

Donald Sandidge

Alton | Sunday, February 17 2013

Donald E. Sandidge, 75, died at 3:35 a.m. Sunday, February 17, 2013 at his home. Born April 7, 1937 in Peoria, he was the son of Thomas E. and Mary Ellen (Canaday) Sandidge. A graduate of Alton High School in 1956, he lettered in football and baseball. He was the quarterback in 1955 and 1956 and the team captain in 1956. Mr. Sandidge answered his country's call and served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1958-1961. He earned the rank of Sergeant (E-5). He returned from the service to join the Alton police force as a patrolman. He was promoted to detective and then earned the title of Chief of Detectives from 1968-1985 and then became Captain. In 1986 he became Chief of Police and was named Commander of the Greater St. Louis Major Case Squad, the only Illinois officer to command the squad. While serving on the police force he was a member of the Alton American Legion, became a life member of the VFW Post 1308, served as Treasurer of the Vietnam Memorial Committee, served as board member of the American Cancer Society, and board member of the Salvation Army. He became a life member of the Southern Illinois Police Chiefs' Association, a member of the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police and a member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police. He served as past president of the Alton Area boys Tackle Football, Inc. and was a member of the K.C. Quarterback Club. He continued his education and earned a bachelor's degree in Law Enforcement and Public Administration from the University of Illinois-Springfield. He later graduated from the FBI National Academy at Quantico, Virginia and took post-graduate classes in public administration at U of I. After a distinguished career in law enforcement he retired in 1989. He then worked as a probation officer for Madison County. A lifelong Alton resident, he felt called to contribute more to the community and was elected Mayor of Alton from 1997-2009. As Mayor, Mr. Sandidge fixed Alton's infrastructure, repaving hundreds of miles of streets and roads. He strengthened our neighborhoods by demolishing derelict houses and problem housing projects. He worked to keep our good



doctors and hospitals in Alton and attracted new businesses and developers to our community on Homer Adams Parkway. He was inducted to the Alton High School Wall of Fame. Mr. Sandidge was dedicated to service and gave over 50 years to public service. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Sheri (Whipple) Sandidge, two children, Dene Sandidge, and Don E. Sandidge II and his wife Leah, three grandchildren, Chris Sullivan, Chandra and Donetta Sandidge all of Alton, mother-in-law, Golda Whipple of Brighton, aunt, Joann Ripper of Pekin, four sisters-in-law and one brother-in-law, Denny Dailey of Texas, Joy Whipple of Texas, Genell Mills of Alton, and Melody (John) Tigo of Carlinville, and several nieces, nephews and cousins. He was preceded in death by his parents, his brother, Thomas E. Sandidge Jr., and his father-in-law, Dennis Whipple. Visitation will be from 4:00-8:00 p.m. Friday, February 22, 2013 at SS Peter & Paul Catholic Church in Alton. A Mass of Christian burial will be at 10:00 a.m. Saturday, February 23, 2013 at SS Peter & Paul Catholic Church. Monsignor Kenneth Steffen and Deacon William Kessler will officiate. Memorials may be made to BJC Hospice or the Marine Corps League. Burial will be at St. Joseph Cemetery in Alton with full military honors. Following the committal service, a luncheon will be served at the Knights of Columbus Hall on East 4th Street in Alton. Pallbearers include; Donald Sandidge II, Christopher Sullivan, Scott Robertson, Paul Steinbrueck, Micah Mills, Douglas Strohbeck, Rodney Caffey, and Tim Palen. Honorary pallbearers are; James Hernandez, Robert Lahlein, Thomas Boerner, James Casper, Ron Aldridge, Don Lovell, Al Charleston, and Bill Ogden. Gent Funeral Home in Alton is in charge of arrangements. Online guestbook and information may be found at www.gentfuneralhome.com