



Garry Mac

March 4, 1955 - February 7, 2023

Local Radio and TV personality Garry “Mac” McGowan had his final ‘sign-off’ on February 7th, 2023, a month before his 68th birthday by natural causes. However, the how and why are not nearly as important as how he lived - full of joy, gratefulness, and all kinds of crazy stories. He was most proud to be Dad to Kellan McGowan (Austin, TX), Hunter McGowan (Seoul, South Korea) and Brittany Kolodziej (Nashville, TN).

Garry was born March 4, 1955 at Erlanger hospital to the late Betty McGowan and was raised in Highland Park, a student of Hemlock Elementary. When he was 12, he, his Mom and Grandmother moved to Fairfax Heights, just off Access Road. It was then that Garry decided he would go to Hixson High School and be a Wildcat, but as his fate would have it he got on the wrong school bus and ended up at Red Bank Junior High where he remained and ultimately was a Red Bank High School Lion, Class of 1973.

Garry began his radio career in 1972 at WEDG in Soddy-Daisy while still attending Red Bank High. His next stop was at WDXB in Chattanooga, where he started as a “go-fer” for Chickamauga Charlie, Johnny Walker and other top deejays. Garry later got his own show at WDXB, and later became news director.

In 1980, he became news director at WGOW, and two years later joined Dale Deason as co-host of “Those Guys in the Morning,” which became well known for popular features like “Media Madness.” He finished up his fulltime radio career at WSGC in Ringgold, and was later a frequent fill-in host on Talk

Radio in Chattanooga.

He worked as US Rep. Marilyn Lloyd's communications director from 1987 to 1993, when he became the evening news anchor at WDEF-TV in Chattanooga. In 1995, he began a long run as marketing director at Memorial Hospital in Chattanooga, serving as the hospital's commercial spokesperson. He was later named Vice President of Marketing and Public Relations at Hospice of Chattanooga.

He later moved to Florida, working in marketing for several medical care agencies including Cornerstone Hospice. In recent years, he operated his own marketing agency, handling projects like the new Parkridge free standing emergency room, now under construction in Soddy-Daisy, Tennessee.

Although Garry never adopted any form of social media, he grew his friends list every week. He never met a stranger and no matter where he was there was always a new friend nearby. Garry was a member of many groups and organizations over the years from the Rotary Club, to many TV and radio groups, to his favorite "Tuesday Taco Night" crew who gave him appropriate grief regularly, keeping him pretty close to humble.

Garry moved to New Smyrna Beach full time at the end of 2022, where he spent his final days just steps away from his favorite beach where he would feed "his" birds and watch the sunsets and shuttle launches.

An only child, Garry saw his mother, Betty McGowan, head to heaven ahead of him. His dad, Charles, went before that as did his great companion Max the dog.

Garry is survived by his three children, Kellan (Kristin) McGowan, Hunter McGowan, Brittany (Mike) Kolodziej and their children, Watson James (2 years) and Lucy Grace (1 year); aunt, Esther (Richard) Follis.

A visitation service will be held from 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM on Thursday, February 16th at Christ United Methodist Church, Chattanooga, TN. A funeral service will immediately follow at 2:00 PM.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that those who are able to make a donation to the American Heart Association in Garry's name. Online condolences may

be shared at ryanfuneralhome.net.

Arrangements are by Ryan Funeral Home & Crematory, Trenton, GA

Cemetery Details

Chattanooga Memorial Park

Memorial Drive
Red Bank, TN 37415

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 16. 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Christ United Methodist Church
8645 East Brainerd Road
Chattanooga, TN 37421
<http://christchurchchatt.org>

A Celebration of Life

FEB 16. 2:00 PM (ET)

Christ United Methodist Church
8645 East Brainerd Road
Chattanooga, TN 37421

Tribute Wall

PD

“ I knew Garry back in 1978. I just learned today of his passing through a friend I've know since 1984. He was such a kind hearted man. And ALWAYS had a smile. He used to come to our pool at Versailles apartments. I will never forget this wonderful friend and kind soul 🙏❤️🙏❤️🙏❤️

Paula M Dossen - August 17, 2024 at 11:35 PM



“ Garry Mac

October 09, 2023 at 03:12 AM

KL

“ Garry was one of a kind and will be sorely missed. I met him at Christ Church in Chattanooga and was honored to call him friend. He was kind to everyone and never met a stranger. our thoughts are with Kellen, Hunter and Brittany.
Kerry McCommon Liedel, Meghan and Josh McCommon

Kerry Liedel - February 17, 2023 at 09:46 AM



“ If you didn't know Garry, well... I have to feel sorry for you! For 25 years I was honored to be included in his (very large) circle of friends. For much of that time, he was my 'boss,' tho he never acted like one. For all of that time, he was my friend. I loved him like a brother. If there's a heaven, it just became a much happier place. Garry Mac will be missed by so many and he left us way too soon.

Lori Cleghon - February 16, 2023 at 04:33 PM

JM

“ Your laugh was contagious and your kindness was truly heartfelt. I will never forget when Garry asked me to introduce to a Chattanooga audience author Mitch Albom who wrote Tuesdays with Morrie. Talk about a gift I will never forget. Garry taught us all how to not take ourselves too seriously and value your family. In the long run that is truly our greatest audience for all those media people who loved you.

Jed Mescon - February 16, 2023 at 08:34 AM

LC

“ Gary was an easy friend. I might not see him but every few years but he always had a big hug & smile & cared about where I'd been & how life was. Gary was easy to love. Gary was a blessing to me & everyone who crossed his path. I'm sorry to his family for your loss but we all have it to look forward to 🙏

lewie Card - February 15, 2023 at 10:29 PM

LB

“ Love, Pia & Ben purchased the Basket of Memories for the family of Garry Mac.



Love, Pia & Ben - February 14, 2023 at 11:56 AM

PJ

“ Dear Kellan, Hunter, Brittany & Family,

Your Dad clearly made a difference in so many lives with his wit and warmth. When he left the room, there was a smile on everyone's face & the day became so much better.



My memories of Garry continue to make me smile. I will forever remember how welcoming Garry & the Family were on my first trip to meet everyone with your beloved late "Bubba". The two of them are no doubt sharing a joke & many stories & embellishing along the way.

With our sincerest sympathy to you and the Family, may you find strength & guidance in the days and months ahead.

*Love,
Pia & Ben*

Pia Johnson - February 14, 2023 at 11:33 AM

DD

“ So sad to hear of Garry's passing. We've been friends for a long time. I rode to high school with Garry until I got my own car. Good memories through the years!

David Dawson - February 14, 2023 at 07:12 AM

MS

“ Condolences from Keith and Karen Sloan. Gary was one of a kind and was loved by all. He will certainly be missed but never forgotten. I'm glad I had the privilege to call him my friend. RIP Gary! Til we meet again.

Mr. Keith J Sloan - February 13, 2023 at 10:27 PM

GG

“ 1 file added to the album *Remembering Garry Mac*



Gay Gibson - February 13, 2023 at 03:29 PM

GG

“ Kellan, Hunter, Brittany, Mike and the Babies

I really do not have words to express how much your Dad meant to not only me but to Cody and Ashlyn! He had an extraordinary gift of being able to talk to anyone and by the end of the conversation, knew everything about their life, had their contact information and of course, had made a new friend. I remember when I was introduced to your Dad at the Applebee's in Fort Oglethorpe, GA and at the time, I had no idea he would become one of the BEST friends I would ever have in my life.....the two things I distinctly remember from that night is he told I looked like Sandra Bullock (wow, don't I wish...LOL) and he loved the Alabama Crimson Tide. So, I knew he was a great guy just from those two points alone. But, I came to know that there were many more things to like about Garry Mac.....his infectious smile, his kind heart, his willingness to ask you and really want to know "how you are"...personally, that question could annoy me more because I didn't feel like a philosophical question while trying to watch a football game but he always meant it to be very sweet, sincere and genuine. So, I will miss him more than my words can express but I know that I will see him again....down the road. All of you are in our thoughts and prayers!

All of our love,

Gay, Cody and Ashlyn (his Fairhope, AL family)

Gay Gibson - February 13, 2023 at 10:38 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Garry Mac.



February 13, 2023 at 09:43 AM

SS

“ Kellan, Hunter, Brittany and family,

I join many others in shock and sadness for your sudden loss of Mac. Since Tuesday night I am one of many that has given much thought to our very own “Mac Memories”.

Mine began 25 years ago at a Boyd Buchanan parent meeting for newly enrolled students. When it was his time to introduce himself & Beth, he used the term “blended family” which I had not heard before. That was Mac, always clever with his words.

That was the beginning of car pooling to Boyd, family trips to Gatlinburg & White Water, pool parties at “Country Mac Estates”, many evenings at each other’s homes, couples’ trips and of course, those “fun in the sun” days at The Ashley in Daytona Beach Shores with our families and so many more of our Chattanooga friends.

My family will always be thankful that Mac accepted Alex and Jerry’s invitation to officiate their wedding ten years ago. That was his first of many and another way that he could make fun occasions even better and more special.

My recent years of “Mac Memories” are primarily our phone calls and hundreds of text conversations with Chattanooga dinners or NSB therapy sessions on the sand sprinkled in every few months. If my Football Vols ever beat his Tide again, it won’t be as much fun for me.

I will miss Garry but I am very grateful for my “Mac Memories”! He was a great Father and Step-Dad to you three as you know. His relationship with you all was always so important to him.

I am sorry for your and our loss and my thoughts and support will be with you these next few days and also after, as you adjust to your new normal without Mac.

Love,
Steve Scruggs

Steve Scruggs - February 12, 2023 at 12:40 AM

JB

“ We loved Gary Mac for many, many years on all media that he contributed his very special talent. So sad to hear of his passing. "Well done thy good and faithful servant", until we meet again.
Johnny & Linda Burnett

John/Linda Burnett - February 11, 2023 at 06:22 PM