

James A. Gammon (1934-2011)

James A. Gammon, founding member of the law firm of Gammon & Grange, and Gammon Media Brokers, died August 3 of pancreatitis at the age of 77. He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Joanne Mott Gammon of Chevy Chase, Maryland, a daughter and four sons, 14 grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Jim was a 1956 graduate of Notre Dame and a 1959 graduate of Georgetown Law School. After practicing energy law for a few years, Jim joined the communications practice of Laura Molnar which was named Molnar & Gammon. After Molnar's death some years later in an automobile accident, the firm was renamed Gammon & Associates which it remained until 1978 when it became Gammon & Grange, the name by which it is known today.

Recognizing an opportunity, Jim and others formed a media brokerage firm in 1981 which evolved into Gammon Media Brokers. Over the years, Jim's media brokerage work consumed more of his time, and by the early '90s, brokerage had become a full-time occupation. Nevertheless, he maintained a presence with the law firm up to his death.

Jim and his firm have long been associated with the religious broadcasting community. Jim was a champion of religious broadcasting, and played a prominent role in that community throughout his career.

Jim was a man of deep religious faith who was not afraid to share that faith with others, including complete strangers. Indeed, he had a unique ability to "pierce the bubble," as his partner Chip Grange has said. He saw Jim do this hundreds of times, but nowhere more memorably than in an elevator at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas during an NAB Convention. Jim's genuinely warm greeting to a stranger who got on their elevator led to the realization that the new passenger was in need of spiritual consolation. Jim offered to pray with the person. When Jim and Chip

reached the passenger's destination on the 30th floor, they got off and Jim prayed with their new friend in the elevator lobby.

Jim was a cheerful but tough advocate when he needed to be. Grif Johnson, who represented an adversary to one of Jim's clients in a comparative broadcast hearing in the 1980s, and who became one of Jim's friends and admirers, recalls that "even when, and especially when, the fight was joined and the punches were flying," Jim maintained his customary good humor and professionalism, and in many subtle ways let it be known that very little escaped his attention.

Jim's boldness was legendary. For example, when he learned that Joanne Mott was

engaged to another man, he confronted her regarding the matter, and persuaded her to break the engagement and marry him instead! After 54 years of marriage, it is safe to say that was the right move for the two of them.

He was also a friend and counselor to civic leaders and groups including, for example, Redskin great, Darrell Green and his Young Life Foundation, and to groups dedicated to the defense of First Amendment rights of religious freedom.

Jim was a serious weight-lifter who reportedly bench-pressed 300 pounds up until his final illness. But as his friends and colleagues have remarked, his personality was even larger than his biceps.

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