



Raymond Louis Serena

September 7, 1938 - July 2, 2024

85, passed away on July 2, 2024, in Joliet, IL. Born on September 7th, 1938, in South Wilmington, IL, he was a member of Saint Lawrence Catholic Church. Ray is survived by his wife Mary Lou, children; Kori (Terry) Speed, Kathi (John) Hernandez, Kristi Serena and Kip (Michelle) Serena and grandchildren; Taylor Speed, Troy Speed, Sydney (Sam) Jones, Ross (Rachael) Serena. He is preceded in death by his parents; Joseph B. Serena and Dominica 'Minnie' Casagrande Serena, and siblings; Martin J. Serena, Joseph V. Serena and Amelia 'Millie' Bernardi Hagmayer. He was a 1956 graduate of Gardner-South Wilmington High School where he excelled at basketball. He entered the U.S. Army in 1962 and was trained as a Meteorologist Observer, E-4 Specialist and received a Good Conduct Medal. Ray's early jobs were as a Sears repairman and a cement mason. He moved on to start his own business, Ray Serena Construction Company, based in Gardner, IL. The company was involved in many commercial jobs in the area such as the Joliet Prison, Joliet YMCA and State of Illinois Youth Center. Ray was an honorary life member of the Knights of Columbus, Braidwood Council #1574, with 66 years in the Order and 51 years in the 4th Degree. He was the commissioner for the Village of Gardner starting in 1970 and served as the town's Mayor for 20 years, 1975-1995. Ray was a true Republican and enjoyed local politics. He served on the GOP Precinct Committee and was the GOP Grundy County Republican Chairman in the 80' and 90's. He was an essential part of a number of Republican candidate's campaigns from

representatives to congressmen to governors in Illinois. Ray spent his time after retirement doing small remodeling jobs and fishing. The family would like to express their gratitude to the staff at Lightways Hospice for the compassionate care provided during Ray's time there. A funeral mass in his honor will be held Saturday, September 7th at 1p at Saint Lawrence Catholic Church in South Wilmington, IL, followed by a luncheon at the Father Matthew Hall. A ceremony for internment of ashes will be at the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, IL, on Monday, September 9th at 12p. To share condolences or memories with his children: kserena88@hotmail.com or Serena Siblings, 6259 Aspen Drive, West Des Moines, IA 50266.

Cemetery Details

Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery

20953 W. Hoff Rd.
Elwood, IL 60421

Previous Events

Memorial Service

SEP 7. 1:00 PM (CT)

St. Lawrence Catholic Church
165 Rice St.
South Wilmington, IL 60474
(815) 237-2230

Tribute Wall

TL

“ *My condolences to the whole family about the loss of your father. Your in our prayers. Your family was always good to me.*
Tonya & Gerald london

tonya london - September 15, 2024 at 05:12 PM

PN

“ *My condolences to all the family. Ray lived a good life! Love to the family.*

Peggy Nelson - August 28, 2024 at 12:50 PM

MD

“ *My condolences to all the family.*

Mary Dondanville - August 27, 2024 at 05:26 PM

JH

“ *I worked for ray long ago . He always had something going as far as work went. Over the years I'd run into him, and he always remembered me even after 20yrs. Rip ☐ ray. Joe Hanson*

Joe Hanson - August 27, 2024 at 02:47 PM

SP

“ *Ray was a very active member of our community. He worked hard his 20 years as mayor for the good of the Gardner residents. Always a gentleman who had time to talk with people. He was our friend and will be sadly missed. Rip Ray. Rob and Sharon Pickles*

sharon Pickles - August 26, 2024 at 02:36 PM