



Ryan Francis O'Donnell, 50 of Manistee, passed away on Sunday August 23, 2026.

Ryan was born September 29, 1975, to parents William and Carol (Boes) O'Donnell. He grew up as the youngest of five in a house at the end of a cul-du-sac in Brighton, MI, surrounded by a grandmother, uncles, aunts and cousins.

As a child, Ryan was typically found outside playing with his siblings and their dogs, had a mechanical pencil in his hand drawing intricate scenes or recreating maps, watching war documentaries with his father or was curled up with a various cat.

He attended Michigan State University and graduated with a degree in Chemical Engineering in 1998.

He married Blythe (Fickes) O'Donnell in November of 1999 after dating in high school, attending different colleges, routine late night phone calls after the rates went down, Friday drives to see one another, backpacking trips, a shared love of Billy Joel and numerous political debates.

They relocated to Manistee and Ryan returned to Ferris State University for a Masters in Education as he had finally convinced a girl with ties to the Great Plains to fall in love with northern Michigan as he had long ago on family camping trips.

Mr. O'Donnell taught high school chemistry for over twenty years. He was proud of how many of his students went on to degrees or careers in a chemically related field, came back to tell him how prepared they were for chemistry in college related to their peers or simply smiled and said hello when they saw him around town. When someone asked what he did you could hear the pride in his voice when he stated he was a high school chemistry teacher.

He and Blythe worked together raising four children. Ryan cheered at numerous games, concerts, recitals, meets, and theatrical productions, but always hoped they did not fall on college football Saturdays or a big Spartan basketball game. He loved showing his children the wonder around them and taught them much regarding insects, trees, animal tracks, the night sky, weather, especially storm and snow prediction, and his love of fly fishing. He was also always ready with a geography question or map quiz.

His family knew where he stood on politics, faith and additional seasonings being added to a recipe; but most importantly they knew they were loved.

He is survived by his children Brynn, Jack, Andy and Maeve; his wife; his mother, his sister, Anne-Marie (Jon) Wiley, three brothers, Tim (Maribelle) O'Donnell, Will (Antoinette) O'Donnell, Fred (Penny) O'Donnell, seven nephews, two nieces, three great nephews, one great niece, three aunts, three uncles, and 23 cousins.

A Mass from the Order of Christian Funerals will be held on Thursday August 27, 2026, at Guardian Angels Catholic Church in Manistee at 11:00 AM with Father James Bearss presiding. Visitation will be held from 10:00 AM until the time of mass.

Arrangements were entrusted to Grace Funeral Home & Cremation Services,
www.GraceCremations.com