



William Bruce Stanforth

August 15, 1950 - June 14, 2018

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Bruce is no longer at the piano. Bruce Stanforth, musician, passed away June 14 at his home in Katy, Texas from complications due to throat cancer.

Bruce was born in Peru Indiana to Bill and Madalyn Stanforth, the second of two boys, and moved to Archbold Ohio in 1954.

Growing up in Archbold, Bruce had the good fortune to take piano lessons from Bill Lauber who, when Bruce began to lose interest in the usual methods books, taught him music theory, chording and how to play by ear, skills Bruce used for the rest of his life.

Bruce first began performing in 8th grade with the Northern Rebels, a micro-legendary garage band. His last regular gig was playing for Havana Houston, a luxury Cuban restaurant.

Bruce was a 1972 graduate of the Butler University Jordan College of Music where he studied piano privately under Steve Allee. After graduation Bruce formed the Bruce Stanforth Ensemble which performed in Indiana, Minnesota, Ohio and Illinois.

Bruce toured with the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra, under the direction of Muddy Morrow, in 1977 and 78 before taking a job as a band leader on the Mardi Gras. The Mardi Gras, operated by Carnival Cruise Lines, was the first ship to make weekly stops in Cozumel. During his two years on the Madri Gras, Bruce met and fell in love with Lori Burke and the people of Mexico, which, in

addition to music were the three great loves of his life.

Lori and Bruce were married December 30, 1983 and moved to Minneapolis MN. With the opening of the Mall of America in 92, Bruce and Lori began a long association with Nordstrom's Inc. Bruce played piano and Lori worked in sales and later management. During their time with Nordstrom's Bruce and Lori worked for stores in Chicago, Indianapolis, and Atlanta before finally settling in Houston where they retired.

Each year Bruce and Lori vacationed in Mexico, first in Cozumel and the East Coast and later in Puerto Vallarta and Zihuatanejo to the west. They became friends with many of the locals as well as expats and Bruce often sat in with the local bands. He especially enjoyed playing at the Café Marina in Zihuatanejo, whose owner, Joe Wells, purchased a keyboard so that Bruce could play when he was in town. Between visits Bruce enjoyed studying its language, culture, art and history of Mexico.

During his career, Bruce had the opportunity to perform with Count Basie, Ramsey Lewis, Doug Kershaw and Fats Domino and to perform on NBC's Today Show with the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra.

Bruce was preceded in death by his parents, Bill and Madalyn Stanforth of Archibald OH, and Lori, his Sweetie. He is survived by his brother Rex (Judy) Stanforth of Milan, nephews Jeremy (Melanie) Stanforth and their daughter Leah of Pittsburgh and Orrin (Megan) Stanforth of Urbana and their children, Jake and Madalyn.

A memorial service for the family in Archbold Ohio is pending.