

||| **ROBERT FRANKENSTEIN | 1943-2014**

# Frankenstein embraced his memorable name

**BY MAUREEN O'DONNELL**  
Staff Reporter

When attorney Robert Frankenstein introduced himself, people did a double take.

"What did you say your name was?" they'd ask.

"Frankenstein, like the monster," he'd reply.

If people pronounced it "Franken-STEIN," he'd sometimes channel Gene Wilder from the movie "Young Frankenstein," correcting them with a tongue-in-cheek hissy fit.

"It's not Frank-STEIN, it's Frank-STEEN," he'd say.

But "then he would say, 'whatever,'" said his daughter, Jamie Steckler.

Mr. Frankenstein, who really did pronounce it Frank-STEEN, went from being a kid who grew up in a West Rogers Park apartment to a lawyer who traveled the world, skiing and scuba diving. He tooted around Glen-ocoe in his Corvette, his Labrador retriever Max riding shotgun, long ears fluttering behind him.

He died last month at his Palm Springs home at age 70. He was diagnosed in December with Stage IV lung cancer, said Susan, his wife of 43 years.

Mary Shelley's novel made his surname a shorthand for horror. When he was in school, teachers taking attendance came to his name and thought they had a smart-aleck on their hands. And in the days before caller ID, it wasn't unusual for him to get crank calls about it.

But he viewed his monstrous moniker as a gift.

"If he met you socially or in the law business, you re-

membered his name," his wife said.

"He actually liked that it was unique," said his other daughter, Cari Gold. "He always knew that it was a way that people remembered him."

Mr. Frankenstein was born in Chicago. His father was an attorney and his mother was a homemaker. He grew up near Damen and Farwell in West Rogers Park, where he loved going to the beach. He joined the swim team at Sullivan High School.

He attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison and law school at Northwestern University before settling in Chicago.

He met his future wife in the Aldine Avenue apartment building where they lived. She'd just received a speeding ticket on Lake Shore Drive, and he offered to help her with it, even though "he had been a lawyer for about three hours," she said.

They started dating. "He'd never met a Jewish girl who could play tennis and ski and horseback ride," said his wife, who grew up in Highland Park. He matched her, sport for sport.

They married the following year and moved to Glen-ocoe in 1975.

Mr. Frankenstein practiced corporate and real estate law. "He was a zealous advocate, but always civil to his opponents," said former partner Michael Goldberg. And, "Nobody ever forgot the name."

In his off hours, he loved adventure, both geographical and gastronomical. He and his wife went on a photo sa-

fari to Kenya and Tanzania. They toured ancient ruins in Egypt, Israel and Turkey. He ate sea urchin in Sicily that was so fresh, it was still moving. The Frankensteins traveled to Cambodia, China, Russia and Thailand. They preferred river cruises over ocean cruises so they could get away from touristy ports of call and get a feel for the heart of a country, dropping in at local markets and bazaars.

After years of visiting the Chicago Auto Show and pinning for a Corvette, his wife urged him to treat himself. He bought a little pewter colored number. "He took a course on driving race cars. He scuba dived. We always kidded him that before he died, he was going to be licensed and certified in everything," she said.

Mr. Frankenstein had a well-stocked woodshop that enabled him to build a well-stocked wine cellar. He loved pairing his homemade risotto and paella with just the right vintage.

For his paella, he might hit three or four stores to get the perfect ingredients — a seafood market for fresh shellfish, another for the tastiest sausage, an ethnic shop for spices.

He owned four smokers — two in Glen-ocoe and two at their home in Palm Springs.

His office was famously messy, with piles on the chairs, the sofas, and even the floors, but he knew where everything was.

Mr. Frankenstein is also survived by his sister, Marilyn Leader, and five grandchildren. Services have been held.

Email: modonnell@suntimes.com  
Twitter: @suntimesobits



**Robert Frankenstein**

## In Memoriam

**Bryan J. Cantafio**



**April 29, 1980 - June 26, 2000**  
Shooting Star.  
So beautiful, so bright, so brief.  
Happy Birthday.

**In Memoriam**  
**Brandon Hubert Culpepper**  
4/29/1982 - 1/27/2012



You are always present in our thoughts and always dear to our hearts.  
We miss you, Mom, Dad & the Holton Culpepper Family

## In Memoriam

### General Information Concerning The Death Notice Page

- A paid death notice may be ordered to appear in the Chicago Sun-Times when funeral arrangements are made, and must be submitted in writing. Information about charges for death notices may be obtained from area funeral directors or by calling (312) 321-3198. A 24-hour fax service is offered at (312) 321-2040 or death notices may be e-mailed to dnddept@suntimes.com.

- An in memoriam or card of thanks may be placed using the same information above.

- The deadline for placing a death notice, in memoriam or card of thanks is 5:00 pm daily, one day prior to publication. Photos must be submitted by 4:00 pm one day prior to publication.

- The deadline for a customized in memoriam or card of thanks with a border and graphics is three work days prior to publication.

- Holiday deadline is 2:00 pm on the holiday for the following day, with photos by 12:00 noon.

- The death notice department is staffed from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm daily.

- Family and friends may visit our website and sign a guest book at [www.chicagolandobits.com](http://www.chicagolandobits.com)

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## Death Notices

**Cook Jr., Ralph D.**

Beloved husband of Toni S. (nee Kovacic); dear son-in-law of Anthony (late Eleanor) Kovacic; brother-in-law of Janice (Craig) Bohn; loving brother of Claudia (Terry) Tremblay, Sharon Cook, Karen (Richard) Juvinal and the late Willard Cook; proud uncle to many nieces and nephews and friend to many.

Visitation Tuesday from 3:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. at the **Zimmerman & Sandeman Funeral Home and Cremation Service**, 5200 W. 95th St. Lying in State Wednesday 10:00 a.m. until time of Service at 11:00 a.m. at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, 9701 S. Brandt Ave., Oak Lawn, Illinois. Interment Chapel Hill Gardens South Cemetery.

Information 708-424-0340 or visit [www.zimmermansandeman.com](http://www.zimmermansandeman.com).

**Zimmerman & Sandeman**  
FUNERAL HOME & CREMATION SERVICES

Sign Guest Book at [www.chicagolandobits.com](http://www.chicagolandobits.com)

**Dahl, David Bruce**

72, of Chicago, passed away April 25, 2014. He is survived by his loving wife of 26 years, Carol; his three children, Jeffery, (Anne), Diana, and Daniel (Beth); his loving grandchildren, Jake, Max, Eli, Lindsay, and Avery Dahl and Taylor Harris; as well as sister, Marilyn Liss and stepchildren, Janessa (Steve) Bernstein and Joseph Russo.

A graduate of DePaul University, David was a highly respected partner in the CPA firm of Leaf Dahl and Company. He will be greatly missed by his family and friends.

In lieu of flowers, please send donation to Hadassah Chicago-North Shore Chapter for Lymphoma Research, 60 Revere Drive, Suite 800, Northbrook, IL 60062. Services will be held this Wednesday, April 30th at 1:00 p.m., at **Weinstein & Son Funeral Home**, 111 Skokie Blvd., Wilmette. Interment at Westlawn Cemetery, 7801 West Montrose Avenue, Norridge, IL. For more info 847-256-5700.

**Weinstein Dignity**  
Funeral Home  
[www.weinsteinfuneralhomes.com](http://www.weinsteinfuneralhomes.com)

Sign Guest Book at [www.chicagolandobits.com](http://www.chicagolandobits.com)

**Hecht, Robert C.**

In loving memory of Robert C. Hecht, October 16, 1937 - April 24, 2014.

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