David Alan Burkinshaw

MARCH 28, 2021

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of David Alan Burkinshaw on Sunday, March 28, 2021 following a brief illness (non-COVID). David will be fondly remembered by his mom, Marion Burkinshaw of Red Deer; brother, Phillip (Lois), of Spruce View and nephew, Rob (Naomi), of Calgary, and niece, Tracy (Joe) Douglas, of Red Deer; sister, Deb, and niece, Killa, of Calgary, and niece, Erin (Brook) Doan, of Innisfail; sister-in-law, Darleen, of Stettler and nephew, Michael (Kailee), of Red Deer; sister, Laura (Ed) Eschak, of Fort Saskatchewan and nieces, Nicole (Shawn), of Edmonton, Victoria (Cyle), of Port Clements, B.C., and Alexandra of Fort Saskatchewan; sister, Michelle (Wade) Zwicker, of Edmonton and niece, Kaitlyn, and nephew, Steven, of Edmonton; great-nephews, Parker, Spencer, and Phoenix; and great-nieces, Feara, and Sakari. David was predeceased by his Dad, Earl, in 2016; and his brother, Dan, in 2012.

David was born in Red Deer, Alberta on Janaury 17, 1963 and was the youngest son and the fourth child out of six kids. He was nicknamed "Bones" when he was younger as a reference to how skinny David was. He and his brother Dan loved to play and build with LEGO; the basement floor was always covered with their spaceships and other creations, and contests on who could build the tallest tower before it would fall over. They loved to play chess and checkers together. In

summer, the backyard became a military battlefield with trenches dug everywhere and little green army men scattered all over the place (army men were still found decades later).

In his teens, David played the French horn with the Red Deer Royals Marching and Concert Band. He traveled with the Royals to England and Scotland in 1976. In high school, he traveled to Europe including behind the Iron Curtain. Several beer steins in his collection reminded him of the places he had been. David graduated from Camille J. Lerouge Collegiate in 1981. After high school he furthered his education by taking courses in Psychology, Sociology, Library and Information Technology, advanced photography, and creative writing courses in both Edmonton and Calgary. At one point after his schizophrenia diagnosis, he considered religious services. He continued with other training including sign language, cooking, art, and travel. He was a lifelong learner right to the end and had recently ordered the”Great Courses for Classical Music” in January. David remained in Calgary until his passing.

David was kind, compassionate, intelligent, and knowledgeable about current affairs and many other subjects. David’s mind was like a steel trap. He had a knack for dates. If you could not remember when something happened, give David a call and he could tell you. He could be stubborn - once he made up his mind there was no changing it. He spent many Sunday afternoons on phone calls with his siblings discussing religion, CoVID, politics, movies, and more.

David enjoyed science fiction (he liked Marvin the Martian from Bugs Bunny), and was an avid fan of the Star Trek and Star Wars movies and books. He looked

forward to new movie releases where he analyzed the characters and plots. He had a wicked sense of humor and liked to tease – making comments or sending you jokes that would have you rolling on the floor in laughter. He was a huge fan of the music group ABBA, and of course, the Beatles.

David’s interest in photography had his camera ready to take pictures at various family functions. He enjoyed nature and looked forward to going to the mountains in the summer, and spending time at the Calgary Zoo. He was focused when discovering a new passion - recently trying to grow flowers and plants, and going for walks in which he was able to lose inches (he had tossed the weigh scale). David was adventurous, trying different types of foods and was willing to experiment - some were liked and the rest were never eaten again.

David was a published author, writing stories for the Star Trek Chronicles, the Schizophrenic Magazine, and a short story - “Fading Image” for FreeFall’s 15th Anniversary Issue - a Canadian Literary Magazine based in Calgary.

Over the years David volunteered at Calgary Police Services, a grocery store, the Canadian Red Cross, Vernon Fanning Centre, Brain Injured Rehabilitation Centre, and the Schizophrenic Society. He spoke with groups and facilitated programs for persons with mental health challenges by aiding with games and assisting clients to access computers through mentoring. He was very involved with his church (St. Pius X Roman Catholic Church) and was a member of the Knights of Columbus (Third Degree *Knight*). He had a reputation for being dedicated, cooperative, empathetic, and enthusiastic.

David was a great son, brother, and friend. He was a gentle soul. He will be deeply missed.

A Funeral Mass will be held (family members only) at the St. Pius X Roman Catholic Church in Calgary Saturday, May 1, 2021 at 11:00am. A link for when the Mass will be live streamed at https://youtu.be/7xCMbsD2Epk .

Donations in lieu of flowers can be made to:

The Schizophrenia Society of Alberta at https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/12386

St. Pius X Roman Catholic Church at http://stpiusx.ca/donate/

The Alberta Diabetes Foundation at https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/m/3248/donation

Breathe The Alberta Lung Association at https://www.ab.lung.ca/donate

Messages of Condolence

I'm so sorry for your loss - David sounds like a wonderful person I wish I could have known him. Sad - those miles that separate our family.
Please know that my heart and thoughts are with you, at this sad time.

— Rosalee Gingras (Neilson)

Sad to hear of your brother’s passing, Phil. Condolences to you and your family

— Dorothy Foo

Though I did not know David, this beautiful tribute reveals him as a most interesting person who lived life with purpose and creativity, and contributed much to others.
My sincere condolences to David's family and friends, and particularly to Phil and Lois who are my friends.
Jan Pearce

— Jan Pearce

Sorry to learn of your loss,Condolences to the familys

— Alan Manship

Thinking of you as once again another permanent change in your family. I always remembered David as a quiet, gentle person. My thoughts and heart are with all of you.

— Rosanne Wilton

Sorry to hear of the loss of your loved one who was taken far too soon. We never met David but he surely was a wonderful person who lived life to the fullest. Our condolences to his family.

— Garry and Marleen Sutherland

Our sincere condolences for your loss. David sounds like a wonderful man - if he was anything like Phil. I'm sure he was!

— Barbara Lutz

I am so sorry for your loss. David was like an extended member of my family and I am so blessed to have known him. My mom (Geri) was a close friend and we shared many meals, stories, laughter and tears together. Sending much love to your family.

— Erin Thorne

I first met Dave in grade 10. Our family had just moved to Red Deer and I did not know anyone. Somehow we became friends. I was on that grade 12 trip with Dave to Europe - we roomed together. It was only just recently, we were recollecting stories of that very trip ... including those related to beer steins:-)

Following graduation, as the years passed, Dave and I developed a casual routine whereby he would swing by for a 24 hr stay over. Usually, his arrival would commence with whatever sort of reno project I was onto at the time. This would always afford Dave the opportunity to subtly observe that I was forever addicted to a never ending list of pursuits. Resultantly, over time, Dave came to dub me 'The Man'. I hated that. But over time I think it became a game as I would strive to avoid the opportunity for him to say it. I guess he won; the last time I spoke with him in the hospital he managed to fit it into the conversation.

Anyhow, come the top of the afternoon it was 'happy hour'. For me a martini, for Dave, a diet sprite. Once in a while that MIGHT include a capful of dark rum (but only ONE).

Of course, happy hour would inevitably lead to supper which was always Dave's favourite part of the visit. One visit Christine was passing the idea of a roast beef for supper. Dave just happened to quip that he would be more than fine with that - and then proceeded to reminisce about about growing up having Yorkshire pudding, mashed potatoes, and gravy as an all time favourite.

Well. You should have seen the look on Dave's face come suppertime when Christine served up Yorkshire pudding, mashed potatoes, and gravy. Suffice it to say, that was the least conversational meal we ever had with Dave. He never stopped eating. And directly proceeded for a second helping.

Our post supper routine was movie time - a favourite activity for both of us. Whether it was movies, politics, current events - whatever - I always felt Dave was one of the truly grounded, reasonable, balanced, reflective and consistently convincing conversationalists I regularly engaged with.

Our condolences to the family - particularly to his mother Marion.
We will miss David. David was a very good friend.

— Roger Dion

David and I met more than 30 years ago in Calgary when we were both doing volunteer work for the Canadian Mental Health Association. I moved to BC 15 years later, but we always kept in touch with weekly phone calls and going for coffee or lunch when I returned to Calgary to visit friends and family.
Over the years we exchanged birthday cards every year, always trying to outdo each other's cards, whether it was in a humorous way - making fun of each other getting older (I was ten years older than David), or trying to find a cuter puppy or other animal photo than the other person had sent.
Both my husband and I appreciated David's quick mind and sharp wit, not to mention his sharp memory. Even when he was in the hospital with his own serious concerns, he inquired as to how my husband's and my appointments with the cardiologist and eye doctor had gone.
David's characteristic of thinking and caring about others was also evident in his long and continuing sponsorship of a child overseas through Unicef.
I often told David that he should be a counsellor, as he had a way of looking at problems and concerns in both a big-picture way and a small step-by-step way that was helpful and wise beyond his years. He was a kind and humble person and seldom complained (much less than I did), always making the best of his circumstances. The way he lived his life is an inspiration to both my husband and I, and David will always live on in our hearts.
Our deepest condolences to David's family. He was a very special person and a truly beautiful soul. He will be sincerely missed.

— Donna and Roger Nelson

David and I met when we were first-year students at SAIT’s Library and Information Technology program. We talked about writing stories (I had lapsed, hadn’t written anything for years) and David challenged me to write a story over the summer break. We kept in touch ever since. Sometimes David would drop in for a chat where I worked, usually Saturday mornings. David’s friendly face was a nice start to a potentially busy and stressful day. Quite often we’d also bump into each other at our favourite free festivals. David never hid that he had schizophrenia or diabetes nor the challenges of finding the right combination of medication that would treat both. David was also quick to find the funny in everyday stuff and wasn’t shy about laughing out loud. Through the years, we swapped emails of street artists, fabulous photographs, funny memes, cartoons, and jokes. David’s emails usually originated from his sister, Deb. David didn’t use the blind cc in his emails or life. What you saw was how he was, authentic. David and I were both big Star Trek fans, so I think he would appreciate: “Of my friend, I can only say this: of all the souls I have encountered in my travels, his was the most… human.” My condolences go to David’s family, who will be missing a son, a brother, and an uncle. Thank you for sharing yourself, David. Rest in peace.

— Wanda Martin

I was sorry to get the call of another young cousins passing. Glad for the times we did get together, however short. I enjoyed Davids gentle ways, knowledge and humor. Its an honor to have David and his family a part of mine. Big hugs and love to all the family and Auntie Marion.
Your son and brothers' moments here will always be available for you to access in years to come.

— Lorraine Wheat

I knew David since high school, he was a really good friend. David always phoned me when he came to Red Deer, to visit his family and we would alway meet up for coffee. We shared many a good laugh over coffee at Tim Hortons. David would always remembered my birthday and never forget to phone me, to wish me a happy birthday. David was a kind soul with never a harsh word to say about anyone. David will truly be missed, Rest In Peace my friend.

— Francoise Joynt

I knew David from St. Pius X Church. It is clear from this tribute that he lived a full and rich life and was much loved. May he rest in peace. My condolences to his family and friends.

— Barbara Jenkins

My condolences to David's Family and Friends. A short but remarkable life. David will be sadly missed.

— Orla Olson

I’m saddened to hear of David’s passing. He was a kind friend during high school. My thoughts and prayers go out to his family.

— Sheldon Bueckert