



Jonathan M. Levine

May 9, 1967 - June 11, 2021

Jonathan Levine, publisher of the Pittsfield Gazette, passed away on Friday, June 11, after a brief battle with an aggressive cancer. A native of Pittsfield, Jonathan revived the school newspaper during his time at Taconic High School, while also assisting in various capacities at the Berkshire Eagle. After graduating from Brown University where he served two terms as editor of the Brown Daily Herald, he returned to Pittsfield and started the Gazette. For nearly thirty years, the Gazette covered the people and happenings of his hometown with reviews of regional theater sprinkled in when the seasons permitted. Jonathan was driven by a strong sense of right and wrong and used his forum to praise city officials when he felt that was deserved and to call out those whose actions he felt were not in the best interests of Pittsfield's citizens. He is survived by three siblings, David, Cathy, and Ian and three nephews and a niece.

With his passing, the Pittsfield Gazette will cease publication in both its print and online formats. Subscribers and advertisers will be contacted regarding the disposition of funds on deposit with the paper. Those with immediate needs may contact the paper at . The family asks for patience as it unwinds the business affairs.

There will be no public services, but a Celebration of Jonathan's Life and of the Pittsfield Gazette will be held at Mazzeo's Ristorante on South Street, Tuesday, June 29, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Those wishing to make a gift in Jonathan's memory are invited to donate to either the South Congregational

Church Food Pantry (<https://southchurchpittsfield.org/donate/>) or the National Kidney Society (<https://www.kidney.org/donation>).

New England Funeral and Cremation Center, LLC, 25 Mill Street, Springfield, MA, has been entrusted with the arrangements. Please visit Jonathan's memorial page at www.nefcc.net to express online condolences. Inquiries of a personal nature should be directed to

To send a flower arrangement or to plant trees in memory of Jonathan M. Levine.

Tribute Wall

AF

“ You are not forgotten. :)

An old friend - February 24, 2024 at 11:16 AM

JT

“ I knew Jonathan both as a friend and on the Gazette. Aside from being an entertaining companion he had the strongest sense on integrity of almost anyone I’ve known. Will miss him greatly.

John townes - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

CH

“ I had the great honor and joy to know Mr. Jonathan. He was sweet and kind and always had time to stop and chat. I will truly miss our conversations and his witty humor. I pray for God’s all sustaining peace is there to comfort during is time of great loss.
~Blessings~

Cori Hasty - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

NB

“ I am very sad to hear of Jonathan’s passing. My sincere sympathy to his family and friends. I remember him from high school—he stood out as a very smart, nice young man. Later in life I interacted with him through his publications as an advertiser and subscriber. The Gazette was a real gift to Pittsfield. I know what it takes to make a print publication a success—and he did it! I was also intrigued when he would skip a publication or two and head off on some interesting travels. I hope you find comfort in good memories. He is now at peace.

Nan Bookless - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

JP

“ Jonathan has come to The Theater Barn to review our shows for many years. We have come to know him and happy to see him when he came to see a show. During intermission he would always come to the box office to chat with me and we will miss him greatly. Rest in Peace Jonathan.”
Joan & Abe Phelps,
Producers

Joan Phelps - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

JB

“ We have come to know Jonathan as both a theater critic and a friend and we will miss him greatly.”
During intermission he would always come out to the box office to chat with us. RIP Jonathan.

Joan Phelps, The Theater Barn - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

RK

“ I knew Jonathan from high school. When living in pittsfield, I would often see him walking to and from the Gazette. He always was a kind soul. Rest in peace my friend.

Roberta Kaufer - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

TO

“ I'm so sorry to learn of Jonathan's passing. His devotion to his community was obvious in his reporting and commentary on local policy and politics. He also wrote some incisive and provocative reviews of the local theater productions. Jonathan could be a curmudgeon at times, but always with a wry sense of humor. I will miss him and The Gazette.

Tom - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

TF

“ To the Levine Family, It is with deep sadness that I read of the passing of Jonathan and I extend my sincere condolences. Jonathan was a true unsung hero. His commitment to local journalism was real and tangible. And it came with a price. He worked so damn hard. So many events...most that no one else covered. And ooooooh..the hours he spent at endless meetings at City Hall. \n\n\nAs an elected official, you can be sure that from time to time over the years Jonathan and I didn't agree but that made little impact on the fact that we respected each other's work. \n\n\nIt's hard to believe he is gone and with it a valued Pittsfield institution. \n\n\nMay he rest in peace.

Tricia Farley-Bouvier - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

RB

“ True friend for more than 30 years, superb newsman, independent thinker and insightful theater reviewer: Jonathan was himself, always. It was a good day in my life when he became the voice for teen-agers in the Berkshire Sampler I edited. He went a long way from that small start, and I admired him. His early death is a loss to many. My sympathy to his siblings.

Ruth Bass - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

JP

“ We have known Jonathan as a critic, and friend, when he came to the Theater Barn to review our shows. He always stopped at the box office at intermission to chat with us and keep up informed as to what was going on in Pittsfield and his life. We will miss him greatly. Rest In Peace Jonathan. Joan and Abe Phelps.

Joan & Abe Phelps - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

GC

“ My condolences to Jonathan’s family. I was the class advisor for his senior year when he was Class President at Taconic. He was a leader and will be missed.

Gary Curry - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

EB

“ I am so sorry to hear of Jonathan’s passing. He was the epitome of the dogged local reporter and his work to keep Pittsfield government transparent was so important. My condolences to Ian and the family.

Elissa Bass - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

MM

“ Taken too soon. Jonathan was one of the first to promote First Friday’s Artswalk via his publication, The Pittsfield Gazette. He offered encouragement and tips for the downtown programs’ success. I will never forget how wonderful He made me feel.. He truly cared about his city and the people who made it a better place to live. He will be deeply missed.

Mary McGinnis - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

RS

“ I was sorry to read about Jonathan’s passing. I remember first meeting him while he was covering an event at Taconic. There he taught me his trick for getting good pictures: take lots of photos--one has to turn out good by chance. I think this advice epitomizes Jonathan’s practically optimistic philosophy.\n\nJonathan was a member of the alumni board of directors while I was the business manager of the Brown Daily Herald. I remember specifically a long debate the board had over buying new office chairs. Some of the other alumni board members wanted a price analysis, multiple quotes, etc. But Jonathan just wanted to be sure whatever we got was of good quality and would be comfortable for the staff. From this I learned how important it was to consider the human element, and not just the numbers, when making decisions.\n\nThough our paths diverged in the subsequent years, I will always remember the lessons I learned from him in my formative high school/college years.

Ryan Shewcraft - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

SH

“Jonathan was a bright and passionate and engaging person and I will miss him very much. He was so dedicated to journalism as a craft and as a touchstone for informing, being fair and putting things right. His high standards were not just for others but also for himself. It was a treat to be interviewed by him or just to run into him at an event: I always felt as if he wanted to hear what I had to say but he also shared juicy news he had encountered out and about in the City or who had rubbed him the wrong way that day. When the Gazette had its super-cluttered offices on West Street, I remember teasing him one time by coming in the front door and loudly announcing, “This is the fire safety inspector! These offices are condemned!” He came out smiling, as I recall, but he didn’t think that was a very funny joke. Apparently office supplies were his secret passion - there were bins and boxes and piles of brand new markers and notepads and pens and file folders in that place. He cared about Pittsfield and knew how to tell its story. His dedicated good work let us know when we were off track but most often brought out the best in this community. I will miss him very much. David, Cathy and Ian, I send you my sympathy and best love. Your brother was a great gift to this world.

Sara Hathaway - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

MB

“Jonathan was dedicated to his craft and to our community. There would be days when I would see him at events in the early morning, noon, and into the late hours of the night. He was honest and fair in his journalism, earning the respect and admiration of those who met him. He will be greatly missed by the community.

Mike Bloomberg - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

SY

“*Jon was one of my closest friends throughout high school, and was a true inspiration to me, due to his strong work ethic and moral compass. I have never known a person since, who has had the conviction of thought and purpose like he had. We had some amazing conversations, even as teens, that I still think about to this day.*”
An amazing man, who led an incredible life, and will be missed by so many.

Scott Yerkes - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

JB

“*My condolences to the family. May the fond memories be a comfort and always be with you. Rest in peace.*”

John Bernardo - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

LN

“*I was just last week talking about the indelible power of figurative language to an 8th-grade English class, and telling students about the personal essay Jonathan wrote for his Brown application. He was, Jonathan wrote then, akin to a kernel of popcorn filled with potential that was ready to explode. What I recall - so vividly, more than 35 years later - was his excitement at the extended metaphor he'd crafted. From our early days at The Sampler, where we were colleagues, to later days when we were competing reporters, to hours peddling adjacent bikes at Nautilus, to so many chance meetings around town, an encounter with Jonathan always left me marveling at his energy, commitment, and authentic interest in the world around him. He embodied the true meaning of the word “community” and Pittsfield will be less friendly without him. My deepest sympathy to his family.*”

Lynne Nilan - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

JL

“ My condolences to Jonathan’s family. He was a wonderful person. He would always cover events at the Berkshire Athenaeum. The Children’s Library held an annual Writing Contest for 5-12 year olds. Jonathan participated as a judge from the first year it began and for many years later. Jonathan will be sadly missed. Carol Mazza

Jonathan Levine - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

AR

“ We met Jonathan at Dialysis. My family was told Dialysis takes a lot out of a person (4 hrs stuck to a machine that cleanses by filtering the waste products out of your blood.) \r\nNot Jonathan! He was ready to sprint to the next event! \r\nWe were so happy for him when he said he had received a kidney transplant and no longer required Dialysis! It should have granted him some freedom!\r\nThen we all had the pandemic! \r\nNow to learn he was faced with an aggressive form of Cancer! \r\nWe are devastated to think his freedom was cut short!\r\nOur deepest condolences to all of you!

Anne & John Ruggeri - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

BW

“Jonathan and I hung out as kids. We attended grammar school together and later attended Taconic High School. In high school, he ran the school newspaper and I ran the radio station (WTBR). We were friendly but it was pretty competitive especially given our respective media empires. I very much appreciated his competitive nature!\n\nIt's so true what Ruth Bass said - “He was brilliant and prickly,” “He could be brutally honest.” I am very grateful that I had the privilege of growing up with Jonathan. He was challenging and direct but it was good to get exposure to that early on before life started throwing real punches at you. As Scott Yerkes said in the comments above, Johnathan had conviction and purpose and he never let that waiver. He was not the type to back down - especially if he saw an injustice. \n\nI recall that Jonathan didn't attend our 25th high school reunion so we called him up and asked him to come to a party we were having to celebrate. Everyone was so happy he showed up - we were no longer in high school anymore but a group of supportive friends navigating a complex world and coping with aging parents. That's my last memory of being with Jonathan. He was kind, genuine, and vulnerable and it was a beautiful experience to connect with him like that - as humans - we were beyond being teens anymore. \n\nSending my deepest condolences to Jonathan's family. He was a brilliant man who took risks and dedicated himself to his community. I will miss him very much. A very sad loss indeed. I am grateful for his contribution to my life and Pittsfield as well.

Bill Wilhelm - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

AW

“My greatest sympathy to Jonathan’s family. I worked with Jonathan for many years as he covered the BCC Board of Trustees meetings. He was a bright, happy, and funny man. Many, many laughs and conversations were had with him over the years. He was be dearly missed.

Alyson Weatherwax - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

N(

“Jonathan and I were first acquainted through Bonnie Gable’s YMCA Players when we still attended Crosby Junior High. Wild to look up to a cat a few years younger, but Jonathan was always someone to look up to! Was so proud of him when he created The Pittsfield Gazette. Enjoyed his honest theater reviews back in the day. Sad to hear of his illness and passing. Peace to his family and loved ones.

Noel (Hanger) - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

“It is with profound sadness that this tribute to Jonathan is being written. \r\nHe was such a good person, a completely honest and straightforward, totally dedicated journalist, and faithful friend. \r\nHe contacted me in 2014 to ask if I would write for his newspaper, The Pittsfield Gazette, as a freelance writer. For seven years, that became my joy. Jonathan and I just clicked.\r\nHe knew exactly the kinds of stories and personal profiles that I'd love to write and he assigned them to me with gusto. He also accepted dozens of suggested stories on people from all walks of life. \r\nAlmost every week when the paper came out, I'd congratulate him on his “weekly miracle.” Then it was on to the next issue!\r\nJonathan had a strange but hilarious sense of humor. We shared a lot of laughs about events and happenings in the community. Most of our interaction was via computer. Sometimes it'd be midnight when we'd go over stories-to-be-written. I guess we were both kind of night owls. \r\nIt was very unfair that he had to suffer so much in life. He actually wrote stories for the Gazette while undergoing kidney dialysis, prior to having a kidney transplant. How amazing that a person could be so dedicated to his craft as Jonathan was to the Gazette. Imagine writing while undergoing dialysis! He was beyond dedicated and I admired him immensely.\r\nWhen he came through the transplant with flying colors, it was cause for great rejoicing. Who ever dreamed that a few years later he'd have to endure the ravages of cancer? He was way too young to die.\r\nJonathan made sure that the Gazette centered on stories in Pittsfield. He'd always remind me of the newspaper's name. It was truly commendable that he founded the newspaper and almost singlehandedly kept it going for more than two decades. \r\nHe must have attended hundreds upon hundreds of meetings in the city. He often felt very proud that the Gazette was the only newspaper in attendance at many of the meetings.\r\nThe pandemic hit the Gazette like it hit newspapers everywhere. Jonathan worried a lot about the devastating loss of advertising revenue and its financial impact. Even though the Gazette was then switched to being a monthly, he still kept it going. That's just who Jonathan was. He never gave up. \r\nTo say that Jonathan Levine will be missed is a massive understatement. One

of journalism's best men has been silenced with his passing. I send my most heartfelt, sincere condolences to his siblings, Kathy, David, and Ian. Your brother was a truly wonderful guy and I'll miss him profoundly.

Susan Guerrero - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

CS

“ We are very saddened to read of Jonathan's passing. As a high school student he won the writing contest our former bookstore (Either/Or) held with the Berkshire Atheneum. We were thrilled when he came back from Brown and started the Pittsfield Gazette. He later served as one of three judges for that same contest, and published the winning essays. He was a fine writer, editor, and public citizen.

Chris Erb and Steve Satullo - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

A4

“ Jonathan was a very good friend of VFW Post 448. In addition to covering many activities of Post 448, he served 10+ years as one of our three District-9, Berkshire County judges for our annual Voice of Democracy high school essay program. Jonathan will be greatly missed by all of our/his comrades

Arnie Perras, Commander, VFW Post 448 - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

AC

“ Jonathan and I went to school from kindergarten at Pomeroy Elementary School through Crosby Middle School and then Taconic High School. We were great friends and had almost all of our classes together. Jonathan was president and valedictorian of our class as well as editor of our school paper, *The Taconic Times*.
I remember fondly going to play dates at the house on Eleanor Rd. Of course we played school! What geeks we both were!
Later on we were both in the same circle of friends playing mini-golf and going to Tanglewood and activities of that sort. It makes me smile just thinking of Jonathan and the “good old days”.
I moved out of state and have only seen him a few times through the years when I came home to visit but Jonathan would run into my Mom, Julane Reed, from time to time and I would get updates - and I’m sure she shared my life events with him as well.
Jonathan was a very good friend and I am so sorry that he has left us. I will cherish the memories I have.

Amy (Reed) Cernava - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM

MP

“ While searching for something else, I inadvertently stumbled across Jonathan’s obituary. I had no idea. I went to school with him, and this saddens me. Prayers and strength to his family and friends...

MICHELLE D PLOUFFE - February 14, 2023 at 09:59 AM