

Randy Smith

Randy Lee Smith

Randy Lee Smith, 48, a longtime resident of Fairbanks, died peacefully Feb. 17, 1998, after a long struggle with cancer. With the help of the Hospice of the Tanana Valley volunteers, we were able to grant his desire to remain at home, surrounded by the love of friends and family, until he left this world for his true home. He will be greatly missed.

Randy was born in Seattle, Wash, on Dec 26, 1949, and made his first trip to Alaska when he was two months old. He was quite taken with the place and spent most of his childhood in Palmer and most of his high school and adult life in Fairbanks.

After graduating from Lathrop High School, he worked at the Fort Wainwright Service Station, where he rose to the position of assistant manager in spite of his ponytail.

Randy spent several years in BLM, from camping out in front of the State Building waiting to go out on an emergency crew, to the position of Chief of Base Services.

In 1984 Randy decided to try his hand at real estate as it looked like a place where one could be rewarded in proportion to the effort put forth. Because of his high energy, dedication, and integrity he thrived, and became very active within the profession as well as the community. He retired from real estate in September 1997, when he no longer felt that he could give his client and associates the level of dedication that he expected of himself. He also wanted to spend his remaining time with friends and family and seeing more of the state via a motor home.

Randy was preceded in death by his mother Marjorie L. Schedlerman Smith. He is survived by his wife Carla Batchelor-Smith, his daughter Sara Smith, both of Fairbanks, his father Henry B. Smith, and stepmother Sylvia M. Smith, who put their lives on hold in Torrington, Wyo., for the last five months to be here with their son.

Randy is also survived by three brothers, Dennis Smith of Anchorage, Walter Smith of Torrington, Wyo., and Jan Smith of Missoula, Mont.

For many years Randy has been an advocate for the youth of Fairbanks through both the educational arena and youth activities.

Randy Smith

Randy Smith dies at 48; fought for kids' causes by Douglas Fischer

Randy Smith, a community volunteer who championed children and helped build the Fairbanks Boys and Girls Club, died Tuesday evening after an extended battle with cancer. He was 48.

Smith advocated strongly for children by volunteering in the schools, promoting the 1999 school bond sale, and giving struggling youths a boost and a bit of support.

"He was all for the kids," said Bob Boko, a Fairbank City Councilman and former school board member who worked with Smith. "He had a goal in life to see that this community grew."

Smith spent part of his teens in Fairbanks, graduating from Lathrop High School in 1968.

He volunteered for the Parent-Teacher Association and helped set up the Tanana Middle School homework hotline. But his work establishing the Fairbanks Youth Center Boys and Girls Club is perhaps his best-known legacy.

Smith, whose family moved to Fort Wainwright when he was 15, said last year that the post's teen center played a critical role in keeping him out of trouble and that his work at the youth center stemmed from a desire to keep other kids from trouble.

"He was a kid who grew up here and succeeded here," said Boko. "He wanted to see this community be the same community that he knew as a kid."

Carla Batchelor-Smith said her husband got involved with his only daughter and her friends early.

"He liked to turn them toward constructive things," she said Wednesday. "There was still a big old kid left in him, so he tended to connect fairly well."

Smith's proudest moment was the graduation bash he helped throw for Lathrop High School in 1996, the year his daughter, Sara,

graduated, Batchelor-Smith said. Sponsorship and a tremendous turnout turned the party into a big hit, she added - and kept seniors from other soirees where alcohol might have been served.

Bill Burrows, chairman of the Fairbanks North Star Borough school board, worked closely with Smith on education issues. Smith served as chairman of the Chamber of Commerce's education committee.

Considering how much he accomplished in such a short time, it's impressive," Burrows said. "He really should be recognized for his contributions."

When Smith wasn't volunteering, he was selling houses. He spent 13 years in the real estate business, most recently at Somers and Associates.

Friends attributed part of Smith's charisma to his zeal for perfection.

In the interview last year, Smith said he was a "reforming" type-A personality. Kelly Gunnels, a senior vice president in charge of real estate lending at Denali State Bank, chuckled when asked if that was accurate.

"He just really pushed to be the best he could be." She said. "He expected that of others, and he respected that."

About Us

Randy Smith Middle School opened in 1999.

The school was named for Randy Lee Smith, a local real estate agent and devoted education advocate. In its brief history, Randy Smith Middle School has developed a strong sense of community among staff, parents, volunteers and students. This is reflected in the many learning opportunities provided for students outside of the classroom.

Contact Information

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