

Former Brevard Commissioner Randy O'Brien dies

Written by **Dave Berman** FLORIDA TODAY

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Former Brevard County Commissioner Randy O'Brien, who served two four-year terms and left office in 2002, died Saturday at age 66 after a lengthy illness.



Current Brevard County Commission Chairman Chuck Nelson was the county's parks director when O'Brien served on the County Commission.

"I enjoyed working with Commissioner O'Brien as a staff person, and I'll miss him as a friend," said Nelson, who now holds the District 2 commission seat once occupied by O'Brien.

Assistant Brevard County Manager Stockton Whitten, who has worked for county government since 1994, said O'Brien "was always fighting for his district" that was centered on Merritt Island, while also having a "good sense of humor."

O'Brien also served 11 years on the Brevard County Tourist Development Council.

After leaving the County Commission, O'Brien unsuccessfully sought other elected offices. In 2004, O'Brien lost to incumbent Florida Rep. Bob Allen in a Republican primary. In 2010, O'Brien finished fourth in a six-person Republican primary for Canaveral Port Authority commissioner that was won by incumbent Bruce Deardoff.

O'Brien was born in Ottawa, Canada, in 1945 and moved to Brevard County in 1979. He graduated from Newark State College in Union, N.J., with a bachelor of arts degree in education.

O'Brien had been owner, president and chief executive officer of ABBCO, a Cape Canaveral company that manufactured and sold equipment to clean up oil spills.

He is survived by his wife Sharon O'Brien, five children and eight grandchildren. Funeral arrangements are pending.