



## Brian "Chips" Curtis

March 27, 1942 - May 22, 2017

Brian Curtis, 75, of Florissant, passed away at home the morning of May 22, 2017. Beloved husband of Janet Curtis (nee Radford) for 52 years. Loving father of Marcy Curtis and Lisa Haugen (Andy); son of the late Orville and Ruth Curtis; dear brother of Steven Curtis (Janet) and Kevin Curtis (Susan); dear brother-in-law, uncle and friend.

A 1960 graduate of Ritenour High School, Brian also attended the St. Louis Institute of Music in Clayton, MO, where he studied piano. He then attended Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau, graduating in 1968. He made many friendships and enjoyed his time there. He also worked at Shivelbine's Music. After graduation, he moved his family to Florissant, MO where he taught music at Hazelwood Junior High for 28 years. He was also a professional musician and worked at the Media Club in downtown St. Louis for 28 years, and performed at weddings, receptions and private parties in the St. Louis area. He was an avid collector of records, cd's and music of all genres. He followed the careers of Elvis, as well as many conductors, orchestras, musical theatre and popular musicians. Music was his life, and he loved to share music with all he knew.

Services: Visitation will be May 30 from 4pm-8pm with a Memorial service on May 31 at 1pm at Hutchens Mortuary, 675 Graham Road, Florissant, MO. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the classical music station, Radio

Arts Foundation-St. Louis, 7711 Carondelet, Suite 302  
Saint Louis, MO 63105, or [www.rafstl.org](http://www.rafstl.org), a group he was very passionate  
about.

Funeral Service is Wednesday, May 31, 1pm at HUTCHENS Mortuary

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAY 30. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Hutchens Mortuary & Cremation Center  
675 Graham Rd  
Florissant, MO 63031  
(314) 831-3100

## Funeral Service

MAY 31. 1:00 PM (CT)

Hutchens Mortuary and Cremation Center  
675 Graham Rd.  
Florissant, MO 63031  
(314) 831-3100  
info@hutchensmortuary.com  
<http://www.hutchensmortuary.com>

# Tribute Wall

JT

“ *Mr. Curtis was a wonderful teacher, and an exceptional person. My condolences to his family.*

*Jeff Taylor*

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**Jeff Taylor** - May 31, 2017 at 10:31 PM

FM

“ *I have known Brian since our Ritenour School Days - - and then when I started a job at HJH and he was there.....Living in Florissant...I would run into Brian at various places...While I don't remember all of the kids I went to school with - Brian was a person you could not forget.... Fern Miggins 5/30/17*

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**fern miggins** - May 29, 2017 at 06:29 PM

CN

“ *Brian was a wonderful musician and a great guy. I worked with him at the Media Club for several years, and he always impressed me with his musical skills, particularly the number of songs he knew by heart. I told many fellow musicians that Brian had forgotten more songs than other players knew. He will be missed. RIP, Brian.*

*Clarence "Clancy" Newell*

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**Clarence M Newell** - May 28, 2017 at 05:56 AM

BS

*I have so many good memories of Brian especially playing at the Media Club. He was a class act with a real love of performing. We always played Canadian Sunset at the appropriate time as we could see the sunset through the west windows. I send my condolences to Jan and family. RIP, Brian.*

*Bob Stout*

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**Bob Stout** - May 28, 2017 at 11:37 AM



“*I'm sorry to hear of Mr. Curtis' passing. He was a wonderful band teacher. I was in his first class at Hazelwood Jr. High. Years later when I would see him, he would always ask about my sister (also in band) and my mom. Carole Enns Tumminia*

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**Sam Tumminia** - May 26, 2017 at 08:30 PM

“ *Brian Curtis: Teacher. Mentor. Musician. Neighbor. Friend.*

*These are just a few of the words I would use to describe the influence and the roles this man had and played in my life. After all, I knew him almost as long as I've known my own family. I have been a performing musician now for decades, and I truly don't think it's an exaggeration to say that I can easily trace many of my life's experiences that have come to me as a result of music back to him.*

*When I was just a kid, I would watch Brian load up his car with his keyboards and equipment to go "play a gig" on a Saturday night "downtown" at "The Media Club." Hearing him talk about it made me imagine an exciting, mysterious world where music happily played and important grown-ups danced and smiled late at night in the city. Seeing him normally as the father to my best friend, Lisa, it was like he was some sort of superhero with an alter ego. His super power? Creativity.*

*Years later, I would go on to play in his school band. I learned more about the drums from him and about music in general. I learned to march. I learned what a drumline was. I learned why his personalized license plate said "PNO MAN". Through all of it, he always knew how to toe the line in class between me being a student whom he had high expectations of, as well as the kid next door who saw him in his other roles. He was never too busy to answer a question from me and I can't think of him ever uttering a stern word in my direction. I always respected him. I suppose that was because even though I was a child, he showed that he respected me.*

*That foundation and those experiences eventually earned me a scholarship to "go away to college", which changed my life in ways I never even imagined. It led me to Los Angeles, where I got to study from and see at close range some of the best musicians that have ever lived. Today, I share that knowledge and love for music with my own kids in the hopes that someday they may be inspired to impact*

*people through the joy of melody, harmony, and groove.*

*Brian also had an incredible and unique sense of humor. He could hold court all while tossing tennis balls in the backyard pool for Lisa and I to chase. I always loved his silly impressions and accents, which he could pull off with ease and at any given moment. It was this juxtaposition against his other "selves" that I think helped demonstrate that a person could wear many different hats in life and that it made life all the more interesting because of it.*

*So to say that Brian Curtis had an impact on me is selling it way short. He was like family...like an uncle that lived next door. I hope he knew how much I admired him. I'll miss him dearly.*

*Brian, here's hoping you find that elusive record in the big garage sale in the sky. Love you, man.*

*Your neighbor, friend, and fellow musician,  
Randy Beck*

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**Randy Beck** - May 25, 2017 at 09:01 PM

RC

“*Janet and Family, Brian was a very old friend of mine. I can see him right now sitting behind a drum set in the parlour of Meyer Hall at SEMO.*

*I apologize for being late, my e-mail was not functioning because I had forgotten my password. That happens at almost 77! Also, I apologize for not coming to see him but I, too, have been sick and not able to go any where.*

*Please accept my best wishes and condolences.*

*Bob*

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**Robert E. Carman** - May 25, 2017 at 10:14 AM

MC

“ Mr. Curtis was one of the earliest influences on me as a musician. I will never forget his enthusiasm for teaching and his love of music, which was contagious. More than just a band director and music theory teacher, he taught me to believe in myself and work for what I wanted, and never let anyone else tell me I didn't deserve something I earned. He also taught me to take responsibility for my actions and not to blame others when I hadn't done what I needed to in order to improve my skills. So many lessons in his band class that are applicable in all other areas of life. I'm grateful to have known him.

Melanie Cole - May 24, 2017 at 11:46 PM



“ I'm so very sad to hear this. Mr Curtis was an amazing man and teacher. Legitimately cared about his students and wanted us to appreciate all kinds of music. I just thought of him last week when talking to my 7 year old daughter about band and music appreciation. My mom sends her condolences as well as Mr Curtis always made it a point to tell her hello at sears outlet. RIP AND THANKYOU FOR SHARING AN INCREDIBLE MAN WITH ALL OF US.

Sincerely,  
Dawn and Effie Raup

Dawn Barger - May 24, 2017 at 09:32 PM

Lee  
Faulkner

“ Mr. Curtis was one of the absolute best teachers. So glad to have been one of his students. Many thanks to his family (wife especially) for sharing him with the ungrateful (at the time) kids he taught. His talent and love of music touched so many. Blessing to those who grieve his loss.

Lee Faulkner - May 24, 2017 at 05:26 PM

JF


“ Still have tapes from the 60's that stand the test of time .. great player & great guy ... I continue think of him and will continue ...  
Jerry Ford

Jerry Ford - May 24, 2017 at 04:39 PM

EE

“ So sorry to hear of Brian's passing. Every time I drive down Shackelford, I see the back of your house and think of Brian and Jan. He bought many vinyl albums from my husband. They had a mutual love of music. My thoughts and prayers will be with you, Jan, along with the family.

Elaine Eilerman - May 24, 2017 at 04:35 PM

 Katie  
Hornberge

“ I imagine being a junior high band instructor is one of the most thankless jobs ever. Dealing with hormonal preteens is hard enough without adding in the noise of musicians that have not yet perfected their craft 😭

Sorry I did not get a chance to tell this man what a great teacher he was and how his passion for music was contagious. I rocked out to a little Billy Joel this morning on the couch way to work in honor of you Mr. Curtis - rest well! 🎵🎶

Katie Hornberger - May 24, 2017 at 03:26 PM



“ Wow. What to say about such a talented musician. I was at SEMO with Chips and Steve and these guys were such fun to be with. We would try to stump Chips on songs but he would play them all. Great memories of a great guy! God bless his family during this time of loss.

Michael Parker - May 24, 2017 at 02:55 PM

SF

*I, too, was at SEMO with Chips in the music department but, being a few years behind him, didn't get to know him that well. All I remember is that he was a great musician. The world was a happier place with him in it. So sad to lose him.*

Sharon Fox - May 26, 2017 at 08:18 AM

KT

“ So sorry to hear about Mr. Curtis. I loved having him as a band teacher in Jr. High. I saw him a few times, at garage sales at our house, where he would buy some 78 records we had. He will be missed.

Karen (Williams) Thorn - May 24, 2017 at 01:19 PM



“ So sorry to hear about Mr. Curtis. He was such a great band teacher and he introduced me to Billy Joel during "writing days" whom to this day is one of my favorites. You will be missed. Prayers to your family.

Marge Frey - May 24, 2017 at 11:03 AM

LL

“ I still remember how kind Brian was to all of my children - especially Tim, who needed a lot of encouragement and "positive reinforcement"! He was so good with kids, in and outside of school! Christina loved him bobbing her up and down when she was a preschooler in the big swimming pool in his yard. He was respected and loved as a teacher, and was a wonderful role model as a Father and educator!

Leanne Lederer - May 24, 2017 at 10:38 AM



“ *Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Brian "Chips" Curtis.*



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May 24, 2017 at 09:23 AM



“ *Lisa A lit a candle in memory of Brian "Chips" Curtis*



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**Lisa A** - May 23, 2017 at 07:27 PM



“ *I learned everything I know about Elvis in his music class. I remember how big of a fan he was. RIP. My thoughts and prayers are with his family.*

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**Lisa A** - May 23, 2017 at 06:02 PM



*I shall always be thankful for and remember Mr. Curtis and the patientce and talent he shared with all three of our sons in the band at Hazelwood junior high.*

*May he rest in eternal peace.*

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**Elaine Petrides Scott** - May 24, 2017 at 12:46 AM



*A major influence on my life, and career. Also loved him as a fellow audiophile. Rest in peace.*

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**Wade Dowdy** - May 24, 2017 at 08:09 AM

RT

*Our thoughts and prayers are with the family. We have many good memories of a fellow music educator and good neighbor. Ron and Jo Ann Thomas*

**Ron and Jo Ann Thomas** - May 24, 2017 at 09:25 PM



*I was a cut-up in his class, but Mr. Curtis gave me an appreciation for music, especially ABBA and Roy Orbison. I didn't realize it at the time, but he was a wise and caring teacher. I realize it now and am thankful to have had Mr. Curtis' influence on my life .*

**Denise Chappell** - May 25, 2017 at 10:19 PM



*I graduated with Brian from Ritenour and so sorry to hear of his passing. My condolences to the family!*

**Jacque Niedringhaus-Harris** - May 26, 2017 at 04:22 PM

BL

*I knew Chips (and Steve) at SEMO where I started out as a music major. He was an incredibly talented musician, as well, as a great friend. He was my "go-to guy" at Shivelbines when I wanted to buy records, no matter what the genre, and was kind enough to loan me his original score that he had written for a play performed at SEMO, "Dirty Work at the Crossroads," when I directed it while teaching at Sikeston. The world has lost an incredible person. My thoughts and prayers to his family.*

**Barbara Brown Lyon** - May 27, 2017 at 08:57 PM

RG

*Without a doubt the most talented person I have ever known. We met our first year at SEMO. He was the front man for a very popular rock band on campus but never seemed to realize that he was a star. That year, he taught myself and Bob Spicer how to play guitar and the next year the three of us began singing as a folk trio on Gaslight Square. I am now 74 years old and still enjoying the gift he gave me so many years ago. The world is a much sadder place now, but, heaven has the best choir director they have ever had. May God bless and keep you always.*

*Roy Gallagher*

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**roy gallagher** - May 29, 2017 at 11:09 AM

BS

*it seems fitting somehow that i would follow my old friend and fellow loxley singer roy in a tribute in the memory of chips...the group we formed, the great times we had playing together will live in my memory forever..chips was one of those gifted musicians who could seemingly play anything you put in his hands...he was the anchor of our trio, and i cherish the times we played together..it is a kinship and friendship that has endured thru my life..god bless him and jan. bob spicer june 27th*

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**BOB SPICER** - June 26, 2017 at 04:00 PM

TR

*It was sad to hear of your husbands passing, John Pyatt informed me. I greatly admired Chips grasp of music. He brought a tremendous amount of joy and fun to all of us who heard him play. We were in high school together and he was the first person that always came to mind when thinking of high school. I remember listening and marveling at his incredible musical talent. I was in the audience at "Jack's or Better" when Roy, Bob and Chips took the stage. My thoughts and prayers are with you your family Jan.*

*Tony Ruesing*

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**Tony Ruesing** - June 27, 2017 at 05:28 AM