

A Celebration of The Life
of
George G. Gaw



Born into Life...February 3, 1951
Born into Eternal Life...July 7, 2008



Mass of The Resurrection

for

George G. Gaw

St. Alexander Church

July 9, 2008



Celebrant

Reverend Edward J. Cronin

Pallbearers

Barry Gaw

Taylor Gaw

Christopher Gaw

Jack Gaworski

Callen Schigalski

Bruce Rosenzweig

Honorary Pallbearer

Michael Gaw

“ Certain is death for the born and certain is the birth for the dead;
Therefore, over the inevitable Thou should not grieve.”

-- Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Verse 27.

Mk

George Gaw was born in Chicago, IL at Lying-in Hospital on February 3, 1951. He was the second child of five boys of Ted and Irene Gaw. According to Irene, “he was always a pleasant child. He rarely, purposefully instigated fights with other kids.” This was why he appealed to so many people. Around eleven years of age, he started sailing at Powers Lake, WI. He credits George Hachmeister, Sr. for getting him into what will be his life long love. This was one of his biggest passions. One that he taught to his brothers. All of the kids had music lessons, and George learned how to play the piano and guitar. He would naturally sit down and practice on his own without being pushed to do so. Eventually, he lost interest in piano and preferred the guitar. He enjoyed classical music, but eventually fell in love with the Beatles. I think we all know, or can guess, which Beatle was his favorite. Either way, music was another passion. He also enjoyed singing in the choir at Old St. Pat’s. He once was able to sing on the CSO stage. George attended Brother Rice High School for one year and then transferred to Marmion Military Academy in Aurora, IL. While growing up in Oak Lawn, all the Gaw boys worked for Petey - the owner of Petey’s Bungalow and Lounge-who would call George “the Colonel” when seeing him in his school uniform. George went to the University of Notre Dame, and it made Ted and Irene very proud. He majored in English and graduated; happy to enrich himself with yet another passion, this time being literature and philosophy. Afterwards, George went to Spain to be with his good friend Tom Salack who was at medical school there. He started speaking Spanish, being another passion along with writing. George ultimately wanted to be a writer. A friend who dealt with newspapers gave him work but his ambitions did not lie in this. In Lake Geneva, he worked for a printing company also, but his ambitions did not lie there either. George also worked as a bartender. He was a faithful person who eventually liked to keep to himself. He went into sales of sailboats. Betwixt all of this, George discovered another passion which was cooking. And speaking of cooking, to shed a little light on the other side of George, he once suggested to his cousin Bob Scigalski that they cook a duck he accidentally hit with his car up at the cottage; letting it chill out in the family fridge in the mean time.

As a nephew of George’s, as opposed to a brother or father, it’s hard to say I entirely knew him, but he had explained to me his interests and views to me quite often. I speak of him in the present because he is not gone. The main reason I am writing a eulogy is that by understanding George in the slightest way, I’ve not only seen how our personalities mesh well but I’ve come to understand what we all should learn from him. He surrounded himself with friends like Doctors

Tom and Josefina Salack. Or also Michael Schaeffer, who was a fellow friend that became an English professor. As Miguel Cervantes once wrote in *Don Quixote*, "Dime con quien andas y te dire quien eres." i.e. 'tell me with whom you walk and I will tell you who you are.' George and I discussed the reasons we were apolitical. We talked about things ranging from quantum mechanics to etymology, art, music, linguistics, prosody, metaphysics, or football. We talked about how our favorite Beatle was Harrison for his deep faith. We talked about how we had the same favorite Chinese and Indian foods. But most importantly, we talked about that which he and I were most proud of. As Da Vinci said, "E lunga una vita spesa bene" i.e. 'long is a life spent well'. As James Joyce said, "Better pass boldly into that other world, in the full glory of some passion, than fade and wither dismally with age". George went into eternal life earlier than many people, but he and I learned that learning and passion elongate our sense of time. He may not have expressed this to others, but he told me he had no regrets in living in his passions.

There is a down side, however, to being passionate, eclectic people. You see, if someone is eclectic by nature, their interests become a part of who they are. It's subsequently easier to affront this person when there are more interests to be deprecated. The interests are aspects of the person that become vicariously unappreciated or ridiculed. He told me that he could never stand up for himself. I told him that I too inhibited my right to do so, but no longer would. I promised him that I would spend the rest of my life standing up for him, inclusive of his myriad interests. It's crucial to realize that the same passion one person has going to a five star hotel or watching a basketball game is the same feeling another gets out of sailing or reviewing stoic philosophy or guitar.

He also told me that it was awesome to hear how much I loved and respected him, inclusive of his passions. It was awful, however, that we hadn't realized how similar we were earlier on. But after he told me in his last days that he never really gave me anything, I told him that as omniscient as he was --or thought he was-- for once he was wrong. He gave me more than he ever could. He gave me the awareness that as Buddha said, "Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; you are the one who gets burned." He gave me the awareness that God works through the signs that have connected me to him via our passions, not to mention the fact that my favorite number has always been seven and the date he went to eternal life was 7/7. In short, George is not gone, he is with us every time we cook, sail, hear the Beatles, play piano or guitar, hear Spanish, review philosophies or literature, or have the taste for duck.

By: Rob Gaw, Nephew



The Serenity Prayer

God grant me the
Serenity
to accept the things
I cannot change, the
Courage
to change the things
I can and the
Wisdom
to know the difference.



Thank you to all our family and friends
for your kindness, prayers and expressions of
sympathy. The act of coming together to love and
support each other is the most fitting tribute to a man
whose memory we shall forever cherish.

The Family of George G. Gaw





In Loving Memory of

GEORGE GREGORY GAW

Born

February 3, 1951

At Rest

July 7, 2008

Mass of Christian Burial

St. Alexander Church

Wednesday, July 9, 2008

at 10:30 a.m.

Inurnment

Holy Sepulchre Cemetery

Columbarium of the Holy Cross

Niche 47 Tier 2

Loving and kind in all his ways,
Upright and just to the end of his days;
Sincere and true in his heart and mind,
A beautiful memory he left behind.

He had a nature you could
not help loving,
A heart that was purer than gold;
and to those who knew him
and loved him,

His memory will never grow cold.

OTTO V. STRANSKY & SON
5112 S. WESTERN AVE. 778-0700