

# Remembering BRYAN



Bryan E. Guzman, 1985-2006

Thoughts and  
Memories from  
Friends & Family



This book is being released just before the 5th anniversary of Bryan Guzman's death. It reprints a *small* sample of the hundreds of letters, cards, emails, and verbal expressions of condolence and support received since December 9, 2006. Except for his Dad's opening remarks and a few words from Daniel, Katie, and Josh, all comments come from those outside the immediate family, a testimony to how far-reaching Bryan's life was. Thank you all for helping the Guzman's cope with their immense loss.

Bryan's death was widely covered, taking up the entire front page of his hometown newspaper, and tributes to him have been many and ongoing. A group of Chicago musicians, for example, recorded the song "Hallelujah" in his honor, and Kevin Andrew Prchal, who originally got those artists together, continues to do wonderful concerts supporting Bryan's most visible memorial, Bryan House.

Rick (Bryan's oldest brother) and his wife Desiree, announced their plan to create a transition house for refugee families in Bryan's honor just days after Bryan's death, and in just 11 months had raised enough money to buy a 5-unit house on Lake St. in Aurora, IL. The house has changed many lives, and as its mission has grown it has become part of a larger organization, the Emmanuel House Community Development Corporation—*Emmanuel*, "God with us," being Bryan's middle name.

This book's release will be announced first at the Bryan House Silent Auction fundraiser on November 18, 2011, and its last page will contain more information on this living memorial. We hope the following words and pictures give you some small glimpse of the person who inspired Bryan House and the EHCD Corp., and who made such wonderful music and great friendships. The burden of missing him grows every day, but the joy he brought to so many lives remains as well. (rrg)



The headline of the *Sun* newspaper on December 11, 2006, read “He would have been one of the Greats.” That’s what his brother Daniel said, referring to Bryan’s enormous musical talent. But by the time of his death Bryan had already become great in something even more important than music. His spirit had become great because he had arrived at a place where, unlike so many of us, he didn’t feel he had to judge any-one anymore.

He didn’t think he was better than anyone, didn’t think he knew how everyone else should live their lives, and this spirit drew many people to him. “He never had anything bad to say about anyone ever,” his girlfriend Katie said—which wasn’t entirely true. Bryan had a sharp sense of humor,

and he made “judgments” about this or that person, which may have been more or less true—but Katie was essentially right. Whatever he may have thought about someone, he also always found a way to like that person and, most important, to affirm their worth. He was far from perfect and full of contradictions: he was so gentle, yet loved to rage, so pure, but

not innocent, so laid back, but a dynamo on stage... Yet his deep acceptance of people and life's circumstances made him profoundly whole. He wrote a college professor that he saw himself as someone who wanted to change the world, although, he admitted, he "hadn't done that much yet." I don't know. His spirit continues to guide me and many, many others to be better people and to try to make the world better, too. If you got close to him that's what you'd want to be and do. I hope these pages help you remember him, or meet him for the first time.

—Richard R. Guzman

**"He really is the greatest person I've ever known... 100 percent genuine."**

—Katie Hofmann

**"His smile will never be forgotten. He touched my soul... His sound was so true."**

—Jon Davit

**"You always smiled. You always had a huge welcome, and everything you did was genuine. And somehow, even though you were Dan's younger brother, you found a way to make fun of me!"**

—Matt Collander

**"He always had a hello for this quite non-traditional student. His spirit will touch many lives."**

—Sue Koranda

**"...he was a kind soul. The kind that could tell you everything's going to be okay, and it would be. The kind you could call at any drunken hour to come pick you up, and he would do it. The kind who would laugh at your joke even if it wasn't funny...who would ask how your day was, and sincerely care to hear about it....Everything about that kid was sincere... You didn't have to know him well, or at all, for that matter, to see that. He was a full moon on a blanket of stars, and he shined more than ever last December. The night of his wake. The line outside of the Friedrich-Jones Funeral Home...is to this day one of the most incredible sights I've ever seen."**

—Kevin Andrew Prchal



“Like everyone, I liked Bryan instantly on meeting him because he seemed to have a calm and peaceful soul. There really was something about him, some goodness that transcended common goodness. I wish I knew better how to express it, but I know all of you know exactly what I mean.”

—Zachary Jack

“I treasured my time with him so much, as he was truly one of the best people to hang around with or to have in class. He was thought provoking from different angles that either no one had thought of or was too scared to say.”

—Daniel Parmet

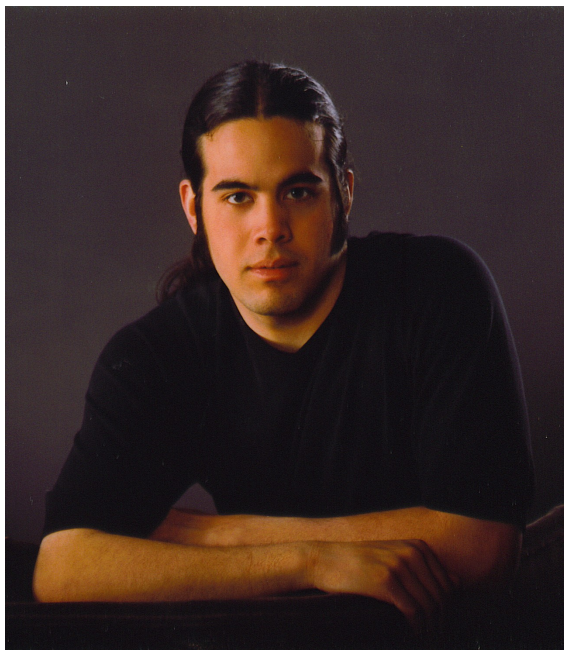
“Bryan was what we had in mind when we think of a person we want in sociology. It is Bryan—a thoughtful, artistic person—who can separate out what is important from what is not. He did not always have the right answers, but he always asked the right questions.”

—Lou Corsino

(Chair of Sociology, North Central College. Bryan's major was sociology  
—his “minor” was music.)



“Prior to becoming friends with Bryan freshman year, my circle of friends and I simply referred to him as ‘Mr. Gorgeous Hair.’ We wanted to be friends with him simply because of this. As the years progressed, I discovered what a beautiful person he was inside and out...But what I remember the most is his relationship with his close friends. Watching those boys interact with



one another was always a guaranteed good time. You could tell they all really loved being together. I loved the way they found humor in the most random things. I will always remember Bryan's laugh and that smile...and his ability to balance that sarcastic funny Bryan we all know and love with a more serious side.”

—Sarah Abraham

Fav memory: “Hot cheese, sleepovers at the loft, watching UHF. Bryan had the best heart.”

—(Unsigned)

“I will always remember going to see Weird Al with Bryan and the Guzman’s and how fun he made my neighborhood when I was young. Love—”

Dustin Covert



**Bryan just basically loved to RAGE!**

—Daniel

**“All our childhood memories are laced with Bryan and the Guzman boys! Kick the can! Fishing! We love you.”**

—Jenine Eubanks

**“He was like a little brother to me...Like many great musicians, his life was cut short by a tragic event.”**

—Josh Eubanks

**“A great little brother, loving son, phenomenal musician, and great friend to so many.”**

—Jon Boyajian

**“...a very incredible musician. His passing took someone extremely too young who had the world at his fingertips. Instead of his name being laid to rest in the stars, it should have lived on in very bright lights.**

—Yetti Blu

“Bryan will always stay with everyone he touched. He is proof that one person can really make a difference. He not only reached people through his kind words and loving heart, but also through his beautiful music. I remember driving to Coventry, VT, and Bryan was in the back of Lauren Hoffman’s jeep. There was barely any room for him back there, let alone his belongings. Yet every time we stopped for a break we would all start cracking up at the sight of him. He looked so content stuffed back there like a sardine, and he hugged his bass the entire ride because there was no way he could leave it behind. That little bit of humor was all we needed to make it comfortably through the long drive. No matter how down we were, Bryan always had a special knack for brightening the moment. Those shared bright moments will forever be carried by the fortunate ones who knew Bryan.” —Keelin Lord

“Bryan was a talented musician, but more important a great human being, and he is greatly missed...” —Ruth Cavenagh





“My fellow musicians and I were consistently floored by Bryan’s tasty and fluid bass chops, especially for such a young man. We enjoyed Hypnotist Collector’s locked rhythm section and Dan and Bryan’s almost telepathic interplay. I salute Bryan and Dan as great musicians, but also for the generosity they showed me with their time and talents, as well as their warm personalities and gracious demeanor.”

—Steve Cavanaugh

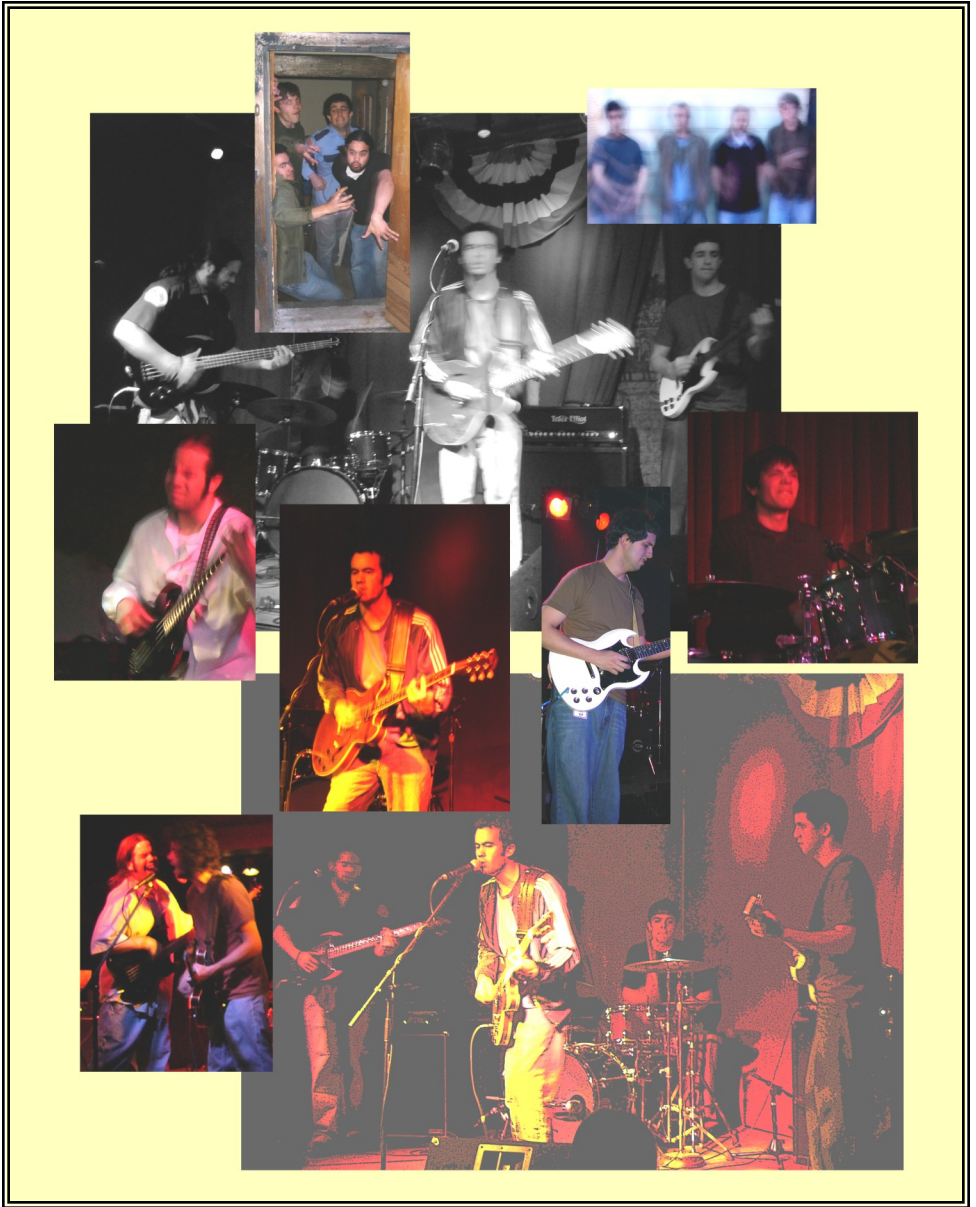


“He was my best man—brother, best friend, musical soul mate, room mate—more than one person usually is to another...”

—Daniel

Fav Memory: “Watching him tear it up on the bass was inspiring. I’m just glad I got a chance to enjoy the experience.”

—Jared



**“Their music is just about as good  
as rock ‘n’ roll gets.”**      **—Tad Lehe**



# Hypnotist Collector



## The Double Door

1572 N. Milwaukee, Chicago

June 8th - 11:00 p.m.

### **Benefit concert for Clara's House**

A Shelter for Women and Children

Door at 7:00, Show at 8:00

Opening Acts: Verbal Kent, Who Shot J.R.  
Prince of Futa, Seemore Perspective, and Aquí

**TICKETS \$8.00**

At the door (no service fee) or at **TICKETMASTER**

Hypnotist Collector is Dan Guzman, Bryan Guzman, Justin Flanigan  
Check out **MUSIC & More** Info @ [hypnotistcollector.net](http://hypnotistcollector.net)

*"A great loss...He had tremendous promise...He was the glue that held us all together and made everyone sound good." —Mitch Paliga*

*(Director of the college jazz ensemble Bryan played with)*

*"My musical inspiration..." —Levi Cordova*

Fav Memories:

“When we used to go to his shows and listen to him play the bass. He was always the best!”

“First of all, a glorious smile. I also remember, while Dan and Justin goofed around getting ready to play a Hypnotist Collector show, Bryan just stood there, ready, calm, and looking at everyone filing in—his bass in tune and in hand.”

—(Both Unsigned)



“You have a great musician there...He auditioned with a piece by Victor Wooten [the great bassist] —and did it better than Victor!” “He was with us only a short while, but he was with us.”

—Jack Mouse (Director of Jazz Studies, North Central College)



“I remember the wonderful poetry slam with you, Daniel, and Bryan providing the music in Chicago 4-5 years ago. You could tell then that they were and would be gifted musicians...” —Dr. John Childrey

(Bryan and Daniel played with their Dad, too, doing shows on Chicago Literature and the poetry of war)

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I love playing music and...think it is extremely important to think of others and give to those who are in need. My brother Rick has been a huge influence on me in this way...I'd also be excited to be work with an organization that helps fight poverty or other urban issues like housing...I've always envisioned myself as someone who would save the world (even though I haven't done that much to contribute yet). I've always had big visions of my band being one that actually raises awareness about issues instead of focusing on themselves. Well, this will hopefully give you an idea of who I am...

—Bryan Guzman (from an email to his college instructor Matt Moreland-Gross, December 2005.)

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“I’ll always remember best his comedy, laughs, and respect.”

“Guz always treated people with love and respect whether he knew them or not.” —(Both unsigned)



### On the Memorial Service:

“I learned so much from your celebration of Bryan’s life! I have his memorial picture on my classroom chalkboard because I want to share his kind spirit with my students. One of my kids remembers Bryan playing bass lines from inside a music locker! She recalled what a joyful kid he was! My favorite memory is when Dan led their reggae band at the Farren Elementary School for the inner city kids from the Robert Taylor Homes...In the end my memories of the Guzman boys/men will be of them working for social justice—and music! Like Emma Goldman said, ‘If we can’t dance, I won’t be part of your revolution.’” —Kermit Eby (NNHS)

“An inspirational testament to faith and love.”

—Tom McFaul

“Such an intense experience. It had everything: it was noble and silly—heartbreaking and hopeful.”

—Chris Savini

“Thank you for sharing your son’s beautiful life with us. It is evident that Bryan is a true angel” —Sue Rickert

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“When he’d come over to hang out with my little brother, I would always tell him he was my boyfriend, and we would be great together. An absolutely beautiful person.” —Becky Diebold

“Bryan’s clever wit drew many different people in, and his friendly nature made all feel comfortable. I will always keep in mind his beautiful, beaming smile, his incredible talent, and his deep passion for music!” —Lauren Hoffman



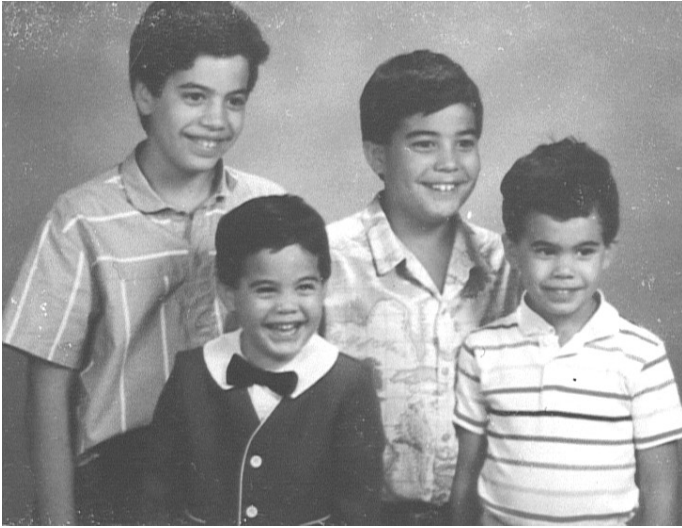
“When I think of Bryan, I think of little boys skate boarding in the street at the corner of Spring and Eagle. What fun!”

—Shirley Scott

Fav memory: “His adorable smile in first grade!” —(Unsigned)

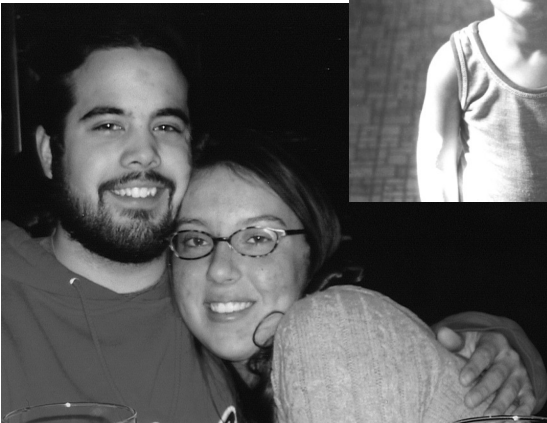
“I remember him as a child full of sweetness and light.”

—Fran Navakas



“Bryan was so funny, intelligent, creative, laid back. He was a wonderful friend and had the best laugh. He got me butterfly paper clips for Christmas one year. He was very proud that he spent \$ 25 on seven people: it was great! So many memories. He is going to be truly missed by so many people.”

—Meredith Jean Zembrodt





Some picture memories of Bryan Guzman...

—with a refugee man, with his family, at the Grand Canyon, at an overlook in Flagstaff, in London, Liverpool, at Wrigley Field, on the way to a Bears game with Katie—and still with us in our hearts.





Looking down Oak Creek Canyon towards Sedona

Peeing with Aaron!



Katie  
And  
Tanner

Bry-  
Daniel-  
Josh-  
Mike

A memorial plaque inscribed, "Brother Friend Musician and Fan — RIP B. GUZMAN," is at Wrigley Field.



“That day in the hospital room will always have a profound place in my head. I’ve never been in a situation so tragic and yet so beautiful and loving at the same time.”

—Josh

“What a beautiful outpouring of love at Bryan’s wake...I could see the deep and lasting effect Bryan had on those who came to pay their respects, and how proud you must be to know he touched so many hearts.”

—Mary Miritello

“The deepest tragedy one could go through—as is said in a Chinese saying—is for the white-haired to see the black-haired leaving the world first...But I also think of this line: ‘For a life worth living, we have to believe in the spirit.’”

—Tongdong Bai

“I’ve been waiting and looking for appropriate words...The only lines that come to my mind right now are Tagore’s lyrics: ‘*You are standing just there beyond the line that separates life and death, and in some hidden corner of my heart, your place remains immersed in a golden light.*’ Tagore lost three children during his lifetime.”

—Durba Bose

“I’ve been wanting to write something to you ever since Bryan’s death, and words would not come. Then today I found them: ‘I believe in the world to come.’”

—James Falzone



In his short life Bryan Guzman created so much music and friendship and good times—all with a great spirit of joy and acceptance that drew so many to him.

Bryan & Daniel in Liverpool, thinking about the Beatles



May this little book help you remember him and keep his beautiful spirit...



...part of your lives forever.





This living memorial to Bryan works this way:

- Qualified refugee families stay at Bryan House for 12 to 18 months. They pay full rent, but your contributions help us to invest those rents. Along with other grants and savings, they leave with enough money for a down payment on their first home in America or college funds for their children.
- Home ownership and higher education are two of the best ways to break the cycle of poverty refugees often fall into.



Children are 25% more likely to finish high school and 120% more likely to finish college. They stay in their neighborhoods four times longer, creating more stability for

*Everyone.*

- You can help change *hundreds* of lives. Support Bryan House with hands-on work and monetary gifts, by attending its fundraisers, and by spreading the word.

As the Bryan House project has grown to include whole neighborhoods and all the working class poor it can reach, it has become part of a larger organization: Emmanuel House Community Development Corporation—*Emmanuel*, “God with us,” being Bryan’s middle name. **Check our new website:**

[www.emmanuelhouse.org](http://www.emmanuelhouse.org)

Thank you to everyone who has supported us. Please stay with us as we continue to serve and to honor the memory of Bryan Emmanuel Guzman.



❖ Isaiah 58:10    ❖ Micah 6:8    ❖