



## Donald Taylor

Donald Ray Taylor, 74, died peacefully on Thursday, November 12, 2015, due to complications from hepatitis C and cirrhosis. A memorial service and reception will be held at 2:00 PM on Friday, December 4th, at the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin: 4700 Grover Avenue, Austin, Texas, 78756. Don was born on Tuesday, November 4, 1941, in Dallas, Texas. A precocious child, he was the teacher's pet, as he knew all the answers and loved to recite poetry. His flawless memory allowed him to snag the leading roles in all of the school plays, in which he knew everyone else's lines in addition to his own. Don played center on the W.H. Adamson High School basketball team, from which he graduated in 1960. In 1965 he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Texas at Austin, graduating Tau Beta Pi. He went to work at the Defense Research Laboratory at the University of Texas' Balcones Research Center, however his moral objections to that effort eventually led him to resign and join the anti-Vietnam War and Rock and Roll counterculture movement of the late 60's. For the next 10 years Don worked as an electrical and sound technician. He wired the light and sound, fixed the air conditioning, and rewired the power for Austin's first psychedelic venue, The Vulcan Gas Company. An audio expert, he recorded some of the earliest Austin bands, including Johnny Winter, the Conqueroo, Shiva's Headband and some of America's blues masters. In San Francisco he worked with bands at the Avalon Ballroom, wired the 36-inch presses at San Francisco's Rip Off Press and repaired

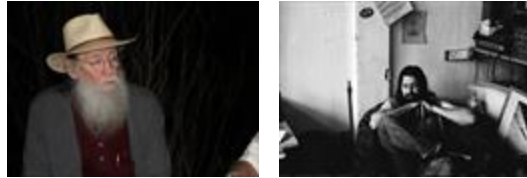
electronic equipment for the bands and those who recorded them. In the late 70's, Don was diagnosed with diabetes, ultimately changing his life for the better. It was this life change that led Don to return to school. In the early 80's he enrolled in graduate school at the University of Texas at Arlington. An old undergraduate classmate and friend hired Don to run the Hardware Lab of the Computer Science Engineering Department. In 1990, at the age of 49, he graduated from UTA with a Masters in Computer Science Engineering. With a new lease on life and having reconnected with Christi (who he dated briefly in college in his early 20s), Don returned to his beloved Austin, ready to get to work in his field of choice. He went to work at ASOMA Instruments, developing recycling instrumentation and employing X-Ray Fluorescence and Ionic Transfer Membranes to measure chemical composition. It was during that time that Don's daughter Rachel came to live with him while she attended graduate school for physical therapy. Over his 20-year career Don went on to work for Weed Instruments and Spectro/Ametek. In one project he perfected an instrument that recognized the unusable PVC plastic on a recycling plant conveyor belt, and separated it using a blast of air. Another analyzer measured ultra-low sulfur in fuels to assist with the elimination of acid rain. Don was a lifetime member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), of which he was very proud. His latter years were perhaps his most gratifying. He felt good about the work he did and the relationships he formed during that time. Don was an avid reader, a tinkerer, a student of history, a scientist, a brilliant and passionate man with an endlessly curious mind. He held strong beliefs in education and science. He was a card-carrying Democrat who regularly donated his hard-earned monies to climate change organizations and other important causes of our time. Don was most happy in social settings. He loved people and came alive at parties with friends - listening to good music, discussing current events, and philosophizing about the ways of the world. To quote his friend John, "Don helped lay the bedrock for making Austin 'weird'. The rest of us only have to help keep it that way." Don was a loving companion, and a very generous and loyal friend. He will be

greatly missed by many who love him. He is survived by his life partner of 30 years, Christi Pate of Austin, daughter Rachel Ray and grandson Josh Ray of Richardson, and Christi's daughters and their families: Ashli Pate, husband Ed Piston and daughter Ella of Austin, and Nicol Pate and daughter Ame of Boulder, Colorado. He was preceded in death by his parents, James L. Taylor and Eunice Williams Taylor, and his sister, Beverly Flannery. In lieu of flowers, please make a donation in Don's name to the World Wildlife Fund, Environmental Defense Fund, Hepatitis Foundation International, American Civil Liberties Union, or to the charity of your choice. Don's family would like to thank the nurses, doctors and staff at Seton Main Hospital's Intermediate Care Unit, especially Palliative Care Nurse Practitioner Stephanie Davis, Nurse Molly, Nurse Stephanie, Clinical Assistant Lauren, doctors Leong and W. Rodriguez, and Hospice Austin nurse Laurie, for their straightforward and compassionate care. Days of Wine and Roses ...They are not long, the days of wine and roses: Out of a misty dream Our path emerges for a while, then closes Within a dream. - Ernest Dowson

# Tribute Wall

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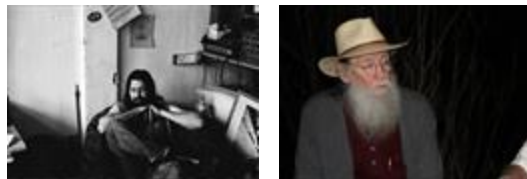


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**Bob Simmons** - July 11, 2023 at 04:51 PM

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**Bob Simmons** - July 11, 2023 at 04:46 PM

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“ *Only the coolest and smartest engineer you ever knew.*

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**Bob Simmons** - July 11, 2023 at 04:39 PM