



Gary Palmer Merkle

July 29, 1950 - November 24, 2024

Gary Palmer Merkle passed on to his heavenly reward at 7:00 a.m. Sunday, November 24, 2024. His wife, Dawn, held his hand as he moved on to his next gig, the leader of one of Heaven's bands. Born on July 29, 1950, in Lynn, MA, his birth and death dates don't matter as much as the dash between those dates.

He lived a robust life and was loved by all he met. He proudly served in the U. S. Navy on the USS Kitty Hawk and spent 8 years as a New York City fire fighter, driving truck the last two years of his service. He repelled off high rises while supervising paint and repair crews in another role and held a wide variety of jobs in between. He wrapped his career as Head Custodian at North Brunswick High School.

A talented singer-songwriter, he performed locally as Featherstone, with his son and daughter-in-law, back in the day. He was quick to break out a guitar and perform old favorites and his originals at parties and family gatherings. Watching him, his son, and his grandsons play together was truly special. Recently, he wrote Christian music and contributed to several area praise and worship teams.

He shared a close and beautiful relationship with his two grown children and was privileged to watch his five grandchildren become successful young adults. They all treasure memories of the fun he added to their lives.

His love of music and family was only surpassed by his love of God. He awoke early every day for 2640 consecutive days to listen to his devotional

and spend time with God. He had a deep faith, he willingly and frequently shared.

Gary was predeceased by his parents Francis Charles Merkle and Wilda Frances Palmer. He is survived by his loving wife of 25 years, Dawn Bugni, his dear children and grandchildren Christopher James Merkle (Rebecca) and sons, Noah and Parker and Kellie Jean Wells (Matthew), sons Slate and Devin, and daughter Mollie, CJ and Kellie's mother, Jackie Johnson-Brady, beloved brother Dan Barnes (Nancy), and sisters Peggy Olsen (Dale), Debbi Behrens (Jeff), and Ellen LaRoche and countless extended adoptive and birth family members.

Godspeed, Gary. You are loved.

Tribute Wall

BE

“ Condolences to Garys family. We enjoyed getting to know Gary through gym classes at O2 Fitness. He was always smiling, joking and is sorely missed by Jan's class of silver sneakers. RIP dear Gary.

Bob and Gloria Edwards - December 10, 2024 at 04:09 PM

D(

“ With enduring sympathy for your family and friends

David & Sherry Pridgen (CMA) - December 07, 2024 at 12:55 PM

DR

“ Dear CJ, Rebecca and family, I'm so sorry for your loss. I'm thankful for the wonderful memories your family has of your dear Dad. He's in his eternal home now and that should give us peace. Praying for God's comfort during this difficult time. Love, Dorinda

Dorinda Rady - December 07, 2024 at 09:13 AM

CR

“ Sending my sincere condolences to you Dawn and your family. I'm so sorry for your loss. I pray that you will be comforted and at peace during this difficult time and into the future. I'm so appreciative of Gary's service in the Navy and New York City Fire Fighters. May the heavenly choirs rejoice! Love you, Dawn!

Camille Roberts - December 06, 2024 at 11:05 PM

BP

“ Dawn, , my thoughts and prayers are with you. Gary was a wonderful man . May the Lord give you strength during this time. Love you,

Bonnie Perry - December 05, 2024 at 05:31 PM

LY

“ My condolences to the family of Gary Merkel I was blessed to work with him when we both went to Rocky Point Baptist Church we sang in the Rocky Point band together I sang he played his guitar my name is Lydia he was always a part of my life for years even on Facebook he followed me he was a very good friend to me and I'm going to miss him and his music Go Rest High On That Mountain Gary you deserve it love your friend Lydia Dennis Brown

Lydia - December 04, 2024 at 03:47 PM

MB

“ Dawn,
My heart, thoughts and prayers are with you. Cherish the beautiful memories. Gary is now an Angel 🙏 watching over you and all his loved ones.
((Hugs&Loves))
Marilyn & Terry Blair
🐾 Cruz 🐾 Bella

Marilyn Blair - December 04, 2024 at 02:30 PM

MF

“ I am so sorry for your loss. He had such kind words to say about Marcus.
I will keep you and your family in my prayers

Marcy Frazier - December 03, 2024 at 08:35 PM

CV

“ Gary was a wonderful friend. we never saw him where there wasn't a huge smile on his face and a love in his heart that truly expressed his love of God. He will truly be missed.

curtiss & lorrie Vann - December 03, 2024 at 07:02 PM

BT

“ I worked with Gary at NBSH great guy and good coworker too.....

Bradley Taylor - December 03, 2024 at 05:45 PM

JM

“ God speed our neighborhood friend❤️

Jay & Candi McCurry - December 03, 2024 at 04:51 PM

AW

“ Perhaps they are not the Stars, but rather openings in Heaven where the love of our lost ones pours through and shines down upon us to let us know they are happy- author unknown. Big hugs for all of you. ❤️

Abby Wilcox - December 03, 2024 at 04:46 PM

DD

“ Gary was a friend and one of the most decent beautiful people I have ever known.

Doug Dixon - December 03, 2024 at 04:07 PM

CB

“ RIP Gary, you will be missed tremendously by so many. My condolences to Dawn and the rest of the family.
Love Cousin Chris

Chris Bragan - December 03, 2024 at 03:34 PM

BB

“ *A beautiful man and a dear brother.*

Bill & Trish Bauer - December 03, 2024 at 03:21 PM

CB

“ *Remembering you on this day, comforted by so many memories. Though absent, you are very near, still loved, still missed and very dear in the hearts of those who loved you. You will always be there.*

Charlie and Donna Bass - December 03, 2024 at 03:06 PM

KF

“ *Fond memories of Gary in the early days in New York. Our deepest sympathies and prayers for the family.*

Ken - Katie Johnson / Famiky - December 03, 2024 at 03:03 PM

DP

“ *Dawn and family, I am so sorry to hear about your loss. Hold on to those memories and trust in God for healing.*

Donna Pace - December 03, 2024 at 03:01 PM

CM

“ *He will surely be missed. So grateful for the life he lived. All the life lessons, the love given. He lived a selfless life, truly he exemplified the love of Christ to all he met. The leader of the band*

Chris Merkle - December 03, 2024 at 02:40 PM