



Joseph P. Anthony

April 17, 1958 - January 2, 2021

On Saturday, January 2, 2021, Joseph P. Anthony, beloved father of two and well-known community figure, passed away at the age of 62.

Joseph, widely known as Joe, was born April 17, 1958 to Tom J. Anthony and Alice P. (Birnfeld) Anthony of Kankakee, Illinois. Joe attended parochial school in Kankakee and graduated from Bishop McNamara High School in 1976. Joe received his law degree in 1983 from Washburn University after earning a Bachelor's in Journalism from Kansas University. Joe played soccer at Kansas University and was proud to be a Jayhawk.

Joe had a passion for sports, with a special place in his heart for baseball, and he acted as a coach and mentor to countless young athletes wherever he lived. Joe played sports most of life and began his coaching legacy with St. Theresa's basketball in 1975. He continued coaching while attending college in Lawrence, Kansas as a girls' volleyball coach. After returning to Illinois, Joe coached indoor and outdoor co-ed soccer, girls' softball, Little League, and senior league baseball for over twenty years.

Joe is remembered by many as a dedicated attorney in the Illinois River Valley, beginning his legal career in 1985. Joe served as assistant state's attorney, public defender, and managed his own private practice over the course of 35 years and continued his practice until the time of his death.

Joe was a lifelong resident of Kankakee County and gave back to his community without regard for recognition. Joe recognized his universal blood type as a moral responsibility and he donated faithfully to the American Red Cross, donating over 22 gallons in his life. Even in death, Joe was an organ and tissue donor, helping an estimated 26 recipients through Gift of Hope. Joe taught multiple years of CCD with St. Theresa's church and volunteered his time as a young adult, teaching proper flag-folding practices throughout the community. Joe could be found throughout his life supporting local sports organizations, bands, festivals, and businesses with his children, or as he called it, teaching them to "soak up the local flavor".

Joe was an avid listener of WVLI – the Valley, had a deep appreciation for music, and he treasured the opportunity to test his pop culture and historical knowledge. He could make a friend out of anyone he met, but particularly enjoyed reminiscing with fellow Andy Griffith aficionados. Joe founded the "No Thank You, Leon" chapter of the Andy Griffith fan club, and frequented the real life "Mayberry" in Mt. Airy, North Carolina where he built countless friendships and an honorary family.

Joe had a genuine respect for history and genealogy and spent the last decade of his life helping to catalog and document over 80,000 memorials for findagrave.com across the country. He valued experiences, memories, and legacies far beyond material possessions, and he lived his life in service of those values.

Joe is preceded in death by his father, Tom, and his mother, Alice. He is survived by his two children, Joey and Allyson Anthony, his sister, Paula (Bill) Burns, and his brother, Thomas (Chris) Anthony, and beloved friend, Lisa Hall.

There will be no public visitation or services held, but his children invite Joe's many friends to share happy memories of their father with

JAnthony.Memories@gmail.com.

Memorial contributions may be made to the American Red Cross by visiting www.redcross.org/donate/memorial-donations, donating blood at your local Red Cross, or friends may also honor Joe by donating to the charity of their choice.

Tribute Wall



“ *Joseph P. Anthony*

October 08, 2023 at 04:39 PM



“ *Alexia "Chambers" Helm lit a candle in memory of Joseph P. Anthony*



Alexia "Chambers" Helm - January 12, 2021 at 10:41 PM



“ *Having difficulty getting my memory to post. Ive known Joe a very long time and am shocked to hear the news. I remember how much Joe loved his sports and when i volunteered concessions for Aroma Park Little League, without fail Joe would make sure he came to say hello. Well he is in heaven with his mom and dad. Please kiss your mom for me. I miss her so much.*

Alexia "Chambers" Helm - January 12, 2021 at 10:40 PM



R.I.P. Joe

Alexia "Chambers" Helm - January 12, 2021 at 10:40 PM



“ *I ran into Joe many a time over the years at the Red Cross & I thought the guy was Hilarious. I always told him I was going to catch up on him as far as Blood Donations go, lol...He seemed to be a Stand-up guy, for an attorney, God Bless him & his Family !!!*

Mike Marshall - January 11, 2021 at 08:41 PM

DC

“ I've known Joe for many years and his friendship has meant a great deal to me. I was a mobile DJ and Karaoke host in the past, working in the local bars. Joe started coming to my gigs around 2001 or 2002 and he became quite a regular. We quickly became good friends and have remained so ever since. In that scene, he always went by the nickname "Joe Mama" and his favorite Karaoke song to sing was Tiny Tim's "Tiptoe Through The Tulips". These days, I work in local radio. I'm now the midday host on Joe's favorite oldies station, The Valley WVLI 92.7 FM. Joe remained a regular caller into my show until about two weeks before his passing. Once highly aware of my dream to work in radio, Joe was a huge supporter of mine and he always encouraged me to chase that dream (which I did). He is also the person who inspired me to create the "Every day is a gift; enjoy the present..." sign-off that I do each day at the end of my airshift. He suggested that I start saying that, and I thought it was a great idea. He and I shared a common love for The Andy Griffith Show, The Flintstones, and music from days gone by. We made each other laugh often; but he was also the type of friend I could confide in. Joe Anthony was one of a kind. He was a genuinely good person and will always remain one of my favorite people. I will truly miss that man. My prayers and deepest condolences to his children: Allyson and Joey, to all of his family members, friends, and to each and every person who was blessed to know him. Joe inspired many and touched a lot of lives during his time on this Earth. His, was truly a life well-lived. God bless him!

-Denny Case

DENNY CASE - January 09, 2021 at 08:42 PM

DC

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



DENNY CASE - January 09, 2021 at 07:04 PM

LP

“ Joe and Harry always saying quotes from the Andy Griffith Show and Songs/Artist/Dates. They loved trivia of both. Also calling the radio stations near and far to answer the trivia questions. Joe could always make us laugh at the things he said---- One day we had picked him up to go to the boat when we arrived and got out of the car he said to my Mom is that a parachute---she had a fanny pack on. Joe loved the Cubs and would go to spring training every year along with his trips to Mt Airy NC. Sorry for the families loss but I'm sure they also have some GREAT Memories

Lois Powell - January 09, 2021 at 11:26 AM

SF

“ So sorry to learn of Joe's passing. Joe and I were law school classmates and friends at Washburn U in Topeka and kept connected over the years via Facebook. In law school, Joe did a funny impersonation of our Civil Procedure professor at the annual Roast of the faculty. I enjoyed Joe's perspective on life, baseball, family, and friends and will miss him.

Steve Fiebiger - January 08, 2021 at 10:45 PM

DJ

“ Many prayers for his family and friends. I met Joe when I lived in the dorms at Washburn while he was in law school and he kind of hung out with a group of us on a pretty frequent basis, hanging out with us undergrads. He was beyond kind extraordinarily funny and always willing to be of help to anyone. I know I was a big hole left with his passing and main memories of a life wonderfully lived provide you comfort.

Diane Shaw Jenkins - January 08, 2021 at 10:26 PM

PF

“ I knew Joe when he was very young, when I helped with Tom's paper route. We lived a few blocks away, and later I remember my mom giving me updates as Joe progressed through law school--he was a favorite of hers. Deep condolences to all of his family and friends.

Patrick Foster - January 08, 2021 at 06:39 PM



Your mother gave us a beautiful crystal pitcher which I still have! She was my 4th grade teacher at Abe Lincoln. Unfortunately long term things didn't work out for us but we have 2 wonderful children. I'm grieving for them and all the fun we used to have. Your mom was my favorite teacher!

Amy Carolyn - January 15, 2021 at 11:14 AM

BC

“ I first met Joe at the States attorneys office in Kankakee. I was a detective working an auto theft task force with my good friend Detective Harry Powell. Joe was assigned to our task force as our lead prosecutor. We had a fairly small office and we became good friends with Joe. Joe had a zest for life and was always upbeat. Every morning for about 10 minutes we would take a break and play the game on the local radio station in Kankakee. He would always start our day with a smile and a good laugh. Looking back now I can say I was privileged to have Joe and my partner Det. Powell in my life and career. Both have left this earth because God needed them more than I did. I will always remember Joe's smile, quick wit and his friendship. In closing, Joe and Harry are together again. And I bet they are playing the trivia game on Heaven's radio station. Till we meet again my friend.

Bill Carnahan - January 08, 2021 at 06:11 PM

ST

“ I knew Joe during the time I worked in the State's Attorney's Office in Kankakee. Joe was well liked by everyone because he was such a nice man -- a gentleman of the first order. Always respectful and always with a smile and a kind word for everyone. I no longer live or work in Kankakee, but I'm sure Joe will be sorely missed by many, many people. May God bless Joe and his family. Rest in well deserved peace, my friend. --Sandra Tarbell-Toogood.

SANDRA TOOGOOD - January 08, 2021 at 06:35 AM

JM

Worked with Joe when he was a prosecutor I remember his courthouse reputation for being a great dancer. I miss all the young people he and I worked with. He spent a great part of Cub Spring Training in Arizona. See you soon in Paradise. Judge Michela

john F Michela - January 08, 2021 at 07:24 PM



“ Starbucks Coffee Condolences was purchased for the family of Joseph P. Anthony.



January 08, 2021 at 05:27 AM



“ Lots of good memories of Joe from the our time together at the courthouse. He was a pleasure to work with and will be missed. RIP

Ernie Richardson - January 07, 2021 at 11:08 PM



“ I'm am saddened from this loss. I was blessed to know Joe from second grade until now. He was always a great guy, fun to be around, a man of character and integrity. Growing up in Marycrest together, we both knew many of the neighbors for blocks around our houses. I have many good memories that I will treasure. My sincere condolences to his family. I will be praying for you. Love you Joe.

Christine Belluso Duff - January 07, 2021 at 07:47 PM



“ I have so many great memories of Joe umping behind the plate when I played for Kranz Electric. He was soooo animated calling strikes that he could make you laugh when you got a called 3rd strike. My kids got to meet him and thought he was funny. I can still hear him say in a very high voice, HI JEFF! Joe was a great person and a life long friend to everyone who knew him.

Jeffrey Trost - January 07, 2021 at 06:21 PM

DY

“ I have a lot of good memory's growing up in Marycrest with Jot he is 5 years older than me But we played baseball in the summertime .a lot and at Beckmen park.

The last few year we connected on Facebook. would chat about baseball and the 3 stooges a the movie we both liked. he was a great man.

David j Yovich - January 07, 2021 at 03:34 PM

JB

I worked with Joe at the SA office. He was a good attorney and very efficient His desk was always clean. He was fun to work with Joey and Allyson you had a great dad and you have my deepest sympathy

Jeanne Benjamin - January 07, 2021 at 09:12 PM

BG

“ Gonna miss the good jokes



Bob Gartner - January 07, 2021 at 02:51 PM

MS

“ Got so many not sure where to start grew up in Marycrest together proly met Joey early 60s st Teresa school he's 2 years older played baseball football basketball together many times we loved the cubs laughed joked worshiped them even pretended to be them recently was my neighbor for 10 years we drank together at festivals bars always smiling and happy if the world had more people like him it would it be a better place God Bless Joey will be missed will post more memories later I'm in tears

moe savoie - January 07, 2021 at 02:43 PM

SW

“ I knew Joe from our time together at the Kankakee State's Attorney's office. He was a true eccentric and a funny, unique person. He wore cargo shorts in the middle of winter. He drank virgin daiquiries. He went to NC for the annual Andy Griffith festivals. He was memorable, and he won't be gone if we never forget him.

Steven Lee Wiggins - January 07, 2021 at 02:27 PM

GM

“ Joey and Allyson, our deepest condolences to you for the loss of your father. Joe was a well respected attorney and person and will be missed by many. I had great respect for Joe and you should be very proud of him.

Gary and Rose Mitchell - January 07, 2021 at 02:19 PM

JD

“ Joe, you will be greatly missed. When you achieved a not guilty against steep odds we learned a lot from you.

Jim Devine - January 07, 2021 at 01:00 PM

SR

“ I am so sorry for your loss. I got to know Joe through the Iroquois County States Attorney Office. He always made me laugh.

Susan Ratliff-Thomas - January 07, 2021 at 12:49 PM