



Jonathan Karl Paul

August 4, 1957 - August 19, 2023

Friends and family say Jon Paul was loved by all who knew him. After a car hit and injured him while he was riding his scooter on Aug. 8, Paul succumbed to his injuries in the hospital Saturday.

The people who know Jon “Buddy Lush” Paul say he was a friend to all. A Waldo resident and a delivery driver for Waldo Pizza, Paul was a fixture in his community, frequently seen on his scooter around town. A regular at several coffee shops and record stores, he was always ready with a joke or a synopsis of a book he read or a movie he watched.

Most of all, Paul loved music. He was in bands for more than 30 years — at one point as many as five at a time — attracting fans and building the Kansas City music scene along the way. He gained acclaim in the area for drumming in the Sin City Disciples. For more than 20 years, Paul has been performing with his band, “The Buddy Lush Phenomenon.”

On Aug. 8, Paul was injured in a hit-and-run near his home off 77th Street and Troost Avenue while riding his scooter. He spent 11 days in the hospital with a brain injury until he died Aug. 19 at age 66.

“The void I feel with him gone is just a kind of a microcosm of the way he was around the city,” said Brock Ginther, bassist in “The Buddy Lush Phenomenon” and Paul’s friend of more than 30 years. “Everywhere he went,

he had these people that loved him. They would see him coming and their face would light up.”

Friends describe Paul as the kind of person who made you feel like family whether you had just met him or had been his friend for decades. Ginther, who’s been playing with Paul since the ‘90s, says Paul was an irreplaceable part of the Kansas City music scene.

“There are literally generations of musicians that have encountered him in some way or another — that either started out in a band opening for whatever band he was in, playing with him at shows or coming to see him,” Ginther says. “Generations of people who were once kids when they went out to first see him, and now are in bands or go to see bands and are just music lovers that he's affected in countless ways.”

Paul sang, played the drums and guitar and was even credited as a banjo player on one of his early albums. Gregg Todt frequently played in Paul’s bands as a fill-in drummer and bass player. He says every Buddy Lush show was half music and half stand-up comedy.

“He was an amazing drummer,” Todt says. “He had a precision about him that was blistering and brutal and he brought so much energy to every band that he played drums in. He had a knack for choosing cover songs that you wouldn't necessarily realize right away that, ‘Oh, this was someone else's song.’ Everything he played sounded like ‘The Buddy Lush Phenomenon.’”

Mat and Kay Adkins, like many of Paul’s friends, met him through the local music community. Mat Adkins says Paul was a genre-bending musician with a varied fan base. Part of that, he says, was because of Paul’s personality.

“Buddy was genuinely one of a kind,” Mat Adkins says. “He lived life on his

own terms. Until the very end, he was just a big kid.”

Before his job at Waldo Pizza, Paul worked at Clint’s Comics, where he connected many with his other great love — comics and graphic novels. According to his friends, Paul loved these jobs because they allowed him to meet new friends.

Kay Adkins, a healthcare worker, helped Paul’s family navigate his medical issues during his time in the hospital. During that time, she says hospital staff were shocked at how many visitors Paul had, from bandmates to staff at the pools and coffee shops where he was a regular.

“A young lady came to the hospital that knew him because she was one of the lifeguards at one of the pools that he would go to,” Kay Adkins says. “That’s the kind of guy he was — talked to everyone. Kids that worked at Waldo Pizza with him, when they left and went on to other places, he would visit them at their new jobs.”

Paul’s sister-in-law, Cheryl Paul, lives in Maryland but kept in touch with weekly phone calls. Paul would always tell her about the latest movie he’d seen or book he’d read. His compassion didn’t only extend to the people in his life. She says Paul would adopt senior dogs who needed a little extra love and attention.

“John lived his life exactly the way he wanted to,” Cheryl Paul says. “He had a degree in communication, but he worked at Clint’s Comics and Waldo Pizza so that he could play his drums and his guitar. He was a free spirit.”

Todt says that Paul was always finding ways to make others happy, either through a joke or a friendly smile.

“It was always a blast. He was one of the most hilarious people I've ever known,” Todt said. “He always had a good joke — most of them were filthy — but it was never like this big serious thing. We were doing music to have fun. We didn't set out to change the world, but he definitely changed our world.”

Paul is survived by his brother and sister-in-law, Mark and Cheryl Paul; two nephews, Andy and Eric Paul; two great-nephews, Kallen and Wesley and dozens of friends and fans.

Mat Adkins has set up a GoFundMe in his honor, which will go towards funeral, vet and remaining home expenses. So far, it's raised more than \$20,000. Friends and family are asking anyone with information about the crash that killed Paul to come forward.

“There's a John Paul-sized hole in this community now that's probably not ever going to be filled,” Todt says. “He was a one-of-a-kind person, and I feel bad for people who didn't get to know him because he was such a good person. I hope that everyone has somebody in their life like that.

By Savannah Hawley-Bates

Tribute Wall



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Jonathan Karl Paul.

August 29, 2023 at 02:49 PM



“ Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Jonathan Karl Paul.



August 29, 2023 at 02:49 PM



“ 2 files added to the album Memories Album



Reflections Memorial Services LLC - August 21, 2023 at 01:48 PM