



## Lev Desmarais

August 29, 1964 - February 6, 2019

Lev Karl Desmarais, who was known in music and other circles by his stage name, Winston Payne, died February 6, 2019, at the age of 54. He was born on August 29, 1964, in Madison, Wisconsin, to Ralph H. Desmarais and Barbara G. Taylor Desmarais.

He was preceded in death by his maternal grandparents, Wallace C. Taylor and Margaret Payne Taylor; his paternal grandparents, Edward L. and Grace Dalton Desmarais; by his stepfather, James Jackson; and by four paternal uncles, Edward, Raymond, Richard and Robert Desmarais.

He is survived by his mother, Barbara Taylor (Forrest Goddard), by his father, Ralph Desmarais (Nancy), by his sister, Jennifer Enos (Henry), by his stepsister, Margot Jackson Lemaster (Jordan), by his stepbrother, Keefe Jackson, by his niece, Corinne McKimmey (Natalie Mosquera), his nephew, Nathan Enos, his niece, Kailani Enos, his paternal aunt, Mary Castonguay; his maternal aunt, Nancy Ruma (Joseph), by numerous cousins and their spouses and children and by many friends.

Lev spent his early years in Madison and Whitewater, Wisconsin, and moved with his family at the age of ten to Fayetteville, Arkansas, where he attended Root Elementary School, Ramay Junior High School, and, at age 17, graduated from Fayetteville High School. He took computer courses at the University of Arkansas during his junior and senior years in high school.

He attended the University of Texas, Austin, for one semester, then transferred to the University of Arkansas, where he was consistently on the dean's list, earning a bachelor of science degree in computer science and engineering. He completed post-graduate studies in computer science at the University of Texas at Dallas, and in computer science and criminal justice at Collin County Community College.

Shortly after earning his bachelor's degree, Lev moved to the Dallas area, where he worked as a computer engineer for Texas Instruments and later worked or served as a

consultant for other domestic and international IT companies, including DSC Communications, Alacatel, Siemens, Fujitsu, Raytheon, the U.S. Department of Energy, Cobham Defense Electronics, Interstate Electronics, Parametric Technology and Axis Technologies. He became a specialist in enterprise engineering document management systems. He was a member of the Association for Software Engineering Excellence and the National Management Association.

In junior high and high school, Lev appeared in a number of University of Arkansas theater productions, including Pippin, in which he juggled while riding a unicycle. His love of theater continued into adulthood and he appeared in several productions with the Plano Community Theater.

Lev's first musical instrument was the euphonium, but when he was 15, during a float trip down the Grand Canyon, he heard a blues harmonica and couldn't wait to get his own. He soon added bass guitar, and accumulated an extensive collection of stringed instruments, ranging from a ukulele to an upright bass, and he accumulated an even larger collection of harmonicas. While he was in Dallas, he played with the band G.T. Texas.

After returning to Fayetteville in 2013, Lev continued to work as an IT consultant. He enjoyed playing music and serving as a DJ for weddings, parties and other events. He volunteered with Washington Regional Medical Center's hospice program, playing music with his friend Pat Hall at nursing homes and retirement centers. He loved dogs, especially dachshunds, fostering and adopting many while he lived in Texas. In Fayetteville, he volunteered with the Fayetteville Animal Shelter, bringing dogs to the Square during Farmers Market to meet potential adopters. He worked on computers as a volunteer with Free Geek and helped friends and family with their computers.

Lev was a member of the Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship of Fayetteville. A memorial celebration will be held at the Fellowship, 901 Cleveland Street, on Saturday, March 2, 2019, at 10:30 am.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in Lev's memory may be made to the Fayetteville Public Library, 401 West Mountain Street, Fayetteville, 72701, or to Fayetteville Animal Services, 1640 South Armstrong Avenue, Fayetteville, 72701.



# Comments

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“ Lev and his wife Joanna were friends of mine when I lived in Texas in the 80s & 90s. So many of my memories of those days include the two of them. I recall the Christmas dinner we had where their Lily, a Catahoula Leopard hound, was caught trying to grab the turkey off the table. I only had corgi's at the time and wasn't used to protecting the table!

Lev and Joanna kindly watched my corgi, Lady, when my daughter was born. I remember Lev desqueaked her ball, haha! I also had the honor of working at DSC with him. He was always kind and fun to be around.

Omitted from his obituary is the detail that he is also survived by Joanna. They were married from 1990 to 2013 and remained close friends til his death.

Gone way too soon.

**Marianne Ross** - February 22, 2019 at 02:33 PM

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“ Dear Barbara - I was so sorry, and shocked, to read two nights ago about Lev's death. I remember him, but not too well, when he was a boy of 8 to 10. I met him at your house on California Avenue (?) and some other places that I can't recall. I recall him as a vigorous young man with lots of energy, He seemed eager for life--eager to live his life. As you know, I have a daughter Ziva and a son David and I can't imagine the pain of losing either of them. Both are doing well I'm happy to say. You are a beautiful and really worthy person who has been important and in fact inspirational in my life, and it grieves me to think of the pain you must be experiencing now. I wish you well my friend. Love - Art

Art Hobson

Professor Emeritus of Physics, UA

**Art Hobson** - February 22, 2019 at 11:00 AM