



Ron Villella

December 13, 1943 - September 13, 2014

Ron Villella, dedicated public servant, respected Governmental Affairs Consultant, and devoted husband, father, grandfather and brother passed away from cancer on Saturday in Tallahassee at age seventy.

Ron touched the lives of many Floridians. He became the truest of friends to those he knew best. He was principled and honorable, creative and tireless. In all that he did he always put the interests of others ahead of his own.

Ron attended The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina on a football scholarship. His elected public service began as a City Commissioner and then as Mayor of Pembroke Pines, Broward County, Florida. He served as The South Florida Coordinator of Governor Bob Graham's first campaign for Governor and as Deputy Campaign Manager in Governor Graham's successful re-election campaign. Ron managed numerous other campaigns including the successful campaigns of Attorney General Bob Butterworth. His political instincts and understanding of practical politics were valued at all levels of government.

During the Graham Administration, Ron served as The Governor's first Director of Administration, and then as a Division Director in The Department of Labor.

In The Office of Attorney General Bob Butterworth, Ron served as Chief of Staff, supervising over 800 employees involved in all legislative, cabinet and administrative matters.

In 1993 Ron joined the firm of Smith, Bryan and Myers where he served

numerous public and private clients on complex matters involving all levels of government until his retirement.

Ron's every endeavor demonstrated his concern for each individual and their problems and aspirations. No task was too small, no person too unimportant to assist or guide. He was a mentor to many, an example to all.

In 1980 when The Mariel Boatlift brought thousands of refugees to Florida, Governor Graham sent Ron to Key West to manage one of the largest events to impact Florida. He discharged this duty with leadership and compassion. This year, he saw the publication that he authored with others that chronicled that momentous time in, "Florida and The Mariel Boatlift of 1980", published by The University of Alabama Press.

Ron was a devoted family man and worked hard to balance the demands of his career and the needs of his family. Ron's imprint on Florida is immense. His impact on those who were his friends and his family is harder to measure... It is as deep as the Sea, as clear as the Heavens and as wide as The River of Grass that runs through the State he loved.

Ron is survived by his wife of 49 years, Lynne; his children, Todd (wife Patricia), Jason (wife Bianca) and Courtney (husband Donovan); his grandchildren Sarah, Emily, Luna Mia, Sebastian and Olivia; and his brother Dan (wife Robin).

The family will receive friends from 5:00 PM until 8:00 PM, Wednesday, September 17th at Bevis Funeral Home of Tallahassee, 2710 North Monroe Street in Tallahassee. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11:00 AM, Thursday, September 18th at Good Shepherd Catholic Church, 4665 Thomasville Road, also in Tallahassee, with a reception to follow in the Parish Hall. A private interment will follow at MeadowWood Memorial Park.

In lieu of flowers, gifts in memory of Ron may be made to the American Cancer Society, www.americancancerfund.org; or to Big Bend Hospice, 1723 Mahan Blvd., Tallahassee, FL 32308.

Rocky Bevis at Bevis Funeral Home (850/385-2193 or bevisfh.com) is assisting the Villella family with their arrangements.

Cemetery Details

MeadowWood Memorial Park

700 Timberlane Rd.
Tallahassee, FL 32312

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP 17. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Bevis Funeral Home & Crematory
200 John Knox Rd
Tallahassee, FL 32303
(850) 385-2193

Memorial Mass

SEP 18. 11:00 AM (ET)

Good Shepherd Catholic Church
4665 Thomasville Rd.
Tallahassee, FL 32309

Reception

SEP 18. 12:00 PM (ET)

Good Shepherd Catholic Church
4665 Thomasville Rd.
Tallahassee, FL 32309

Tribute Wall

TH

“ *Ron was my mentor for many years. A man of deep compassion and dedication to public service and the human challenges of policy and power. I am honored to have been involved with his life and that of his beautiful family! Great job Ron!*

Tim Howard - October 20, 2014 at 10:16 PM

DB

“ *Mr. V - You're a great man with a big heart. You always gave me truthful advice, and a good talking to when I strayed my course (It was always deserved). Thank you for looking out for me even when others wouldn't have.*

SF - Dennis Bolde

Dennis Bolde - September 19, 2014 at 02:09 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Ron Villella.*



September 17, 2014 at 09:21 AM

TE

“ *Rest in peace my friend. You were a good man. It was a honor and pleasure knowing you.*

*Ted Griffin
Pensacola*

Ted - September 16, 2014 at 02:14 PM