



Acclaimed public defender John Delaney remembered by loving family

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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ALTON - After being reported missing Wednesday night, John Delaney's body was found in a hotel room in Shelby County, Illinois, Thursday afternoon.

Delaney had visited his oldest daughter and spoken with his secretary Wednesday. He was reported missing by his family after he did not return at the end of the day. Delaney served as a special public defender for Madison County, and once served as an assistant state's attorney. He opened his own law firm in East Alton, which is still in practice.

"He practiced both criminal and family law, and was always open, honest and available for his clients," his daughter, Victoria Sutton said in an email.

Delaney also taught criminal law at Lewis and Clark Community College in the early 1980s. He continued teaching there until he retired from the position in 2013. Victoria Delaney said her father was even able to teach two of his children while in that position.

"He taught numerous and current law enforcement officers and attorneys in the area," she said. "He was a very excellent, humorous and understanding teacher. He was very active in his children's lives from their births. He coached numerous teams for the kids, was active in Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts - he was a canoe instructor for many years. He loved to spend time camping and swimming with his children."

Sutton also described her father as a doting grandfather.

"He loved his grandchildren dearly," she said in a message. "They had weekly sleepovers, and he loved to teach them all about his love of music and technology. They are all rather handy with iPads. He was a devoted family man and adored his three children and three (soon to be four) grandchildren. He could frequently be heard telling stories about his children and grandchildren all around the Madison County Courthouse."

Foul play is not suspected in Delaney's death.

Mark's Mortuary in Wood River is handling the arrangements, and a memorial service and celebration of his life are set to be held in the near future.