

THE LAST WORD

A few thoughts on the passing of a dear friend

By
Everyone Else.

**Dan
Shuster**

Please send my condolences. Chet Zarko was a great person and I truly enjoyed working with him on the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative. He will be missed.

**Pearl
Denmen**

please send my regards

**Kelly
Mitchell**

Condolences to the Zarko family, Representative Knollenberg and Mike. I'm very thankful and blessed I had the opportunity to work with Chet. He was always very gracious, helpful and funny. He was a staple in room 890 of the House Bldg. I can't imagine going back there and not seeing him sitting at his desk. May you find peace and comfort during this difficult time.

Richard E. Haberman

May God bless this gathering and Chet's family. May they be comforted as only God can do...

**Oscar
BullFrog**

this circumstance is horrible. america, michigan and i have lost one of our true friends of liberty, humanity and strength of character. i hurt.

**Carrie
Nelson**

Please accept my condolences as I will not be able to attend- the drive is too far for me- I know it will be beautiful and I pray for Chet's family.

**Darrell
Mc Neill**

I'm sorry I not able to be there. My prayers are with Chetly's family. Each of us owe a debt to Chet and his family for the service Chet did for the citizens of Taylor. Hope we never forget what Chet meant to the city of Taylor.

Patrick Clawson

Chet was a true champion of liberty and the people's right to know. He was one of a kind, an American treasure. Our state and nation will be poorer without his presence. May the Lord be with you, Chet

**Abigail
Thernstrom**

I am so sorry I cannot come, and send my condolences to his family for their terrible loss.

**Emily
Marie Zanotti**

I wish that I could be there. Chet will be very missed and my prayers are with his family.

Matthew G. Davis

I keep think about Chet more and more each day. I wish I had taken the time to work with him more - the opportunities were there, but with the busy world of state media, politics, etc., we never got to mesh. Now that he is gone -- and it's hard to get over the shock -- I'm in stunned sorrow, filled with regret for a fallen warrior of the right and a man of conscience. I plan on going to pay my respects.

**Brian
Schefke**

Can't make it, but please accept my condolences to Chet's family.

**Leslie
Carbone**

Thank you for including me, but it's too far from Massachusetts. My sympathies are with Chet's family. I'm glad that I had the chance to know him.

**Nicole
Williams**

Sorry i cant make it. So bad.

Victor Diaz

Chetly: you will be missed. Sleep well and look in on us from time to time.

Chuck Wahr

I am sorry for your loss, but I will not be able to attend.

**Christopher
Cummins**

I'm not going to be able to make it to Lansing on Sunday.

Allen Fuller

Unfortunately, I won't be able to attend, but Chet's family is in my thoughts and prayers. We remember Chet for all the good he did and the impact which is his legacy.

Facebook Friend Replies

**Cindy
Fricke**

Sorry I cannot attend.

**Stacia
Pulliam Tremaine
Lemon**

My condolences to him & his family

Rafael Bracero

My thoughts and prayers are with your family.

**Warner
Todd Huston**

I am stunned and saddened by Chet's passing so sudden and many years too soon. I wish I could be there but I cannot make it. My condolences to all that knew and loved Chet.

**Jason
Fichtner**

Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend. My thoughts are prayers are with Chet's family and friends. Jookie - Rest In Peace, my friend. You'll be missed.

**Cathy
Guerrero**

Sending my thoughts and prayers to Chet and his family, may God's healing touch bring you peace.

**Snarf Oscar
Boondoggle**

if at all possible and my brakes keep working ... this is a really sad week.

**Jeff
Reynolds**

Can't make it from Oregon. With you all in spirit.

**Daar
Fisher**

I'll be driving out from Grosse Pointe. If anyone would like to ride out with me, let me know.

**Stepha
nie Shawn Jasky**

I am so sad about Chet's passing. I wish I could make it up there....but my prayers are with Chet's family. You will be missed Chetly.

**Paul
Jacob**

I'm attending in spirit. Chet was a wonderful spirit. I'm honored to have had the opportunity to know him just a little. It was great to talk to him over a beer or for two hours next to the elevator at one conference or to talk strategy through with him, and to know him as a friend and comrade. Bless you, Chet.

**Heather Stafford
Honeyman**

Sorry for your loss, I am living out of state but my prayers are with you and your family

**Baron
John Carlos Cruz**

Unfortunately I will be unable to attend as I will be in Iowa. My prayers to Chet and his family, he will be missed.

**Brian
Pannebecker**

I'll be there.

Brian

**Judith
Gaylor Doucette**

Chetly, I am so sorry for your loss. If I weren't starting a new job, I would take off and drive up for the service. You and your family will be in my prayers.

Doug Welch

I am sorry but I will not be able to make it. But i wish all the family and friends the best. He will be missed.

**Barbara A.
Harrell**

i will not be able to attend, but will certainly keep Chet's family and friends in my thoughts and prayers.

Matt Davis

I'm sorry, I have committed to work that day. You are in my thoughts and please accept my deepest sympathies.

Facebook Friend Replies

From Warner Huston...

Chet Zarko, RIP

Publius Forum on 07.20.10 at 9:23 PM

-By Warner Todd Huston

I really hate to report this, but friend to the blog Chet Zarko of Michigan has suddenly passed away.

I've known Chet for a few years now and he was a tireless advocate for small government as well as accountable government in the Wolverine State. Chet gave the Democrats fits up there.

Apparently, Chet had some sort of attack that took his life as he sat home reading on the evening of the 19th. He was missed the next day and was found in his chair, reading material at his feet.

Chet was only 39 but was full of life every time I ever met him. His sense of humor was infectious and every room he entered was filled with mirth and cheer.

Chetly Zarko will be sorely missed.

Rest in Peace, Chet. I'm glad I knew you.

Rest in peace

by InksLWC on Tue Jul 20, 2010 at 10:57:30 PM EST

It broke my heart when I heard this earlier today.

I never dealt with him too much outside of the blogging realm, but he was always very nice and helpful to me back when I was starting off as a blogger. My thoughts and prayers are with your friends and family, Chet. May you rest in peace.

RIP, Chetly

by leondrolet on Tue Jul 20, 2010 at 11:40:14 PM EST

I was fortunate to work with Chet Zarko on the MI Civil Rights Initiative. He was among our very first volunteers and our first staff person on the campaign.

In those early days, we often had little or nothing to pay him, but his work effort never diminished - Chet was driven by his passion for justice.

Chet worked with MCRI from the beginning and stayed through the end - doing any task to advance the mission.

Thank you, Chetly Zarko. A piece of you is now in the Michigan Constitution.

A huge loss.

by maidintheus on Thu Jul 22, 2010 at 08:51:46 AM EST

A loss to all and especially his family and close friends.

From Shiawasee Forums...

I am very very sorry to report that Chet Zarko has passed away.

I don't know what happened, but he was found in his home.

Chet was the FOIA investigator I hired whenever I needed help with something. He was what I affectionately call "a right wing nutbag" and I'm sure he had a left wing handle for me too. He used to argue with me something fierce on my blog. He was tenacious .. to the point that I occasionally considered just giving him my website if he would just promise to stop arguing with me over every. little. detail. He was wrong about almost everything, and I didn't mind telling him that.

But

I agreed with him 100% on his views on transparency, and I very much appreciated what I think was his near-perfect integrity when it came to sunshine. Most people who talk about transparency really only want it for other people ... they don't actually want transparency for

themselves or their friends. Chet was pretty consistent in his views and I appreciated and respected that.

Blogging is a funny world ... it's taken very seriously by bloggers. Most high profile political bloggers are only blogging so that they can get a job in Lansing or DC or some politician's office. As a result they end up compromising their logic & values and end up advocating crap that they don't believe.

They take \$\$ from someone and don't disclose it. They demand money in exchange for not saying bad things about the politicians or organizations they are supposed to be supporting. They're very nasty to each other ... every blogger is seen as a competitor who must be destroyed. It's an ugly little world full of ugly little people. But Chet just used his own resources and did what he thought was right and stuck to it. It even cost him some work with the GOP once (or rather, once that he told me about.) He was a professional political consultant, so when he disagreed with his party, it could affect his livelihood. Still, he did what he believed in. There just aren't very many bloggers who will do that.

There are very few bloggers who I really respect, and now there's one less. I really want him back.

Chet's blogs -

<http://www.outsidelansing.com>

<http://www.oaklandpolitics.com/>

<http://www.chetlyzarko.com/>

Christine

A great loss for the Conservative point of view.

You and he were definitely each others political foil but the mutual respect and admiration was there.

My condolences on the loss of your friend.

JMB 1911

RIP Chetly Zarko

A Loss To Our Community

By JGillman, Section News

Posted on Tue Jul 20, 2010 at 04:55:57 PM EST

Tags: Chet Zarko, Rest In Peace (all tags)

It is with great sorrow I am reporting that Chetly Zarko, a long time defender of Liberty, a masterful student of Michigan politics, and great part of our ongoing discussions here and on his own site has passed away at age 39.

We will have more details as is available and appropriate.

May God Bless you Chetly, and Rest In Peace.

Kicks my backside- Miss you already, Chet

by Nick on Tue Jul 20, 2010 at 05:27:20 PM EST

Chet Zarko wasn't just a blogger and a consultant and a staffer and an activist... he was just plain good, earnest people.

Failing for the right words right now and mourning the loss of a good guy.

Thanks, Jason, for the update.

Good bless his spirit

by Brady on Tue Jul 20, 2010 at 09:03:45 PM EST

Chetley was a true champion of the First Amendment and the values that have made our nation the greatest in world history. As a Democrat, I have appreciated his willingness to reach out to us and other centrists, moderates and even the liberals with a kind heart. God bless his spirit. I pray more step in to fill the role he left.

From The Web

So sorry to hear this. He was a good one.

kaylor

From the Detroit News Blog

Category: Good Citizen

Posted by Mako Yamakura on Thu, Jul 22, 2010 at 7:53 PM

Chetly Zarko

While I never got to meet this guy, a champion of research and politics, I liked his approach. Chet Zarko was always in the mix in Michigan Politics. He was also the credit for many breaks and news articles across the state. While there are times I didn't agree with Chet, I've always respected his approach to bursting the bubble of rhetoric with data. Most times I read Chet in the news, it's always giving research tidbits or exclusive, breaking news.

He represented the kind of research journalists often fail to do at all. He supported small government, and more citizen participation. I'm sure Wendy Day and the folks at The Michigan View will have something to say, so stop by there if you can, I'm sure they're still stunned as well. Mako out.

From the water cooler on the the Michigan View

Posted by Ken Braun on Tue, Jul 20, 2010 at 9:59 PM

Freedom is Missing a Wheel

The freedom coalition in this state has a lot of moving parts and gears. We don't always mesh perfectly when we're all rolling, but the moving parts are still easy to spot.

So too, unfortunately, are a few of the parts that don't move much at all. To often, those are the parts that sit there, jealously sniping and throwing allegations at the parts that are moving. While some make real progress and don't make nearly enough noise about it, others make little progress and do it loudly.

Today, this movement lost Chet Zarko.

It's hard to summarize easily all of what Chet was into. We gave it a try at the Mackinac Center Blog.

Chet had his faults. We all do. But nobody would ever mistake him for anything but a fine example of one of freedom's moving parts. He accomplished real things, of his own initiative, because doing them was the right thing to do. Often stuff that the rest of us couldn't have done as well - or at all.

And, unfortunately, he wasn't one of the loud parts either. Too busy doing the next thing to brag about the last thing. So, today, too few people know his name.

RIP big guy. We'll miss what you would have gotten done.

RIP, Chetly

Chet lived the words of Barry Goldwater: "Moderation in pursuit of justice is no virtue." For Chetly, pursuit of justice was a natural life calling, he didn't deliberate about it, he always moved deliberately and passionately to correct injustices.

Chet never quit, no matter how daunting the task.

We'll miss you, Chetly Zarko. Thank you for all you did.

MI Taxpayer, Macomb Twp., MI

Posted by Wendy Day on Tue, Jul 20, 2010 at 4:29 PM

RIP Chetly Zarko

The liberty movement lost a great man today. You may not know who Chetly Zarko was, but you no doubt would recognize his work. Chet was a foot soldier in the liberty movement.

Chet worked on the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative, took on the Michigan Education Association and exposed the fake Tea Party being formed in Michigan. He was always willing to help with research and advice. An eternal optimist, he always had another idea or avenue to reach the goal.

He was well respected by those on both sides of the political spectrum, even though he could trade barbs with the best of them. Chet will be missed by many in the liberty movement. Rest in peace, my friend.

From the Mackinac Center

Chetly Zarko, RIP

Tributes From Mackinac Center Staff

7/20/2010 4:38 PM

Michigan has lost forever the contributions of a stalwart freedom fighter: Chetly Zarko was found dead this morning at the age of 39. Reportedly, he slipped away while reading, sitting in a chair in his apartment.

Requieset in Pace.

Chet's greatest passion was defending the people's right to know through the state Freedom of Information Act. The University of Michigan's bureaucracy was one early target of his dogged pursuit of the truth.

More recently, Zarko was the plaintiff in an ongoing FOIA lawsuit against the Howell School District, which claimed that e-mails sent by union bosses from school computers discussing union business were "personal communications" and thus exempt from disclosure. The Mackinac Center Legal Foundation and the Michigan Press Association are co-authors of an amicus curiae brief pointing out the defects of this blatant violation of the plain language of the law.

Separate from his lifelong campaign against government secrecy, Chetly was deeply engaged in partisan political activity on the Republican side. He brought a rare and unusual quality to his work there: a deep respect for the truth. A fine legacy would be for Chetly's former colleagues on both sides of the aisle to resolve to emulate his example.

So long, Chet — we'll miss you.

From The Web

Jack McHugh

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My own favorite Chet story was during the Board of Canvassers hearing when Democratic Party Chairman Mark Brewer was giving instructions to board member Doyle O'Conner about how to spike the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative petitions (a campaign on which Zarko did extensive work). Chet put the video camera in their face, in a public building, when public officials were behaving badly.

The results speak for themselves:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2IJFWxR1ko4>.

Chet's version of the event: <http://www.chetlyzarko.com/brewer.html>.

I like this one because it was vintage Chet.

More recently, he exposed the impostors who are trying to put a fake "Tea Party" on the Michigan ballot.

More at the MichiganView.

Ken Braun

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My first encounter with Chet was in Chicago at a small gathering of liberty-minded thinkers and activists. Almost everyone there, including me, enjoyed the privilege of drawing a paycheck for advancing liberty. Chet was there as a freelancer if possible, but a volunteer if necessary. He went where he was most needed, sometimes whether he would be paid or not.

Every important movement for liberty has been powered by people who would, like Chet, rather fight for what they believe in than fight for a steady paycheck. In the course of human events, some have even pledged their lives, fortunes and sacred honor to such causes. Chet was their kindred spirit.

Chet would have acknowledged that certain statist, imperious bureaucrats and powerful beneficiaries of government largesse might one day greet his passing with relief. But in life he was just as certain that each day brought us that much closer to securing our lives, liberty and happiness from usurpation by the government charged with protecting those very rights.

Thank you, and God bless you, Chet.

Joe Lehman

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I had the good fortune of meeting Chet over a dozen years ago. I was, for a short time, local counsel in the University of Michigan admission lawsuits, and Chet wanted to help in any way he could. Over the years, he maintained that pugnacious spirit and could often be found in the middle of political and policy conflicts.

Recently, I interacted with him over his lawsuit seeking access to e-mails from the Howell School District. It was classic Chet. He believed there to be controversial action by public employees; he went after the information; and when he was denied it, he took the legal fight as far as he could.

But while he was a fierce partisan, he believed in fundamental principles. For instance, he reached out to groups across the political spectrum with whom he had built relationships and who he thought would be interested in a vibrant Freedom of Information Act statute. To him, government transparency was an issue for all of us.

Rest in peace, Chet.

Patrick Wright

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### From The Blog Prof (minus a few copies of others)

Tuesday, July 20, 2010

Michigan Blogger/Activist Chetly Zarko Dead At Age 39. RIP My Friend...

I just heard the news that my friend, fellow blogger, and fellow conservative activist Chetly Zarko passed away today. I have no details at this moment. Chetly most recently broke the story that Fake Tea Party Run by Democrats in Michigan Trying to Become official Third Party! It made national news. Chetly was a warrior who preferred to work behind the scenes, especially in filing FOIA requests that shed much light on many issues. Instead of writing a ton of posts like yours truly, Chetly did a ton of research and opted instead for the home run. Other than the fake tea party post, Chetly also broke the story of graft at the UAW golf course, a story that Michelle Malkin picked up among others.

Chetly and I teamed up just a couple of months ago for this: theblogprof on "Off The Record" with Tim Skubick, April 9, 2010

I thought that we would do more of those in the future. Everyone who knew Chetly was better for it. Rest in peace, my friend...

This is my second blogger friend that has passed in the last year. Last November, I had to write this sad post: R.I.P. - Conservative Michigan Blogger David Hinz Killed In Auto Accident Today. If I get any details, I will post them here.

UPDATE: Went to a fundraiser this afternoon and got to talk to people. All were aware of the passing of Chetly. From what I could piece together, he wasn't feeling



well on Friday. Nobody heard from him on Monday and perhaps even as far back as Sunday. So they went to his place this morning and found him sitting up on his sofa. The time of his passing is not known right now but it could have been Sunday.

### **from the Stixblog**

Chetly Zarko, RIP

Posted on 07/20/2010 by stix1972

As a blogger, you get to meet and become friends with some great people. About 3 years ago or there about, I went to Chicago for the first Samsphere put on by the Sam Adams Alliance. I met many people there and one of them was Chetly Zarko. We did not stay in touch other than interactions thru emails. But even though we did not interact a whole lot, I respected his fervor for opening up Government to the public.

He was a big proponent of Transparency in Government and had kept the government on its toes. He will be missed in the blogosphere. The internet has lost a great advocate for liberty and openness in government

As with all my blogging friends, we are all family. Dysfunctional at times, we get in spats and form factions, but when it comes down to it, we are

I can only empathize with Eric on his loss, and tell him to keep involved in all the work he and Zarko have been doing to keep the fight for freedom alive. Keep immersed in the effort to allay your sorrow and know that by doing so your boss would be proud.

Again our condolences go out to his family friends and co workers of which Eric our co chair is included.

### **From Michigan Messenger**

RIP Chetly Zarko

By Ed Brayton 7/20/10 6:43 PM Digg Tweet

It is with great sadness that we note the passing of Chetly Zarko — conservative political activist, former legislative staffer, blogger, journalist and staunch advocate of government transparency. Early reports indicate that he died this weekend of an apparent heart attack.

Chetly was often a critic of the Michigan Messenger, but he also graciously helped us pursue transparency through Freedom of Information Act

family. And the blogging community has lost one of their own. It will leave a hole on the blogosphere and no one can replace him.

R.I.P. my friend. And may your friends and family find peace with their loss.

### **From Bottomsup politics blog**

Wednesday, July 21, 2010

Chetly Zarko is Dead, but not forgotten

Chetly Zarko has passed away at the age of 39.

Our condolences go out to Eric Rothoff the Co Chair of the Muskegon Tea Party who was a friend and fellow co worker of Mr. Zarko.

The Muskegon Tea Party had its Executive Board meeting 8am Tues. Eric with the rest of our board was there talking the business of our Tea Party group. We were discussing putting out a press release regarding the fake Tea Party which just announced it had filed the necessary petition signatures to put their name on the ballot.

Because Eric was intimately involved with Chetly Zarko and his efforts since last May to expose the "Tea Party Party" as a fake; our co chair was able to give us some needed insight into who was probably behind the effort to deflect the popularity of the Tea Party Movement and its influence on the elections.

Here is a link to a radio station site which gives Wendy Days opinion.

<http://www.whmi.com/news/article/10540>

Here is a link to the Mackinaw Center's RIP article. It has some good links about Chetly Zarko.

<http://www.michiganapitolconfidential.com/13212>

I only met him a few times and then only in passing, usually at Conservative meetings or conventions in and around Lansing where he was based. One example was a Center Right Meeting in Lansing hosted by Jack Hoogendyk.

requests when we needed it. Because we value an honest critic as much as we do an earnest friend, we will miss our interactions with Chetly. Our deepest sympathies go out to his friends and family.

### **groberts1776**

Nothing more touching than seeing how Chet touched people across the political spectrum. Always a class act, always gracious

### **From the Socialist Squirrel**

This Last Tuesday the 20th, We Lost a Great One, Chetly Zarko defined Temerity.

Posted on 07/22/2010 by admin

Chetly Zarko was found dead July 20th in his apartment. The brave Patriot that defined Temerity was taken from us and his good fight he valiantly brought to the evil found in his backyard. I just learned about Chetly's death and I am still shaken. It sounds as if the Chicago Politics that Chetly shined the light upon have finally claimed this Patriot. Conservative activism is not for the feint of heart. Every day we play with all the cards on the table, and all in. Chetly Zarko, the brave patriot will be missed.

Chetly took this picture of me when I was awarded the 2009 best states blogger award from the Sam Adams Alliance. He captured one of the best days of my life. I remember talking with him that night about his next project. Chetly always impressed me and I was so humbled that he was there to celebrate the recognition for all my hard work. Then he captured that night in this one photo like no one else.

*From The Web*

Chetly your good fight is won, your good race is over. I thank God for your effort and may you now find peace and glory in heaven.

Since Chetly was so prolific, I thought a google search link to his efforts would be a good starting point for you the reader to see exactly how much this patriot gifted his backyard. Click here to get started.

With a heavy heart, I just wanted to say thank you Chetly Zarko, for all you have done and the life you have given for this nation and against evil that we find lurking in the shadows of our backyards. God Bless and God Speed my friend.

**From The Rochester Citizen**

RIP Chetly

Posting Date: Jul 21 2010

By Bruce Fealk

Chetly Zarko

While I would not say Chetly and I were friends, I had the feeling underneath all his bravado and outward gruffness, Chetly was a decent, caring human being.

We didn't agree on much politically, but I know Chetly genuinely cared about the issues he fought for.

I wish that more conservatives were more like Chetly in some ways.

My best wishes and condolences go out to his family and co-workers.

**From OutsideLansing.com**

Chetly Zarko Rest In Peace (+)

by: JGillman

Wed Jul 21, 2010 at 07:19:24 AM EDT

One finds it relatively easy to re-examine his mortality when a mere 39 year old can pass so quickly and without any expectation.

Chetly performed a great service to his community, fighting for transparency, truth, and honesty in government, and held friendships that extended to both sides of the political spectrum.

He was a true patriot, and an exceptional citizen.

He will be missed.

May god grant you all that you are deserving. Rest In Peace Chetly.

JGillman :: Chetly Zarko Rest In Peace

Tags: chetly zarko, (All Tags)

**Very sad (0.00 / 0)**

How can I help keep his work online? He has an incredible body of work that needs to be preserved. If someone is involved in or in charge of keeping his sites online, please let me know if I can help.

(Caveat for those who don't know me: I worked with Chet on some FOIA stuff and I respected the hell out of him)

cb@christinebarry.com

by: Christine @ Wed Jul 21, 2010 at 10:31:00 AM EDT

**Not sure (0.00 / 0)**

How we might do that.. If you pursue it, and need assistance I'll be glad to help you find answers. I am not sure where to start.. My account here allowed the posting is all.

by: JGillman @ Wed Jul 21, 2010 at 11:04:41 AM EDT

**I will look into it (0.00 / 0)**

.. and see what I can find out.

I would like to meet Chet's mother, and tell her how I worked with him on some FOIA stuff. He mentioned once that they had a "never-ending banter" about his name. "The Chetly Factor" is still alive in Shiawassee County. I'm sure she'd be proud of the impact he had.

Man I just can't believe this.

From The Web



## **From RightMichigan**

Chet Zarko: In Memoriam

By Nick, Section News

Posted on Tue Jul 20, 2010 at 11:11:02 PM EST

Tags: Zarko (all tags)

Sitting in the political director's office at Cox 2010 campaign headquarters earlier today, hashing over one seemingly life-or-death detail or another, when someone scanning their blackberry shouted "Chet Zarko died?!"

We jumped on Facebook and Twitter and instinctively checked Outside Lansing and a few of Chet's other haunts (heading immediately to blogs and social networking websites--I like to think the irony is not lost on Chet this evening) scanning for news, hoping to find a reassuring word or some indication the rumor was wrong.

We know now that it wasn't. Chetly Zarko passed away over the weekend at his home with, we're told, a book in his hand. He was 39 years old.

Chet Zarko was the original Michigan conservative blogger. When this site was in its infancy back in early 2007 Chet had already been at the game for years. When Rightys in Michigan claimed three or four "new media" sites to their name, Chet's was the gold standard. Ditto when there were dozens. And with over one-hundred Righty Blogs going strong, there was still only one Chet Zarko.

While many have started blogging since or blogged more actively, there will never be another Chet. His boldness... his dry wit... his sharp (SHARP) mind... his drive and dedication... his willingness to put in the extra hour to get something right instead of simply getting something first... Chet was the sort of guy the blogging game, the activist game and the governing game could use more of.

I mean c'mon, now. The guy was banned at MichLib, compared (lovingly) to Darth Vader by the Mainstream Media and had the guts and the tenacity to legitimately give Mark Brewer fits. On handheld camera no less.

Swung by one of the man's favorite haunts earlier this evening to see if they'd gotten the news. Over on Michigan Liberal they're mourning Chet, themselves. No name calling, no vitriol. A healthy respect and an admiration.

Chet was that kind of guy. He was pointed, he was passionate and he understood the power of his beliefs. But he was friendly, open and just plain good people. And everyone knew it.

I'm going to miss the man as conservative thinker. I'll miss him as a blogger. I'll miss him as a researcher and an activist and a standard bearer. Mostly, I'll miss him as a friend.

Pouring a little out for you tonight in Livonia Chet. We'll see you on the other side.

**Well Said.**

by JGillman on Wed Jul 21, 2010 at 10:56:59 AM EST

Looking in retrospect, he has shown how much can truly be shaken up in so short a span of life. Also, as I have been scanning different news stories, blogs and have seen one theme; He was respected by all.

"Sharp", as you put it, was indeed recognized universally.

**Chet knew his stuff**

by Republican Michigander on Wed Jul 21, 2010 at 07:10:15 PM EST

Damn. 39 is young, not all that much older than me.

I didn't know Chet well, although our paths crossed a couple of times. Most of what I knew came from Outside Lansing or Oakland Politics which I checked from time to time.

The two things I noticed from Chet is that he knew his stuff and stuck to his principles. That's rare in politics, whether it be consultants, bloggers, or politicians.

## From MichiganLiberal.com

### RIP, Chetly Zarko

by: Eric B.

Tue Jul 20, 2010 at 15:30:27 PM EDT

Most of our regular readers knew Chetly Zarko as one of the bad guys, who popped in here every so often to engage in debate over issues, and his longstanding campaign to get himself reinstated on this site to leave comments was a long-running gag in the Michigan blogosphere. As I knew him, he was more than a conservative operative, but a fan of his principles and values.

Despite the constant name calling and cheap shotting that took place, I not only held him in high regard professionally, but found him to be genuinely nice. We disagreed, and he even hinted at one point that he ought to sue me, but I always respected the disagreement and the guy. On one occasion where I was dealing with a legal issue that next to none of you knew anything about, Chet not only often helped out with advice and a kind of "buck up, son, you ain't alone in this fight" support, but also offered to help me find a lawyer. And, on occasion, I'd drop him a line with tips on stories he might be interested in following up on or examples of gummint run amok that he might find amusing (for example, the library book I turned in to CMU a month overdue and for which I received an \$80 bill).

It is with great sadness that I have to report that people is reporting that Chetly Zarko died today. I don't have a lot of details to share, which is fine. Better for the moment to just remember the man.

Eric B. :: RIP, Chetly Zarko

#### COMMENTS:

##### **Sad indeed (4.00 / 2)**

Chet and I didn't agree on much but I liked him. It wasn't like he looked for common ground where there wasn't any on issues, just common decency that says you don't attack a person's motives just because you disagree.

by: LiberalBubba @ Tue Jul 20, 2010 at 16:11:36 PM CDT

##### **Horrible. (4.00 / 4)**

He was only 39. More here.

In case you needed another reminder about how short and fragile life can be.

Great Lakes, Great Times, Great Scott

by: ScottyUrb @ Tue Jul 20, 2010 at 16:22:20 PM CDT

##### **Chetley (4.00 / 3)**

Chetley had a profound respect for the U.S. Constitution, particularly the First Amendment. He had a lighthearted love of politics and was always willing to reach out to Democrats and progressives. In a number of ways, he was a Michigan liberal. God bless his spirit.

by: Brady @ Tue Jul 20, 2010 at 19:18:25 PM CDT

##### **RIP, Chetly (4.00 / 4)**

Chetly and I did not get along--I may or may not have been involved in the event that led to his years of complaining on ML--but he definitely spiced things up around here. I usually couldn't wait to see what he'd say next. He was a man of integrity, and he will be missed.

by: joanb @ Tue Jul 20, 2010 at 20:58:34 PM CDT

##### **RIP, Chetly (4.00 / 5)**

Chetly lived the words of Barry Goldwater because he refused to moderate his passion for justice. His passion for "what is right" was determined and honest, and he never quit despite the odds.

Thank you, Chetly. And thanks to Eric and the very decent posters here at MILiberal for remembering him so kindly.

by: leondrolet @ Tue Jul 20, 2010 at 22:28:30 PM CDT

##### **A poignant reminder (4.00 / 3)**

People like Chetly and Leon are our political opponents, not mortal enemies.

RIP, Mr. Zarko.

P.S. If the "Tea Party" that got on the November ballot truly is a Democratic Party front (as you alleged on Craig Fahle's show just last week), I hope MichLib will be among the first to go public with the news.

ActBlue Virg Bernero Page: <http://www.actblue.com/page/fa...>

by: helzapoppn @ Wed Jul 21, 2010 at 09:26:50 AM CDT

##### **Chet was quality (4.00 / 4)**

He did quite a lot to support blogging in general and the concept of citizen journalism, and made his name advocating on behalf of transparent government (we disagreed on how this worked, of course). When someone asked me about names of people to put together for a First Amendment coalition, his was the first out of my mouth, and when the person making the inquiry expressed reservations because of his politics, I told him that Chet was first and foremost an open government/First Amendment guy.

More importantly, he carried himself as a class act. He had my back during some bumpy times earlier this year, and I was never able to repay that debt. I was shocked yesterday when started seeing the news, and was deeply saddened when it was confirmed to me.

Among the Trees

by: Eric B. @ Wed Jul 21, 2010 at 09:47:06 AM CDT

##### **RIP loyal opposition... (4.00 / 3)**


He actually helped me with a project that he was in disagreement with.

I also agree with many of the other comments -- that he was genuinely likeable.

He was not the kind of partisan hack who, if he saw Obama walk on water, would then come back with the headline: "PRESIDENT CAN'T SWIM."

He truly was a worthy opponent.

by: Buster Vainamoinen @ Wed Jul 21, 2010 at 13:36:17 PM CDT



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