



William "Rusty" Russell Barkley

November 6, 1953 - September 23, 2024

William Russell "Rusty" Barkley, passed peacefully at his home in Concord, NC, on September 23, 2024. Rusty was born November 6, 1953, in Mooresville, NC, to the late John William Barkley and Mary Sue Atkins Barkley. Rusty will be remembered as a man of immense talent and humble spirit by all who loved him. Known affectionately as "Rusty," he was a son, brother, husband, father and friend to many.

A gifted musician and guitar teacher, Rusty's passion for music shone through in every note he played. Rusty's father "Big John" bought older brother Johnny a guitar when they were 8 and 11 years old. Rusty didn't show any interest in playing guitar as he was playing baseball (and a very good player). He made the all-star team when he was only 10 years old. Around the time Rusty was 12 years old, he would sneak and get his brother's guitar, when his brother was gone. One day "Mama Sue" asked Johnny "Have you heard your brother play guitar? He's getting really good." By the time he was 15 years old, he could play lead guitar as well or better than anyone around. He would practice for hours on end daily. No one had the tone and played with confidence more than Rusty Barkley. Throughout his almost 60 years of playing, he played with the following groups (Mind Garden, Orphanage, Appleton, Goldust, Barkley Brothers, misc house bands including the Beach Wagon, Rock Porch, Country City). He started his own band, the Part Time Blues Band, in 1990 & remained with PTBB until 2022.

Throughout his musical endeavors, Rusty had the potential to achieve national acclaim, yet his unwavering love and dedication to his family always took precedence. He found his greatest joy in watching his children grow and supporting them as they flourished into remarkable individuals.

A member of Hopewell Baptist Church in Davidson, Rusty's passion for music and faith intertwined harmoniously in his life.

In addition to his parents, Rusty is preceded in death by his father-in-law, David Hafer, and stepson, Michael Scott Green.

He is survived by his loving wife of 35 years, Lynne (Lynyrd) Barkley; his children, Mary Lynne Barkley (Jeff), John David Barkley, and Ramsey Kate Rogers (Justin); brothers, John Allen Barkley (Melissa) and Stanley Dale Barkley (Lesia); mother in law, Marty Hafer, sister in law, Lisa Hite (Keith); grandchildren, Jackson and Jude Haddix, Madden and Desiree Green and numerous cousins, nieces, nephews, and aunts (Phylis & Harriet).

A future Celebration of Rusty's Life will provide an opportunity for family, friends, and the community to come together, honoring his memory and sharing stories of his life. Services will be held at a later date, offering a time for reflection, remembrance, and gratitude for the life Rusty lived.

Cavin-Cook Funeral Home and Crematory, Mooresville, is honored to serve the Barkley family during this time. Condolences and support can be directed to the family through their website at www.cavin-cook.com.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to support Rusty's wife, Lynne Barkley, 2248 Barr Road, Concord, NC 28027.

Cemetery Details

Cavin-Cook FH & Crematory

494 E. Plaza Drive
 Mooresville, NC 28115

Tribute Wall

DB

“ *My sincere condolences to the Barkley family. Rest in peace Rusty.* ”

Diane Buffington - October 31, 2024 at 10:01 PM

SC

“ *Thank you for all the years of enjoyment of you sharing your music and friendship. Much love for your family.* ”



Star collins - October 03, 2024 at 05:17 PM

RZ

“ *I knew Rusty for well over 30 years. He was an amazing person and a great friend. My favorite memories of Rusty were our trips to Merlefest. I will miss him greatly. Condolences to the Barkley family.* ”
Zuber

Rick Zuber - October 01, 2024 at 08:09 AM

KH

“ I met Rusty when I was 19 years old. I was friends with his drummer Nolan Paige's wife, Sandy. He was separated from Connie at the time. My mom would go with me to see the Barkley Brothers play. She became friends with Mama Sue and Papa John. I had a huge crush on Rusty and we dated a little bit. I was crazy about him, but he didn't feel the same way. I think he thought I was just a young groupie. Lol...But, through the years, I would go to watch him play when I had the opportunity. Hard to explain, but he had a huge part in bringing me from my sheltered life into the real world. In my opinion, he was always the coolest of the cool, a kind, sweet man and one of the most talented musicians that I've ever seen...RIP Rusty. So many people loved you.

Kelly Murden Howard - September 30, 2024 at 08:20 PM

CH

“ I had always known of Rusty and heard him play from time to time. But in 2001 we had our first Blues and Burritos at our law office on Main Street and Rusty and his band were the logical choice for our first year. By the time the show date came we were dealing with the immediate aftermath of 9-11 but decided the show must go on. It was a healing moment. Our event went on for 15 years with Rusty and his group headlining every year. I got to know and love Rusty beyond his phenomenal guitar playing. A humble and chill human being who brought the jam. I remember one year they played “Into the Mystic” by Van Morrison and it was if I had never heard the song before. It was that next level, and I know that Rusty is taking it to the next level now, somewhere out there.

Cliff Homesley - September 28, 2024 at 09:37 AM

JG

“ Janet Groce lit a candle in memory of William "Rusty" Russell Barkley



Janet Groce - September 28, 2024 at 04:35 AM

JF

“ Jamie Franks lit a candle in memory of William "Rusty" Russell Barkley



Jamie Franks - September 27, 2024 at 10:27 PM

JF

I met Rusty in 1978 when he played with Perry Puckett, Nolen Page and Larry Blake. Rusty was Perry's best man when Perry and I got married in 1979. So many great memories and awesome pickin' over the years! I am thankful we now have youtube. He's pickin' in Heaven now.

Jamie Franks - September 27, 2024 at 10:41 PM

RK

“ Randy & Joan Kerr lit a candle in memory of William "Rusty" Russell Barkley



Randy & Joan Kerr - September 27, 2024 at 12:01 PM

BF


“ I met Rusty through my husband, Mike Faulkenberry. He introduced me to the Part Time Blues Band, and Rusty's phenomenal guitar playing. We went to see them play as often as possible. He was not only an incredible musician, but a humble, sweet soul. He will be missed greatly. RIP Rusty.

Beth Faulkenberry - September 27, 2024 at 10:51 AM

WB

“ R.I.P. old friend!

William D. & Danette S. Bumgarner - September 27, 2024 at 10:04 AM

 Leila Hobbs

“ Rusty was one of the good ones known for his love of playing his guitar and being a member of “The Part Time Blues Band”. He was a treasure, greatly talented, friendly and will be missed by his his fans, family members and friends. My condolences 🌸. Rest assured Rusty is playing his music 🎵 in heaven now. God bless.



Leila Hobbs - September 27, 2024 at 08:03 AM

LB

“ I've known Rusty since meeting him in 1974 at the infamous Double Door Inn in Charlotte. What an amazing musician that's played the guitar all over the Charlotte area and beyond. Such a talented and nice man that everyone that knew him will surely miss. God Bless 🙏



Lynne & Steve Bennett - September 26, 2024 at 11:34 PM

SB

“ *A most talented individual, caring and giving soul, I consider Rusty a dear friend.. I will miss him!* 💔😭🙏



Shelia Bryenton - September 26, 2024 at 10:42 PM

WB

“ *Continued prayers and condolences for all!*

William D. & Danette S. Bumgarner - September 26, 2024 at 07:35 PM

LR

“ *Rusty was an amazing talent. But even more so as a person. When my husband was in the hospital Rusty called him several times to lift his spirits. That is exactly what he did. My husband was truly touched by his act of kindness.*
RIP Rusty

liz Rotondo - September 26, 2024 at 05:49 PM

DH

“ *Knew Rusty for more than 50 years. The best word I can use to describe him: kindness. It was my pleasure to have considered him a friend*

Dewayne Haire - September 26, 2024 at 04:59 PM

CS

“ Carol Shubkin lit a candle in memory of William "Rusty" Russell Barkley



Carol Shubkin - September 26, 2024 at 04:51 PM

CS

I was very sad to hear about Rusty's passing. I always thought the world of him, both as a musician and a person.

I was an agent that worked with PTBB back in the 90s and always dealt directly with Rusty. I loved working with those guys and they were so easy to book. I had known Rusty for awhile as a friend but, when he heard I was booking other bands around town, he called and asked if I would take them on, too. My obvious answer was YES, of course!

I am so saddened that he has been taken from us so soon. I want to offer my condolences to his family and everyone whose lives he touched!

Carol Shubkin - September 26, 2024 at 04:58 PM

JR

“ A very good friend and teacher. Will miss him.

Joe Runyan - September 26, 2024 at 03:25 PM

AD

“ Rusty Barkley was more than an amazing musician he was the greatest man I have ever known . He really cared about seeing the younger generation carry on a love for music . I was able to work for Rusty for well over a decade and I cherish the lessons he taught me the laughs I had riding too many miles to count . I was able to call RB a friend an influence on me and a father figure to myself and so many others . I will like all those people carry Rusty in my heart for the rest of my days . Not a day will go by without me thinking of RB and I know he is with so many of his musical brothers that have made that journey we all gonna make but I know out of the millions of people on this earth I was lucky enough to know and call a friend to the best

Adam - September 26, 2024 at 03:17 PM

BR

The man, the myth, the legend! He will be truly missed! Him and my daddy were old friends and will always remember the memories and times ! GBNF

Brett(Bert) - September 26, 2024 at 04:33 PM

RW

Rusty was a great husband of my niece Dama Lynne! I remember him picking and singing at my Mother's funeral. Love and prayers to all his family.

*Aunt Rosetta
Greeneville, TN*

Rosetta Wells - September 26, 2024 at 04:52 PM

LR

Sending love and prayers to the Barkley Family. Rusty will now rest in Heavenly peace and play his music and sing for the Lord and Angels. He will truly be missed by those who knew and loved him. Linda and Art Rahtes

Linda abd Art Rahtes - September 26, 2024 at 05:00 PM

TH

We are so sorry for your loss, Love and Prayers, Myron and Teresa Hill

Teresa T. Hill - September 26, 2024 at 05:39 PM

DH

I have only known Rusty and his family for 17yrs. My husband "Lightnin" introduced him to me. They have been friends forever! I now I am part of that friendship. His daughter Mary and I became instant friends. She has Rusty's kind heart and love for friends and family. When he became your friend, you were a friend forever. Mary is the same!

I know Lightnin and I wish we could hear Midnight Rider and Whipping post one more time!

I'm sure the angels and all who welcomed him through the pearly gates are hearing their favorites sung by Rusty! Play on my friend play on!

Play that guitar like no other! FOREVER!

We will always love you and miss you!

Thank you for playing at my 60th birthday party!

So many memories and so many special songs!

Dona Harbin - September 26, 2024 at 08:14 PM

MF

We were privileged to hear Rusty play many times at 202 North Main. He will be missed!

Mark Fowler - September 27, 2024 at 03:24 PM