



Mr. Jeffrey Paul Sarnacki

May 15, 1960 - May 20, 2020

Jeffrey Paul Sarnacki, 60, died very peacefully at home on May 20, 2020 after winning his freedom from a valiant fight against ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis). He was surrounded by family and lifted up by love always, and especially in the final days and hours of his life. He leaves behind a legacy of love, commitment, and dedication to his family and friends, who already miss him beyond measure.

Jeff was an extraordinary person – a deeply devoted husband to Juliet Taylor, loving father to Makelle and Derek, proud soon-to-be grandfather of a baby girl, cherished son of Stephen and Reba, and wonderful brother to Kathie Milewski, Mark Sarnacki (Teresa), Brian Sarnacki, Steve Sarnacki (Diane Page), Greg Sarnacki (Vivian) and Janet Beining (Jim), as well as sister-in-law Jill Graf. He was a favorite uncle to many nieces and nephews. He was an exceptional friend and will be missed by many. He also leaves behind his beloved dogs Rudder and Sailor and family horse Monte.

Jeff was born and raised in Wyandotte, Michigan and was very proud of his Polish heritage. He grew up enjoying his neighborhood and friends, playing sports, camping and fishing with his family. He was a standout athlete and graduate of Gabriel Richard Catholic High School, where he played both basketball and track & field. He graduated from Western Michigan University and was happy when his two younger brothers followed him to college, where many great stories were born.

Following college, Jeff began a 28 year career of public service. He started his federal career in 1984 as a Special Agent Accountant with the Federal Bureau of Investigation. During his time as an FBI Special Agent, Jeff conducted criminal investigations into significant crimes. In 1989, Jeff became a Special Agent with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) in Detroit. Always looking to improve and challenge himself, Jeff became an expert in arson and explosives investigations and achieved the title of Certified Fire Investigator. Due to his advanced skills and abilities, Jeff was selected as a member of ATF's elite National Response Team (NRT). One of his most challenging assignments in that role was working on the Oklahoma City Bombing in 1995.

Jeff was later promoted to Resident Agent in Charge of the Salt Lake City, UT, Field Office. During this time, he was also named as the ATF Program Manager for the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympics. His duties as the Olympic Program Manager included planning for all public safety-related issues. Jeff's efforts towards drafting the bomb prevention and response plan for the entire Olympic theater as well countless hours of hard work earned him the United States Attorney's Award for Leadership and the United States Attorney General Award for Outstanding Contributions to Community Partnerships for Public Safety.

Jeff was promoted to ATF Headquarters in Washington D.C. in 2004, beginning as a Branch Chief overseeing annual budget for the Field Operations Directorate. In 2006, he advanced to serve as a Division Chief in ATF's Intelligence Directorate. Jeff's continued hard work earned him a rare spot at the Marine War College where he graduated with a Masters Degree in Strategic and International Studies. He also served as the National Coordinator for the Department of Justice Emergency Support Function that oversaw the deployment of government wide federal law enforcement personnel in response to disaster. His crowning achievement in public service was serving on the White House Homeland Security Council as the Director of Law Enforcement Response Policy under Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama. He went on to serve as the Chief of Staff to ATF's Director before retiring from federal service in 2012.

After retiring, Jeff consulted in risk management, emergency management and disaster preparedness. From 2015 to 2017, Jeff served as the Director for the Global Operations Center and Safety and Security Leader for Quicken Loans. Jeff served on the Southern Methodist University Cyber Advisory Board and was a Senior Fellow at the George Washington University Center for Cyber and Homeland Security. He was a member of American Society of Industrial Security (ASIS), the National Fire Protection Association, ANSI, and the International Association of Emergency Managers.

While Jeff enjoyed an impressive career, the role that gave him the most joy was father. He took great pride in raising Makelle and Derek. He was looking forward to welcoming a granddaughter in October.

As a brother, Jeff was caring, funny, and up for anything. He enjoyed countless good times and jokes with his six siblings. He was fond of saying that as the middle child, he was the most well-adjusted. A particular favorite activity was weeklong fishing trips to Green Lake in Interlochen, Michigan.

Jeff was married to the love of his life. His time with Juliet was marked by commitment, shared values and fun. Together they enjoyed traveling, spending time on the water and the beach and seeing live music, but they were happiest spending quiet time together at home. Jeff was most content sitting by the water with friends and dogs, smoking a quality cigar and enjoying a cold beverage. He loved feeding the birds and squirrels, and was known for naming all of the neighborhood wildlife.

Upon Jeff's ALS diagnosis in November 2018, he shared with his family his commitment to living each day to its fullest, and he did. During his ALS fight, Jeff traveled to the Florida Keys; Hilton Head, SC; the Dominican Republic; Sun Valley, Idaho; the Canadian Rocky Mountains; Green Lake, Michigan, and other beautiful places. He took on an impressive number of household projects. ALS did not define Jeff, he simply found ways to work around it, and he fought with all he had.

We are devastated at his loss but we rejoice in knowing that we will see him again.

In lieu of flowers the family request donations to the
Johns Hopkins ALS Clinical Care & Ed Fund
C/o Lora Clawson
JHOPC - Suite 5070A
601 N Caroline Street
Baltimore MD 21287
or to the donor's favorite dog rescue.

Comments



“ My sincere condolences to Jeff’s family and many friends. I had the privilege to meet and work closely with Jeff in ATF HQ in 2010-2012 on some significant projects during a challenging period in the agency’s history. Jeff addressed his difficult tasks with confidence, commitment and compassion. He exuded leadership and integrity which inspired and guided others. He was and will be greatly missed but never forgotten. - Stuart Lowrey

Stuart Lowrey - July 01 at 02:36 PM



“ Very sorry to hear about Jeff's passing. We were teammates in the bicycle racing club Route 1 Velo while Jeff was living in the DC area, and Jeff was an officer on the Executive Committee as well. Condolences to the family.

Jeff Travis

Jeffrey Travis - June 25 at 04:07 PM



“ Very sad news regarding Jeff. I had the honor of working with Jeff in Detroit many years ago. Coincidentally, Jeff and I determined that we had competed in HS track and also attended Western Michigan University at the same time. Jeff went on to a truly remarkable career. Jeff cheerfully accepted personal sacrifice in order to serve our country. Condolences and comfort to his family and friends.

Greg Geider - June 19 at 09:13 PM



“ My husband and I always considered Jeff a good friend; we were saddened by the news of his diagnosis and knew he had fought hard after the horrible bike accident! We admired and respected him for a lot of reasons, and frequently agreed he was just a stand up guy. He was what you saw, consistently honest, caring and himself. I enjoyed his company, the laugh, the smile from an otherwise serious guy who didn't demand respect, but had it. He made an effort to be attend my mom's funeral and the house after. He was kind and caring and went out of his way for even those he didn't know. He helped Dan's sister and brother-in-law navigate the details after a shotgun shooting took the life of their only son. He will likely never know the countless little things he did that made a huge difference. Little acts of kindness. He was truly one of the good guys who made a difference in this world, and he deserved so much more!

Gods speed Jeff. Our hearts go out to Makelle, Derek and his family.

Laurie Peterson - Dan Empey



Laurie Peterson - June 09 at 02:58 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr. Jeffrey Paul Sarnacki.



May 31 at 12:27 AM



“ I am so sorry to hear about Jeff. I had the pleasure of working with Jeff on the NRT Western Team. I first met him on a call out in Salt Lake City before he was on the team. He made a lasting impression with his work ethic and wit. He was soon a member of the team and a welcome addition. I had forgotten about the cigars! I had to laugh when I read that because he always did enjoy a cigar in the evening after a hard day of digging out a fire scene. I remember Jeff and Marshall Littleton both lighting up, sitting back and enjoying the cigar. Jeff was one of those guys that kept you interested in his stories and his pleasure for a good laugh. He definitely left an impression with everyone that crossed his path. My prayers and condolences to you and the entire Sarnacki family. Maybe at one of the NRT reunions we will have a stogie in Jeff's honor.

David Opperman

David Opperman - May 28 at 10:24 AM



“ I have fond memories of working with my colleague Jeff at the White House. Jeff was one who spoke knowledgeably, with qualifications and experience. I raise my glass to him, and thank his family for letting us share his time with us.



Korey Jackson - May 25 at 02:42 PM



“ I had the honor of working with Jeff at the White House. We were office mates and I always looked forward to having a few cold American beers when we could all get away from our desks. A true professional, and someone I always admired for many reasons including love for our country and professional excellence. I was beyond impressed as he showed such determination and grit as he got back to health after the bike accident. I would like to think now he is on a dock, beer in hand and line in the water, just smiling. I will miss you.

brendan - May 24 at 06:18 PM



“ I love this so much. That's EXACTLY how I'd like to picture my Dad now too. Thank you for sharing

Makelle Sarnacki - June 01 at 07:29 PM



“ I had the pleasure of working on the periphery with Jeff first when he was in Salt Lake City, then as a fire investigator and member of the ATF National Response Team. He was a pleasure to get to know. I offer my most sincere condolences to Jeff's family and loved ones.

Steve Carman

Steve Carman - May 24 at 01:26 PM



“ One of the kindest and most impressive people I had the opportunity to cross paths with here in DC. I always looked forward to seeing Jeff and it was blessing when I would run into him. Perfect obituary that sums up a great person. He will be missed. Our family prays for all those he left behind but we take solace in knowing that we will see him in all his glory in the future. God bless.

Mike Koroluk - May 23 at 07:24 PM



“ Jeff, Angelo Vitale and myself were always a trio to go out and having fun, if it was concerts to go see or having great burgers at Lil Wally's, they were always great times. Condolences go to the whole family, and I loved seeing the vacation pictures that the family was able to share with Jeff, which it was great to see him smile. Rest in peace my friend and the next time we see each other maybe we can have another lil wally burger and some cold ones. Stay strong everyone...Paul Winall

Paul Winall - May 23 at 11:31 AM



“ This obituary is beautifully written. I knew Jeff through Juliet and he was always so gracious and funny and tolerant of us ladies when we had a fun wine nights at the harbor. Thank you for making Juliet so happy- she shared with us constantly what a wonderful man and father you were.

brittany kirk - May 22 at 11:55 PM



“ So sorry for your loss and the pain of losing a loved one. I worked with Jeff in Detroit as well as a couple different Headquarters offices. In HQ we would talk About biking and I remember his accident. He was a smart and funny man who had a great sense of humor.
Rest In Peace brother.

Do ald Soranno - May 22 at 10:16 PM



“ I hired Jeff away from the FBI while serving as the Detroit SAC. As was my habit, he was moved between ATF groups which provided experience in the many facets of our enforcement jurisdiction. Jeff was smart ... very smart, and we at the division level were often able to tap into his proficiency in database building and management.

A casual glance at his LINKEDIN page filled me in on the fantastic career he had carved out for himself since the time we worked together in Detroit. RIP, Jeff.

Bernie La Forest

Bernard La Forest - May 22 at 08:19 PM



“ Jeff was a force of nature and I am proud to have known and worked with him at ATF. I cannot begin to fathom your grief nor would I to attempt to assuage you from your sense of loss, but will only offer that the very memories that bring tears to your eyes today may very well bring a smile to your face in the years to come. I trust that you find solace in the knowledge that so many of his co-workers are praying for you and your family and cherishing our memories of Jeff.

Mark Kraft

Mark Kraft - May 22 at 06:17 PM



“ Jeff was the smartest guy in our CFI class and that's no small feat as the class was filled with smart people being taught by PhD's in chemistry and physics. Jeff pioneered the computer modeling of fires under official ATF investigation. He had a great career and will be missed.

Carl Bengtson - May 22 at 04:52 PM



“ Elena Seigler lit a candle in memory of Mr. Jeffrey Paul Sarnacki



Elena Seigler - May 22 at 12:05 PM