# US Army Veteran Reveals Lifelong Secret in Obituary



Colonel Edward Thomas Ryan, a decorated US Army veteran, revealed a lifelong secret in his obituary published on June 8 in *The Times Union*. Ryan, aged 85, passed away from intestinal cancer at his Albany, New York, residence.

In his obituary, Ryan disclosed that he had lived as a gay man all his life. "I was in a loving and caring relationship with Paul Cavagnaro of North Greenbush. He was the love of my life," Ryan wrote. Cavagnaro had passed away in 1994 due to a medical procedure gone wrong. "I'll be buried next to Paul," he noted.

Ryan explained his decision to keep his sexuality secret due to fear of ostracization and potential repercussions during his military career, which began before policies more tolerant of LGBTQ+ individuals existed in the army.

Throughout his lifetime, Ryan achieved notable accomplishments. He was a Vietnam War veteran, a firefighter in Rensselaer, the founder of Albany radio station WHRL-FM, and a chef at East Greenbush's American Legion Post #1231. He received several prestigious awards, including the National Defense Service Medal and the Defense of Liberty Medal for his participation following the September 11, 2001, attacks.

Ryan is survived by five siblings and over a dozen nieces and nephews. His family had long been aware of his relationship with Cavagnaro. A private family funeral will be held, followed by cremation, and his ashes will be interred in Kinderhook, New York.

Ryan's posthumous revelation and his story of a well-lived life have elicited an outpouring of comments on his online obituary, commending his bravery and service.