

Sheryl “Sherry” Hadley

Sheryl “Sherry” Hadley sadly passed away on November 3, 2023, at the age of 76. She was born to parents Billy Harold and Hettie Lee Williams in Selma, Alabama. She graduated from A.G. Parrish High School in Selma and attended The W (Mississippi University for Women) and Auburn University, and graduated from the University of Texas San Antonio in 1980. In 1968, she married Air Force Officer Marion “Jay” Messenger Jr. (Colonel, Retired). She and Jay had two children, Audris Kelly Messenger and Matthew Tyler Messenger that survive her.

During the late 1980s and early 90s, Sherry was the Associate Executive Director for the American Lung Association in Northern Virginia. In 1991, she was one of three finalists interviewed and was ultimately selected as the Executive Director for the Airborne Law Enforcement Association (ALEA, now known as the Airborne Public Safety Association, or APSA) during their annual conference in Mobile, Alabama. On December 23, 1992, Sherry married Howard K. Hadley, a former ALEA Board Member and Tulsa Oklahoma Police Department Supervisor. For 15 years, they resided in a home on the Register of Historic Places in downtown Tulsa, Oklahoma.

In 2006, following her husband’s new career to Niceville, Florida, she resigned as the APSA’s Executive Director and entered into a contractual agreement to manage the association’s meetings, events and tradeshow. The responsibilities of the arrangement were significantly reduced due to Covid-19 and a restructuring of the APSA conference. Her most recent conference was held in July 2023 in Orlando, Florida. Sherry loved working and building relationships with the members, vendors/exhibitors, and law enforcement officers involved with airborne law enforcement.

In 2008, Sherry and Howard relocated to Fairhope, Alabama, where her husband had moved a company from Miami, Florida. Sherry truly enjoyed walking around the beautiful neighborhoods in Fairhope, and typically walked three to five miles almost every day. Sherry loved to travel and, since 2013, she had traveled on nine Viking River and Ocean cruises throughout Europe and the Mediterranean. In August of this year, she and Howard traveled from Paris to Prague on a Viking River Cruise and she unfortunately tested positive for Covid-19 upon her arrival home. In early September, she tested negative but continued to suffer from long-term Covid-19 symptoms followed by additional complications with her heart and other organs. Sherry continued to maintain her positive attitude during the last two weeks in spite of the health issues, including going out to dinner, shopping and even attending a Halloween party for Trick-or-Treaters.

Sherry suffered cardiac arrest while peacefully laying in bed with her Kindle and cat Winston; she never recovered and passed away on the evening of November 3, 2023. She was a lover of animals and an avid reader. Sherry is survived by her children, Kelly and Matt, stepson Kristopher Hadley, stepdaughter Mikala Hadley, and grandchildren. Sherry was well-loved by everyone who knew her and will be fondly remembered and missed.

As per Sherry’s request, no funeral or memorial service will be held.