



Ralph Jr

Godfrey | Monday, November 17 2014

Ralph H. Baahlmann Jr., 61, died at 3:22 a.m. on Monday, November 17, 2014 at Alton Memorial Hospital in Alton, IL. He was born in St. Louis, MO on May 5, 1953 the son of Dr. Ralph Baahlmann Sr. and Virginia “Ginny” (Gangloff). After graduating from Marquette Catholic High School in Alton, Ralph attended Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas where he was elected freshman class president. During his sophomore year Ralph was a TV Camera operator and hosted the campus television show. Seeking work in TV news Ralph transferred to Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville in 1973 to focus on mass communications for a career in broadcast journalism. In 1975 Ralph trained to become an EMT-A. He was certified in Illinois and the National Registry of emergency medical technicians. He worked at GENT Funeral Home in Alton and later Marks Mortuary in Wood River where he worked the ambulance in addition to his other duties at the funeral homes. It was during his service at GENT Funeral Home when Ralph met Mrs. Dallas M. Burke who was Illinois first female coroner. Dallas appointed Ralph as a volunteer deputy coroner in 1976. In 1984 Dallas hired Ralph as Madison County’s first paid deputy. Two years later he was hired full time and was appointed as chief deputy coroner. In addition to two longtime stints as chief Deputy for Dallas Burke and later Stephen P. Nonn. Ralph was a field training officer, shift supervisor, chief investigator and evidence supervisor. Ralph completed the basic death investigators course at University of Missouri St. Louis Medical school. He later became a board certified diplomat of the American board of medical legal death investigators; Inc. Ralph was a 17 year investigator for the major case squad of greater St. Louis, working with Mrs. Burke and successfully negotiated the Illinois Police Protective contract and benevolent association. He served as the PB & PA union’s first president. In addition to his work with the Coroner’s office, Ralph was a 20 year member of the Alton Exposition Commission, was a deputy registrar for the Madison county clerk’s office to register voters. He served on the Alton Civil Defense Board in the late 1970’s and was a 25 year member of Twin Rivers Search and Rescue, where he was president for 12 years. He was a notary public for 22 years. He was a regular speaker at various schools around the county for decades. Ralph was a 4th degree

member of the Alton Knights of Columbus council 460, the Alton-Wood River sportsman's club, Wood River Moose, Madison County Police Association, Illinois Coroner's and Medical Examiners Association and the Police Benevolent and Protective Association of Illinois. He was a member of St. Ambrose Catholic Church in Godfrey. He is survived by his life partner; Jerry Nailor of Godfrey, two sisters, Barbara M. Boyd (Dr. Tobin Boyd) of Alton, Nancy E. Reese (Tom) of Alton and three brothers, Mark G. Baahlaman of Alton, Matthew L. Baahlmann (Teri) of Godfrey and John L. Baahlmann (Nancy) of Brighton, and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents. Visitation will be from 4:00-8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 19, 2014 at Gent Funeral Home in Alton. A funeral mass will be conducted at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, November 20, 2014 at St. Ambrose Catholic Church in Godfrey with Father Steve Pohlman officiating. Private family burial will be at St. Patrick's Cemetery in Godfrey. Memorials may be made to the American Cancer Society. Additional information and online guest book may be found at www.gentfuneralhome.com