



Gary L. Brown

February 9, 1948 - August 28, 2012

Gary L. Brown, 64, of Chicago, formerly of Kankakee, died Tuesday (Aug. 28, 2012). A memorial Mass will be celebrated at 6 p.m. today at Maternity BVM Catholic Church in Bourbonnais. Clancy-Gernon Funeral Home, Bourbonnais, is in charge of arrangements.

He was born Feb. 9, 1948, in Donovan, the son of Dorothy Anderson and Delmar Brown. He spent his childhood in Beaverville working on the family farm, attending school and playing sports. He especially enjoyed playing baseball.

After graduation from high school, Gary attended Indiana University, where he played basketball and baseball for the university. Since baseball was his passion, he decided to play professionally for the Montreal Expos minor league team from 1969 to 1971. He graduated from The John Marshall Law School in 1976 and chose to practice in Kankakee. His legal career included work as an assistant states attorney, a private practice with the law firm of Butz, Mortell, Jaffe, Smith, O'Connor and Brown, and the city attorney under former Mayor Russell Johnson for eight years.

After more than 20 years in law, Gary switched careers to work for a not-for-profit agency, Howard Area Community Center. At the resource center, Gary structured and organized the computer literacy program.

Gary will be remembered by his family as the dad who taught his son to pitch like a pro and play chess like a master; by his daughter, Jessica, as the dad who celebrated even the smallest achievement; and by his daughter, Chrissy, as the dad who encouraged her to strive for excellence and embrace each individual along the way.

Gary is survived by his children, Jessica Szynal Brown, Christina Szynal Brown and J.D. Timothy Szynal Brown; and his former wife, Carol Szynal Ph.D., whom he married July 15, 1972.

Previous Events

Memorial Mass

AUG 31. 6:00 PM (CT)

Maternity B.V.M. Catholic Church
308 E. Marsile
Bourbonnais, IL 60914
(815) 933-8285
<http://www.mbvchurch.org/>

Tribute Wall



“ Gary was kindness and respect personified. I remember taking his computer classes. I know he was an attorney by profession but he was an excellent instructor. I remember being in his Microsoft Publisher class he gave us all an assignment. There was no reward or trophy but the value of the experience was all worth it. The goal was to see who could finish the project before the class ended. I finished first. Then there was this lady named Barbara who was always talking all the time interrupting class. Not paying much attention she was just there because I think she was either retired or on some kind of disability. Anyways the time came when Gary told the class I had finished my assignment with flying colors. Barbra only said he can pay attention because he is young Gary turned to her with a not so impressed look on his face. He believed in everyone's potential including Barbara's but she used her senior status as an excuse not to focus or finish her project. Gary was definitely on top of his game. Extremely knowledgeable very respectful. I even got the chance to introduce him to my mother because I kept telling my mother of the cool instructor teaching the computer class. I think it must have been three to two weeks after my last class when I came back to the center when I asked for Gary everyone was quiet. Then they told me the news. But I was just talking to him. My mother just met him. I was in shock. Then some of the media reporting the articles from the reporters. Only the crazy guy knows why he did that which was not a nice thing to do. To his family my deepest and sincerest condolences. Sometimes during class or in between breaks Gary would talk about you guys and even though I've never met any of you Gary made sure we knew who you were and how special you were to him. But I only hope he is in heaven because in the end he really did tried to redeem himself. I only saw him as this really super bright guy. Someone who encouraged everyone to be the best they could be. Thank you Mr. Gary L. Brown. You were one cool dude to us all in your computer class. We will always remember you Gary :)

Carlos Barahona - July 24, 2021 at 06:27 PM



“ I will never forget this sweet and gentle man. He helped me to learn different computer skills when he was working at Howard Area. He always was very positive and kept me motivated.



Tammy Schrader - July 20, 2020 at 04:35 PM

KS

“ Gary was a very kind and patient man...my interactions were brief with him..however I knew him from the Howard Area Community Center. It is a tragedy that Gary and Cathy's lives were extinguished by someone that they were trying to help.

Kelly Sheridan - December 06, 2012 at 01:01 PM

KS

“ Kelly Sheridan lit a candle in memory of Gary L. Brown



Kelly Sheridan - December 06, 2012 at 12:57 PM

AM

“ Please join the Howard Area Community Center in celebrating the life of our dear friend, co-worker and teacher Mr. Gary L. Brown. The memorial will be Friday September 7th, 2012 at 3:00pm at Howard Area Employment Resource Center, 1623 West Howard Street Chicago, IL 60626.

Amanda Myers - September 05, 2012 at 09:40 AM

PP

I wish to send my condolences to Gary's family. I only knew him for a short while when I took computer classes with him at the Howard area Community Center. He seemed like a very kind and patient man with a good sense of humor and he treated everyone there with patience and respect. I know he will be missed by many people. So sorry for your loss.

Penelope Pane - September 08, 2012 at 12:02 PM

VC

“*Christina, Jessica, Tim,
We were so sorry to hear about your dad. You
are in our prayers.
With sympathy,
Shirley Hedger(your babysitter when you
were young) and family*



Vicki Cheffer - September 04, 2012 at 10:54 AM

JS

“*Joyce Stevenson lit a candle in memory of
Gary L. Brown*



Joyce Stevenson - September 02, 2012 at 05:11 PM

MP

“ To the family of Gary Brown I want to express my sympathy at your loss. I have know Gary by his first name for about three weeks but by his face for a number of years. We saw each other regularly on Sunday mornings. He was free with a kind nod or a soft smile as greeting. He spoke rarely but said important and relavant things that encouraged and supported those around him. He will be missed in my crown of people for his warmth and gentle spirit. I will pray for Gary and all those who thought of him as a friend and for his family. Peace Mike Perez

Michael A. Perez - September 02, 2012 at 01:54 PM

PW

*I'm so sorry for your loss. Please accept my condolences and prayers.
Pam Weidner*

pamela weidner - September 02, 2012 at 02:06 PM

RR

“ To those who knew and loved Gary Brown;

Gary was always a good, thoughtful man. I worked with him in his roles as Assistant State's Attorney and Kankakee City Attorney - both positions of public trust which he conscientiously carried out with dedication and enthusiasm. Gary took great interest in serving his fellow citizens - his heart and soul were wrapped up in performing the best that he could for those around him. I am so very sorry to hear of his awful tragedy. Live in the Peace of our Creator forever.

Ron Riml, Kankakee City PD, Ret. - September 01, 2012 at 10:26 PM

DH

“ Gary you will be missed greatly....You always had a smile on your face no matter what you were going through...You believed that God could do all things if only you believed. You always gave me such inspiration when we would sit and talk. My condolences go out to your family.... Your memory will live on in our hearts and minds..... You were a great and wonderful person.....Deborah Hopkins and Family

Deborah Hopkins - September 01, 2012 at 11:29 AM



“ I met Gary thru my sister Christie VanZee. Gary sure like taking pictures of everything, he was very good at it also. He was a good person to be around. The last time I saw him was last October and I had the privilage to pick him up at the train station. To the family I send my sympathy and my prayers for your loss. Hold on to your memories. May the God of Peace & comfort be with you during this time. Praying for you all.

Ruth Logan - August 31, 2012 at 07:37 PM

ES

“ Dear Jessica, Christina, and Timothy,
I practiced law with your Dad in the late 70's in a 6-membered firm which had its offices in the old City National Bank Building, which now houses the Kankakee County administration offices. Your dad was a generalist: he would take on just about any type of case, if he believed in it, and he particularly liked trial work. He was a natural-born lawyer. He was afraid of nothing and no one. Gary hated injustice. He had a great sense of humor. He had energy and enthusiasm; he didn't fatigue or get diverted when he set his mind to some task that had to be done. He took great pleasure in the Donovan farm place, particularly the stocked catfish pond. He was very proud of each of you. I remember Gary best as a solid general practitioner trial lawyer who, when he perceived an injustice, would unhesitatingly muster his considerable skills to champion the cause of the underdog. He was a good man .My wife, Jean, and I extend to you and your mom, Carol, our very deepest sympathies and condolences.

With sympathy,
Ed & Jean Smith

Ed Smith - August 31, 2012 at 03:21 PM

TT

“ My condolences go out to the family. I have never forgot the kindness from Gary when I rented from him. My prayers are with the family.

Toni Timm

toni timm - August 31, 2012 at 12:05 PM