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Edward P. Mikusa

Sept. 4, 1948 - March 22, 2023

Edward P. Mikusa, 74, died peacefully at his home on Wednesday, March 22, 2023 in the company of his wife and daughter. Born in Canton, Ohio on September 4, 1948 he was the son of Amy and Ed Mikusa Sr. Growing up in Columbus Ohio in the 60's, music played a formative role in his life. He and his friends formed The Grayps in 1965 and played to together for the next decade opening for the Beach Boys, Left Banke, and Bob Seager. As part of his musical career, Ed and his friends owned and operated Owl Recording with studios in Columbus and Los Angeles. Ed as the front man for the band, was full of energy and enthusiasm.

Coupling his energy with his caring spirit, Ed became the Director of Recreation at Rosemont School for Girls. While at Rosemont, Ed met the love of his life, Melanie, after hiring her as a lifeguard for the summer. In addition to the typical therapeutic recreation offerings, Ed integrated outdoor adventure, taking the girls hiking and climbing. He used outdoor adventure as a tool for personal growth and development for the residents. To deepen his understanding of outdoor education, Ed attended the North Carolina Outward Bound School's Educators leadership course in the spring of 1984. This was a transformative experience for Ed. Together, Ed and Melanie went to work for NCOBS for a summer in 1986 and this is where he found his calling.

Over the next decade, Ed served as an instructor, course director, and human resource director at the school. He valued his time as a field instructor and hiring future generations of NCOBS staff. During his time at NCOBS he openly and wholehearted engaged with the community. He shared his caring spirit, his calm nature and his incredible sense of humor, making friends that would last his entire life. Ed was extremely proud of his accomplishments, but what brought him the most joy was his daughter, Flannery. They shared many common interests. Together they would hike, camp, listen to music, and enjoy the outdoors. He always beamed when he talked about her and loved hearing about her climbing adventures.

Ed and his family moved to Morganton in 1994. Community being an important part of Ed's life, he found Grace Episcopal Church. While at Grace, Ed continued to impact the lives of other through his service as a Sunday school teacher, vestry member, and junior warden.

Those who knew Ed will remember him as a curious and kind individual who was always ready to listen and bring a smile to even the toughest situations. He is survived by his wife, Melanie E. Mikusa, daughter Flannery A. Mikusa, and sister Paula Hauck. Ed is preceded in death by his parents Amy and Edward Mikusa Sr.

Ed was most in his element when he was supporting others. Memorial contributions can be made in his memory to the NCOBS scholarship fund at https://www.ncobs.org/donate/ or North Carolina Outward Bound School P.O. Box 896893 Charlotte, NC 28289-6893, or Grace Episcopal Church at https://onrealm.org/GraceEpiscopalC47588/-/form/give/now .

The service will be held at 11 a.m., Saturday, April 29, 2023 at Grace Episcopal Church. The interment of the remains and receiving of friends will follow the service.

Sossoman Funeral Home and Crematory Center is assisting the family with the arrangements.

Tribute Wall

I first met Ed in 1966, he was in the band The Grayps, and my older brother Sterling was joining the band on keyboards. I was 11. Over time, wow so much fun! He was part of our Owl Recording Studio which we opened in 1973 here in Columbus Ohio. I joined the Grayps at that point, and Ed had rejoined, we played all over, and had so much fun. We played at Rosemnont School where he and his best friend Mike Meyer worked. Time and life march along, and most of our studio crew including me, moved to LA. We were in touch with ED, but after OWL closed and he moved, that kind of faded. In more recent times, 1982, we, were trying to find him on social media, but other than one instagram photo, couldn't find anything. We all loved the guy, we were and always will be family. Please reach out to me if you like. I have photos, video, who knows what else. Tom Smith. Tomdrums98@gmail.com. 614-506-4934. On Facebook, Tom T Smith.

–Tom Smith

I knew Eddie decades ago when we were teenagers. Though I lost touch with him I never forgot him and thought of him on his birthday each year. He was so much fun and as others have noted he had an irrepressible sense of humor. He was just a sweetie! He helped me through some dark times and my mom adored him! As adults I spoke with him only once and was glad to learn he was so happy to have found Melanie and his place in the world. My heart goes to his family, may his memory be a blessing.

–Laura

Mel, Margaret and I send love and remembrance of a wonderful man. Ed was my co instructor several times. Wild courses!! So sorry for your loss. Mary Decker

–Mary decker



I will never forget Mr. Mikusa. My first memory of him is when he would come to The Children's School and drop off Subway and a Diet Coke for Mrs. Mikusa, my kindergarten and 1st grade teacher, and they led a perfect example of how a husband and wife should act- only loving toward one another. My second most fond memory of Mr. Mikusa was on a school field trip at South Mountain State Park; we had an hour long conversation about faith and I distinctly remember the way he made me feel seen and heard. Mr. Mikusa is UNFORGETTABLE. I will always remember the presence he had in this world. Love to Mrs. Mikusa and Flannery

–Sana Mohiuddin



Ed always had a smile for everyone he engaged with. When I think of Ed his pleasant demeanor comes to mind. He was a natural entertainer - doing his card tricks at the MDS annual auctions. Melanie and Flannery, my thoughts are with you... Ed was a good man.

–Kurt Reid

Dave and I are so very sorry for Ed's loss. I will always think of him as such a warm, kind person, and I will hold you in my heart as you celebrate his life with all the good memories and grieve his absence. Sending love and our deepest condolences.

–Jessica Howells

What a wonderful tribute to a very special person. I didn't realize Ed was such an accomplished musician and didn't know the story behind his involvement in outdoor recreation and education and coming to NCOBS. Ed always had a smile

for everyone and a great sense of humor. His energy had a positive impact on the community - on and off the mountain. Sending condolences and love to Melanie, Flannery, and the rest of Ed's family and close friends.

–Tina Geithner

My love to all who knew and loved Ed. I'm greatly sadden by Ed leaving, but I celebrate all the times we were together! My thoughts are with you Mel and Flannery…. Henry

–Henry Browning

Melanie and Flannery I am sure there is a lot of sadness right now and my heart goes out to you. I just loved Ed. He was also the first person I met at NCOBS when he interviewed me for an instructor role. He was full of energy and really curious about my life, and so welcoming. I was honoured to work a new staff training with him which sealed a great friendship. His sense of humour and fun was infectious and felt good to be around. We often had long philosophical talks about life and where we belonged in it. He also brought such great energy to the field when he would come out on course support. The students loved his warmth, humour and ease. And of course Melanie we loved it when Steve and I had moments dropping by the duplex at TR to visit you as a family. Steve and I send much aroha to you and Flannery from NZ. Ed has certainly lived a full and passionate life of giving and creativity. I am sure his spirit is dancing out there in the light somewhere. Sue Pegrume NCOBS friend.

–Sue Pegrume

What is joy it was to be a fellow volunteer at UNC Blue Ridge with Ed! He always had a smile and kind, encouraging words to share with others. Prior to retirement

had a smile and kind, encouraging words to share with others. Prior to retirement, I could always count on Ed to help with any volunteer activity. I was also inspired by the compassionate care he provided to his mother.

—Susan Pollpeter

Trusting and praying that in your mourning you lean on His grace to allow you to remember all the joys of your life together and Ed's contributions to your family and community Marita

—Marita Eden

Melanie and Flannery, Ed hired me at NCOBS and he was a wonderful role model of how to have curiosity and compassion. He was a light at NCOBS. Some of my fondest memories of him were how we would say the wisest thing in the room after listening intently to all people. Also how he saw in others what others did not And his fun playful side when the old tapes and tales of rhe grayps were broken out. What a spirit of light and love. The very best kind. We share the same birthday and he was important in my path of life. Flannery while you were young at the base camp, I still remember how your dad would light up when you were around. And Melanie!! I send grace and love to you both.and I am by good climbing Flannery if you need lodging in Montana! Love, Robyn Reed Gaddy 406-531-6969

—Robyn Reed. Gaddy. NCOBS friend.



Melanie, I am so sorry for your loss… my thoughts and prayers are with you and Flannery and family.

—Karen Burton

Mel and Flannery. Please know that Ed was a good man. And he has made a difference.

—Buffalo McMurry