

MICHAEL CHERINGTON

NOV. 24, 1934–JUNE 25, 2022

Although the Flash is probably the first character you'd think of if someone said "superhero" and "lightning bolt," these words also describe **Michael Cherington** (MD '60), who was known as the "Lightning Doctor" and completed 25 marathons.

He was born in Pittsburgh to Jewish parents who emigrated from Russia. Although his childhood was, at times, adverse, it was imbued with community, Shakespeare, Gilbert and Sullivan, George Gershwin and chess. (At the age of 10, Cherington played national chess champion Arnold Denker; as the story goes, the match resulted in a draw.)

His mother died when he was 14; after that, Cherington was raised by his grandparents. Through a series of summer jobs and scholarships, he put himself through undergraduate and medical school at the University of Pittsburgh. He later opened a private practice in neurology in Denver. During these early years, he was married for the first time and had three children.

In 1990, as he was winding down his practice, Cherington published a case study on a patient who'd sustained injuries after being struck by lightning. The article was the spark for his subsequent

career in keraunomedicine, the study of lightning casualties.

Cherington founded the Lightning Data Center (LDC) at St. Anthony Hospital in 1992, and following the inaugural meeting, the LDC has continued to meet once a month to gather and share information. Cherington served as the center's chair until 2007. The LDC continues to bring together an interdisciplinary group of lightning experts who share an interest in the prevention and treatment of lightning injury. The members built an injury dataset and collaborated on a paper that first proposed the 1:10 ratio of lightning deaths to injuries, a reference point still cited today. During his career, Cherington published dozens of peer-reviewed articles, many of which significantly advanced the field of keraunomedicine.

Since his death, his wife, Nancy Cherington, who met him in 1989, keeps learning more about his accomplishments: "He never ever talked about them. I found all this information that I didn't even know about him, and it just made me love him more." —*Rachel Bittner*



Cherington

IN MEMORIAM

'40s

BERNARD COBETTO, MD '47
SEPT. 9, 2022

'50s

FRANCIS ESPOSITO, MD '59
JUNE 20, 2022

JOHN FULTON, MD '55, RES '59
JULY 5, 2022

EARL SHIREY, MD '52
JULY 17, 2022

'60s

MICHAEL CHERINGTON, MD '60
JUNE 25, 2022

CARL KONVOLINKA JR., MD '60
JULY 26, 2022

MICHAEL MCCARTHY, MD '65
SEPT. 22, 2022

JAMES MRAZ, MD '62
SEPT. 20, 2022

JOHN PAAR, MD '60
SEPT. 2, 2022

'70s

CURTIS FISHER, MD '76
JUNE 3, 2022

GLENN IBEN, MD '76
AUG. 10, 2022

MICHAEL JOHNSTON, MD '71
JULY 30, 2022

JOHN KARLUCK, MD '75
JULY 1, 2022

JOHN MIKITA, RES '72
AUG. 26, 2022

BARRY WINGARD, MD '78
OCT. 1, 2022

'80s

**MARDJOHAN
HARDJASUDARMA, RES '80**
JUNE 15, 2022

KIRK MAURO, MD '88
JUNE 13, 2022

DAVID RAVELLA JR., RES '82
AUG. 1, 2022

'90s

ANTHONY KOROSI, MD '94
SEPT. 19, 2022

TODD SHUSTER, RES '92
JUNE 3, 2022

'00s

DOUGLAS ROCKACY, RES '03
JULY 16, 2022

'10s

VINAY SUNDARAM, FEL '10
JULY 14, 2022

EMILY ZHAO, MD '15, RES '20
AUG. 17, 2022