

Dr. Michael Herschel Kaplan

October 5, 1942 - March 31, 2025

Dr. Michael Herschel Kaplan, age 82, died on Monday, March 31, 2025 in Baltimore, MD from complications of dementia with Lewy bodies (DLB).

Michael was born in Baltimore to Rose and Solomon Kaplan and raised in the city. Following graduation from City College and the University of Maryland, he earned a degree in Veterinary Medicine from Michigan State University. He ran the NYC marathon in 1978. During his 47-year career as a veterinarian he was guided by excellent, evidence-based veterinary care. He developed, owned and operated Valley, Perring, and Baltimore Animal Hospitals, Roland Park Veterinary Clinic and most recently Ruxton Animal Hospital. He incorporated animal-themed art and sculpture in their decor. He retired in 2015.

Michael was a faithful, caring friend and cherished veterinarian. A veterinarian friend said, "He was my favorite colleague. He was so smart. I loved talking medicine with Michael. He always had a clear perspective. He will be missed." A client and friend said, "I loved many things about Dr. Kaplan as our family vet for 30 years. What I loved most about him was that he always kept up with the most recent research, so I knew my dog was getting the best care."

Michael and his husband Steve fell in love at first sight in 1979. Together 45 years (married in 2013), they rarely spent time away from each other;

traveling, dining, enjoying the world's great art museums, cultures, historical and architectural sites. Over the years, they frequently hosted events for friends and family.

Michael was a lifetime member of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), served as president of the Greater Baltimore Veterinary Medical Association (GBVMA) and on the boards the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF), the Gay and Lesbian Community Center of Baltimore, and Washington, D.C.'s Textile Museum's International Hajji Baba Society (oriental rugs/textiles group).

His interests included travel, high-end audio, vinyl records, a decided taste in art, architecture, oriental rugs, African ethnographic sculpture, landscape design, orchestral performance, and his sculptured animal art collection.

Michael is survived by his husband Steven B. Nordfjord, two daughters, four grandchildren, an aunt, cousins and former wife.

Thanks to Michael's medical team, caregivers, hospice and the kind support of so many family and friends.

Those desiring may make memorial contributions to the ACLU.

Tribute Wall

RL

“ I met Michael in 1981 through a gay married men’s group in Baltimore and soon came to understand what a gifted, caring and “challenging “ man and friend he would become in my life. We loved talking science and medicine, politics and to an extent most unusual in my life experience, how we felt about many things. Although Michael was more of “not only is the glass half empty, we’ve already hit the iceberg and the ship is going down” type of guy to my sometimes naive optimism, we respected each other’s viewpoints and supported each other warmly and sincerely.

Over the ensuing 45 years our friendship matured as we navigated our divorces, our kids growing up, changes in our professional lives, “getting older” and our relationships with loved ones, most importantly our husbands.

Michael was a “true friend” in the classic sense that when my husband suffered through the final ten years of AIDS, he was one of damn few who was always there, along with Steve, to do what true friends do: to simply be there, bear witness, comfort and support.

Michael was usually the first one to “challenge” me “Why are you doing this? How does that feel? Are you quite sure?” Which was frankly a bit off-putting at first but then became a welcoming line of inquiry that encouraged introspection and growth.

Steve was the absolute grounded center of his life and together they reminded us all of what a good marriage is all about.

Love you, Michael.... Hope to see you “down the road”, and yeah, I can imagine we probably disagree about that one too!

Ralph LeBlanc

Ralph Leblanc - April 02, 2025 at 04:04 AM

SH

How fortunate Steve and Michael found each other to share a most amazing love, their strengths complimenting each other to make perfection. Steve, I join all of your friends in making a circle of strength and caring around you at this difficult time. Love, Susan and Ruby Rose

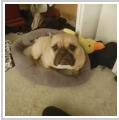
Susan Hadary - April 02, 2025 at 09:46 AM

SR

RIP Michael. Steve-- Alan and I join Susan in her circle of strength and caring around you at this tough time. It was a sad ending to a amazing and beautiful relationship which never faded. "We are still in love" is what you said to me just days before Michael passed. I was so touched to hear you say that after all your years together. It was truly a special love.

Sherry & Alan Rudick

Sherry Rudick - April 02, 2025 at 12:31 PM



God speed.

James Plumer - April 02, 2025 at 06:27 PM

PN

Our sympathy and condolences to you Steve for your loss. We so appreciate all you did during your time in Dickeyville. Your plantings thrive and we enjoy them front and back. Do knock on our door if you're in the neighborhood. Wishing you comfort and strength as you journey through the times ahead. Patricia & George La Noue

patricia la noue - April 08, 2025 at 05:07 PM

MA

Michael was our family's vet for over 50 years. We relied on his expertise with our many pets, and we admired his humor. Although we don't know you Steve, we do know what a loss it is to and your family. The pain doesn't go away...it just fades, but the great memories are with you. Maureen and Fred Winer

Maureen - August 27, 2025 at 09:55 PM