



## Gary Lee Sunday

October 5, 1954 - June 15, 2024

Gary Lee Sunday was born on October 5, 1954 in Philadelphia, PA to Gustav and Mary Sunday. In September 1982, he moved to California to begin his journey in obtaining his PhD, which he completed in 1989. In his career, he helped and guided so many individuals and their families.

He had a passion for music. By profession, he was drummer and vocalist; however, his musical talents led him to expand to guitar and piano. Gary never went to music training, and he did everything by ear. His legacy was his music, which has given his family and friends great comfort. His music is available at [www.youtube.com/@Gary-cy4xk](https://www.youtube.com/@Gary-cy4xk)

His mother, father and sister, Joyce preceded him in death.

He is survived by his wife, Kathy Sunday as well as his two daughters, son, and their significant others; Holly (Servando), Amanda (Cole), and Jonathan (Heidi). He had 6 grandchildren, which were the joys of his life. He is also survived by his sister, Cynthia Sunday.

In his retirement, in addition to music, he enjoyed gardening in his yard. If you lived close to us, then you knew his favorite holiday was Halloween, for which he spent months preparing. Costco, Starbucks, Lowes, and Sam's Club have truly lost a valuable customer.

We will be celebrating Gary's life at a later date. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that you make a donation to the Hemophilia Foundation of Northern California: [hemofoundation.org/support/donate.html](http://hemofoundation.org/support/donate.html)

Your donation will help children with hemophilia attend their annual events and camps throughout the year.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

JUL 27. 11:00 AM (PT)

Pardini's  
2257 W. Shaw Avenue  
Fresno, CA 93711

# Tribute Wall



“ *I met Gary in 1970's when he played drums in band. He was playing clubs in NJ & Philly. He was such a talented musician. He was also extremely intelligent, kind, always smiling. Great memories. Much sympathy to his family.*



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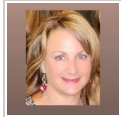
**Kathryn Smith** - November 19, 2024 at 10:20 AM

RU

“ *Really helped me a lot....*

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**Rupert** - September 02, 2024 at 02:06 PM



*I knew Gary when he played drums in his band around Philly and Jersey. 1976/1977. He was so talented, so smart, so kind. Great memories. So sorry for his families loss.*

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**Kathryn Smith** - November 19, 2024 at 09:59 AM

SH

“ *Susan H. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary Lee Sunday.*

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**Susan H.** - July 25, 2024 at 11:07 PM

“ Gary's sudden and tragic death was completely unforeseen and devastating to all who knew him. I was privileged to share a friendship with Gary for nearly five decades. His musical talents, mellifluous vocal skills, and richly layered, effortlessly blended harmonies were his trademark. Additionally, his infectious laughter, enthusiasm for learning, and loving dedication to his family always shone through in conversations. He was a vibrant spirit, a gift of warm and loyal friendship.

Gary had a sharp intellect and an insatiable curiosity. He was a BIG talker, a smooth dancer, and a gracious entertainer, whether through his music or his captivating storytelling. We first crossed paths during the Midnight Blue days with the Platters, and both of us were Temple University graduates. We'd often catch up on campus between classes, diving into word games and discussions about life.

In a twist of fate, we both ended up in California in 1982—Gary and Kathy moved to the Central Valley for graduate school, while I headed to Los Angeles after getting married. Although our lives took different paths, we kept in touch sporadically over the years as we raised our children and built our careers.

With the advent of cell phones, Gary and I were able to reconnect more regularly, especially as we entered our Senior years. He embraced retirement with a sense of contentment and often encouraged me to take the plunge, enjoy endless Saturdays, and spend more time with family. His last message to me was particularly special—it included photos of him with Ruben in his cap and gown, along with Kathy, Holly, and Servando. It was a poignant touch that his message also contained the finalized version of Elvis' song, “In the Garden,” which Rik had sent him that day.

As I close, I just want to say how deeply I will miss my friend. Thankfully, he had the foresight to leave us with a treasure trove of music that he crafted over the years. Whenever we listen to his songs, we'll be reminded of his vocal and musical brilliance and the

*way he brought joy into our lives. He was an affable, outgoing, and wonderfully complex person who found much happiness with his family. So, let's hold onto those memories and let his music be a comforting reminder of the incredible person he was.*

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**Susan Heiler-Adams** - July 25, 2024 at 10:57 PM

BP

“ Oh Gary...sweet memories of making music with you in the band called “Primary Process” while you were a student at CSPP back in the mid to late 80’s. What fun we had!!

*So sad to learn of your passing. Prayers of comfort for your family. The memories we made and shared will last forever.*

*Peace to you  
Dr Bruce Lippmann*

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**Bruce Lippmann, Ph.D.** - June 23, 2024 at 06:00 PM

BS

“ Gary and I played in a rock band while we were both going to graduate school. He loved doing old 60s acapella four part harmonies (i.e. Duke of Earl). After graduate school, we both worked in Fresno, although not together. We stayed in touch and he regularly shared his music with me. He was a wonderful guy and I will miss him.

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**Brad Schuyler** - June 23, 2024 at 05:17 PM

“ To Kathy and the Sunday family:



To me, Gary was a lifelong friend, and a surrogate brother.

Where to begin to say what Gary meant to me is hard to put into just a paragraph or two. We grew up in a tiny neighborhood of Philadelphia known as Meritt Square.

Early on, when we were both about 13-14 years old, I admired Gary's budding musical interest.

One of my earliest memories of him was watching him play drums in his basement to the Edwin Starr song "25 Miles". He would turn off the drum section of the recording using a tape system, and play those parts himself, since it was loaded with double base drum beats it sounded so cool when he played it. He started my love of music which I enjoy to this day. Later on, he talked another friend of ours and myself into going into another neighborhood in Philadelphia to take boxing lessons. We were so young, none of us could drive, and we had to take the elevated Philly transportation system train, locally known as "the El". After a while both he, and our other friend stopped going, Even so, I found a new interest in that and wound up working for the guy who owned the school, teaching little kids the fundamentals of that sport. This was one of my first paying jobs and I was very happy. This because of Gary.

As we became a bit older, Gary's outgoing nature again benefitted us, his group of friends, as he was usually the guy who would make first contact with groups of girls.

This was a guy who you really wanted to be a "wingman" to, as you were always sure to meet fine young ladies through this "chick magnet". Gary provided for me, a ticket to a social life at a time when I was extremely awkward socially, as anyone who knows Gary would understand, he was "just what the doctor ordered". One evening he came over to my house, and spent some time convincing me to go to an adjoining neighborhood to meet with

*some new friends he had made in his high school, again people involved in music. Going with Gary at that time ultimately led to a whole new group of friends for me. Best of all a few years later, I wound up meeting the girl of my dreams, my wife Susan in that neighborhood. Just one more great thing in my life, again heavily influenced by my friend, yeah, you know: Gary!*

*Another memory I'll never forget happened in 2003 on the 25th anniversary of my wedding. Our four children surprised us with a great gift of a trip to San Francisco., After the pleasant shock of this gift wore off, it dawned on me that my longest, best friend, Gary, lived in that area. Of course I called him to tell him of our impending trip. To our enjoyment, both he and Kathy met us for dinner at a Fisherman's Wharf eatery and we had a chance to catch up on so many events in our lives that had happened since we had last seen each other. Our get-together really made the trip for me. On the following day, we took a drive with Gary and Kathy on the Coastal Highway and had a great time. That was one of the last times Gary and I were actually together. We did keep in touch through the internet as Gary would regularly send me his music CDs or links to his latest efforts which we always enjoyed. Gary's music and his ever improving recordings were always a blast to listen to.*

*It was an honor to be in Gary's wedding to Kathy, who in both my wife Susan's, and my opinion, was the best thing that ever happened to Gary. She brought stability to his life and this was the happiest I had ever known him to be. Gary and I lost touch after he was married and I think shortly after that is when he left the area for California. Our loss was Cali's gain, but I am proud of Gary for the way he continued to follow our Phillies and Eagles. He never lost his interest in things Philly.*

*So, as you can see, there was just no way in a few words to describe what Gary has meant to me.*

*Rest in peace my good friend. To say you will be missed is an understatement.... You will always live on in my memory, Gary.*

*Your friend, Mike Sheahan*

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**Mike Sheahan** - June 22, 2024 at 07:50 PM

RO

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



**Robert** - June 21, 2024 at 03:43 PM

DW

“ *I grew up with Gary back in Philly. He was always joking around and even back then he was into his music. We lost contact with each other over the years but thanks to Facebook we reconnected.*

*We would talk in the phone sometimes for hours and he would always have you cracking up and then talk about his music. He would send me his CD'S then ask me what I thought. I'll treasure them more than ever now.*

*Two years ago I lost my wife and he was always there to talk to. But then again that's how Gary was. Very caring about others.  
R.I.P. my friend*

**Dave Wermuth** - June 21, 2024 at 12:12 PM

SD

“ Just a guy from the neighborhood doesn't begin to describe my friend, Gary. We grew up in the same area of Philly. Our families were friends. Gary was a beautiful spirit. He took the time to speak to you. He would follow up with questions which made you feel that he was truly listening. You don't encounter that these days. Gary's music acumen goes back to his teenage days where he and his band would practice in his sister, Joyce's basement. Joyce lived next door to us. I will sorely miss our text exchanges on music. I am not gifted with musical talent but I do love music & the history. I was impressed with his talent. He said he was impressed by my knowledge of music. Yes, along with Gary, I read the liner notes. There will always be a special place in my reverie and that place is where Gary will live forever. My most sincere condolences 🙏❤️👍

Susan T Duffy - June 21, 2024 at 11:03 AM

MK

“ Dr. Sunday, my colleague, was a devoted therapist at Kaiser, Fresno, mental health. His death is tragic.  
M. Kirsten, MD

Markham Kirsten - June 19, 2024 at 02:14 PM

MP

“ Worked with Gary in the late '80s at the Renaissance Adolescent Inpatient Unit in Fresno. A young boy ran away and while the police were being called, Gary chased him down and talked him into coming back. His passion for patient care was unmatched! Also evident when I again worked with Dr. Sunday at Kaiser, adult outpatient. He always enthusiastically took on difficult tasks many others avoided. Dr. Sunday touched many lives and will be missed by many. Mike Petrovich

Michael Petrovich - June 19, 2024 at 10:06 AM