



Andrew P Baldes

December 3, 1964 - September 26, 2019

Andrew Philip “Andy” Baldes died of natural causes on September 27, 2019. Andy was born on December 3, 1964, in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, the fourth of the five sons of Richard and Jean Baldes. Andy He was mostly raised by his father and loving (step) mom, Ann, in their blended family of ten children which he referred to as “the Brady Bunch on steroids.”

Andy graduated from Tuscaloosa Central High School and studied printing at Fredd State Technical College. He enjoyed his career as a printing pressman, which he chose while still in high school.

Andy also served his country for seven years in the United States Air Force as a law enforcement officer from 1985 to 1992, including two tours in the Philippines and duty in California, Alabama, and Texas. He had SWAT training and represented the Air Force in a competition for military law enforcement teams. He developed some impressive skills, including being able to rappel down the side of a building upside down. Fortunately, it wasn’t a necessary skill in his later life.

Upon his return to civilian life, he passed up job offers in law enforcement, noting that in the Air Force, no one ever shot at him. He was pleased to return to his beloved career in printing, which he practiced for many years in Florence and Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

A devout follower of Jesus, Andy served for years as a volunteer sound technician at First Baptist Florence and Calvary Baptist Tuscaloosa for church services and weddings. He grew a beard to play the apostle Andrew in the living Lord’s Supper one Easter at Calvary.

Andy’s other passions included cycling, collecting amusing t-shirts and studying the German language. He began cycling seriously while in the Air Force and still cycled regularly for 2-3 hours a day several days a week. He enjoyed amateur bike racing for many years, never winning any major races, but just enjoying the sport, the exertion, pulling on the front for a teammate, and all the nice people he met along the way. He loved watching professional cycling races on TV, DVD, and live streaming, and witnessed

stages of the Tour de France in person in 2015 and 2017, experiences he never tired of discussing.

His collection of t-shirts included many topics that were dear to him such as “Love your neighbor” which he had in both English and German, and “Melanoma Survivor,” and some that were funny or only understandable to cycling enthusiasts such as “Shut up, legs!” and “It’s only pain.” This summer Andy had been wearing a very truthful shirt that said, “WARNING: May start talking about cycling.” Andy loved to wear cool t-shirts, but his favorites said in big letters “I love my wife” and “Ich liebe meine Frau.” It was his travel day shirt, and his wife had a matching one. He loved wearing it because people would ask about it and then he could tell them how much he loved his wife. He proudly proclaimed his love for his wife across many states and several countries.

Because his grandparents were German immigrants, he became interested in learning the German language, at first teaching himself then taking classes along with his wife at two different universities and at the Goethe Institute in Schwabisch Hall, Germany, on three separate occasions. He loved cycling in Europe, meeting new friends from all over the planet, visiting the hometown of his paternal grandfather, experiencing the spectacle of the Tour de France in person, camping in the mountains of Arkansas and North Carolina, and hanging out with friends and family in Sweden. He planned to learn Swedish next.

Andy took his wife to see the movie Cars on their first date to a Saturday matinee full of children. They laughed so much they never wanted to be apart again. He loved to laugh with everyone, but especially with his wife and mother-in-law, Kay. When they first met, Andy encouraged his future wife to try cycling just a little bit further. Five miles grew to ten and then by her 40th birthday that year, he had her cycling 40 miles. He loved encouraging new cyclists and was still doing so regularly. In 2007, he and Amelia rode away from their wedding reception on their tandem bicycle, but only after first having a comical slow motion fall over because someone had put the bike in a much too hard gear for them to get it going.

He followed his wife from job to job and city to city, always supporting her in her academic career. He became a househusband after they married so they could spend as much time together as possible and fulfill their travel dreams. He loved her with an everlasting love, taught her how to tent camp, and how to use all her bike’s gears properly. She taught him how to swim better and they completed triathlons together.

In 2012, Andy was unexpectedly diagnosed with Stage III Melanoma. Major surgery and a nasty year-long treatment period followed in which he never lost his sweet personality,

even though he felt physically awful, lost all his fitness, got glaucoma, and his eye lashes grew aggravatingly long and curly and had to be regularly trimmed, something he found bizarre and annoying. He was very proud to be a melanoma survivor, and wanted everyone to be reminded to see a dermatologist on their birthday each year wearing only their birthday suit. Consider yourself reminded.

Andy loved reading classic literature and Tom Clancy novels. He loved listening to audiobooks. He loved movies such as Star Wars, Star Trek, and funny animated children's movies such as Despicable Me and Monsters versus Aliens. He adored British comedy in all forms and was watching an episode of Monty Python's Flying Circus when he passed into the afterlife.

Andy never met a stranger. He never held a grudge. He loved everyone. He was always concerned about doing the right thing and being helpful. He was a beautiful, gentle soul, ever strong in his faith in Jesus. He read his Bible (on his Kindle) first thing every morning, reading through the entire Bible almost every year. Andy was endlessly patient, including smiling almost every time his wife photographed him. The internet is littered with countless photos of this smiling man, mostly behind a plate of scrumptious food at every restaurant they frequented in their travels.

Andy answered to many names including Andrew, Andy, Andreas, Drew, Superman, and Mr. Wonderful. He would answer to anything, including HEY YOU or What's His Name or Captain Obvious, if it made someone happy.

He leaves his wife of 12 years, Amelia Annette Baldwin; his Mom, Ann Baldes; six brothers and one sister; countless in-laws and out-laws; and many beloved nieces, nephews, great nieces, great nephews, and cousins. He was preceded in death by his father, his biological mother, and two brothers, Ted and Larry.

Andy will be interred with military honors at the Alabama State Veterans' Memorial Cemetery in Spanish Fort in a graveside ceremony at 11am on Friday, October 4, 2019. In lieu of flowers, donations are suggested in memory of Andrew P. Baldes to the M. D. Anderson Melanoma & Skin Center, Angel Flight South Central, your favorite cancer or cycling related charity, or any charity that helps people.

Arrangements are entrusted to Cason Funeral Service in Foley Alabama

Events

OCT **Military Graveside Service** **11:00AM**

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Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Spanish Fort
34904 AL-225, Spanish Fort, AL, US, 36577

Comments



“ 2 files added to the album Memories Album



Mindy Norton - October 02, 2019 at 04:39 PM



“ I personally never met Andrew but I have always enjoyed his and Amelias' adventures. Even when they traveled back and forth to Houston for his cancer treatments they just always made the most of the journeys. I always looked forward to seeing all the posts from them.

I really hate that I didn't visit with them while down there for vacation. But I was glad I was able to sit with Amelia Friday morning. I love her dearly and I wish I could have met Andrew.

Deborah Hendrix - October 02, 2019 at 12:26 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Amelia Baldwin - October 02, 2019 at 12:24 PM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Amelia Baldwin - October 02, 2019 at 12:23 PM