



Richard A. Cervantes

NOV 17, 1949 - JAN 2, 2019



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Richard A. Cervantes, 69, died peacefully at Lakewood Ranch Medical Center in Florida on January 2, 2019 after a long and challenging quality of life fight with autoimmune disease, lymphoma, diabetes, and congestive heart failure. Rich's life was particularly defined by his quest to understand and share best practices in correctional education and public safety, his family, and honing his gift to make people smile. Rich was born to Jose and Kay (Hughes) Cervantes on November 17, 1949 in Aurora, Illinois. He was raised with his brother Robert. He graduated from Aurora High School followed by subsequent college degrees from Waubensee Community College, University of Illinois Champaign/Urbana, Chicago State University, and doctoral studies at Northern Illinois University. Rich is survived by his wife Gayle (Saunders) and children Evan Cervantes (Jen), Kalle Ryan (Luke), Kelsey Warrner (Nick), and Katelyn Snack (Dustin); and grandchildren Paul Anthony Ryan, Paislie Marie Ryan (deceased), Preston Eugene Ryan, Ada Mae Warrner, Joseph Wilson Warrner, and Brooks Eugene Warrner. Grandson baby Snack is being excitedly expected soon. Rich was actively interested in and dedicated to the work he was committed to with the Department of Corrections in the State of Illinois for more than 26 years. His passion in Criminology studies and training professionals was fulfilled as faculty of Elgin Community College and Lincoln Trail College. He also assumed his community safety outreach as Director of Campus Safety at Elgin Community College and Chairman of the Drug/Gang Task Force in the region. He served on numerous community, state, and national committees in the betterment of community education, correctional education and gang task force leadership. Prior to his retirement from corrections he became certified as a hostage negotiator for the State. After his retirement in 2008 he was a real estate agent for Brinkoetter and Associates. His weekly "opening remarks" at ROMEO's breakfast meetings rounded out his week. Rich had a lifelong interest and early desire to learn through



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his leadership opportunity as Master Counsellor of the LaFayette Order of DeMolay and later as a 32nd degree Freemason of the Scottish Rite. His work and beliefs were grounded in his lifelong values of loyalty and brotherhood. Gifts in lieu of flowers in memory of Rich may be made to the Eleanor J. Saunders Memorial Endowed Scholarship at Richland Community College Foundation, Decatur Illinois. The private memorial service to celebrate Rich's life will be held January 28, 2019, 11:00 am at Graceland/Fairlawn Funeral Home in Decatur Illinois. A public Visitation will be held just prior to the service beginning at 10 am. Rich will be deeply missed by his family, his friends and colleagues, and those whom he touched with his humor and stories.



Tribute Wall

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CH

Christine posted:

Gayle... If you ever want to hear about the "Richard" I knew, please be in touch. I'm on Facebook. (Denver)Take care. And, again, sorry about Richard.

February 6 at 2:55 PM

CH

Christine posted:

Gayle, you don't know me. I'm an old girlfriend. While looking up someone Richard had worked with in the past I see that he's gone.Sorry for your troubles and your loss.He was a really good guy.Christine

February 6 at 2:26 PM

SC

Susan Creek posted:

To Gayle and family, I was so sad to hear about Rich. I very much wanted to attend the visitation and give you my condolences in person but was unable to do so as I am recuperating from a typical Illinois winter virus. I have great memories of working with Rich at Taylorville and will especially always remember his wry sense of humor and bad (but funny) jokes. I loved listening to his stories about his earlier days in Corrections. One of my best memories with Rich is the time another co-worker won 2 last-minute tickets to an Illini football game and Rich and I attended the game. The team wasn't favored to win but we cheered and yelled and had the best time as they unexpectedly led the entire game. And then they lost on a last-second field goal. And we shook our heads and laughed some more. I will always be grateful to Gayle that he was "allowed to come out and play" (his words) that day. Rich was one-of-a-kind and I am thankful for the time we spent working together and being friends. I will keep all of you in my prayers as I know he will be greatly missed.

January 28 at 6:22 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Richard by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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