



Scott Esten Hendley

August 20, 1965 - March 16, 2020

Scott Esten Hendley, 54, of Alexandria, VA, passed away peacefully, but unexpectedly, from cardiac arrest on the evening of Monday, March 16, 2020. He was an Alexandria resident for 29 years. Scott was born on August 20, 1965 in Tyler, Texas. He was the youngest of three sons born to William Esten (aka Buddy) and Mary Elaine Hendley. Scott graduated from the University of Texas at Austin where he received a bachelor's degree in Government, and master's degree from the LBJ School of Public Affairs at UT Austin. Scott is survived by the lights of his life, who will dearly miss him: his wife, Renée, and their children, Nathaniel and Kathryn (Katya). He is survived by his older brother, Dane, his wife, Sharon Rose, and their son, Grant Hendley, of Tyler, Texas. His parents, William Esten and Mary Elaine Hendley, and his oldest brother, Michael, preceded him in death. Scott was hired directly out of graduate school by the U.S. Department of Justice (DoJ) as a Presidential Management Intern, proudly telling us all he wanted to become a bureaucrat! His career spanned 30 years where he rose to become the Associate Director of Policy at the Office of Policy and Legislation within DoJ's Criminal Division. Scott was an exceptional public servant whose career spanned more than 30 years as a policy analyst supporting Attorneys General Richard Thornburgh, William Barr, Janet Reno, John Ashcroft, Alberto Gonzales, Michael Mukasey, Eric Holder, Loretta Lynch, Jeff Sessions, and William Barr again on a broad range of strategic policy issues. In the 1990s, Scott researched, and developed strategies related to organized crime in the former Soviet Union -

this work was used to develop a 2004 comprehensive guide on Russian Money Movements. ¶ In the early 2000s, Scott's research and strategies helped to identify sources of terrorist financing - this work later served as a user's guide for federal prosecutors. ¶ After the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, Scott worked with a team to draft an award-winning study that involved developing recommendations on gun control policy. ¶ Scott also was on a task force charged with working collaboratively with Mexican officials to assess and develop policy related to drugs, firearms and explosives trafficking. In his free time, Scott wrote feature wine reviews for the Shenandoah Valley's Mountain Courier and the Alexandria Times before establishing the National Wine Review as an independent online publication in 2012. He recently joined the team at Alexandria Living Magazine, where he highlighted the attributes of Virginia wines. Scott was a self-described "equal opportunity" wine taster and tasted and evaluated wines from around the world but he held a special affection for California wines, especially along the Sonoma Coast. Scott and his wife, Renée (also a graduate of the LBJ School of Public Affairs), were married in Austin, Texas, in 1990 and were blessed to share 30 incredible years together. Scott was a deeply loving and devoted husband and a wonderful and present father -- the big-hearted, foundational rock who loved his family more than anything. Scott and Renée raised two kind and thoughtful children together in Alexandria, VA. His daughter, Kathryn, graduated with a Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Urban Planning from the University of Virginia and is working in Baltimore. His son, Nathaniel, is a senior in high school and will attend the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) to study television and film production. Scott and Nathaniel shared a passion for good film making and watched countless movies together. Scott encouraged Katya to buy her first house over a glass of dark beer in a Belgian beer hall. He cooked many gourmet meals in her new kitchen before retiring to the basement for a night of horror films with Nathaniel. Scott supported Nathaniel's dream of becoming a filmmaker, touring film schools across the country, providing thematic inspiration for short films, and serving as a

supporting actor in Nathaniel's productions. Scott and his family enjoyed many joyful times at their vacation home in Virginia's Shenandoah Mountain. Family-loved activities include biking, hiking, fishing, and toasting friends and family with a nice bottle of wine and epic meals. Scott Hendley knew how to enjoy life. He greeted the world with a smile and a twinkle in his eyes. A lover of travel and discovery, his was a generous spirit through whom encouragement, support, delicious food and wine flowed freely to all who had the good fortune to know him. A connoisseur of many fine things, his favorite pastime was discussing wine. Scott was known as a wine super-taster, and had the fine art of teaching all who were interested about the 4 Wine Senses (Sight, Smell, Taste, and Touch) so that more people could appreciate all kinds of wine as he did. These are precarious times when we'd like to make a difference when we can. During the current conditions of the COVID-19, his family kindly requests all to please consider making offerings in Scott Esten Hendley's name to the Fisher Center for Alzheimers Research Foundation Like many of us, Alzheimer's runs in Scott's family. Scott's mother, Mary Elaine (who was a lot like Scott, extremely generous, funny, and knew just what to do in such situations) died of Alzheimer's disease. Because of the COVID-19 virus, we can't hold a public memorial right now. We will come together to celebrate his life as soon as we are permitted to do so. Events Details are pending.

Tribute Wall

DH

“ With the passage of time and a move back to my home country I lost touch with your family. I have never forgotten Scott's generosity and coming to your home for fine meals (and wine) and feeling the incredible warmth of your family. I was so terribly saddened to belatedly learn of Scott's passing. He was a gift to the world.
Deborah Hansell

deborah hansell - March 10, 2023 at 12:00 AM

RH

“ I remember that Praying Mantis, Jody. The kids called him Pepe for short, and absolutely loved him and Winkler Nature camps. Winkler was the best of the best. We still have several nature clocks, an Addarandack chair, a trash can - several gems the kids made over the years there' thank you for that fun memory!

Renee Hendley - May 02, 2020 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ I came to know Scott as the loving father of Kathryn and Nathaniel. Both children attended my nature camp at the Winkler Botanical Preserve. One spring, I sent Nathaniel home from camp with a real praying mantis egg sac inside of a habitat container hand-made by Nathaniel. The idea was that Nathaniel could release the hundreds of baby mantises back to nature when they hatched and perhaps keep one in the habitat container to observe its growth. However, this mantis would have to be fed wingless fruit flies that could be purchased from the pet store. I wasn't sure how this would go over with parents, especially having to buy wingless fruit flies, but imagine my delight upon learning that Scott fully embraced this idea and that is how Pedro the Praying Mantis became a loving family member of the Hendley family. Dear Renée, Kathryn and Nathaniel, I am so sorry for your loss. I will never forget Scott's story of how he helped Nathaniel raise Pedro and the laughter we shared. Sincerely, Jodie Smolik

Jodie Smolik - March 28, 2020 at 12:00 AM

EL

“ My deepest condolences on Scott's passing. I know its been a long time since graduate school and the early days in D.C. I will make sure to toast Scott with my glass of Sonoma red. Eduardo Luna, San Diego, CA

Eduardo Luna - March 26, 2020 at 12:00 AM

RM

“ My wife and I met Scott back in December when we visited DC for the first time. Renee is a childhood friend of mine. The two of them picked us up from the hotel our first night in town and took us to the DOJ building for a private tour. Scott was so passionate about his job and loved talking about the history of the building. We then went for a tour around DC and yet again Scott knew his history! Smart guy indeed. We went for drinks and had a great time laughing and talking on so many different topics. Although it was my first and last time meeting Scott the impression he made will stay with me forever. It was epic! Renee was lucky to have him for 30 years. RIP friend.

Rosie & Melinda - March 25, 2020 at 12:00 AM

BV

“ Renee, Katya and Nathaniel, I have no words to express the deep sympathy i have for your loss. The world was a brighter and kinder place because of Scott. He is a good soul and surely will reap the benefits of that as will his family. For years Scott and I rode the bus together and enjoyed sharing many a conversation. I will remember those conversations fondly. Many blessings to you all.

Barbara Viney - March 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM

SK

“ Scott sensed things oblivious to others. While he, Renee, my wife Catherine, and I stood in line for a jazz concert at the Swedish Embassy, Scott, with a devilish smile, made a comment about my hands. Fifty-plus years with these hands and I couldn't see their paw-like presence. So much about Scott was eye-opening.

Stu Kantor - March 23, 2020 at 12:00 AM

KS

“ There were many things to love about Scott - like the sight of him breezing into the neighborhood with his hair flowing behind him in his open topped Jeep - but I think it is his voice that will remain in my head forever. How can the sound of a voice convey humor gentleness and wisdom all with a gentle twang - not sure how - but he did. I will also remember him for his always evident love for Renee, Katya, and Nathaniel - it was in every word and action. Still can't believe he isn't here but prayers of peace for those grieving him so much right now.

Katy Sokolove - March 23, 2020 at 12:00 AM

DL

“ What a beautiful tribute to Scott! Definitely captured his essence that we will all miss. Our condolences to the entire family. Debra, Dave and Ellen Livingston

Debra Livingston - March 23, 2020 at 12:00 AM

LA

“ What a perfect tribute and picture of Scott. I see the twinkle in his eye, hear his laughter and sense his happiness and love of life and family. Yes, he was extremely proud of his wife and children and made life fun. SO many will miss you Scott. We will continue to take care of Renee, Katya and Nathaniel. Love your sis, Laura Lovett

Laura - March 23, 2020 at 12:00 AM

DL

“ I lent Scott my kilt and trappings a time or two for him to wear to the Alexandria Scottish Parade. I'm sure Renee would agree he was a strapping, bonnie figure! Gotta love him!

David Livingston - March 23, 2020 at 12:00 AM