

LENNY DUNN EULOGY August 14th, 2023

by Ralph G. Fatello

Marianne, Matt, Elis, friends and family of Lenny Dunn.

Thank you all for coming here tonight to celebrate Lenny's life.

When I received the text from Ronnie on Monday night at 8:11PM telling me and Johnny about Lenny's passing, I have been in sort of a fog ever since. Slowly, but surely, the memories and stories have been filtering back into a clearer picture of his 66 years with us all.

Lenny was born in Salem, Mass he was the son of the late William Dunn Jr. and Jeanette (Francis) Dunn. Lenny was raised in Marblehead and attended Marblehead High School.

Lenny was a devoted son who worked his whole life as an Electronic Technician with his father Bill at their family-owned business, Advanced Ceramic Coating in Beverly. In 2012, Lenny became the owner and operator of his family-owned business after his father's passing. And speaking of his dad Bill. When I would call Lenny at Ceramic Coating, I would spend no less than 20 to 30 minutes talking with Bill about Boston Sports. There were times when I'd hang up without even talking to Lenny. His dad was just like him. They both loved, or should I say, Loved and hated Boston Sports. Thank God Lenny lived through the Glory years of Boston Sports.

Lenny had two sisters, Gail and her husband Steve of SC and Karen and her husband, Dana of FL; two brothers, Michael Dunn and his wife Joan of Swampscott and William Dunn III and his wife Jan of SC and many nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by one brother, Mark Dunn who passed away in an auto accident when they were younger. Lenny was very close to Mark, and we would all like to think that Mark, and his parents, were there to greet him when Lenny crossed over.

As most of you already know, Lenny married his childhood sweetheart Marianne in 1980. It was a storybook marriage. They would have celebrated their 43rd Wedding Anniversary on August 31st. Think about that for a minute. 43 years. Marianne, I can tell you without any hesitation, that Lenny loved you with all his heart and soul. You know that. Of all of us in this room, you knew the real, true Lenny. That kind, and thoughtful soul, that he was. He loved you Marianne. And he loved Matt and Elis and his granddaughter Emma with that same unconditional love. Little 8yr old Emma calls you both "Nina and Grampy" and she loved eating chips and salsa with her Grampy. And I'm sure Grampy loved every single minute of those special times. Marianne you said, "He was our Rock. Even with his Lenny stories."

Marianne and I spoke last night about the time that me and a fellow Marine Vietnam Vet stopped by their home, after we marched in a Memorial Day Parade here in Beverly. We knocked on the door still dressed in our combat jungle fatigues, and little Matty opened the door and with his eyes bugging out of his head, he freaked out running to his dad yelling "Dad there's two GI JOES standing in the doorway!"

I can't tell you how many times over the years Lenny would bring that story up.

Matt, your father loved you. That special kind of love, that only a father could have for a son. He was so proud of you. Like your father loved your grandfather, you will now carry his legacy with you going forward. And he absolutely adored your wife Elis. The three of you brought such tremendous joy into his life. You all need to know that. You made him happy, and he felt that love every time he was with you.

Lenny loved his family first and foremost. He loved going on those wonderful ski vacations with you all. And those are some of the fondest memories that Marianne and Matt will fondly remember in the days ahead. Some of you might not know this, but Lenny could fly down the mountain on a pair of skis. I know this first hand as he flew by me a few times. I remember thinking at the time "Was that Lenny?"

Who knew he could ski like that? Not me. Not until I saw him with my own eyes. What was I doing on a mountain with Lenny?

Well, I've known Lenny for 40 years and have played music with him for 35 of those years. My brother Johnny and I started the NOR'EASTERS in 1988. It was me and Johnny on guitars, Mike White on bass, and Lenny on the drums. We played everywhere in New England. And some of the shows we played were in the White Mountains, and luckily for us, they would put us in a hotel, and give us free ski passes. And that's when I saw Lenny ski. I think he took a certain devious pleasure in blowing by me on the mountains because I was always talking about surfing. This was his way of showing me, that surfing and skiing are two different animals.

There are others here who have known him longer. His best friend Ronnie Chane. Ronnie played with Lenny in the CATALINAS. This is from Ronnie's public Facebook post. "None cuts deeper than this...Lost my best friend. Lenny Dunn and I have been musically tied to the hip for over 40 years. Been in bands, blues jams, and projects spanning over that time. We have taken road trips to Montreal, Baltimore, Philly and South Carolina to mention a few. Countless Patriots, Celtics, and Red Sox games as well as concerts together. Some stories I can tell, some stories I can't tell to protect the innocent. Great musician, one of the funniest guys you would ever meet and a true friend...Rest in Peace, until we meet again." Ronnie

And Johnny shared this story: "It was so easy playing with Lenny. He started in the pocket and ended in the pocket. One of his favorite things to do was keep playing these rolls at the end of songs while we're all standing there in the end the song position and one of us would say come on man. And of course in typical Lenny fashion he'd have that smirk on his face and say shut up then he'd end the song. And give us his mm-hmm grunt and his infamous RIGHT ON."

And this one from Johnny. "I have a van load of stories about Lenny.

But for those of you who've ever been around me and Lenny at Gigs or just out you know those stories are better left under wraps. One story I can tell is about when I was living upstairs and one day he came up the stairs. I answered the door in this big black bathrobe with a hood. He cracked up and if you've seen or heard him laugh you know how infectious it was. We were in hysterics. And then he said. I now pronounce you "Ming." From that day on Lenny, Matt, and Marianne called me Ming every time I saw them. He also named me Triple X but that's another story for another time. I love you Lenny and I will miss you every day."

I know there are others here who have known him forever. Satch and the Catalinas. Steve from STEVE'S QUALITY Music. You all have stories and memories. Share them after the service.

If I could say just a few words about The NOR'EASTERS.

THE NOR'EASTERS 1988-2023. Johnny and I have played with Lenny for 35 Years. That's a long time. Some of the best times of my life were spent with Lenny, Whitey, and Johnny. We made some good solid Rocking Blues music, and we had a f-ing blast doing it.

There will never be another drummer like Lenny Dunn. So, when Lenny passed away on Monday August 7th, 2023, so too, did THE NOR'EASTERS. It's true.

I'm not playing without him under The Easter's name.

Lenny, was a cross between Charlie Watts and Ringo Starr. You all think about that for a second. Charlie Watts and Ringo Starr. Lenny was that good. Always solid in the pocket, no BS, no complaints, no need to play a drum solo, or any additional fills. He was the engine that drove The Easters. Just a solid, powerhouse, behind the kit. He was in my honest opinion, the best.

And he kept us all laughing while doing it. Lenny was a funny individual.

He had nicknames for everybody. He called Johnny "Ming". And The "Chef." Or "Cheffy." There were other names he had out there for our friends. Gomez, Blubster, and the Brothers Brilliant to name a few.

Gee, I wonder if he had one for me and I just never heard it?

Marianne and I were talking last night about some of the special Nor'easters Posters that were not for PUBLIC viewing. I would make some of these X-rated posters just for Lenny's amusement. He loved those insane posters. It was mostly of Johnny doing something obscene and funny. Lenny laughed his ass off when I'd post them in our rehearsal space. In fact, I know he had a collection of them somewhere. Please Don't let those fall into the wrong hands. I could get in trouble in today's world.

THE NOR'EASTERS played all over the seacoast. From Boston to Portsmouth, we played and rocked out at so many different clubs and halls. We were a fun band to go and see. We had no political agenda, and no message to share. It was just Rock and Blues music. Mostly originals with some covers tossed in. Most people liked the band. I mean what's there not to like? Me and my brother Johnny on guitar, Whitey on the bass, and Lenny Dunn on the drums. We were one hell of a Rocking Blues Band. And we played with some of the greats too. Robin Trower, Mick Taylor of the Stones, Warren Haynes of The Allman Bros Govt Mule, and the late Rory Gallagher and Ginger Baker to name just a few. With Lenny on the drums, we were an ass kicking Blues Rock Band. And anybody whoever saw us will agree.

And speaking of drums, Marianne shared with me that little Emma wants to play the drums. I say HELL YEAH EMMA! It's in your bloodline. You're a direct descendant of the GREAT Lenny Dunn. You KICK IT GIRL!

Marianne also shared a few stories with me that most people don't know about. She spoke of how one day when he was at a super market, there was a woman in front of Lenny, and she didn't have enough money to pay for her order. Without any hesitation, Lenny stepped up and paid for her entire order. That woman was so touched by his generous and thoughtful heart. But Lenny just shrugged it off. To quote Marianne; "He would give whatever he could to those who needed something."

And Johnny shared this one. "One night we had an impromptu fundraiser at the Jam at the French Club in Beverly for a friend who was about to have surgery for cancer. We tried to collect enough money to fly her son home to see her before the surgery. We came up short. Lenny grabbed me and Sue and asked how short it was.

He paid the difference and it wasn't a small amount. He also asked that we never tell her it was him. To this day she doesn't know. That is Lenny in a nutshell."

In the end, we will all be judged by what we did here on earth. Did you help someone along the way? Did you make some else's life better? Did you put a smile on someone's face? Did you sacrifice a part of your life to make someone else's life better? Only you can answer that. But we all now know, that Lenny did all of that and then some.

So what do we do now going forward? I'll tell you what we do. We speak his name. We talk about him. We play his music and we watch the videos he's in. In short, we never ever forget him. As long as we all shall live, we will remember Lenny.

Because you all know, that if he was here, and we were the one being eulogized, he would do exactly that. He would talk about us. No question. He would talk about each and every one of us. And he would do it in Lenny fashion. But, he'd talk about us. We need to do the same.

So until we all meet up again, let us remember our dear friend, brother, husband, uncle, father, and grandfather. Lenny Dunn.

I know I speak for Whitey and Johnny when I say this.

Lenny, I had the best of times playing with you, and I am going to miss you until my own dying day. Until the next time we see it each other...

"2-3-4...Well we rocked all night in a local bar, Johnny got drunk and played guitar. Yeah we rocked that joint and tore it up. Whitey yelled "kick it" and we took off. We're going 95 on 95, baby 95 is the speed I drive, 95 on 95 when my baby needs me, that's what I drive. Well the very next night we did it again. Man that place was rocking. The brothers brilliant make it move. Lenny and Blubster talking chew. We went 95 on 95, baby 95 is the speed I drive, 95 on 95 when my baby needs me, that's what I drive." We're going home Lenny. We're going home brother. I love you Lenny!