

# Thomas W. McBride Biography



**Thomas Frederick  
McBride - Class of 1946 -  
b. 1928 d. October 31, 2003**

From the EHS Yearbook: Sr.  
Class Play, French Club,  
E.H.S. Players, Spanish  
Club, F.T.A., Sr. Literature  
Club.

Thomas F. McBride, a former  
associate prosecutor in the  
Watergate prosecutor's  
office, has died. He was 74.

McBride died, after a fall, of a cerebral hemorrhage on Oct. 31 in Portland, Ore.

He fell just a day before he was to attend an event in Washington, D.C., marking the 30th anniversary of the "Saturday Night Massacre," when President Richard M. Nixon fired Watergate special prosecutor Archibald Cox and abolished the special Watergate prosecutor's office.

Nixon ordered Cox fired for refusing to obey the president's instructions on the handling of the Watergate tapes.

McBride's wife, Catherine Milton, said she and her husband were having dinner when they heard the news bulletin in 1973.

"Our son came in yelling, "Dad, dad, you've just been abolished," " Milton recalled.

Milton said that her husband, fearing that important paperwork would be destroyed, immediately drove to the office to remove files for safety and preservation.

As associate prosecutor, McBride led the task force on campaign contributions and the selling of ambassadorships. He was responsible for accepting guilty pleas from some high-level corporate officials and others, such as shipping magnate and New York Yankees owner George Steinbrenner and Maurice Stans, the chief fund-raiser for Nixon's reelection campaign.

Born in Elgin, Ill., McBride graduated from New York University and Columbia Law School before beginning his legal career as a prosecutor in the Manhattan district attorney's office. He went to Washington to become a trial lawyer for the organized crime task force set up by Atty. Gen. Robert F. Kennedy.

McBride later joined the Peace Corps, where he was deputy director for Latin America. After Watergate, he became the first inspector general of the Department of Agriculture.

In 1982, McBride moved to California to become associate dean for administration at Stanford Law School.

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During this time, he also served on the President's Commission on Organized Crime and the California Council on Mental Health.

From 1989 to 1992, McBride directed Stanford's Department of Environmental Health and Safety. While at Stanford, McBride taught human biology as a lecturer, served as associate dean for administration in the Law School from 1982 to 1989. After the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989, he was asked to head the Department of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS), which had been at the center of controversy for several years concerning its handling of environmental and safety matters on campus.

"He gave the department a lot of leadership and vision in a time of trouble," said Harvey Chock, former EHS associate director. "He really helped calm things down. He was definitely a consensus builder."

At the Law School, McBride implemented a loan repayment assistance program for public interest law students, said Associate Dean Frank Brucato. "Tom was really devoted to public service," he said. "He was a good problem solver and a great mentor."

In 1992, McBride left campus to join his wife, Catherine Milton, founder and director of Stanford's Haas Center for Public Service, who was on leave in Washington, D.C., to head the Commission on National and Community Service. McBride spent a quarter teaching in the Stanford in Washington program before leaving the university. During his years on campus, Milton said her husband particularly enjoyed teaching undergraduates in the Human Biology program. "He loved the students," she said.

In the 1990s, McBride worked as a special counselor at the Department of Energy, working on the cleanup and closing of nuclear weapons sites. In 1997, he became special assistant to the president of Save the Children and was responsible for improving systems related to child sponsorships worldwide. He also helped resettle Kosovo refugees through the Saugatuck Congregational Church in Westport, Conn. Last year, 1982, McBride and Milton moved to Portland, Ore., where he planned to teach a course in constitutional law and current events at Portland State University.

In addition to his wife, McBride is survived by four adult children, his brother and a sister.