



Mr. Michael R. Houseknecht

October 17, 1939 - April 17, 2019

NEW YORK MILLS - Mr. Michael R. Houseknecht, age 79, met his maker and was reunited with those who went before him when he passed away peacefully on Wednesday, April 17, 2019 with his devoted wife by his side. Born in Buffalo on October 17, 1939, Michael was the son of the late Roy and Leonida (Rouleau) Houseknecht. Raised and educated in Buffalo, he was a graduate of Bishop Timon Catholic High School. He continued his education at multiple institutions including the Rochester Institute of Technology, State University of New York at Buffalo, and Erie County Technical Institute. His course studies focused on Planning Administration, Business and Government, and Administrative Management. A proud veteran, he served his country as a member of the United States Army Reserve. Michael shared a 38-year relationship with Rosemary (Glista) Carole which was blessed when they were wed on Christmas Eve in 2008. They were united by a true bond of love and their passion for each other. Theirs was a relationship of the heart, graced with many great times. Even when they faced life's challenges, they were always steadfast and loyal, and carried each other through. Michael accepted a position as a Planner with the City of Buffalo Planning Commission and was a respected junior planner. He proceeded to work in various positions of his expertise including City Planner on the City of Toronto Planning Board in Canada; Deputy Administrator with the Department of Urban Renewal and Economic Development in the city of Rochester; Commissioner of Urban and Economic Development in the city of Utica under

three mayors; Executive Assistant to Senator James H. Donovan/47th District; Chief of Staff/Director of Legislative Operations for Senator William R. Sears, 47th District New York State Senate; Senior Program Executive for New York State Housing Finance Agency; Senior Vice President for Intergovernmental Relations for New York State Housing Finance Agency/State of New York Mortgage Agency where he worked with Governor Pataki's Counsel, Budget and Legislative Offices, and lastly, he was an Independent Consultant for Government Affairs on numerous levels and operated as Michael R. Houseknecht, LLC. Michael was a political mover, shaker and visionary. His accomplishments were so vast and each community and state level benefited from his intellectual and knowledgeable mindset. Locally he secured major funding for the Sheraton in downtown Utica which was a highlight for this community.

Michael was an extremely happy and fun-loving guy. He was meticulous in appearance and impeccable in his apparel. His energy was boundless and there was no limit to what he could do in a day. Being an avid swimmer, he swam a mile a day. On the political scene and in his personal space, he not only found the time and the stamina to care for his wellbeing, but he would never let a day would go by without checking in with his wife and ending the call with "I love you". Dining out was always an enjoyable time, and when necessary, take-out was fine! He loved Frank Sinatra, and he himself was blessed with a beautiful voice. In his youth, he was an Altar boy and could recite the Mass in Latin. Throughout his life, his family was first and foremost. He honored his parents and especially loved his mom. Michael and Rosemary's shelties and their cat made for a most complete and happy home. He rooted for the New York Yankees, and because of his roots in Buffalo, the Bills ranked #1 for him. He took an interest in political television shows, would read three papers a day: the NY Post, the Daily News, and the Albany Times Union never losing touch with Albany news, as well as sporting events, and old westerns, especially The Rifleman and Gunsmoke. A true renaissance man, Michael was an excellent portrait painter and caricature artist. He could

take his feelings about his sweet Rosemary and put them to words in a song which he sang to the end of his life, a sentimental expression of his love, appreciation, and admiration for his wife. Every day he would say that he was grateful to God for his beautiful wife and his political career.

Michael is survived by his cherished wife, Rosemary; his sister and brother-in-law, Cathy and Russell Papia; nieces and nephews, Russell Papia, Jeffrey and Maria Papia, and Patrick Papia, Michele and Eric Hillebrand, Gerald "Jed" Hohl and Leslie, Kevin Hohl, and David and Lisa Glista; great-nephews and great-nieces, twin boys, Francis, and Joseph Papia, Nick and Mary Katherine Hillebrand; twins, Vivian, Marilyn and Henry Hohl; Molly Hohl; and Logan, and Sydney Glista; cousins; in-laws, Jerry Hohl, Michael Alberti, Norman and Patsy Glista, and Christine Glista; and loyal and beloved friends, John Boltz, Linda Dillon, the love of the Rosado family, especially Monica, and Steve who Michael loved as a son; his in-laws, Norman and Patsy Glista who have been wonderful; and Rosemary's sister, Chrissie, whose thoughtful phone calls, cards, and notes sustained them throughout Michael's illness. Michael's life has been blessed with a host of magnificent colleagues and friends. He was preceded by his sister, Judith Alberti, a niece Denise Glista and her mother Martha.

The family extends their sincere thanks to Dr. Scott Brehaut for his outstanding compassionate care; primary physician Dr. Gordon Fung who tried diligently to help Michael with his illness when he needed attention. Michael remained home for four years with his wife by his side tending to his every need. The last day of his journey was spent at the Abraham House where he was provided a comfortable and compassionate environment for which Rosemary is so grateful.

Visitation will be held Friday from 4:00-7:00 at the Eannace Funeral Home, Inc., 932 South St., corner of Hammond Ave. A time of reflection will be offered at 7:00 p.m. by Michael's beloved friend, Linda Dillon, as well as a rendition of his favorite music. Expressions of sympathy in the form of

donations may be made in Michael's memory to the Abraham House online at <http://www.theabrahamhouse.org>. Envelopes will also be available at the funeral home. Michael's funeral service and Celebration of Life will commence on Saturday morning at 11:00 at the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes where his Mass of Christian Burial and committal prayers will be offered. Judge Robert F. Julian's thoughts will be streamed, and John Boltz who will be present, and both will be reflecting personal remembrances of Michael's life.

"I love Rosemary, she's my beautiful wife
She's smart, tall, kind, and pretty
And she's funny and witty
With her I'm everything
Without her I'm nothing
I love my Rosemary"
A song he sang to his wife every day.

Tribute Wall



“ *I worked for Michael when he,was commissioner of Utica Urban development. Michael brought drama and flair to his job, created a whole change of reference to how Utice could be, initiated a host of projects, instilled in his staff at he willingness to believe that our work mattered*

Joseph Zilvinskis - June 12, 2019 at 11:10 PM



“ *Michael,*

Belatedly, thank you from the possibly thousands of New Yorkers who have benefited from the safe housing, improved communities and stronger schools which you helped to make a reality during your over 45 years of public service in New York State. Also I personally thank you for over five and a half years of valuable and practical experience in local government and many additional years of loyal friendship.

Bob Shields

Robert Shields - May 10, 2019 at 02:59 PM

PM

“ I just learned that Michael passed away. What a smart man. What a sense of humor and an ability to see the humor in so many moments. Over the years of Utica politics and then as lobbyists together in Albany, I found him to be one of those people who knows things and knows how to make things work. He was a special breed...so sorry to know he is gone and send my thoughts to his family

Peter Mannella

Rensselaer NY

peter mannella - May 06, 2019 at 07:36 PM

RM

“What can I say but, how deeply sad and mournful I am at the passing of my good friend Mike Houseknecht. I met Mike 29 years ago when I was an NYS Senate employee as he was. We became good friends and we had great fun together. We hung out at night, we went to Saratoga Race Track in the summer and won and lost our money, went to lunch all the time, drove around Albany just to get to get out of downtown Albany during legislative session days. Mike was my pal, and I will never say anything different!

I will miss his innumerable phone calls to my office, which used to drive the secretaries crazy, his poems and odes (I was particularly fond of his ode to baseball), and his earnest ability to be himself; Mike was no phony. I admired Mike and I looked up to him in so many ways. He was a little older than me, but we always had a good relationship.

While others had issues with Mike because they did not like some aspects of character, I felt that's what made him special and his own man.

I will always think good things about my friend Mike House, he was a great friend, loyal and he did a good job in his professional work in the Senate and everywhere else he worked, which he never hesitated not to tell me about.

Thanks for the great years Mike, I informed our old buddy Elaine at the Albany Hilton of your passing and addition to her stunned sadness she has you in her prayers.

I extend my deepest sympathies to Mike's family, particularly Rosemary on his loss.

Richard C. Mereday

Richard C. Mereday - April 27, 2019 at 09:25 AM

CH

“ *Charlene Harris lit a candle in memory of Mr. Michael R. Houseknecht*



Charlene Harris - April 26, 2019 at 12:18 AM



“ *Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Michael R. Houseknecht.*



April 25, 2019 at 10:28 AM

JJ

“ *Sleep well our friend. My wife Janice and I send our prayers to Rosemary.*

God Bless!



Janice and Samuel L. Russo, Jr. - April 24, 2019 at 01:50 PM

MW

“ *1 file added to the album OLD FORGE 1988 i WAS THE DRIVER OF THESE FOUR*



Mark Williamson - April 23, 2019 at 12:01 PM