



Michael Pogorzhelsky

January 6, 1958 - January 4, 2024

Michael Pogorzhelsky, 65 of Manalapan, New Jersey passed away on Thursday, January 4, 2024, at his home.

Born Monday, January 6, 1958 in Odessa, Ukraine. Michael was the son of Rosa Pogorzhelsky and the late Boris Shirman.

Michael was raised in Odessa, and would immigrate to the United States at the age of 18, in 1976. He would live with family in St. Louis for a short time before settling in Newark and then East Brunswick, New Jersey. Michael would meet Patricia Fuzzi and the couple would marry. They would start a family of their own, living in Morganville and later in Old Bridge, New Jersey.

Michael worked in property management and development. When Michael wasn't working, he enjoyed going out for a fine meal and having a cocktail. He loved his after dinner espresso. He enjoyed relaxing and having a thoughtful conversation with family and friends. He will be missed by all those who love him.

Michael is survived by his beloved wife of 34 years, Patricia, by his caring children, Sinistra Black, Francesca Mitchell and her husband, Kris, by his youngest, Alessandro Pogorzhelsky, by his cherished grandson, Maxton, and by his mother, Rosa.

The family will receive friends on Sunday, January 7, 2024, from 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM, with a funeral service starting at 3:00 PM.

Family Tributes

Where to begin about Michael? He was a complex person to say the least. Always a challenge, for sure!! Blatantly and bluntly truthful. Generous to all those that he took under his wing. In the words of a dear family friend, Jason Scott: Michael was always kind to me. He treated me to many very nice lunches and dinners. He was always very generous.

I'll always remember the laughs he and my dad, Paul, had and all the good times. And Michael knew that he had a wonderful family. He had a good heart. On a funny note, I also remember he loved taking my dad and whoever was in the car on fast drives and laughing and banging on the dashboard saying "giddy up" while my dad was grabbing the door and roof handle. It was hysterical. Truly unforgettable!

Kind words and remembrances from others will certainly help me and my family to heal.

Michael was very ambitious in life. He set his mind on certain goals and achieved them!! He came to the United States as a teen. He left the USSR and lived in Italy for 2 1/2 years. This awakened in him a great passion and love for everything Italian, especially the food and wine. That love of Italy remained with him all of his days.

I believe that he embraced many Italian customs and traditions. I always joked that he was an Italian wannabe. In fact, I believe that he was happiest when seated at a table enjoying a good meal.

Once he was in America, he set his goals very high. He truly believed in

America as the land of opportunity. In his late teens to early twenties, he approached a local bank and was able to get a loan. He built his first two developments in Scotch Plains as a very young man. He developed long lasting professional relationships. He expanded his business to include property management and other services. He put on a suit and tie for the next 40 years. He enjoyed professional success and his work place always included humor and food galore!! It was not uncommon to walk in and find a culinary smorgasbord at lunch time and even a make your own ice cream sundae bar. That was indeed Michael!!

Another great passion of his was travel!! We were blessed to have traveled quite a bit by land, sea and air with family and friends!! Cruising was a huge part of our lives. We were fortunate enough to make and keep friends in various parts of the world. I have received many condolence messages and I will share one from a dear friend, Peter, from Leeds, England. He wrote: We are also in total shock here. I have shed a few tears this morning. We all have so many happy memories of our times together.

The wonderful painting he bought for us in Cape May.

Watching "Scent of a Woman" starring Al Pacino. His

walking into bins and lamp posts, falling out of taxis in Gibraltar, fish restaurants in Portugal, racing back to the ship with minutes to spare.

Swimming with Dolphins in Bermuda. Being treated to our first ever Caviar on the Splendour of the Seas.

So many laughs. Teaching us how and what to buy at art auctions at sea. We now have a collection of 20 works of art purely because of Michael.

Picking us up at New Jersey airport and the first thing he said to us was, "Welcome to America, the Land of the Free!!"

Loads more things I could mention.

I chose to share Peter's comments because I feel Peter captured Michael's

better moments....his pure and unfiltered zest for life....his desire to make everyone laugh. He'd often say, "Come on, you gotta laugh!!" And no one had as outrageous of a laugh as his. He'd watch a love story and cry or a mystery and gasp. He loved history and took any chance to talk about it in full detail. He enjoyed music. At times, he'd blast it till the house nearly shook as he vigorously mimicked a conductor. He particularly loved Italian music and the stylings of the French chanson. I would often translate for him, so he knew the meaning of what he was so fervently lip syncing.

Michael's health took a turn many years ago. He stunned the medical community because he survived the unsurvivable over and over again for many years!! That's Michael!! Miraculous. A medical marvel. Invincible. Unbelievable. Remarkable. Unprecedented. Inexplicable. Amazing. Again, that's Michael!! These were the words of many doctors....all specialists.... all with absolutely no plausible medical or scientific explanation other than the Grace of God, Michael's sheer will or a combination of the two. Sheer will....that truly describes Michael!! When he was told repeatedly to change his life style, which meant bland food and no alcohol....he refused in no uncertain terms. He would not be deterred from living life his way. He made a conscious decision to live his life as he willed. With full clarity and conviction, he chose to live his days to the max, his own way....even if that meant that he would live a shorter life. It was his preference to live a robust life on his terms for less time than to live a longer life in a manner that was not his choosing. For that courage and fortitude, I say, "Kudos to you, Michael!"

One of his many catch phrases was, "take your time, but hurry up!" That's Michael!! Always a dichotomy. Complex, yet simple and clear.

Not all our moments were sunshine and roses. Close friends knew this. His light shown brightly. Yet, his darkness was an abyss. At this point, I choose to embrace the memory of his strength, fortitude, resilience and absolute

survivorship. I will say this, I (your LG) already received your messages (BB). As such, I know you're A OK....never doubted that for a moment because you have always been fearless!! I also know that you are now reunited with your beloved grandparents, my mom is making fresh pasta, my dad gave you a beer and your best friend, Paul Scott, gave you a cigarette!! Michael, Ya Lu blu te bya ochin ochin, tuoya gena'!!

I shall forever embrace your light and forgive your darkness. Fly freely and soar!! Keep an eye on us from where you are!!

Rest in peace, Michael!!! Salute, l'chaim, cheers!!

-Patricia-

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 7. 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Michael Hegarty & John Vincent Scalia Home for Funerals and Cremation Service
3377 US Highway 9
Old Bridge, NJ 08857
(732) 679-4422
hegartyfh@scaliahome.com
<https://www.hegartyscaliafuneralhome.com>

Service

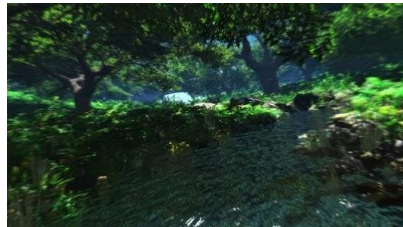
JAN 7. 3:00 PM (ET)

Michael Hegarty & John Vincent Scalia Home for Funerals and Cremation Service
3377 US Highway 9
Old Bridge, NJ 08857
(732) 679-4422
hegartyfh@scaliahome.com
<https://www.hegartyscaliafuneralhome.com>

Tribute Wall



“ *Michael Hegarty & John Vincent Scalia Home for Funerals and Cremation Services created a Tribute Video in memory of Michael Pogorzelsky*



Michael Hegarty & John Vincent Scalia Home for Funerals and Cremation Service - January 08, 2024 at 01:58 PM

PA

“ *On June 15, 2024, we had Michael’s headstone blessed. May he rest in peace. We actually met on June 15th, so it felt right to do the blessing on this day. Played a favorite song of his (“Si tu n’existe pas”) and it was a serene moment. As Michael would say, “Perfectly executed!!” Fly high and soar, Michael.*

Patricia - June 17, 2024 at 12:28 PM

PA

“ *file:///var/mobile/Library/SMS/Attachments/56/06/614DAABC-32FA-4A14-837A-4A65C1646551/IMG_0752.png*

Young Michael

Patricia - February 22, 2024 at 04:45 PM

PA

“ Yet more Michael-isms:
*I'm in good shape for the shape I'm in!
*I'm losing weight by the second! (When he would look through a menu to select.)
* Je n'ai pas mangé pendant six jours!
*Io lavoro per le mance.

Patricia - February 20, 2024 at 09:53 PM

PA

“ Michael's mottos:

“You gotta live a little!”
“Come on, you gotta laugh!”

And, of course, “you wanna go to White Castle?” (Always at 2 am)

Patricia - February 15, 2024 at 06:56 PM

PA

“ More Michael-isms:
*They call me Mr. Point Pleasant!”(Tweaked from “In the Heat of the Night”)
*Amazing!
*This is all paid for! (As he patted his stomach and laughed!)
*Right-O!
*Right on!
*What up?!
*10/4 over and out!

Patricia - February 15, 2024 at 06:54 PM

PA

“ *Michael's mottos:*

“You gotta live a little!”

“Come on, you gotta laugh!”

And, of course, “you wanna go to White Castle?” (Always at 2 am)

Patricia - February 14, 2024 at 12:52 AM

PA

“ *Michael-isms (updated):*
**Take your time, but hurry up!*
**Yabba Dabba Doo!! (The Flintstones)*
**OK, Wilma! (The Flintstones)*
**”Which way did he go?”*
(Willoughby from Looney Toons)
**Rapeeteetwa Dada and Twa Twa*
**Allaganta*
**Cabuchicaca*
**It’s not easy living the first 150 years!*
**Stifle (All in the Family)*
**Dingbat (All in the Family)*
**Good night, nurse!*
(All in the Family)
**”Pappa, can you hear me?” (Yentl)*
**Not nice? It’s not nice when your children look like your neighbor’s children.*
**About his kids: Look what I created!?!*
**”Softly, gently music shall caress you*
Hear it, feel it secretly possess you.” (Phantom of the Opera)
”Past the point of no return.” (Phantom of the Opera)
**Luke, I am your father!”*
(Stars Wars)
**”Forest, Forest, will you marry me? Ok!” (Forest Gump)*
**Giddyup! Easy, girl! Neeiiighhhh! (As he hit his car’s dashboard.)*
**Michael’s Chewbacca imitation was better than the original!!*
**Michael and his best friend and chosen brother, Paul Scott, were infamous for.....”That’s all folks!”*
(Elmer Fudd from Looney Tunes)
I am certain they are now up there together enjoying their coffee and good conversation!!

Patricia - February 06, 2024 at 10:31 PM

PA

“ *Michael-isms:*

**Take your time, but hurry up!*

**Yabba Dabba Doo!! (The Flintstones)*

**OK, Wilma! (The Flintstones)*

**"Which way did he go?"*

(Willoughby from Looney Toons)

**Rapeeteetwa Dada and Twa Twa*

**Allaganta*

**Cabuchicaca*

**It's not easy living the first 150 years!*

**Stifle (All in the Family)*

**Dingbat (All in the Family)*

**"Pappa, can you hear me?" (Yentl)*

**Not nice? It's not nice when your children look like your neighbor's children.*

**About his kids: Look what I created!?!*

**"Softly, gently music shall caress you*

Hear it, feel it secretly possess you." (Phantom of the Opera)

"Past the point of no return." (Phantom of the Opera)

**Luke, I am your father!"*

(Stars Wars)

**"Forest, Forest, will you marry me? Ok!" (Forest Gump)*

**Giddyup! Easy, girl! Neeiiighhhh! (As he hit his car's dashboard.)*

**Michael's Chewbacca imitation was better than the original!!*

**Michael and his best friend and chosen brother, Paul Scott, were infamous for....."That's all folks!"*

(Elmer Fudd from Looney Tunes)

I am certain they are now up there together enjoying their coffee and good conversation!!

Patricia - February 02, 2024 at 02:42 PM

PA

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Patricia - January 12, 2024 at 05:31 PM

JR

“ Our sincere sympathies and prayers go out to Michael and his family at this time. Michael was a great man to an awful lot of people. A mentor to many people in the business world. A man that truly loved his family and love to do anything he could for them specially make them comfortable and always ready to give them a good laugh.

My wife and I will truly miss him but we have plenty of memories going to dinner in lake George New York lake luzerne New York and the two or three times we used to visit in New Jersey. We express our love and condolences to the family from John and Maria rolleston and our extended families that live in New York

John and Maria Rolleston - January 08, 2024 at 01:51 PM

PR

“ Night Night Michael. It was a privilege to have known you.

Lots of Love

Peter, Beverley (Denise!!) Sarah & Jamie

Peter Riley - January 07, 2024 at 02:23 PM



“ 25 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Michael Hegarty & John Vincent Scalia Home for Funerals and Cremation Service - January 07, 2024 at 09:38 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of *Michael Pogorzelsky*.



January 07, 2024 at 08:33 AM