



Daniel McKenzie Speer

November 27, 1949 - April 20, 2017

Daniel McKenzie Speer, age 67, passed away at Centennial Medical Center in Nashville, Tennessee on April 20, 2017, with his wife, Brenda, by his side.

Dan was preceded in death by his parents, Dr. John and Johanna Speer, brothers Michael Speer and Steve Speer, and sister Mary Toby Speer Perkins. He is survived by Brenda Sanders Speer, his wife of 34 years, brothers John Speer of Bowie, Maryland and Frank (Joanne) Speer of Smyrna, sisters-in-law Nancy Manthey (George) of Knoxville, and Sue Braly (Jeff) of Pulaski, Beth Speer of Thompson's Station, several nieces, nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews, his many friends and associates, and his church family at First Presbyterian Church.

Dan was a true son of Giles County, Tennessee. He was born in 1949 in Pulaski and grew up nestled in the loving embrace of a large family and community. He attended Columbia Military Academy and graduated with a BS and Masters from Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro.

Dan's first elected office was Pulaski city alderman in 1984. In 1990, with the encouragement of his friends and family, he ran for and was elected Mayor of Pulaski, an office he held for 21 years. In 2010 Dan stepped down from political office and became Executive Director of the Pulaski/Giles County Economic Development Commission. He served as Director until his health

compelled him to step down just days before he passed.

As Mayor of Pulaski, Dan led the city through some of its most difficult and most glorious hours. His term of office saw a complete revision of the city charter, the creation of an ambitious network of trails and sidewalks, the development of a second industrial park, the restoration of Sam Davis park and stadium, and the renovation of public housing.

Dan's proudest moment came as the city struggled against outside efforts to resurge its darkest history. As white supremacy groups flooded into his small town, Dan and community activists led the city in a massive brotherhood movement that engaged civic cooperation across racial, economic and religious lines to present a united Pulaski front against the threat. Dan won, the City won, and the city is still winning, today. The whole country took notice of the victory, and recognition followed as Pulaski was named an All-American City by the National Civic League and Dan was recognized as small town Mayor of the Year by the National Association of Towns and Townships.

In his position with Economic and Community Development, Giles County enjoyed unprecedented job growth, unemployment cut in half, and a dramatic resurrection from economic recession to growth and prosperity - and the bringing of broadband internet service to the County. Dan's strong hand continued throughout his difficult battle with cancer, and the ongoing great works of the Board bear his marked determination for development, innovation and recruitment.

Dan's awards and personal recognitions are many. His humility rarely saw him discuss his personal role in these accomplishments; instead Dan always attributed his proudest work to the sense of community and indiscriminating love of those around him. Above all, Dan was stubbornly loyal and lived his life with great integrity.

Dan was a lifelong student of local history, an avid runner, an accomplished chef, and a lover of good music.

Dan adored Brenda, his family, his pets Lucy, Mac, Ozzie and Guy, and his many friends. His kindness to others, sense of purpose, and zeal for life were traits loved by all who knew him.

Visitation will be held Saturday, April 22, 2017, from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Martin Methodist College's Curry Christian Life Center, in Pulaski. Visitation will continue from 3:00pm until 5:00pm on Sunday, April 23, 2017, with the funeral service to follow at 5:00 p.m. at Martin Methodist College's Curry Christian Life Center.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the Giles County Public Library 122 South 2nd Street; the Giles County Education Foundation, 204 South 1st Street; and the Dan Speer Memorial Scholarship Fund at Martin Methodist College, 433 West Madison Street, all in Pulaski, TN 38478.

Bennett-May-Giles County Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements for Daniel McKenzie Speer.

Tribute Wall

CS

“ Sent a gift in memory of Daniel McKenzie Speer

Caroline Scoggin - February 09, 2017 at 07:02 PM

SH

“ So very sorry for your loss.

Sam and Johnnie Sue Hobbs - February 09, 2017 at 07:02 PM

JB

“ Brenda so sorry for your loss

Johnny Beatty - February 09, 2017 at 07:02 PM

CS

“ I so admired your many years of marriage

Caroline Scoggin - February 09, 2017 at 07:02 PM

EM

“ Lit a candle in memory of Daniel McKenzie Speer

Elizabeth Maxwell - February 09, 2017 at 07:02 PM

PK

“ This obituary is so well done because it's not just a resume, it's a description of a legacy left to all of us in the community. Dan and Brenda have modeled good citizenship . Their attachment to one another is inspirational.

pamela keller - February 09, 2017 at 07:02 PM