Conservative Publisher Breitbart Dies At 43

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Conservative media publisher and activist Andrew Breitbart, who was behind investigations that led to the resignations of former Rep. Anthony Weiner and former U.S. Agriculture Department official Shirley Sherrod, has died in Los Angeles. He was 43.

Breitbart's website, bigjournalism.com, announced Thursday he died of natural causes in Los Angeles in the early morning hours. His death was confirmed by Breitbart.com editor-in-chief Joel Pollak, who said he was at the hospital, and by the Los Angeles County coroner's office.

Breitbart was walking near his house in the Brentwood neighborhood shortly after midnight Thursday when he collapsed, his father-in-law Orson Bean said.

Someone saw him fall and called paramedics, who tried to revive him. They rushed him to the emergency room at UCLA Medical Center, Bean said.

Breitbart had suffered heart problems a year earlier, but Bean said he could not pinpoint what happened.

"I don't know what to say. It's devastating," Bean told The Associated Press.

He is survived by his wife Susannah Bean Breitbart, 41, and four children.

Breitbart was an outspoken critic of the mainstream media but was lionized by his fans for his efforts at exposing government corruption and media bias.

Breitbart was at the center of two video controversies in recent years — one that led to the firing of an Agriculture Department employee over an edited video of what appeared to be a racist remark, and another that embarrassed the community group ACORN when workers were shown counseling actors posing as a prostitute and pimp.

Breitbart is known for disseminating an edited video that showed an Agriculture Department employee making what appeared to be racist remarks.

Sherrod, who is black, was fired from her job as Georgia state rural development director in July 2010 after the video surfaced. She is seen telling a local NAACP group that she was initially reluctant to help a white farmer save his farm more than two decades ago, long before she worked for USDA.

Missing from the clip was the rest of the speech, which was meant as a lesson in racial healing. Sherrod told the crowd she eventually realized her mistake and helped the farmer save his farm. She has since filed a lawsuit against Breitbart.

Play

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Trail, Jacob Smith, Micheala Trenhaile, Niki Knox, Ted Anders, Trevor Fender; Bug/Tuna Fish — Joselvn Pearson, Carson Heinemeyer, Emma Eichacker, Makayla Palecek, Hannah Thurow, Kaylean Thurow, Tess Zoss, Elizabeth Schmidt, Lilly Schmidt, Abbigail Schmidt, Olivia Schmidt, Alexandra Schmidt, Kaitlin Paulson, Tori Cass, Amelia Morkve; Villagers — Kaycee Smith, Jaden Pearson, Amelia Morkve, Tori Cass, Olivia Larson, Jaden Pearson, Daniel Bruegman, Natalie Dixon, Ryan Eichacker, Tori Wieland, Tess Zoss, Tina Zoss, Choe Roberts; Donkeys/Revelers -

"They have really bonded," Spak said about the cast, which has been rehearsing since January. "It's been a unique cast in that aspect. They all get along so well, and they all work with each other ... It's just been real fun rehearsing. Next thing you know, it's four or five hours later and it's like, 'Oh my gosh, you kids have to go home!"

"The kids are working hard,"
Heinemeyer added. "Some kids
have never really gotten the opportunity to sing and dance before. A
lot of the girls are in dance, and
with their experience, they have
helped their peers become better
dancers."

Heinemeyer said the children have been enjoying rehearsals so much that several of the cast members have requested extra practices to enhance their performances.

"They have a lot of fun," she said. "Sometimes it's hard to keep it serious when they're having so much fun."

Performances are 7:30 p.m. March 8-10, 2 p.m. March 11, 7:30 p.m March 16-17 and 2 p.m. March 18 at the Dakota Theatre.

Spak encourages everyone to attend the show, especially if they haven't seen a YCTC performance in the past.

"I think everybody should come and see a children's theatre show," she said. "It doesn't matter how old you are or how young you are, you will always enjoy children's theatre because it's never the same show twice. It's fun and you don't know what to expect."

Tickets are available at the door or can be reserved by calling 605-689-0401 or 605-660-6414.



