember me.

As you look upon a flower and admire its simplicity

- remember me.

Remember me in your heart, your thoughts, and your memories of the times we loved, the times we cried, the times we fought, the times we laughed.

For if you always think of me, I will have never gone.