



Shawn Michael Kelly

May 25, 1958 - April 24, 2025

Our brother and uncle and friend to many, Shawn Michael Kelly, born May 1958 passed away April 2025 in Austin, Texas while living a spiritual life seeking truth and practicing daily meditation.

Shawn inherited his mom's (Barbara Kelly died: 2021) love of travel, eagerness to explore, curiosity to learn, cultivating friendships and appreciation of the many art disciplines. He inherited his dad's (Howard Kelly died: 2005) strong work ethic as witnessed in his years in the United States Air Force, health career, challenging music career and his drive for continuous learning.

He worked at the DMAFB missile base in Tucson, Arizona until he left the service as a sergeant with an honorable discharge. While in the military Shawn married his high school love and though they later chose different life paths they held a special place in their heart for each other and their families.

While in the Air Force Shawn met a fellow soldier with the same passion for music he had. They became friends and then fellow musicians and together dedicated tremendous amount of hours writing, practicing producing and performing music both solo and in a band. Shawn loved the discipline, sounds and joy that came from the art of music. Shawn felt he was a quiet shy person and music gave him a voice.

Shawn loved traveling and journeyed both in the States and internationally. We could tell you of the places traveled but that would never explain the imprint made on his soul. He believed the desert and mountains of Arizona impacted him greatly and he felt staying at Mt. Adams in Washington was wonderful for his soul. He loved the exercise and peace that came with hiking the mountains. Shawn hiked Peru's Machu Picchu in 2005 and it is then a new friendship developed into lifelong bond. The planned journey not fulfilled was to explore the culture, people and land of Southeast Asia after he officially retired.

The brother we grew up with adventured with his Curious George monkey, sang and played guitar with whatever stick was available until he got his first real guitar, partnered with Batman, loved the music and story of Billy Jack learning karate as a result, was a fierce protector of his younger sisters, on the movie Ms. Congeniality it was Shawn's hands that were hired to play the hands near the bomb at the beginning and those with the black gloves at the end but more importantly it was the incredible kind spirit of Sandra Bullock that remained with him. Shawn was honored to have had a part in working on a guitar owned by Willie Nelson while employed years ago at Erlewine Guitars in Austin. Shawn was fourth of seven children all close in age.

Throughout the years and in his last days Shawn and his older brother Kevin shared long conversations the sisters were not privy to, though we were all fairly sure who did the most talking and who did the most listening. Shawn looked to his older sister Sheila for guidance and Colleen as a shared learner. Shawn and his younger sister's Brigid's bond created fun (sometimes too much fun) and several of their original friends remain in their friendship circle now. Shawn never gave up trying to teach his younger sister Laurie how to strum the guitar, though no matter his patience the sessions always ended in laughter because her fingers just couldn't follow his teachings. Shawn and his

youngest sister Mary had the best of times when he visited Mary's Florida home where their mom and the Girl Gang could be found. They looked forward to his visits and the conversations and laughter to come. It was the best of times for Mary and Shawn. Decades ago Shawn and Kevin declared they had too many sisters so they invited Mary to be one of the brothers - a group she was incredibly proud to join. During their last talk, Shawn reminded Mary "the Brothers" need to stick together.

Shawn's nieces and nephews (and the great ones too) shared less in person time as he lived much of his adult life in Arizona and Texas but when he visited in person or conversed on the phone those moments were highly valued, fun and meaningful. When Shawn was talking with you he focused on you and that made people understand how much he valued the relationship.

Shawn created lifelong bonds with people from his youth on Everett Drive to the condo above him in Austin. Friends have shared the impact Shawn made in their life be it as their close companion, lifelong or once a year birthday celebration friend, coworker, advisor, counselor, boss, sharer of knowledge or teacher. They expressed how he encompassed all the great qualities with the heart of gold always knowing a lot about everything. Friends from across the country have reached out to share appreciation of his friendship and love. There is no way to list names without missing some people. Shawn was outwardly thankful for his incredible Michigan, Arizona, Texas and other social and work friendships as you could tell by the stories he shared.

One friend said it best, "Most of all we are going to miss you on this earth Shawn. Rest easy dear friend and fly high. May you be in your kind of paradise on the highest peak with all the best views playing beautiful music until we see you again. We will cherish the years of memories and keep your legacy alive."

Many friends exchanged the gift they felt when Shawn shared of his search for understanding of life now and the afterlife. One friend shared that there is comfort in remembering all the long talks they had about Jesus and how close Shawn got to him and the relationship he built with Jesus since 2019.

Shawn you were a loving brother, brother-in-law, son, uncle and friend to many. We thank you for all the ways you showed love to us. What a blessing you have been. We thank you for having let us join you on this part of your spiritual journey. As you said to mom, "May the Peace of God forever hold you." We love you.

Tribute Wall

JA

“ I am sorry to hear about Shawn's passing. I was just starting to try to find him after 50 years and ran across this obituary. Shawn and I did training in the Air Force together and took a long and icy drive in Feb 1977 from Minnesota to California for missile training. He was a great guy and I enjoyed the short time that I knew him. I am sorry that I wasn't able to find him sooner.

Jeff Aune - April 15 at 11:06 AM

WC

“ I'm deeply saddened to hear of the news of my dear colleague Shawn. Shawn and I had the privilege of working together for 15 years at Healthtrust Workforce Solutions in the staffing, scheduling and consulting management.
Shawn will be missed. Wanda Chalk

wanda Chalk - May 18, 2025 at 07:21 PM

FG

“ It was a honor to know Shawn, he was someone your could talk to, about anything. We will miss him, he will always be in our prayers as we consider him family. Our condolences to his family. Until we meet again
Frank & Jo Ann Gomez

Frank Gomez - May 14, 2025 at 10:11 AM

RN

“ So sorry to learn of Shawn's passing, my condolences to his family. Shawn was a great guy and I enjoyed working with him these past few years. He was a 'go to' person for staffing and scheduling expertise, always available and helpful to all. We lost a good man.



Robert Nixon - May 06, 2025 at 07:56 AM