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John Nimrod, RIP

submitted by former State Rep. Penny Pullen

John Nimrod has been out of office more than 20 years, but the constituents he served – and the friends with whom he served – still remember him as a dedicated state senator, an advocate for the right to Life who lived out his commitment in his own family. He was an engineer by profession and advocated sound, creative changes in energy policy before anyone else was paying attention. And he held down the fort for the Republican Party as township committeeman in the very challenging north suburban neighborhoods of Niles Township.

He was also a good friend to a young legislative aide whose boss had died while in office, hiring her part-time to help with his own work and then helping her get elected to the Illinois House in her own right ... and driving back and forth to Springfield sessions with me, staying awake at the wheel by singing Christian camp songs and sharing his faith with me, eventually taking me, along with his family, to his church's anniversary banquet, where I accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior under the compelling preaching of evangelist Luis Palau.

John was controversial; he rubbed many people the wrong way. But that often happens when a public official stands on principle and carries integrity into office. And it happens when such a man refuses to get out of the way so a younger man – of infinitely less principle and worth – decides it's time to move up. He was, in the end of his legislative career, ill served by the voters he had served so well, but his disappointment did not turn to bitterness. He turned instead to further work for his Lord, devoting himself to the wellbeing and international representation of one of the world's displaced and sometimes persecuted people groups, the Assyrian Christians, of whom John was a tireless leader.

Now he is enjoying the welcome of his Lord and Savior in the peace of his eternal reward. The tears shed by those he left behind are tears of gratitude for having known such a complicated man both of generous heart and of ethical rectitude. In my life, John Nimrod made a profound difference. I rejoice in the sure knowledge I will one day see him again.