# Retired U.S. Army Colonel and Former Firefighter Edward Thomas Ryan Passes Away at 85, Revealing Lifetime Secret



Edward Thomas Ryan, a retired U.S. Army colonel and former firefighter, passed away on June 1, 2024, at the age of 85. His obituary, published in The Times Union of Albany, N.Y., on June 8, contained a poignant revelation: Mr. Ryan disclosed that he had been gay all his life but had kept it a secret due to fear of ostracism.

Mr. Ryan had a distinguished career, serving in Vietnam and later as a firefighter in Rensselaer, N.Y., until his retirement in 1992. He was also a co-founder of an Albany-based radio station and volunteered as a chef.

The obituary described a lifelong, 25-year relationship with a man who died in 1994. Following the publication, tributes poured in online, praising Mr. Ryan for his service and lamenting that he felt unable to live openly.

Mr. Ryan's family, aware of his private nature, was not surprised by his disclosure but had not discussed it openly before his death. “Now he can rest in peace. He got it out,” said his niece, Kelly Blue.