



Mr. Peter C. Conrad

April 26, 1955 - December 23, 2023

Peter C. Conrad, of Baltimore, passed away unexpectedly on December 23, 2023. He was 68. Born in Bismarck, North Dakota, he was a social worker for the State of Maryland, and in retirement, a beloved dog walker in North Baltimore.

He is survived by his loving wife of 32 years, Ann Sherrill, and son, William Conrad, of Seattle WA; two sisters, Marcia Conrad Kirby (Paul), of Hagerstown, MD, and Kari Conrad (Ervin Lee) of Glen Ulin, ND. He is also survived by devoted cousins, nieces and nephews, and life-long friends.

He was predeceased by his parents, Charles and Joyce Conrad. Peter attended Hampshire College and graduated from Beloit College and the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

After family, his great passions in life included reading, basketball, the natural world, and music, especially the history of jazz and blues. A Celebration of Life will take place on January 13 at 1 p.m. at the Towson Unitarian Universalist Church. In place of flowers, the family welcomes contributions in Peter's memory to the HART Fund at the Blues Foundation, the Maryland Food Bank, or a charity of your choice.

Family and friends from across the country are invited to participate in the

Celebration of Life via Zoom.

<https://zoom.us/j/98008406419?pwd=R0c5T2hXRm1LKzNFRGZGV3FFK00wZz09>

Meeting ID: 980 0840 6419

Passcode: 125311

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

JAN 13. 1:00 PM (ET)

Towson Unitarian Universalist Church
1710 Dulaney Valley Road
Timonium, MD 21093

Tribute Wall

EI

“ Peter was the first person I met when I arrived, bleary eyed, after driving all night to get to Ann Arbor to attend grad school. He welcomed me to the co-op house we both lived in and we became fast friends. Attached is a picture of Peter in his room in the house that fall of 1981– it is how I best remember him. He was kind, funny, smart, idealistic though a bit skeptical too. Over the decades since, we kept in touch only sporadically through Christmas cards and letters. My heart goes out to you, Ann, and your son, Will.



Ellen Ives - January 10, 2024 at 11:27 AM

TC

“ As a lover of music, and immigrant to the USA , I knew little about jazz and its history. In 1996 during one of our overnight visits to Peter and Annie, I discovered Peter’s passion. For more than an hour, Peter introduced me to the history of Jazz in the most fundamental and practical of ways that I was forever hooked onto the history of Jazz. He introduced me to the connecting dots in a landscape of Duke Ellington, Al Jarreau, Wynton Marsalis , Miles Davis, John Coltrane, and others.



I owe my hunger for making connections between jazz and the world, in part, to Peter. For Peter, it seemed, Jazz and the blues weren’t separate from language, identity, storytelling and our humanity. So I went on to connect the passionate cries of Masekela to Coltrane, Fela’s contradictions to Miles Davis, and the wisdom of Ellington to Abdullah Ibrahim. This continues today-that ability to hear connecting language in notes from across boundaries , cultures and history.

On December 23, upon hearing the sad news, Liz and I lit a candle for Peter, and I played Chet Baker who I discovered late -The thrill is gone, My funny Valentine, Look for the silver lining, among others, filled our living room and hearts that day. As I write today I see Peter and me in that sunlit room in Baltimore discussing why Jazz matters. Now I know more than ever that it is about life.

Rest in Peace, Peter.

Tete Cobblah - January 08, 2024 at 11:44 PM

EC

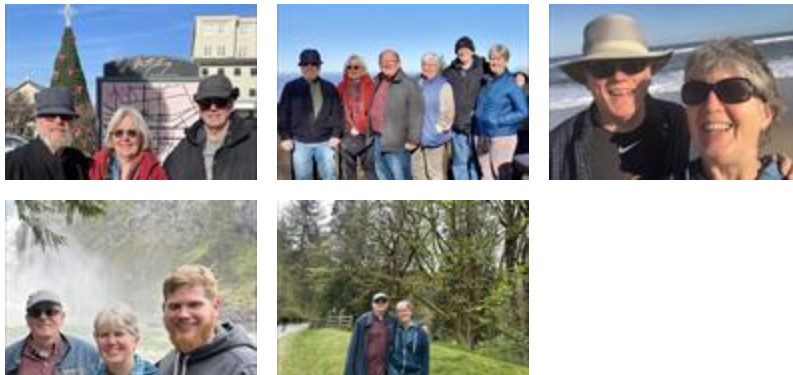
“ Last summer while at Squam Lake, Peter found it amusing that Annie, on the dock, was having a conversation with me, on a rock across the cove. Peter took a picture of this scene which captures why he found it so amusing. The two people, in casual conversation were actually pretty far apart from each other and are dwarfed by the lake and mountains. Peter's picture captures the scale, the beauty of the setting and the ease of communication between two lifelong friends all at once! I appreciated his amused recognition of this scene last July, and will forever cherish the photo he took.



elizabeth Cobblah - January 07, 2024 at 01:28 PM

MA

“ 5 files added to the album Peters Family



Marcia - January 05, 2024 at 07:49 PM

WM

“ [From Willy Mills Part 4 of 4]

A tougher challenge came when Peter asked Nancy for a date and she turned him down. I heard the story, separately, from both of them, with vaguely matching details. I offered Peter sympathy over the experience without taking sides.

A few years after that, Peter hosted a bachelor party for me the night before my second and much more legal wedding. There was no booze, no dancing babes, just several old high school chums pretending to be happy for me and not mentioning that I was betraying some unwritten rule about friendships. It was a wedding too soon, for both bride and groom, and didn't last. Later, when Peter introduced me to his wife, Ann, it was a much happier celebration for a marriage that would last a long, loving time.

With all that happened in life, Peter and I kept in touch, sometimes seeing each other in person, sometimes just trading phone calls. He met my third and forever wife, Lisa, and some of my new stepchildren. We sat at the lake, talked about life, and didn't go fishing.

Then, just before Christmas, I got a call from my first bride, Marcia. It was a terrible tale, told through a tangle of tears. The details were as murky as those old lake waters, but it wasn't a tale that Marcia should have to repeat at that moment. But I knew the basic fact. My tag-along friend Peter had tragically stopped tagging along and was gone.

Willy Mills - January 04, 2024 at 11:52 AM

PS

So many memories! The Dome in the Missouri River Bottoms, Heart Butte, various visits in 8 states, and the Teton Wilderness hiking camp. We left Bismarck just after graduation of High School for 9 days of back packing in Wyoming. We planned on catching many trout to support our meals which was difficult, the smokers ran out of Cigarettes but learned from other hikers how to identify kanickanick, so called Indian tobacco. Our favorite treat were snow cones made with Tang and fresh snow.

Patrick Shannon Sr. - January 07, 2024 at 05:43 PM

“ [From Willy Mills Part 1 of 4]

Younger than me, Peter Conrad was my tag-along friend. We had a lot in common: too many sisters, a lack of brothers, Unitarian parents, and fathers who drank too much and too often.

When I was a toddler, Peter Conrad was a newborn baby. Our parents were friends and neighbors, in town and out at the lake. Later, Peter was the toddler, and I was the wiser four-year-old. So, Peter and I, we explored and learned about the world together. We learned the joy of crawling under coffee tables, hiding in closets, and that a trellis was for the flowers to climb, and not little boys.

We shared a view of the world, mostly agreeing. We agreed on the unimportance of girls in general and sisters in particular. And, later, we agreed on the importance of girls, of women, of wives, and of children. We learned how sad it was to lose a father, and then a mother, and the importance of sisters when that happened. We talked about surviving high school, and not getting drafted, and making it through college, joyfully starting a career and, later, the calmer joy of ending a career and retiring from that too busy world.

Peter and I became brothers of sorts, at least in spirit, when I married his sister, Marcia. Marcia, who is an attorney, has since informed me I shouldn't worry about the legal consequences of that marriage, as I was only five years old at the time.

The older we grew, the more my tag-along friend and I became friends. We caught grasshoppers and toads. We shot arrows, cap guns, and bb-guns. We built sand castles and snow forts. We caught fish, cleaned fish, and cooked fish. We learned to smoke tobacco in pipes and how to quit smoking. Peter and I, through careful experiments, learned the exact right way to get a firecracker to launch an empty pop can into the sky. We learned to sail. We helped put out prairie fires and hiked mountains. We watched those first satellites crossing the night sky while the northern lights danced

about. We learned how to be vegetarians, and how the Seventh Day Adventists, on a certain day of the week, sold vegetarian food at the back of their church. And then it was spring, and fishing season, and we learned how not to be vegetarians.

Willy Mills - January 04, 2024 at 11:48 AM

“ [From Willy Mills Part 3 of 4]

While a teenager, one summer morning, I had argued with my mother that I didn't need to mow the lawn because the lawnmower wouldn't start. So mother gave me the second task of repairing the mower. As I was mowing the lawn with a miraculously revived mower, my mother interrupted me to tell me I had a phone call from Joyce, Peter's mother. Joyce told me that there were two empty seats on an airplane headed for Washington, DC. If I could get a suitcase packed in the next thirty minutes, then Peter and I could spend a week there with his cousin Roan. Did I want to go?

An hour later, with the lawn only half mowed, I sat in the back of an airplane with Peter. We got a stern lecture from a man who explained that every other kid on that plane was there because they had worked incredibly hard for the right to be there. So Peter and I were to be quiet, and be last in line for food or beverages or any other perk. Peter and I politely agreed we understood. We both felt embarrassed about the situation. I had earned my place on the plane by not completing my mowing of the lawn.

The trip to DC was great fun. During the day, we explored the city on our own and in the evening, when Roan was off from work, he took us on other adventures. Peter and I visited the museums and the capital. It was a hot, humid day, so Peter and I removed our shirts, tying them around our waists. A police officer stopped us and explained that we were being disrespectful and needed to put them back on. So we finished our touring in, apparently, much more respectful sweat soaked shirts.

Roan took us to see the premiere of Stanley Kubrick's 2001 Space Odyssey in a grand, vintage DC theater. He also took us one evening to a concert in a park. Horrible humming noises buzzed from huge speakers while large metal cylinders were passed through the crowd.

Roan lived in Georgetown. One afternoon, Peter and I explored the downtown, which was becoming a kind of east coast hippy hangout. There was a lot to see. We saw a guy in silk driving a black mustang convertible with the sidewalls of the tires completely covered in thick black velvet. A couple of young girls talked with us, and then showed us around. By the end of the afternoon, one of the girls, Diane, exchanged addresses and phone numbers with me and then kissed me goodbye.

It was a year later and my parents were out of town, leaving me in charge of my younger sister, Nancy. That same Diane snuck into town and I graciously offered to share my bedroom. All would have been fine except that later Peter, unaware the visit had been clandestine, mentioned it to his father who told my father who gave me a very long lecture about how I needed to be more respectful to women and what a terrible example I was setting for my innocent young sister. Peter later apologized, and it didn't make the slightest dent in our friendship.

Willy Mills - January 04, 2024 at 11:46 AM

JM

Good story.

jeanmarie Mara - January 06, 2024 at 12:41 PM

“ [From Willy Mills Part 2 of 4]

Peter and I spent a lot of time together at the lake. The lake. It rarely needed a name, but when it did, the lake was Heart Butte, and not the Lake Tschida shown on a map. My Grandma Crystal never called it a lake. To her it was the river because, before the river was dammed, it was where Crystal, the new rancher's bride, would go to enjoy a Sunday picnic. But the river was dammed and grew into a lake and the lake began to eat away at the sandy cliffs an older river had abandoned, which is how and why Peter and I almost did ourselves in.

There was a section of sandy lakeside cliff that had separated away. It stood as a pillar perhaps six feet wide, a foot thick, and twenty feet high. It was composed of packed sand and capped with prairie grass sod. At the top of the cliff, pounded in to the sod, was a wooden stake with a rope that hung down. That was where the temptation began. On the beach below was a concrete block and another rope, likely used to tie up a boat and then abandoned.

My tag-along almost brother Peter and I did the sensible thing, or at least what passed for sensible to teenage boys. We attached the concrete block to the hanging rope. We then took hold of the other rope and walked away from the cliff along the short sandy beach until we could pull no harder. Then we let go. The concrete block swung like a wrecking ball, hitting the bottom of the pillar with a sharp edge, and knocking loose a bit of sand. We were so pleased with the result that we did it again. And again. And again. Until suddenly, the pillar of sand was a roaring, tumbling landslide coming straight for us.

We ran quickly down the short beach and then slower and slower through the ankle deep, knee deep, waist deep water. Then it was quiet. I turned back towards the shore. The water behind me was clear lake water. But the water in front was a murky, muddy brown. In the middle of the murk sprawled a shorter legged Peter, who

stood and then summarized the situation with three succinct words.

“That was stupid.”

It was that horror of how incredibly stupid teenagers can be that helped Peter and I manage the somehow scarier phase of life that is trying to parent a teenager.

Willy Mills - January 04, 2024 at 11:45 AM