



## Walter D. Copeland Sr.

March 11, 1934 - October 20, 2015

Walter D. Copeland, Sr., 81 of Camillus, passed away peacefully on October 20, 2015 at home with his loving family at his side. Walt had been bravely fighting cancer for over two years before succumbing to the illness. Walt was a banker for his entire career at Marine Midland Bank NA/HSBC. Born on March 11, 1934 in Schenectady, NY. Walt was the only child of Philip and Eva Copeland. He attended Albany High School where he played football. He attended Cornell University where he also played on the football team. Following this he joined the US Army and served from 1953 to 1955.

He began in banking in 1955 where he met the love of his life, Connie, and they married in May, 1957. In 1959 he moved to the Bank's Mortgage Department where he trained and subsequently managed Loan Administration. As the years continued, Walt was promoted in 1963 to a Junior Officer and handled commercial, construction and residential financing. In 1968 he was promoted to Assistant Vice President and was assigned to Marine Midland Realty Credit to work with commercial construction and permanent mortgage placements. Again in 1972 he was promoted to Vice President in charge of the Commercial and Construction Loan Department for the central region of the bank. In 1974 his career went national when he was promoted to Executive Vice President in charge of Marine Midland Mortgage Company and the Mears Company, an Irvine California Mortgage Banking Company, a subsidiary of Marine Midland Bank and the promotions continued.

In 1976 he was promoted to Vice President and Senior Mortgage Officer in charge of the consolidated Midstate Region Mortgage Department, with responsibility for construction, residential and commercial mortgage loans, as well as loan administration. This department included offices in Syracuse, Binghamton, Watertown and Utica. In 1981 Walt was selected as Vice President and District Manager, heading up the newly formed Construction Loan Department of Marine Midland Banks, NA covering all of Upstate New York reporting directly at the bank's corporate headquarters in Buffalo and New York. He was now responsible for hundreds of millions of dollars in outstanding loans and commitments.

In 1989, after 34 years of mortgage and construction financing experience and financing a number of the largest commercial projects in Upstate New York, he retired from banking and formed the Walter D. Copeland Organization Inc., his own real estate consulting/commercial mortgage placement business and later retired a second time.

He was involved in an extensive number of professional organizations including Board of Director positions at Skaneateles Bancorp/Center Banks, the Advisory Board of TICOR, Director and a past President of the Syracuse Builders Exchange, Delegate to the Building Industry Employers of New York State, member of the Syracuse Economic Development Corp. Loan Committee, President of the Central New York Mortgage Bankers Association, President of the Society of Real Estate Appraisers Upstate Chapter, designated member of the Appraisal Institute (SRA).

In retirement he was President of the Pennsylvania Club in Clearwater, FL, his winter residence. He was a member of St. Josephs Church in Camillus, NY

His wife, children, grandchildren and a great grandchild were his greatest interests and their great memories of him will sustain them for the rest of their lives.

He is survived by his beloved wife of 58 years, Connie and by his two children, Walter D., Jr. (Lucy H.) And M. Denise Slade (Ron) and seven very loved grandchildren: Jennifer (Terry) Musho, W. David (Mariesa) Copeland, III, Matthew S. Slade (fiancé Faith), Joseph E. Copeland, Katie Slade, Daniel Slade and Elisabeth M. Copeland as well as his first great grandchild, Malachi David Copeland.

Walt was known all his life as a kind, compassionate person who always put others first. His charity to everyone, especially to those often ignored by others, was what set him apart. All who really knew him also understood this. It just came naturally.

Services will be private for his immediate family as per his wishes at St. Joseph's Church in Camillus. He will be laid to final rest with military honors in Assumption Cemetery.

Contributions in memory of Walter may be made to Golisano Children's Hospital, CAB Room 326, 750 E. Adams St, Syracuse, NY 13210. <https://www.foundationforupstate.org/gchdonate>

Arrangements by B.L. Bush & Sons Funeral Home, Camillus. Please sign the guestbook at [www.BLBUSH.com](http://www.BLBUSH.com)

# Tribute Wall

RC

“ Dear Connie, Walt, Denise, and your entire family,

*Pam and I, along with our entire family, extend our deepest sympathy to all of you at this sad time. We loved Walt very much, and share your grief. His kindness, smiles, and laughter will remain as cherished memories of the times we got to share with him.*

*With our love and sympathy,  
Rick, Pam, and family*



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**Rick and Pam Copeland** - November 08, 2015 at 02:30 PM

DD

“ Connie:

*Please accept our deep felt sympathy for your loss. Walt was a great friend. We will miss him. We both spent our careers working for competitive banks, but that was no barrier to the good times we enjoyed together over the years...sports events, fishing, golf, smelting, a wedding and membership in the MBA of CNY.  
David and Tamara Dembowski*

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**David M. Dembowski** - October 30, 2015 at 06:55 PM

BD

“ To the Copeland family:

*I knew Walt as a truly kind and caring individual; not just to me but to all he met along the way; an outstanding professional. His belief in me was the true kick starter of my career in Real Estate development. Although our paths did not cross often in the past decade or so, whenever I did see him he went out of his way to extend a warm hand shake, and his always welcoming smile.*

*The word gentleman was the definition and epitome of what Walt was.*

*While his loss is monumental for the family which was the focus of his life, as emphasized in the paper, in the years to follow, certainly you will be comforted by the thoughts and remembrances that people whose lives he touched in many different ways are now sharing with you.*

*Thank you Walter for having the faith in me which directly paved the way for whatever successes I've had my career.*

*Bill Dutch*

*Kelly & Dutch Real Estate & Syracuse Chiefs*

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**Bill Dutch** - October 27, 2015 at 08:12 AM

RB

“ Connie and family,

*I have known Walt ever since he joined Marine Midland Bank in 1955. We were friends in the messenger department and throughout the years. Our prayers are with you and your family.*

*Janice and Red Barry*

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**Roland Barry** - October 26, 2015 at 08:47 PM

AG

“ My sincere sympathies to Walt's family. I worked at Marine Midland in the early 1980's and had the pleasure of knowing Walt during those years, and again in my position as Foundation Director of Syracuse Home in Baldwinsville, where Walt's Mother was a resident. Walt was an elegant man; a pleasure to work with. I'm so glad I knew him. My prayers are with Walt and his family.

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**Audrey Gibbs** - October 26, 2015 at 09:31 AM

TS

“ Lord, you made us for a better place. When your loved ones have gone home to you, we rejoice while we mourn the loss for us. Thank you for the hope of a final, joyful reunion in your presence. Amen.  
Connie, we are sorry for your loss.  
Tom and Cathie Soccocio

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**Tom Soccocio** - October 25, 2015 at 06:43 PM

JV

“ My thoughts and prayers have been with Denise and her entire family through her Dad's sickness and death. From all the wonderful things Denise has shared about her Dad, he sounded like a great man who was truly loved by his family. May the memories you have about him comfort you in this difficult time.  
Love, Jenn Vinci

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**Jennifer Vinci** - October 25, 2015 at 11:30 AM

JH

“ My deepest sympathy to the beautiful Connie, as well as Walt Jr. & Lucy and Denise & Ron & their wonderful families on their tremendous loss. God bless them for all the caring things they've done for Walt during this difficult time for all of them. Rarely have I witnessed such love in a family. It was all about doing things for one another. In the over fifty years I have known Walt & the family (thru banking & real estate & friendships), I started out referring to him as "my boss", then "my friend", then "my terrific life-long friend". How fortunate I have been to have my life's path cross with his. One of my favorite movies is "It's A Wonderful Life". Somewhere along the way, it dawned on me that the way Walt lived his life paralleled the way George Bailey (the main character in the movie) lived his. He was always doing good things for people. But he never wanted them to know. Most of the time they never knew it. In the workplace setting, I got to see these "good deeds" unfold . I believe most of these "good deed" recipients simply thought it was something that "just happened". If you thought you " just happened" to be a recipient of good fortune, particularly in the career field...think again. And when you think again, think of Walt. Think of Walt and something good he was working on for you without your knowledge or some good advice he gave you early on that helped form your character or help you through a tough time. Walt was emphatic to me that it was essential to him that I keep his goodness to people to myself. I've tried my best to honor that. I do confess I may have slightly broken that promise in the last several days. For that, I'm not one bit sorry. Again, love and deepest sympathy to Connie & the family from me & all of my family.

Judy Hoppe  
Liverpool, NY

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Judy Hoppe - October 24, 2015 at 08:35 PM

CW

“ Connie,

*Walt was a good man and a pleasure to work with at the bank, my sympathies.*

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**Connie Monteleone Whitton** - October 24, 2015 at 12:46 PM

MM

“ Connie, Walt and Family,

*I'm sorry to hear of Walt's passing. He was a wonderful boss and will always be remembered fondly. May memories of the good times sustain all of you.*

*Mary Maybee*

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**Mary Maybee** - October 23, 2015 at 05:46 PM

LI

“ Sincere wishes of sympathy from my family to yours. Walt was a wonderful man.

*Linda Rivenburgh Taylor*

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**Linda** - October 23, 2015 at 01:03 PM

EP

“ *My father worked with him for years at Marine Midland and always had a kind word to say about him. In the early 70's, I remember cutting down the Elm trees on my grandparent's old farm and salvaging 2x4's from a burnt out bowling alley in Eastwood that the bank owned with him and my father.*

*My thoughts and prayers go out to you and your family.*

*Eric Pease*

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**Eric Pease** - October 23, 2015 at 11:16 AM

WM

“ *Connie and family,*

*Cherie and I send our deepest condolences to you at this difficult time. I can not say it any better than you have expressed in Walt's obituary. he truly was a kind, warm and generous person and in my special case a friend and mentor. I do not think I would be the person I am today without Walt's guidance and trust. Our thoughts and prayers to all of you.*

*Bill & Cherie McIncrow*

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**William D McIncrow** - October 23, 2015 at 08:14 AM

LC

“ *Please accept the most heartfelt sympathies of Le Moyne College. We hope the love and memories that you will forever hold in your heart bring you peace and comfort during this difficult time. Le Moyne College, Office of Alumni and Parent Programs Syracuse, NY*

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**Le Moyne College** - October 23, 2015 at 08:07 AM

TM

“ *Helen and I wish to express our deepest sympathy to you and the family. I have known Walt since 1958 and have nothing but great memories of a kind and generous man. Our thoughts and prayers with you.*

*Ted & Helen Michaels, Cicero, N.Y.*

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**Theodore Michaels** - October 23, 2015 at 07:50 AM

SB

“ *Connie and Family, With my deepest sympathy to you and your family. My thoughts and prayers are with you. Always enjoyed my trips with you and Walt here at OTOW. Take care.. Sylvia Bohanek, Clearwater, Fl.*

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**Sylvia Bohanek** - October 22, 2015 at 10:21 PM

CD

*Connie, Walt and Denise I am so sorry for your loss. I hope the many years of memories will provide you with some comfort during this difficult time.*

*Chris*

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**Chris DeBottis** - October 23, 2015 at 07:50 AM

MS

*Walt hired me when I first moved to Syracuse to work in the Mortgage Department at Marine Midland. I remember him as a kind, compassionate man who treated everyone equally. May you find peace in knowing he is not suffering anymore. My thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.*

*Myrt La Shomb*

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**Myrt La Shomb** - October 23, 2015 at 08:57 AM

PM

*Connie & Family:  
Our deepest sympathy and prayers to each of you during this most difficult time. Praying that your many memories will give you comfort.  
Pat & Carol Mara*

**Pat & Carol Marra** - October 23, 2015 at 09:03 AM

DL

*Connie & Family. My deepest sympathy .May he RIP. David Lubin  
,Clearwater, Florida*

**David Lubin** - October 23, 2015 at 09:36 AM

BH

*I am so sorry to hear of Walt's passing. We here at Top of World will surely miss him. Walt was a wonderful and caring man. Barbara Hogan  
- TOW Clearwater, FI*

**Barbara Hogan** - October 25, 2015 at 08:56 AM

RC

*He will be missed by all his Marine Midland friends. A contribution to Galisano Children's Hospital will be made in his memory. He will be remembered as a fantastic person and friend. R. Peter Clarke and the Marine Midland Coffee Club*

**R. Peter Clarke** - October 27, 2015 at 07:52 PM