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Howard K. (Ken) Ranftle

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The Board and staff of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force mourn the death of Ken Ranftle, a member of our board for five years. His involvement in the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender movement began at Stonewall and continued throughout his life. Ken was endlessly generous to the Task Force, including ensuring that we would be the beneficiary of Ascension on Fire Island and Winter Party Festival in Miami. The eldest of five boys --four of them gay-- he married Craig Leiby, his partner of nearly 20 years, in Montreal last June. In his professional life, Ken ensured that domestic partnership benefits were available for gay employees during his tenure at both IBM and Towers Perrin. Ken gave ceaselessly and joyfully of his time, his astonishing intelligence and his delicious sense of humor. Ken had been fighting lung cancer and died of a heart attack in Craig's arms. Our thoughts are with Craig, who he adored, and with Ken's large and loving family.