



Roy Benjamin (Benny) Conley II

July 1, 1953 - November 15, 2020

Roy Benjamin (Benny) Conley II went to his eternal home while at Vanderbilt University Medical Center on Sunday, November 15, 2020. He waged a fierce battle with glioblastoma multiforme for the past seventeen months and demonstrated his unwavering faith and indomitable spirit. Benny wouldn't want us to focus on the cancer that took his life, but rather on how rich and full his 67 years here at his earthly home have been. After his diagnosis, he said that if his life ended that day, he had been blessed, and every additional day he had he was grateful for it.

Benny was born on July 1, 1953 at Fort Sanders Hospital in Knoxville to parents Roy and Betty Queener Conley. He was a North Knoxville boy, having grown up on Rudy Street near Sharp's Ridge. Because his mother cared for his two brothers, Jeffrey and Kerry, who were born with cerebral palsy, Benny was quite the independent, curious, adventurous, but responsible child, except when he ran up a \$2.00 tab of milk and cakes at Fred's neighborhood store and was admonished by Betty. He often rummaged through the trash cans at Fred's for Tom's potato chip bags for entrance to The Chipmunk Club's movies at the Tennessee Theater. He and a neighborhood pal would ride their bikes or take the bus to the Tennessee and then eat at Nan Denton's or if they had enough money, treat themselves to a slice of cake at the counter at Regas. Benny could tell story after story of growing up on Rudy Street, which were memories that sustained him throughout his life.

Benny attended Lonsdale Elementary and junior and senior high at Rule High

School. He was truly a Rule Golden Bear. He lettered in baseball and tennis, as well as football, and often quoted his beloved Coach Bob Poston's smash mouth football style when he complained from time to time about a certain university football team. He was senior class president, Class of 1971, and a football captain.

After graduation from Rule, he decided working in the produce department at the local A&P wasn't for him, so he started working full time at Moore's Lumber Company on Clinton Highway in Knoxville while pursuing his electrical engineering degree full time at the University of Tennessee (UT), Knoxville. He often laughed that he paid for his education at UT each quarter in installments, but he knew where his education came from.

In 1979, he graduated UT with a bachelor of science in electrical engineering and took a job in Dallas, Texas, but returned to Knoxville in December 1979 and began a career spanning over 40 years on the Department of Energy Oak Ridge Reservation. He worked at the Oak Ridge Gaseous Diffusion Plant (K-25), Oak Ridge National Laboratory (X-10/ ORNL), and most recently at the Y-12 National Security Complex (Y-12). He started out in engineering maintenance at K-25 and then worked in computer networks at ORNL, and most recently, design engineering, which he found extremely satisfying. He was a Professional Engineer (PE), a Six Sigma Black Belt, and a Project Management Professional (inactive).

Benny loved all music from Andrea Bocelli to ZZ Top, but bluegrass stole his heart. After a birthday gift of a beginner mandolin and starter lessons with music teacher Tim Worman, Benny looked for concerts to attend to see the "greats" and with the exception of a few, he saw them. After the mandolin, he started banjo lessons as well and discovered he liked the banjo even better than the mandolin. Now, Benny would be the first to tell you that Bill Monroe and Earl Scruggs didn't have anything to worry about (and that's not a reflection on Tim's teaching), but Benny played for the pure joy of music—for himself.

He could fix or build anything and did. He became a licensed contractor so

that he could build his own home in Tellico Village—all that experience he got at Moore's turned out to be invaluable.

Benny was also a history buff and loved all of David McCullough and Shelby Foote's work and traveled to many historical sites and Civil War battlefields, including a trip to Gettysburg, Valley Forge, and Philadelphia a few years ago. Also, when he could, he tried to catch lectures at the Knoxville Civil War Roundtable.

Benny at 67 was still that same independent, curious, adventurous, and responsible little boy from Rudy Street and the popular and just plain fun guy who was class president and football captain at Rule and the engineer at Y-12 who wore ties or bow ties (especially on National Bow Tie Day) to work just to throw everyone off that there was some big, special event going on, only for Benny to tell them he had a phone interview later that day so he had to dress up. He made all of our lives richer just by being Benny.

Although our sorrow is great, we are comforted in knowing that Benny who grew up attending the 8th Avenue Church of God in Knoxville was ready to go to his eternal home, having made a profession of faith and been baptized as a youth and having relied on His promise that this world is not our home.

Benny is preceded in death by his parents Roy and Betty, brothers Jeffrey and Kerry, and mother-in-law Jeanette Francis.

He is survived by his wife, Joyce Francis, Tellico Village; brother Tim (Kim) Conley, Knoxville; sons Chase and Blake (Natalie, Oliver), Knoxville; father-in-law John E. Francis, Newport; brothers-in-law Mike (Connie) Francis, Murfreesboro, and Mark Francis, Union, Kentucky; several nieces and nephews; and an enormous number of friends, neighbors, and colleagues who loved him dearly.

We want to express a special thank you to family member Wilma Tipton, Dandridge, for all her help and support during Benny's illness.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to Faith Comes By Hearing (2421 Aztec Road NE, Albuquerque, NM 87107 or by calling 1-800-545-

6552). Benny supported this charity and believed in their work to spread the Gospel through audio devices so that individuals around the world can hear the Gospel in their own languages.

Graveside funeral services will be held 11 am Friday, November 20, 2020 in Union Cemetery, Newport, TN with Rev. Dennis Strange officiating.

Family and friends may sign online at: www.manesfuneralhome.com

Arrangements by Manes Funeral Home

Previous Events

Graveside

NOV **20**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Union Cemetery Inc
420 Mineral St
Newport, TN 37821-3900
(423) 623-6918

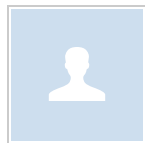
Tribute Wall



“ *Stacy Lynne Conley lit a candle in memory of Roy Conley*



Stacy Lynne Conley - May 19, 2024 at 09:47 AM



“ *Roy Benjamin (Benny) Conley II*

November 17, 2022 at 06:00 PM



“ *Dear Joyce*

So sorry for your loss! I hope you can take comfort in knowing he is now playing music in heaven without pain or suffering! Please know that you are in my thoughts and prayers!

Sincerely

Kim Dockery Bennett

Kim Bennett - November 20, 2020 at 12:11 PM

CP

“ *Benny and I lived next door to each other in the late 80s when I first began working at ORNL. We carpoled together for a year or so until I transferred to Y12. I'll always remember singing along together to the pop tunes of that time during our drives to work. It wasn't pretty but it was fun. He was always a kind and caring person. Condolences to the family.*

Clark Piercy - November 19, 2020 at 08:01 PM

WW

“ *Benny was one of my best Friends during High School we had a great time lots of Great Memories Rest in Peace My Friend Wayne Waggoner Class of 71 Golden Bear*

Wayne Waggoner - November 19, 2020 at 07:31 PM

RT

“ *Rest in peace, my Friend!
"Rule High Golden Bears - Class of 71"*

*Respectfully,
Ronald Sprowl and Larry Coats*

Rhoshawnda Turner - November 19, 2020 at 06:33 PM

BS

“ *Benny was a great teammate. We started playing together when I was in the 8th grade and he was in the 7th for the Peanuts. Undefeated, with one tie in the Optimist Bowl. He played beside me on the Golden Bear varsity for two years as well. Right beside me. He was OG and I was tackle. I haven't seen him in years and this news breaks my heart. RIP, Benny, you are a hell of a Golden Bear.*

Billy Stokes - November 19, 2020 at 05:24 PM

JC

“ So very sorry to hear of Benny’s passing. I first met him in the 80’s at ORNL where he worked in the Telecommunications Division, and then I had the opportunity to also work with him at Y-12 in later years. Benny was one of those guys who always had a smile on his face. No matter how bad your day was going, after a couple of minutes spent in his presence he would make you laugh and the day would seem just a little bit brighter. His family is in my prayers.

Jeff Cleveland - November 18, 2020 at 07:24 PM

AD

I really enjoyed getting to know Benny at Y-12. He was always fun to be around and ready to listen. He was a great friend.

Amy Duncan - November 19, 2020 at 01:05 PM

TB

“ Benny was a light hearted, intelligent, and friendly guy, and it was a pleasure to meet he and Joyce and share some good times! My condolences to Joyce and the family. Theresa Bean

Theresa Bean - November 18, 2020 at 05:46 PM

TC

“ I spent many hours with Benny during his last tour at Y-12. He had a way of making everyone a little happier with his marvelous sense of humor. I considered him to be one of my best friends and I will miss him dearly. I will pray for Joyce as she carries on without him and for his boys. Benny loved his family and friends and he was easy to love.

Tom Cox - November 18, 2020 at 02:19 PM

RG

I never saw Benny without a smile on his face. He will be missed by many.

Roger Gregg - November 19, 2020 at 04:33 PM

BR

“ *Blake and family,*

I am so sorry for your loss, but so very thankful for the time you were blessed to share.

You will be in my prayers.

Brandy Roberts

Brandy Roberts - November 18, 2020 at 10:27 AM

AK

“ *I now know Benny and that he was a wonderful person because of this beautifully written obituary. Rule High boys can and do succeed. May God bless Benny and his family.*

Albert L King - November 18, 2020 at 08:35 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Roy Benjamin (Benny) Conley II.*



November 18, 2020 at 06:58 AM

CE

“ *Benny was an AWESOME guy and a joy to work with. I had the pleasure of working with him at K-25 and Y-12. Occasionally we also played a few rounds of golf together - those were some fun times! Our prayers are with Benny's family in this time of bereavement.*

Charlie and Cathy Earlywine

Charlie Earlywine - November 17, 2020 at 09:52 PM

AH

I first met Benny in 1985 when we worked I. Telecommunications at K-25. He was always a fun person to be around. We had so many happy times and fun adventures together. My condolences to Joyce and to his sons Blake and Chase. Fly with the angels my friend

Allen Henegar - November 18, 2020 at 10:11 AM

JC

“ *May GOD Bless Benny's Family*

Jim Conley - November 17, 2020 at 03:21 PM

MT

“ *So sorry to hear of Benny's passing. He was always a wonderful person to work with, very upbeat and pleasant to everyone. My deepest sympathy to you Joyce and the rest of your family. Mary Sue Tavino (retired from Y-12 Design Engineering group)*

Mary Sue Tavino - November 17, 2020 at 02:31 PM

SP

“ Joyce, I'm so sorry to read of Benny's passing. Know that my thoughts are with you and the rest of the family.

Sandie Popiel

Sandie Popiel - November 17, 2020 at 12:49 PM

DD

“ Joyce and I attended CCHS together in the 70's. I too have a "North" Knoxville native for my husband. Thoughts and prayers from an old friend.

Debbie Chesteen Davis - November 17, 2020 at 10:35 AM

LR

“ Benny and I shared a love for music. It was a pleasure seeing how Benny would bring his mandolin or his banjo to his office to go to his music lessons after work. I enjoyed sharing names, songs, and stories with Benny about musicians we both admired. And I appreciated his positive outlook about life and the people around him.

Larry Robinson - November 17, 2020 at 09:31 AM

AS

“ Joyce, I'm so sorry for your loss. Remembering you in prayer.

Arzella Mantooth Shelton - November 17, 2020 at 09:02 AM

SF

“ My thoughts and prayers are with you duringt this difficult time

Sandra Fultz - November 17, 2020 at 06:09 AM

LM

I am thinking of you and sending prayers. I am so sorry for your loss.

Lucy Moyers - November 17, 2020 at 09:09 AM

TM

“ Words seem inadequate to express the sorrow I felt by the loss of Benny. I extend my deepest sympathy on the loss of this precious man.

Benny was such a thoughtful and caring person. Always ready to help, offer advice, impart his experience, or inject a joke – Benny will be sorely missed. His soft laugh, gentle spirit and warm personality brought people to him and he will be missed by everyone here.

I wish you comfort and peace and you will be in my thoughts and prayers.

Thomas Moczadlo (Y-12 Design Engineering)

Thomas Moczadlo - November 17, 2020 at 05:59 AM

BJ

“ Joyce so sorry of Benny passing. Just seen it I be there Friday if need me help in any way be honor

Billy Jones - November 17, 2020 at 12:30 AM

RF

“ I am no acquaintance of Mr. Conley, but after reading the obituary, I know he is my brother. Condolences to the family, but we rest assured he is in a better place than in this world.

Ray Fancher - November 16, 2020 at 05:34 PM