



Mr. Gary Zajac

May 18, 1952 - February 7, 2018

Like many of the people who volunteer for the Ais Village Trail archaeological preservation society, I met Mr. Gary Zajac while investigating an Indian village site near his home on the Banana River Lagoon. From the beginning, Gary was by far one of the best volunteers the group ever had. His excavation work was impeccable, his attention to detail that of a craftsman, and his ability and patience in recovering artifacts in the shifters was unmatched. Without anyone ever asking him, Gary built and donated a new shifter to the group. When the time came to draw an intact raccoon skeleton, Gary willingly volunteered when most volunteers just want to find more "cool stuff."

But it was Gary's comportment and his interactions with his fellow man that was even more exemplary. Gary always spoke and listened to other people with a thoughtful softness that made everyone glad to be in his presence. He won the hearts of everyone he conversed with, even when the conversation were disagreements of opinion on politics or philosophy. I don't recall anyone ever getting interrupted by Gary, nor do I recall ever even wanting to interrupt him as he spoke. His quietly told stories of the rich adventures of his life were eagerly lapped up by anyone fortunate enough to be listening. Had a great writer like Kerouac or Steinbeck been listening, they surely would have taken mental notes and incorporated aspects of those stories into their own.

It makes me cry to have to put all of these sentences into the past tense. There should be some other tense available for speaking and writing about the passing of a great human being like Gary Zajac. Call it the "future perfect tense"--not in the strict grammatical definition of the term, but rather in the sense that if the Future ever did become Perfect, Gary Zajac would surely be with us again.

Alan Brech

Archaeologist for the Ais Village Trail organization

Comments



“ The original days of college radio at WFIT were fraught with passionate characters proselytizing the masses in an attempt to illuminate the listener and convert them to their cause. Whether it was Jack Simpson jazz raconteur, Juan Blanco punk provocateur or Gary 'Mr Z' Zajac these guys lived the music they so loved. Gary knew the murky depths of the blues and embraced the quest to lead the listener beyond the popular notions of blues his boomer compatriots grew up with. His passion and love for the music was ever present in his presentation and like most hopeless romantics sought to make it his life's work. Gary succeeded when he discovered that the love he had for the blues was enough and that in the end, he like his heroes, would leave this earth with everything but the blues. We will miss you and think of you every time we hear that old train whistle blowing.

Blake Ostrosser - February 13, 2018 at 11:35 AM



“ When I first met Gary, he was making a peanut butter and banana sandwich at the first Sunseed. I was fortunate enough to become friends with Gary and his wonderful wife Carolyn. Over the years, I watched "It's All the Blues " come to fruition. What a great way to learn about the artistes who spread the gospel of the blues! And to listen to his smooth mellow voice on his WFIT radio show was fulfilling and fun. I remember dancing at the Chicken Shack to many fabulous songs. Thanks for letting the good times roll, my friend. Pax.

Bebe Miller - February 13, 2018 at 06:48 PM



“ Joe " The Blockhead" Sekora lit a candle in memory of Mr. Gary Zajac



Joe " The Blockhead" Sekora - February 13, 2018 at 11:29 AM



“ My Gary memories..his little boy chuckle got me..his tenderness, when he spoke to Carolyn.. and most anyone else, but it was especially sweet with her. I will always cherish Gary. .always remember his soothing voice, and gentle ways. And I will miss him very greatly.

Teresa Casteel - February 12, 2018 at 09:21 PM



“ The GREATEST DJ EVER!

Ralph Brooks - February 22, 2018 at 01:33 PM



“ I've listened to blues shows all over the world and hosted my own for a few years. Mr. Z was the best.

Richard L - February 26, 2018 at 10:09 AM