

We've all lost a good friend and food service/restaurant advocate. Michael Birchenall epitomized a gentleman, a warrior, a mensch, a father and a friend — there will be a vacant spot in my heart for a long time to come.

Dara Bunjon, Foodservice Monthly

What can you say when someone who touched your life in such an impactful way leaves this earth? I met Michael Birchenall, as so many others did, through the food business. He saw me grow up in this business, and was a steady mentor and friend through it all. During a big career change for me, I realized what a quiet champion he was. I could always call him and he would give me honest feedback without sugar coating. He offered connections that resulted in long-time job opportunities. Our conversations extended to personal family stories and shared recipes — he even made his famous Red Velvet cake for a family event! The public relations profession is about building good strong relationships and I count Michael Birchenall as one of those. I will miss his friendship to my core.

Dianne Murphy, PR Consultant

Michael Birchenall was a special friend and colleague. He was also an amazing writer and truly one of a kind. I first met Michael at a press event downtown, at a time when food bloggers were flooding the DC food scene. The two of us became fast friends. Later, even though he lived far away from Olney, Michael began visiting the farmers market I run. His passion was our plum tomatoes. Every year, when I ran into him at press events, he would ask when we would have our plum tomatoes. I regret that this year I forgot to tell him about those tomatoes he loved so much.

Janet Terry, Olney Farms Market

What a shining light in our community. Michael's knowledge, generosity of spirit and celebration of our industry was always a highlight.

John B. Snedden, Rocklands Barbecue

What a great sadness. Michael was a lovely and truly unique person.

Kristin M. Rohr, Guest Services Inc

Very sad. There was such great synergy between Michael's publication (his heart and soul) and RAMW, as our organization survived extinction and, along with *Foodservice Monthly*, grew and prospered. RAMW events will not be quite the same without Michael and his camera.

Andrew J. Kline, Esquire

We will all surely miss Michael.
Scott Attman, Acme Paper & Supply

It's a very sad day — a true friend has left us. During his years in DC Michael did so many great things for the industry he so dearly loved. We should each stop and remember how Michael believed in RAMW and The Rammy's. He was a tireless advocate and promoter.

Jodi Lehr, Santa Lucia Estate Coffee

We will remember Michael as a spirited, engaged storyteller with integrity. From one Joan Hisaoka Associate Member of the Year to another, I salute you, Michael. Your insight and thoughtfulness will be missed. Our prayers for his family and friends. Fair winds and following seas, God speed.

Rob Mumma, Belair Produce

Grateful for his contributions and commitment to this community; he will be missed. RIP Michael.

Scott S. Kinlaw, EagleBank

Michael had a big impact on the restaurant industry in Washington DC. You will be greatly missed.

Robert Wiedmaier, Marcel's et al

He was an amazing man with a great heart and a love for everything food. Rest in peace, my friend.

Grace Abi-Najm Shea, Lebanese Taverna

I will always remember Michael for his kindness, his smile, his commitment to the industry and RAMW and of course, the camera around his neck.

David Moran, Clyde's Restaurant Group

Champion. Advocate. Supporter. Mentor. Creator. Friend. One of the good guys. Michael Birchenall. Thank you for your friendship and guidance. I'll miss you always. And-

remember you with love.

Randi Rom, Foodservice Monthly

I don't think there is anyone who knew the food industry quite like Michael Birchenall. I remember fondly the times he would visit and we would discuss new restaurant openings, new chefs coming to town or just share interesting stories about the food scene. His commitment to *Foodservice Monthly* and to the industry never wavered. I could always count on Michael to stop by with magazines in hand. On behalf of all of his friends at Metro, we extend our deepest sympathy to the Birchenall family, friends and colleagues. His unparalleled contributions will never be rivaled.

Steven Kohan, Metropolitan

Michael Birchenall was a true gentleman, always genuinely interested in our success, as he was with every company in our industry. He was a dear friend of Saval Foodservice and a part of our family. His industry insight was unequaled and he shared all that he knew with anyone willing to listen. Michael cared about us, he always took the time to speak with everyone at an event and he made everyone feel important. Michael had become our industries' historian. Appearing at every event with his camera, everyone waited for the next publication of *Foodservice Monthly* to see their picture. All of us at Saval Foodservice will miss seeing him at RAM and RAMW events, trade shows and our celebrations — they truly will never be the same. May his legacy live on. We'll miss you Michael.

Paul Saval, Richard Hatcher and Bryan Bernstein, SAVAL

*When a great man dies, for years
the light he leaves behind him,
lies on the paths of men.*

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Michael and I met few years ago and became close during my daughter's illness — he was always kind, supportive and thoughtful. I consider myself privileged to have known and worked with him. He was as Longfellow described: a great man who left behind a legacy and many warm hearts.

Osman Yazgan, ITEK

Michael was a dear comrade and colleague. A true gentleman, leader, trailblazer and friend to everyone. He had an incredible knack for making those around him comfortable. Hospitality and kindness towards others was the foundation of his character. Michael treated everyone the same — with the utmost respect. Always willing to engage, he was truly interested in hearing your story and thrived on learning more about you. He did not shy away from stating his mind and was the first to speak out against injustice. In the end, he taught me lessons on grace and gratitude that will be with me forever. So Michael, thank you. For being steady, for being present, for sharing and caring, and for never making work the basis of our connection. In an industry that sees a lot of change, you were a constant.

Kelly Morris, KSM Marketing

Michael's passing will leave a void in the foodservice world as the depth of his knowledge and passion were unmatched. His humble and heartwarming personality, combined with a natural ability to connect so many industry puzzle pieces, will be remembered forever. Each year, I looked forward to our Expo as I knew that meant we'd be able to catch up. We both loved our view from above overlooking the tradeshow floor — one of his favorite spots for capturing Expo photos. Rest in peace my friend.

Susan Jones, OCHMRA

Michael, you were a wonderful friend and fellow foodie; and so many people loved you.

Alexandra Greeley, cookasia.com

A gifted writer and one of the most organized, focused and thorough editors I have ever had the privilege to work with, Michael was that rare combination — a professional of the highest order who also truly cared about the industry and its people. I will miss our monthly late night production sessions collaborating on the design and layout of *Foodservice Monthly*. But mostly, I will miss his kind, gentle, and softspoken way.

Leslie LeFranc, Electronic Ink