



## Maria Davila Arseneau

May 2, 1970 - January 19, 2017

Maria Trinidad Davila Arseneau, 46, of Bourbonnais passed away Thursday, Jan. 19 at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. due to complications from Marfan syndrome.

She was born May 2, 1970 in Chicago, Ill., the daughter of Jose Enrique and Maria Trinidad “Trini” (Estrada) Davila from Bourbonnais, Ill. and Barranquilla, Colombia.

After Maria graduated with a political science degree from the University of Illinois, a major heart surgery derailed her plans to go to law school. It was something that would have crushed the spirit of a lesser woman, but inspired Maria to pursue her true calling: teaching.

For nearly two decades she held court in the foreign language hallway of Bradley Bourbonnais Community High School, her alma mater. Describing her as a Spanish teacher, though — even a wonderful one — is woefully inadequate. Beginning with her first class of students in 1999, she was so much more than an educator. Maria was a mentor, a life coach, a teller of blunt truths, an inspiration, a force to be reckoned with. If any of her students were asked to name the most valuable lesson they learned from her, it’s virtually guaranteed that none would answer “conjugating verbs in the subjunctive” or “learning to ask where the library is.” Any one of the hundreds

would likely share details of a lesson in life or love, taught with the utmost care and a healthy dose of humor.

While she and her husband Tim didn't have any children themselves, they willingly inherited scores of them. They welcomed students into their home and treated them like family, serving as surrogate cool relatives whom young men and women on the cusp of the scary adult world could approach for honest advice — or even just some much-needed laughs during a time of stress.

Maria's quick wit combined sarcasm and sometimes-inappropriate humor, and meant no one around her went long without smiling. Her laugh was infectious. She loved making people happy, no matter what she was struggling with herself. In fact, many who were close to Maria were unaware of the health issues plaguing her, which was by design.

She would much rather spend time cooking, dancing or watching cheesy romantic comedies than unloading her worries onto friends and family. Though, when it comes to listening to others, there was no one better. Maria was warm, empathetic and willing to go to the ends of the earth for those she loved. It's no surprise that many of her friendships date back to her elementary school days.

Maria is a shining example of how to love the people in your life — and that was especially true with Tim, her best friend, soulmate and partner in crime whom she married in 2003.

Not many people can say they've truly left a legacy. Maria has. Her spirit will live on not only in the people she knew, but also through stories told about her humor and compassion and strength to those who never had the remarkable privilege of meeting her.

Cremation rites have been accorded. A memorial service will be held at Bradley Bourbonnais Community High School Main Gym, 700 W. North St., Bradley, Ill. on Sunday February 5th, 2017 from 11:00 to 3:00 PM. A formal remembrance ceremony will be from 1:00 to 2:00 PM. Parking is available in the back lot. Entry through the atrium doors. A funeral service will be held at Maternity BVM church, 308 E. Marsile St., Bourbonnais, Ill. on Monday February 6th, 2017. Greeting from 9:00 to 10:30 AM. Funeral service starting at 10:30 AM. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Maria T. Arseneau Scholarship Fund in care of the family.

Surviving Maria are her husband, U.S. Army Colonel Timothy Arseneau of Bourbonnais; her father, Jose Davila of Bourbonnais; her sister, Deisy Esther Davila (David) Anderson of Bourbonnais; brothers-in-law, Michael (Maria Victoria) Arseneau of Bourbonnais and Jerome (Carrie) Arseneau of Manteno; sister-in-law, Nicoele Arseneau of Manteno; five nieces, Mia Rose Anderson, Margaret, Sophia, Gabriela and Kennedy Arseneau; three nephews Andrew, Jacob and Christopher Arseneau; numerous aunts, uncles and cousins; hundreds of friends and students.

Please post memorials on line at the following site: <http://memorial.yourtribute.com/MariaDavilaArseneau/>

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

FEB 5. 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Bradley Bourbonnais Community High School Gym  
Bradley, IL

## Formal Remembrance Ceremony

FEB 5. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Bradley Bourbonnais Community High School Gym  
Bradley, IL

## Greeting

FEB 6. 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM (CT)

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

## Funeral Service

FEB 6. 10:30 AM (CT)

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



# Tribute Wall

PT

“ *Phil Torchia lit a candle in memory of Maria Davila Arseneau*



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**Phil Torchia** - February 06, 2017 at 09:31 PM

JP

“ *As a former student of Ms. Arseneau's, I can say that each day, her class was a guaranteed exception from the otherwise monotonous high school routine. This was in part due to the way she conducted class, which struck a perfect balance between education and recreation. Although most first hour classes can be dreadful, first hour Spanish with Ms. Arseneau was a perfect way to start the day. Her wit and sense of humor was sure to get laughs even during the winter doldrums.*

*Perhaps even more important than her teaching style was the way in which she treated her students. We were treated as adults, which may not seem significant, but meant quite a great deal me in retrospect. Although I only had the privilege of having Ms. Arseneau as a Spanish teacher for one year, her legacy has made an everlasting impact on my life. I will certainly never forget her.*

*My thoughts and condolences are with her family,*

*Jon Powell*

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**Jonathan Powell** - February 05, 2017 at 03:37 PM

JJ

“ I am a former resident of Ashkum IL and unknown to you. I am a retired Hospice Chaplain from Lafayette, IN. Also, I am a minister-convert to the Catholic Church.

In the past, I have spoken with Fr. Pighini (sp) who had been my aunt's priest at St. Patrick, Kankakee.

Tim, the photo of Maria and the accompanying obituary is extremely touching.

She had an extraordinary relationship with her students, and will continue to do so with her prayers from heaven.

Please accept my most sincere sympathy and prayers regarding your most painful loss. God's peace be with you and your loved ones. It would seem quite pretentious for me to leave my phone number with you. However, at anytime, you would sense a need to talk with someone, I am available to listen. (765- 418- 4804)

1 Thess. 2: 16, 3: 16.

God Love You,

John T. 'Jack' Johnson

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**Jack Johnson** - February 04, 2017 at 10:19 AM



“ *Sam Preston lit a candle in memory of Maria Davila Arseneau*



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**Sam Preston** - February 04, 2017 at 09:51 AM

LB

“ *As a student in my BBCHS English classes, BBCHS speech team, and BBCHS community relations office, I got to enjoy her many gifts and talents from the first time she had me at "Hello" when she walked into my sophomore class. I remember the day she went to U of I and the day she came back to the school to visit after learning of her heart disease. On that day, we talked about the curve in the road to law school and her decision to teach high school students. Thankfully, we became colleagues and fabulous friends and gratefully, she taught my lucky children in her brilliant classes. Her passion to teach was as obvious as her love for her amazing parents, her pride in her dancing baby sister, Deisy---and her beloved best friend forever---dear Tim. My heart breaks with this news. The world has lost an authentic sparkle whose presence in all of our lives brought grace, joy and goodness to any room she entered----and to any life....especially mine.*

*Tim---- Jim and I are keeping you and your amazing family in our hearts and prayers now and always..*

*Sparkle on, dear Maria....sparkle on.*

*Lana Brown*

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**Lana Brown** - February 03, 2017 at 06:14 AM

DK

“ While both of my sons were students of Maria's, I was also privileged to know her through classes we took together at GSU. She was truly a blessing to those she encountered in her life, and will be sorely missed.

*My condolences to her family. I will be keeping all of you in my thoughts and prayers.*

*Dianne Kronika*

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**Dianne Kronika** - February 02, 2017 at 05:00 PM

MP

“ *Mary Lou Pallissard lit a candle in memory of Maria Davila Arseneau*



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**Mary Lou Pallissard** - January 31, 2017 at 10:41 PM

MP

*Remember Maria coming to BBCHS as a teacher...her classroom was close to my office at BBCHS where I also worked. Was a warm and sweet person and a pleasure to work with. My grand kids all thought she was an awesome teacher. My sympathy and prayers to her family.*

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**Mary Lou Pallissard** - January 31, 2017 at 10:47 PM