



## Michael L Cardinale

March 11, 1965 - March 16, 2019

On Saturday, April 27, 2019, hundreds of children from varied backgrounds, from all across Chicagoland, will sit down together at chessboards, shake hands, and start to compete in a free tournament sponsored by the Chicago Chess Foundation. Some of these children may go on to become ranked players, but all will benefit from the best of what chess can teach: being resilient, respecting others, working hard, welcoming challenges, and being present in the moment. This will happen, to a large extent, because of the vision and efforts of Michael Cardinale, 54, who succumbed to glioblastoma peacefully at his home in the Uptown neighborhood in Chicago on the afternoon of March 16.

Mike was a member of the chess team at Regis High School, in Manhattan, from which he graduated in 1983. He moved to Chicago in 1987 following his graduation from the University of Notre Dame, and soon thereafter started coaching a chess team at Gale Math and Science Academy in Rogers Park. He connected his team with the Youth Chess Foundation of Chicago (YCFC), which offered free chess tournaments for children, and took over as the tournament director for the organization in 2002, directing 88 free, public chess tournaments between then and 2017. Mike worked with other leaders in the chess community to create the Chicago Chess Foundation, which adopted the oversight of the tournaments in 2017, while adding chess training in Chicago Public Schools and free summer chess camps to the group's

offerings. In addition to his work for children, Mike served as the Metro Vice President for the Illinois Chess Association from 2010 until 2014, in which capacity he revived the Illinois chess tour in order to provide opportunities for chess players to compete and socialize in locations around the state.

Chess was but one interest in a life that was full of joy and accomplishments. Mike adored his family. He is predeceased by his parents, Dr. Patricia Hennessey Cardinale and Dr. George Joseph Cardinale, of Montclair, New Jersey. Mike is survived by his sister, Ricia Harding, of Mason, Ohio, his brother-in-law, Paul, and two nephews, Chase and Christian Harding, who were a source of great pride to Mike. In 2000, Mike's curiosity and infectious enthusiasm for Shakespeare led him to strike up a conversation with a classmate in the Master of Liberal Arts program at the University of Chicago, and three years later he and Autumn Mather were married, creating a life together that they filled with art, books, music, theater, delicious food and drink, travel, baseball, dogs, horse racing, soccer, and amazing friendships. Autumn's family embraced Mike, and he is survived by his mother-in-law and father-in-law Gay and Jim Mather, of Woodstock, Illinois; Mavis Mather and brother-in-law John Collis, of Chicago; and Allegra Mather, of Indianapolis, Indiana, mother of Mike's niece, Norah Reading, and nephew, Nico Reading, both of whom were a source of great delight to their uncle.

Diagnosed with glioblastoma in 2016, Mike never complained. He was fascinated by the science that is so close to making this a manageable disease, and he participated in numerous clinical trials and studies to further this end. Many thanks to Dr. Orin Bloch, Dr. Priya Kumthekar, and Meg Walsh of Northwestern University for making Mike feel like an active participant in his treatment, encouraging his research, advising him on new treatments, and always honoring his wish to balance quality of life with the efficacy of his treatment options. Thank you to Dr. Julian Bailes and Dr. Ryan Merrell of North Shore University Health System for their care and compassion for Mike.

Both the inpatient and outpatient staff at the Shirley Ryan Ability Lab treated Mike with dignity and helped him maintain his mobility as long as possible, which meant the world to him. Once treatment was no longer an option, Mike received thoughtful and caring treatment from his caregiver, Emma, who is a credit to Compassion Home Care, and from his team at JourneyCare, particularly his nurse, Molly Brewster, a strong defender of his right to ice cream, and Dr. Katherine O'Brien, Gina, Pam, and David, who helped Mike leave us surrounded by love and peace on a beautiful sunny day.

A parishioner at St. Thomas of Canterbury, Mike appreciated the kindness and thoughtfulness of Father Bob Cook in spending so much time visiting with him in his last days, and for giving him the great gift of a Mass in his home at the end of his life. Mike's life will be celebrated with a visitation at Barr Funeral Home, 6222 N. Broadway, from 4:00 until 8:00 on Monday, March 25, and a funeral Mass at St. Ita Catholic Church, 5500 N. Broadway, at 11:00 on Tuesday, March 26.

To honor Mike, his family asks that you support two of his great passions, the Chicago Chess Foundation, and the Chicago Shakespeare Theater. Please keep Mike in your hearts and spare a thought for him when you pet a dog, solve a difficult problem, have an adventure, are transported by the arts, witness an athletic feat, play with a child, learn something new, play a game, reach out to a friend, taste something delicious, or do a kindness for someone.

# Cemetery Details

**Private**

## Previous Events

### Visitation / Viewing

MAR 25. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Barr Funeral Home  
6222 N. Broadway  
Chicago, IL 60660  
(773) 743-4034  
info@barrfuneralhome.com  
<https://barrfuneralhome.com/>

### Funeral Mass - Meet at Church

MAR 26. 11:00 AM (CT)

St Ita Catholic Church  
1220 W Catalpa  
Chicago, IL 60640

# Tribute Wall



“ *Michael L Cardinale*

October 08, 2023 at 11:31 AM



“ *I was happy to work with Michael over several years on legal issues concerning his company. . It was a joy working with him. He was easy to get along with, loved his firm and was very knowledgeable about the law. He earned my admiration and that of his colleagues.*

Richard Friedman - March 25, 2019 at 11:37 PM



“ *Michael taught me what friendship is, may you now rest.*

*-Bernard*

Bernard Collins - March 25, 2019 at 05:10 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Michael L Cardinale.*



March 25, 2019 at 10:19 AM

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“ *What a profoundly good man. I've known him for almost 40 years, and there is a hole in my heart right now, but, I know in the coming weeks that pain will be replaced with joy and happiness for having shared this life with Mike and he and the life he lived will be an inspiration for the rest of my life.*

*My condolences to his wife Autumn and sister Ricia.*

*May Mike Rest In Peace*

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**Tom English** - March 25, 2019 at 12:56 AM

AL

“ *Very sad to hear of Mike's passing. We shared a lot of good times together playing chess and hockey, collecting sports cards, and enjoying the first few seasons of Fire soccer. A wonderful guy with a wonderful heart. Condolences to the family and friends, especially his dear sister Ricia.*

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**Adam Levy** - March 24, 2019 at 10:14 PM