



Bruce Brown Winkworth

January 4, 1952 - May 17, 2019

The family and friends of retired baseball publicist and music collector Bruce Brown Winkworth will celebrate his life at the Universalist Unitarian Fellowship of Raleigh on Monday, May 27, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. Bruce died on May 17, 2019, at the age of 67, following an 18-month battle with lung cancer.

Born in New Bern, North Carolina on January 4, 1952, Bruce came to Raleigh as a toddler and never really left, graduating from Needham B. Broughton High School in 1970 and North Carolina State University in 1993.

He became a baseball fan at the age of 3, learning to keep a scorebook from his father and learning strategy by playing card games with his older brother. He was an early fan of the Brooklyn Dodgers and a life-long devotee of the Cleveland Indians.

After a brief enrollment at Western Carolina, Bruce returned to Raleigh, where he worked full-time at several retail record stores and attended as many rock-and-roll concerts as his budget would allow. He began a long enrollment at NC State in the early 1980s and earned his degree in oral communications by taking two classes a year while working full time at record stores and part-time as a freelance journalist.

In one of his writing classes, Bruce fell for his teacher, Rita Marie Buhr, asking her to attend a Durham Bulls baseball game, where he served as the public address announcer. Married on November 1, 1986, they lived happily together for the next three decades, throughout Rita's 35-year battle against breast cancer, until her death on March 19, 2019.

Bruce worked unofficially for NC State baseball throughout the tenures of coaches Sam Esposito and Ray Tanner, then was hired full time as an assistant sports information director in 1996, regularly working with baseball, wrestling, volleyball and cross country. He was head baseball coach Elliott Avent's general manager, bench coach, and director of game-day sanity.

When Bruce retired in early 2012, the NC State baseball program gave him and Rita a trip to the 2013 College World Series in appreciation for his service to the baseball program. The Wolfpack, after a record-breaking season, went with them, in only the second CWS appearance in school history.

Bruce was preceded in death by his parents, Ralph C. and Blanche B. Winkworth, and his wife Rita. He is survived by his brother Doug Winkworth of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, scores of life-long friends and baseball fans, a word-class musical collection and his Dodgers' baseball cards.

A red-and-white celebration of Bruce's life will be held at 10:00 a.m., Monday, May 27, 2019 at the Universalist Unitarian Fellowship at 3313 Wade Ave., Raleigh, NC, 27606. All are welcome to wear their favorite Wolfpack gear to the casual service to share stories of how Bruce entertained them with his biting wit, fundamental knowledge of proper grammar, and bootleg copies of old rock concerts.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Wolfpack Unlimited Friends of Baseball, in memory of Bruce Winkworth, at NC State University, Campus Box 8502, Raleigh, NC, 27695 or to Transitions LifeCare, 250 Hospice Circle, Raleigh, NC, 27607.

Events

MAY **Memorial Service** 10:00AM - 11:00AM

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Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Raleigh
3313 Wade Ave, Raleigh, NC, US

Comments



“ Bruce is the kind of friend and mentor every person on the planet would benefit from having in their lives, and I, along with many others, have been lucky enough to have the original version.

He was kind, giving, and extremely knowledgeable on just about anything. Bruce always had a way of explaining things to me in a way that made complete sense. Everything I write to this day happens with the image of Bruce in the back of my mind (most likely saying, "Have you finished writing that yet, Shakespeare?") He taught me so much about so many things, it's impossible to list here.

I wouldn't be where I am today without Bruce. As I wrapped up my college years (at the ripe old age of 31), it was Bruce's recommendation to the New York Yankees that landed me the media relations internship with the club. Everything else from that point forward points to Bruce's influence.

Besides baseball and swapping articles about our terrible NFL football allegiances (his being the Redskins and mine being the Browns), we shared a genuine love for music. I always had an appreciation for music, primarily rock 'n roll, but Bruce shared every ounce of his knowledge of all things music that took my appreciation to an entirely different level. We'd share music (he gave FAR more to me than what I was able to reciprocate), and I developed new tastes in artists and songs I'd never heard of before. He took what was a common type of thing for me and made music a part of my fabric. For that, I will forever be grateful.

In our most recent encounter after Rita's memorial, we hugged and talked about how nice it was to see each other again. Even though we spoke often, it was so good to see him with my own eyes again. The moment wasn't soft for long, though. Around 10 seconds later Bruce complained about the lack of offseason improvements for the Indians and Braves.

That last encounter couldn't have been any more perfect. I'll miss Bruce dearly; however, his lasting memory will always be with me.

Ian Johns - May 21 at 04:37 PM



“ Bruce was a unique and wonderful man. He always took time to talk with me and share his perspective and expertise in many areas. His impact and memory will last a long time. Mick Prochaska.

mick Prochaska - May 24 at 10:38 AM