



Dr. Michael Given, PhD

February 24, 1951 - April 8, 2025

IN MEMORY OF:

Dr. Michael Given, PhD

Serving Location:

CRAIN PLEASANT GROVE-MURDALE FUNERAL HOME

31 Memorial Drive, Murphysboro, Illinois

Dr. Michael Given, PhD, age 74, of Carbondale, passed away on Tuesday, April 8, 2025 at The Landings in Carbondale, Illinois.

He was born on February 24, 1951 to William Wayne and Virginia (Bryant) Given in Fairfield, Illinois.

Michael was a member of the last undefeated football team at Carbondale Community High School in 1968 and was of the graduating class of 1969. He received a scholarship to play football at Western Illinois College and earned a Bachelor's Degree in Cinematography. He then moved to San Francisco where he was a dispatcher for Desoto Cab Co. In 1992, he earned his Master's Degree in English Literature and in 1997 his PhD in English

Literature both from Southern Illinois University. Michael then worked at the University of Southern Indiana and later at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas and retiring in 2021.

Survivors include his brothers, Kerry Given and Todd Given; three cousins, Kevin Williams (Eileen Norton, Nancy (Ray) Mitchell, and Rebecca Rusina; and uncle, Charles Wilson.

Along with his parents, he is preceded in death by his brother, Patrick.

The family will host a memorial gathering at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests with gratitude that memorial contributions be made to Operation Smile. <https://www.operationsmile.org/>

The cremation of Dr. Michael Given, PhD will be personally handled by the staff of Crain Funeral Home.

Crain Pleasant Grove-Murdale Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Tribute Wall

“ Over the last year, Mike and I got to spend quite a bit of time together. I wish it had been under different circumstances. But our time together was at times poignant, deep, occasionally punctuated by laughter. I’m so grateful for what we shared. It was edifying, and brought me closer to a man for whom I already had great respect. I got to know about his life journey, and it was a fascinating one. We spent a lot of time, sharing our experiences in Academia, complaining, and sometimes laughing about students we had, college administrators, and the world situation in general. We also dove deeply into spirituality and religion, poetry, literature, and the current state of college athletics. He had a brilliant, inquisitive mind. To me, one of the best insights into Mike’s character was a letter he wrote to me in 2002. I hadn’t seen Mike very often over the decades since we graduated high school. We mainly saw each other at class reunions, were always glad to see each other, and usually spent some time catching up, but we didn’t spend much time together during those weekends. But, when I was paralyzed with Guillain-Barré syndrome in 2002 I got a letter from Mike. He’d heard about my condition and reached out, offering words of encouragement, support, and, hope. We were physically distant and hadn’t communicated beyond hurried conversations at the reunions for decades. Yet he reached out, took the time to write a letter that touched me deeply. He was an excellent writer. One of our favorite discussion topics was what we perceived to be the degradation and corruption of the English language. I think he ended up pursuing the career for which he was meant. In fact, the first time I ever heard of Mike was before I met him. In first or second grade at Springmore elementary, we heard about a kid in our grade at Brush elementary who would read the newspaper to his classmates. Mike was an English professor even then! I’m sure he touched and inspired many students under his tutelage at Stephen F. Austin. He was fiercely independent, thought deeply about deep things, and had a deeply caring heart. Like so many others who knew Mike I will miss him. I am so grateful to have been able to share the time we had together and call him a friend. Rest in peace brother. ❤️🙏

George Davis - April 18, 2025 at 05:03 PM

RC

“ I knew Mike when he was a student in my class when I was a student teacher at Lincoln Junior High. He struck me as a bright and very intelligent young man and we struck up conversations at times. I followed some of his activities at high school. After I graduated from grad school and went into the Air Force, for some reason he kept in touch. We have been exchanging Christmas cards ever since and I always looked forward to hearing from him. He continued to show his high degree of intelligence and independent thinking and I was extremely impressed that he got his Ph.D. As an English major, myself, I would have enjoyed being in one of his classes. I am just sorry I did not see him in person more often, especially in these past months. He will be greatly missed.

Ronald Centanni - April 11, 2025 at 01:53 PM

TG

Thank you Mr. Centanni

Todd Given - April 16, 2025 at 10:58 AM

MO

“ I am saddened to hear of Michael's passing. He was my first English professor at SFA back in 2015, and he is a key factor in why I am the the kind of English teacher I am for my high school and college students. His wisdom and charisma have a lasting effect on me and those who knew him. To this day, I often catch myself saying Givenisms to my students when coaching them on how to write properly. My condolences to his family; he was a wonderful person and will be greatly missed.

Mahailey Oliver - April 10, 2025 at 01:15 PM



Thank you Mahailey -Todd Given

Todd Given - April 10, 2025 at 04:11 PM



So sorry to hear of Michael's passing.

Terryl Given - April 11, 2025 at 08:21 AM