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Homebuilders celebrate life of key employee David Horton

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The life of David Horton, considered the Ontario Home Builders' Association's "Rock of Gibraltar," will be celebrated by colleagues, friends and family today.

Horton, 62, served the association for 25 years, joining it in 1985 as a public relations manager and moved up the ladder to executive director by 1987. He was considered "an astute strategist, outstanding organizer and skillful communicator" according to the association.

Andy Manahan, executive director of the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario, was hired by Horton in the summer of 1991 at the OHBA. Manahan remembers a confident, hard-working leader who was not afraid to delegate during the seven years they worked together.

"David was tenacious and essentially lived and breathed the association. He was a good role model for representing the industry," recalled Manahan.

"He gave you the authority in the board and committee context to carry out the duties on behalf of the membership. Some people like to do it all and they can't. His model of delegating was great."

Horton passed away on May 1 from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's Disease) after being diagnosed in fall 2010. He leaves a brother, John, and sister Claire. Horton served with over 20 different OHBA presidents and the association excelled during his tenure.

"He organized annual conferences in communities across the province from Huntsville to Windsor, Ottawa to Niagara Falls, making hundreds of friends along the way," an OHBA statement revealed. "David was the man behind the curtain who made it all tick."

The OHBA said that Horton worked tirelessly to help ensure housing remained affordable and that the quality of Ontario housing would remain unparalleled. He was inducted into the OHBA hall of fame this year for his efforts.

"Blessed with a sharp intellect, David had a remarkable memory and was a stickler for details," noted the association.

Horton's working career was "eclectic and varied" added the association. He once worked as a wrestling announcer and television anchor in Arnprior. However, his time at the OHBA was dearest to him and he often said, "it is a privilege to work here."

The celebration of Horton's life will be held today, June 22nd from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Westin Prince Hotel, 900 York Mills Rd. in North York. Contact OHBA offices at 1-800-387-0109 or info@ohba.ca for more information.