



OBITUARY FOR DENNIS PALKA

Dennis Thomas Palka, 61, passed away suddenly on Good Friday, March 25, 2016 in Florida. He died from complications of routine heart surgery at the Mayo Clinic, in Jacksonville, Florida surrounded by family and friends.

Dennis was born on May 6, 1954 in East Hartford to the late Albina (Chilvin) and the late Joseph Louis Palka. Dennis attended the American School for the Deaf (ASD) until his graduation in 1972. He went on to Gallaudet University in Washington D.C. for his B.A. degree then to Western Maryland College where he obtained his Master's degree in Education of the Deaf and returned to ASD in 1977 to begin a long and illustrious career as a Teacher up to the present day.

In his affiliation with ASD, Dennis taught Mathematics to younger and older deaf students, was a well-respected athletic coach, was a union federation president and was a liaison for deaf international students attending the school. Additionally, he was chair for the ASD Alumni Association chapter preparing for the school's 200th anniversary in 2017 and was very involved as a leader in the local and national Deaf community most notably as President of the Hartford Club of the Deaf.

Dennis lived most of his life in East Hartford, before moving to Bolton and finally to West Hartford.

Dennis is survived by his beloved sister Ursula Tiberio and her husband Carmen of St. Augustine, Florida, his aunt Joan Palka, cousins Tony Palka, Jimmy Palka, Barbara Viestart Ray, Henry Palka, Mike Ray Palka, Kathy Palka and many more cousins, and very close special friends, Lou and Kae Volpintesta.

Dennis loved the American School for the Deaf, where he grew up as a student and continued to grow professionally when he returned as a teacher, known by all for his infectious humor and smile. A proud man, Dennis expected and wanted only the best from and for his students. Dennis will remain a beloved Alumnus and Faculty of the school.

A winner of numerous awards for his leadership and athletic coaching, he will be sorely missed by all of his family, friends, and colleagues.

Calling Hours will be on Tuesday, April 5, 2016 from 4:00-7:00 PM at Benjamin J. Callahan Funeral Home, 318 Burnside Avenue, East Hartford, CT 06018.

Funeral Mass of Christian Burial on Wednesday, at 10:00 AM, St. Mary's Church, 1584 Main Street, East Hartford, CT. 06108

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that donations in Dennis' name be made to:

The American School for the Deaf (ASD), the American School for the Deaf Athletic Program and the International Program at ASD – c/o ASD-IA Department, 139 North Main Street, West Hartford, CT 06107