



## Vey J. Valentine II

September 28, 1946 - June 2, 2022

Wheels, wheels, wheels. It was always wheels with Vey James Valentine II (aka Vey, V.J., Jody, Jim). It started with a race bug he built to speed down the long curvy roads of Tacoma, Washington as a boy. It grew into a love of bicycles, vintage motorcycles and cars, especially a 1939 Pontiac Silver Streak that he drove for over 50 years. Vey was trained as a medic and ambulance driver in the US Army and served in El Paso, Texas and South Korea during the Vietnam Era. A visit to a family pottery on Orcas Island in Washington introduced Vey to a different kind of wheels - potters' wheels. He studied music and art at Oakland University and received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with a concentration in ceramics from Wayne State University. After graduation he worked as an historic interpreter at Greenfield Village demonstrating traditional American ceramic techniques, In the 1980s he found a way to combine his interests in clay and cars and landed a dream job sculpting full-scale cars of the future in clay for Ford Motor Company.

But it wasn't just wheels that captured Vey's imagination. He played classical and ragtime piano, flew RC airplanes, and enjoyed art, poetry, bird-watching, kayaking, nature walks, camping, and people. At a Cros-Lex High School reunion in 2000, he rediscovered a passion for redheads reconnecting with his high school sweetheart, Cheryl Gielow. They were married in 2004. A life-long Unitarian, Vey believed in the inherent worth and dignity of each person and he treated everyone he met with kindness. He loved and was greatly loved by

his family and friends.

Vey Valentine passed peacefully with his wife Cheryl and his step-son Ian by his side on Thursday, June 2, 2022. Vey was born September 28, 1946 and was 75 years old. He is survived by his wife Cheryl, his step-son and daughter-in-law, Ian and Joy Natzmer, and his grandchildren Kyle, Alec and Aria Natzmer, as well as his brother and sister-in-law Michael and Janet Valentine, and his nephew James Valentine and his wife Lisa, and great nephews Michael and Andrew Valentine. He is also survived by his brothers-in-law Tom Gehrs and Doug Gielow and their families. And last, but not least, his beloved furry friend, Mojo.

Vey was predeceased by his father Vey James Valentine, his mother Violet Lorine Wiley and his first wife Nancy Levin.

A Memorial Service will be held at the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor (4001 Ann Arbor Saline Road) on Saturday, July 30 at 1:00 P.M. A live broadcast of the service can be seen by visiting [www.bit.ly/Stream4Vey](http://www.bit.ly/Stream4Vey) Please sign Vey's guestbook and leave a memory for family and friends. Vey was a firm believer in the transformative power of music and in finding non-adversarial solutions to disagreements. In lieu of flowers donations may be made to Vey's favorite jazz and blues station, WEMU or to The Dispute Resolution Center, a mediation center serving Washtenaw and Livingston Counties. To contribute to WEMU follow this link: <https://www.emich.edu/foundation/give/?fund=00658> or make a check payable to EMU Foundation and mail it to: EMU Foundation, PO Box 972057, Ypsilanti, MI 48197. To find out more about the Dispute Resolution Center (DRC) go to: [www.thedisputeresolutioncenter.org](http://www.thedisputeresolutioncenter.org). Donations may be made on the site by clicking the "Donate" button or send a check payable to the DRC to 4133 Washtenaw Ave., #B125, Ann Arbor, MI 48108-8645. Add VJ Memorial to the memo line.



# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

JUL **30**. 1:00 PM (ET)

First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor  
4001 Ann Arbor Saline Road  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103  
<https://uuaa.org/>

# Tribute Wall



“ Robison-Bahnmilller Funeral Home & Cremation Services created a Livestream link of the service. in memory of Vey J. Valentine II



Robison-Bahnmilller Funeral Home & Cremation Services - July 23, 2022 at 02:32 PM



“ Vey J. Valentine II

October 23, 2023 at 01:07 PM



“ I was at an antique store and bought 2 candle sticks signed Vey Valentine yesterday. I decided to look up my old pottery teacher and found this obit. Sorry for your loss. I think it was 1989 that we took pottery from Vey in a little stone building at Greenfield Village. He was a nice man and good teacher. Sorry for your loss.

Mary - August 23, 2022 at 07:28 AM

HH

“ Cheryl and Family, I am so sorry for your loss. Vey was such a kind person. He had a compassionate and earnest interest in people. I remember as part of the UUAA Pastoral Care Team thinking how lucky the recipients of his visits were. Not only did he show such caring for the people he visited, he brought them their ie or milkshakes of their choice. He brought such joy and he will be missed!

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**Hannah Hotchkiss** - July 27, 2022 at 10:33 AM

AM

“ Dear Cheryl and Family, We are deeply sorry for your loss. Vey was such a kind, loving, multi-talented, thoughtful, joyful man. We are very grateful for our time with him. Sending Sympathy, Love, and Peace to you, Anne (Valentine) Martino, John (husband) and Michael (son) Martino

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**Anne Valentine Martino** - July 22, 2022 at 02:06 PM

MB

“ Vey was a beloved member of 212 Arts Center in Saline. We all loved his kind and gentle ways and appreciated his pottery skills. He was a uniquely kind soul with a great sense of humor. He added much to our family of creatives. The world needs more Vey's.

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**Margie Bovee** - June 26, 2022 at 10:21 PM

SL

*Jim has always been a gentle, thoughtful and kind person. Jim will be deeply missed and remembered by all of your friends. The world would be a much better place if there are more individuals as Jim.*

*Classmate and friend,  
Shiuh-Wuu*

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**Shiuh-Wuu Lee** - July 16, 2022 at 09:03 PM

DR

“ VJ and I shared an interest in automobiles, both new and old, and some of his other life long interests. We had several visits with he and Cheryl who were very gracious hosts. VJ influenced many people and will be sorely missed.

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**David Rhoads** - June 26, 2022 at 12:59 PM

MB

“ Dear Cheryl and your family, Alan and I are so sorry and saddened to learn of VJ's passing. What a tremendous loss of such a wonderful, thoughtful and fun fellow. We always loved spending time with the two of you. sending hugs, Martha and Alan

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**Martha Bloomfield** - June 25, 2022 at 10:04 AM

LM

“ We send our thoughts and condolences to Cheryl and her family. It was a sad day here in Colorado when we learned a dear man and friend had passed so suddenly. My husband Paul and I had the privilege to meet and spend some wonderful times with a very special human being. VJ embodied all that is good and kind in a human being. We will treasure our times spent a few summers ago in Michigan that included a boat ride, a bike ride, a visit to Greenfield Village ,some wonderful salmon on the grill, and a trip to Ann Arbor.

*I will treasure the pieces of pottery he gifted us.*

*See you in a better, more peaceful place and let's ride our E-bikes !*

*Hug those you love and keep in touch with them... life is too short.*

*Paul and Lorrie Martineau*

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**Lorrie and Paul Martineau** - June 20, 2022 at 04:54 PM

TW

“ Vey was always known to me as Cousin Jody. As he was ten years my senior and lived many miles away, I didn't know him well when we were younger. We had opportunity to reconnect when my father passed away ten years ago and he came for the funeral. We hit it off immediately and stayed in touch ever since. I shared his love of motorcycles and appreciation of the arts, but what I loved most about him is his kindness and the joy he derived from everyday life and his ability to form a meaningful connection with people. Cheryl and family, Kari and I are so very sorry for your loss, which is a loss also for us and for humanity.



Tom Wiley - June 10, 2022 at 04:19 PM

TW

*I can't figure out how to edit this, but it should read Tim Wiley, not Tom.*

Tim Wiley - June 10, 2022 at 04:21 PM

DB

“ Our deepest sympathies and condolences to Cheryl and her family! We cherish the time we spent with VJ and Cheryl. VJ was a kind and caring person, a great story teller of all his life experiences. I love his talent for pottery and will cherish the pieces he made for me! God bless his family during this difficult time! Love Always  
David & Marcy

David & Marcy Brainerd - June 10, 2022 at 10:54 AM

CM

“ We were in an online movie group of four couples with Vey and Cheryl. We always had a wonderful time, laughing and being silly. Vey never failed to say how much he enjoyed getting together with the group and watching the movies. He really treasured social interactions.

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**Cathy Muha** - June 09, 2022 at 04:15 PM

PG

“ V.J. was a wise man. He observed the world, wisely, and he fully engaged in it with his music, his potting, his biking, his boating. He seemed to understand the textures of life and was so fully a part of them. A man like V.J. comes our way seldom. All of his friends and family are grateful he came our way as long as he did. Patti and Ron Gauch

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**Patricia Gauch** - June 08, 2022 at 09:20 PM