



Michael Allen Gordon

March 5, 1941 - October 5, 2020

Michael Allen Gordon, of Milwaukee, died on October 5, 2020, age 79, from ALS. He was born on March 5, 1941, in DeKalb, Illinois.

He was the only child of Ben Gordon and Edith Simon Gordon. In 1917-1918, at a very early age, Ben, his two siblings and their mother undertook a year's long journey from their home in Russia, immigrating to the Chicago area to join their father, who had come before..

Michael grew up in DeKalb, earned a Bachelor's degree from Northwestern University and a Ph.D. from the University of Rochester. He was an oral historian and archivist with the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. He taught history for many years at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He enjoyed studying and teaching American labor history, social history, Wisconsin history, and guiding students as public historians for work outside academia in the community. History understood from the bottom up, not top down, was important to him. And he enjoyed conveying the skills and techniques of oral history to community organizations throughout the state.

From advocating for social justice, to supporting and loving the UWM Panthers, Michael was passionate about many things. He spent his life supporting labor unions, giving to and caring for the well-being of the kids and people in his community, and providing for his family. Those closest to him will

remember his amazing stories and story-telling abilities, his love for teaching, his legendary tours of Milwaukee, the generosity he spread to all, and his goofy sense of humor. The real work of Michael's life was his loving care of his family and others, whom he held dear. His lifelong work was to gather and relate the stories of our past and how they connect us.

He has left a loving family and many dear friends for whom he was always a stalwart moral compass. He was the perfect father for Samuel and Isabel and the doting grandfather of Henry and Oliver. He was so happy that Madeline Skemp joined Sam in the family. And he was the best friend and husband of Michele Sumara.

If interested, friends may make donations honoring Michael to a charity of their choice, including ACLU of Wisconsin, ALS Association, or Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

Tribute Wall

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“ *I will make a donation to the ACLU of Wisconsin in memory of Michael.*

Cathy Kaye - October 11, 2020 at 12:00 AM

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“ *I was so sad to see the death notice in this morning's paper. Michael was a wonderful human being who I was honored to know through our shared union activism at UWM. My heart is with his family at this difficult time. Michelle, he spoke so highly of you.*

Cathy Kaye - October 11, 2020 at 12:00 AM