



Bradley W. Smith

May 16, 1952 - November 16, 2016

Brad Smith

64, of the West Fork of the White River at Broad Ripple Low Head Dam, passed away peacefully in his sleep on November 16, 2016. He was born on May 16, 1952 to Jack and Marsha Smith.

Brad's family tells stories of his many accomplishments on the dance floor as a child and speaks of his gifted intellect. Both were evident as an adult, if not slightly more difficult for most to recognize because of his unique way of expressing himself. Brad lived in or around Broad Ripple for most of his adult life. His irresistible charm endeared him to many residents, shop owners, and wildlife. Brad was a creative spirit with entrepreneurial ambition, one of his more recent endeavors being his walnut ring business. The impressive collection of rings gave Brad a creative outlet and a product that he took to market on The Monon Trail. It is believed that he eventually sold out his entire catalogue. Brad was always himself and was loved by many. Those who cared for him are profoundly saddened by the loss.

Brad was preceded in death by his parents; brother, Jack; and sister, Barbara Lasonder. A brother, George Smith of South Bend, Indiana, a cousin and countless advocates for mental health and homelessness survive Brad. Memorial contributions may be made in Brad's name to The Abbie Hunt Bryce Home.

Tribute Wall

TH

“*Broad Ripple Brad has been a part of Village life for the entire 33 years Apple Press has been operating here. First met him at Good Earth through Bob Landman, who had grown up with Brad and served as a lifelong guide and mentor. When our business relocated the first time, we renovated a house between the Monon & McDonald's and used Brad as a hired hand. Thereafter he always called me Mr. Apple. Many years later when we bought our property on Ferguson, Brad would stop by and shoot the breeze on cold days when it was clear he was freezing and needed to warm up. Once he showed up with his cell phone and displayed a good grasp of its features. He was a brilliant, if erratic, conversationalist with occasional glimpses of wit and intelligence. Brad took Bob's passing very hard and was distressed and distraught in a way I'd never seen before. I talked to him out back one day when he seemed calm. "You guys were close," I said. "Yeah," replied Brad, "We had a thing." It was the only time I smiled during those dark days and I smile now just thinking about it. When I told my former business partner Mark Finch about Brad's passing he said, "The end of an era! Sorry to hear it. Seems as though there should be a memorial plaque or rock or something." I agree and I think there is a movement to commemorate Brad in some way in the spring.*

-Tom Healy

Tom Healy - November 22, 2016 at 02:09 PM

KT

Hi Tom! Beautiful words. Please let me know if I can help with a memorial plaque/rock for Brad. It would be so nice to tie it in with a gathering. Will you take down my email address and let me know if/how I can help?...Thank you! Kristin Tuller (kristintuller@yahoo.com)

kristin tuller - November 22, 2016 at 07:28 PM

TW

“ Sorry to hear about the passing of one of my oldest friends, Bradley Winthrop Smith. Brad and I grew up as next door best pals beginning in 1956 and were close through most of our lives. I went to California with Brad in 1971 to visit his biological mother, and I was there during the period when he began to decompensate and become mentally ill. I attempted to remain in touch and supportive but Brad could be a really willful guy and in particular did not like the idea of anyone trying to tell him how he should live his life. Many people didn't know the many talents Brad possessed. As a child he was a very accomplished dancer and his parents had numerous photos of Brad in top hat and tails during one of his tap dancing recitals. He later got interested in modern jazz and ballet and could have really gone far as a dancer had his parents provided the support he needed. Brad was a dog lover and was responsible for taking care of 4 dogs on his own for his parents. Brad was perhaps the most charming kid I have ever known and was also quite good looking in childhood/adolescence, he had girls falling all over him in his heyday. He was intelligent and somewhat of a salesman in that he could sell virtually anything to anybody. He was someone I always predicted would be successful in life, but his mental illness developed when he was relatively young and pretty much took the best years of his life away from him. Brad was perhaps more like a brother to me than my own real brother, and I will miss him dearly.

-Tom Waldo

Tom Waldo - November 22, 2016 at 11:33 AM

KT

Tom, I have been back to this site three times just to read what you wrote here. He was so special and so fascinating. Your insight is heartbreaking and beautiful all at the same time. It confirms so much of what he would talk about. Kristin Tuller

kristin tuller - November 22, 2016 at 07:37 PM

MO

“ *Countless Brad breakfasts: 2 scrambled on a pancake: have I shared a cup of coffee over...and in the last winter or two without him around as much has made the Cafe not right. I will forever be humbled having known my sweet friend Brad.*

moira - November 22, 2016 at 06:34 AM

KR

“ *I am one of many who loved Brad. When I worked in Broad Ripple many years ago, we would see each other almost daily. He was full of creative ideas and always willing to help me with whatever work I was doing. After I moved out of Broad Ripple, long periods of time would pass before I would run into him again. But, I ALWAYS would run into him; on the Monon Trail, or at the coffee shop. More recently it was at Target, Walgreens or Speedway in Glendale. I bought several of his amazing walnut rings when he was in business. He was a creative genius and a beauty of a person.*

kristin - November 21, 2016 at 09:13 PM

KR

“ *1 file added to the album New Album Name*



kristin - November 21, 2016 at 09:01 PM



“ *I didn't know Brad before his illness. I visited with him the last two weeks of his life. I heard wonderful stories of his adventures. It was a gift to be with him in his last days and although he didn't know me and he was quite ill, he continued to inspire people's lives, including mine.*

God bless you sweet gentle man.



Deborah White-Machon - November 21, 2016 at 05:32 PM