



Mr. Joe David Bonner

May 13, 1947 - August 31, 2021

JONESBORO – Joe David Bonner, 74, of Jonesboro passed from this life Tuesday, Aug. 31, 2021, at NEA Baptist Memorial Hospital in Jonesboro after a brief illness. He was surrounded by loving friends and family.

He was born to the late George W. and Elaine Smith Bonner on May 13, 1947, in Center, Tx.

Joe was a retired professor of music at Arkansas State University from 1984 to 2017. He graduated from Hemphill High School in Texas in 1965. Following graduation, Joe served his country in the United States Air Force during the Vietnam Conflict. Following basic training, Joe joined a USAF Band in Southeast Asia, playing trombone and was then promoted to drum major. The Band served the conflict area by playing concerts and ceremonies for our troops.

Following his military service, Joe enrolled in college and received a Bachelor of Flute Performance from the University of Houston in 1978 and a Masters in Flute Performance from Stephen F. Austin State University in 1983. He was doing post graduate work at Arizona State University in 1984 when he joined the faculty at Arkansas State University. He continued post graduate work at the University of Memphis in 1986 -87.

Joe was an artist level performer on flute. He performed numerous recitals and concerts, as well as playing festivals and conventions and holding master classes. His knowledge of music history and literature possibly eclipsed his talent on flute. He was well versed in both instrumental and vocal music literature from all historical periods. Students have lavished praise upon Mr. Bonner for introducing a variety of music in the classroom. Even when studying what some would call “boring” music, he could make it more engaging. He was a celebrated professor in the ASU Honors Program. His class on Rock and Roll history was always very popular.

Joe was a consummate musician with a legacy of hundreds, if not thousands, of students thankful for the time spent with this master. His students have gone on to become band directors, university professors, professional performers and, maybe most important, supporters of music.

In addition to his parents, Joe was preceded in death by his brother, George W. Bonner II, and sister, Mary Elaine Bonner.

Survivors include his daughter, Cai Hopkins, and her mother, Dawn, cousins, as well as a multitude of friends and colleagues.

It was Joe’s wishes for no funeral service or visitation. His cremains will be placed in the family plot in Texas. A celebration of his life for students and friends will be scheduled later.

“He who has gone, so we but cherish his memory,
abides with us, more potent, nay,
more present than the living man.”

Antoine de Saint-Exupery, Writer

Tri-City LLC Crematory Funeral Home is honored and privileged to serve the friends and family of Mr. Joe Bonner. Lasting donations in memory of Joe may be sent to ASU Department of Music, PO Box 779, State University, AR 72467. Please note "In memory of Joe". Online condolences may be expressed at <http://www.Tri-CityLLC.com> .

Tribute Wall

CB

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Christine Erlander Beard - September 07, 2021 at 11:45 AM

RH

“ Our daughter, Heather Hall Coleman, was Joe's first private student when he came to ASU in 1984. She was thirteen at the time. Because of his influence and example, she embraced a career in music, earning her DMA and returning to teach at ASU. Through their thirty-seven year relationship, he was her brilliant teacher, wise mentor, respected colleague, and loyal friend. His presence is felt every time she steps into her classroom, plays with the Delta Symphony or other venues, or shares her love of music with her musically talented daughter. She reached out to him many times through the years for his sage advice. He will live on in the many lives he touched. His was a life well-lived and an example for all of us. Thank you, Joe. You are always in our hearts.
God bless you.
Ray and Barbara Hall

Ray and Barbara Hall - September 04, 2021 at 12:32 PM

JP

“ Way back in the summer of 1984, a girl of 17 years was asked to be a "guinea pig" for a mock flute lesson for a prospective flute teacher at ASU. That was me, and that was the first time I met Joe. Of course, he was Mr. Bonner to me then and for many years to come, (until he MADE me call him Joe) but what a great teacher and friend he would prove to be. As time has marched on, we have witnessed many highs and lows in one another's lives. There have been countless philosophical discussions and memories shared, along with many performances together, and he will always be one of my favorite people. My comfort is that he is now with our Lord, where no pain or sorrow is known.
My love to the family,
Julie Plunkett



Julie Plunkett - September 03, 2021 at 06:11 PM

DJ

“ We have lost a talented artist; a dedicated scholar; a gifted and much loved educator;
An honorable and trustworthy colleague;
A loving, caring person; and most of all,
An amazingly beautiful soul. Rest in peace,
My friend.
Ellis Julien

Dr. M. Ellis Julien - September 02, 2021 at 09:38 PM

BC

“ Joe was such a kind, genuine guy. I was a music major at ASU and Joe treated all the students with kindness and dignity and was always available to talk and give advice; even to the “troubled kid crowd” of which I was a part. He was an excellent musician, teacher and later friend. He made a point to tell me how proud he was of me when I finally got into recovery and when I adopted my son. He will be truly missed by more people than anyone knows.

Beverly Creach - September 02, 2021 at 03:49 PM

RJ

“ Joe was a wonderful friend and colleague during our time in the Music Department at Arkansas State University. He was a master teacher and musician, and he will long be remembered by his students. He was also strong in his faith. Thanks Joe for all that you shared with so many...

Richard Jorgensen - September 02, 2021 at 03:38 PM

BB

“ I accompanied many of Joe's students while at ASU. I am a better musician having been in his company. You will be missed, dear friend. Rest in peace.

Bob Bidewell - September 02, 2021 at 02:13 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Tri-City Crematory Funeral Home. ~ Serving for over 10 Years - September 02, 2021 at 10:46 AM

AS

Truly one of a kind. Much loved cousin. Alice Smith

Alice Smith - September 02, 2021 at 12:42 PM



Beloved and dear. Your many gifts to me are and will remain precious. Your warmth and artistry are unmatched. I will never forget your generous guidance, mentoring, and friendship. Rest from a beautiful life. We will take it from here remembering you always.

Tim Crist - September 02, 2021 at 11:01 PM

JC

I loved Joe David! He was a very dear class/band mate in high school! I look forward to seeing him in Heaven one day! ❤️

Jeannie Mills Coday - September 03, 2021 at 05:41 PM

DB

*What a profound loss! I just saw this obit as I was preparing to send Joe a (very) late Christmas card. Joe was kind, talented, and empathic musician of the top order. We crossed paths in Arizona, both graduate students at Arizona State Univ., and remained good friends throughout the decades. I am deeply moved by this loss, and send my sincere condolences to Cai and the rest of his musical, and personal family.
Diana Basso*

Diana Basso - January 28, 2022 at 10:45 PM