

Pat Long

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I N L O V I N G M E M O R Y



PATRICK STEPHEN LONG

Arrived:  
March 11, 1954

Flew away:  
April 23, 2003

Pat was the kindest, gentlest person I ever knew . . . never a harsh word for anyone. He loved his beautiful daughters, Cassie and Olivia, as much as any father could. And he loved his music. It's entirely fitting that we honor him and Blue Rose Cafe on the same day. They are inseparable. He often said those were among the happiest days of his life. "I was self-employed, doing what I wanted to do, writing, playing, having a great time on the road with my friends."

He went away to Nashville to pursue his musical career, and he had some good times there. He also picked up more than his share of grief, eventually slipping into a depression that dogged him for the rest of his life. But that indomitable spirit kept bubbling to the surface, right up until the end. The last time he called on that fateful Tuesday morning, he was as happy as I've ever heard him. Once more, he was doing what he wanted, out on the road, driving that big Freightliner from Houston up to Indiana.

He never made it to Indiana  
but gettin' there ain't the plan  
he just liked the feel of goin' down the road

Pat . . . the last thing I heard you say was "See you later."

That's what keeps me going . . .

See you later . . .

-Jack  
PAT'S DAD



his old Goya sits silent  
in the living room  
no magic fingers  
to coax it into life

I pick a note or two  
and a couple of chords

seventy years too late

when I see him again  
we'll have plenty of time  
he can teach me

How does a mother reflect on what a son meant to her and not fill pages and pages? Patrick was my softie – he always stayed in touch, always remembered special days, laughed when he went out to play a round of golf with *Mother!* He was fun-



loving, smart, musically talented, and how he loved his girls! Though we lived miles apart, we visited him or he visited us often enough that we didn't miss out on seeing Cassie and Olivia blossom and grow.

I regret that those times together couldn't have been more frequent, but he knew when he needed a picker-upper from sagging spirits, or when he just wanted to talk,

Mom was as close as the nearest phone or e-mail,

and we did that a lot! Alcoholism and depression finally took him from us – that gentle, sensitive man chose to end his suffering. We loved him and miss him so, but his sweet nature, his loving countenance, will always be a part of us.

–Barbara Troutner

PAT WAS ONE OF MY TWO BIG BROTHERS. *During my college days when I was finding my way in life, I used to drive to Norman most weekends to hear Blue Rose Cafe. I was a student at NSU, a few hours away, and swore my Mustang convertible knew the way. I used to think it was so cool not only to go to the gigs, but to hang around the house and listen to the guys just play their guitars and sing. I met a guy who would become my husband*



*who did just that and we've been joining our friends to play guitars and sing for almost 25 years now. Pat moved back from Nashville a couple of years ago and brought friends and family together in our living rooms to play and sing. Here's Mike on his banjo, George on guitar, bass, whatever, I get to sing, Jack and Suzanne are always*

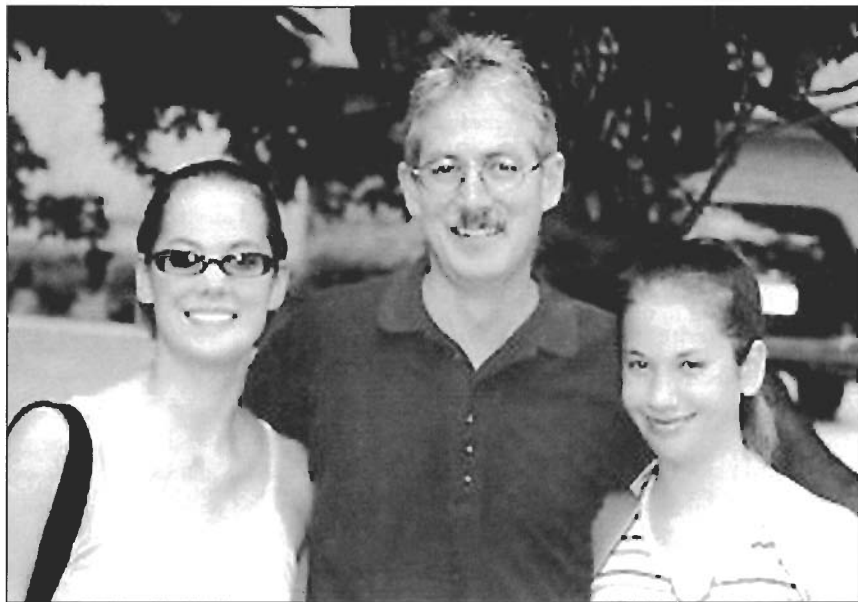
*there, we're trying to schedule these things when Barbara's in town. There are old and new friends – sort of like going back to my roots, bringing us all together again. I am so grateful to have been brought up in the midst of all of these creative people who have shaped who I am and what is important in my life. I am grateful to Pat for his gentle nature, his corny sense of humor, his love of music, and his ability to pull people together to share it. I see this, and his beautiful girls, as his legacy. I wish he were here to share it, but will have to settle for being a part of keeping it alive and well.*



—Linda Barton

I still find myself grieving each day. I think of Pat at least 13,000 times a day and his songs play forever in my mind. I wish I could have stood up in front of everyone and told them what a loving father he'd been.

Everyone knew him as a friend, a fellow musician, but I was fortunate not only to know him as that, but also as a father to his two beautiful daughters. He was there to care for them as young children, to give them rides on the riding lawn mower, to do all their school projects with them, to help Cassie get into college with all the financial applications, and take care of all their taxes, etc. The list is endless but even though he struggled through many years of it, he was always there for them, always. I am just glad he does not have to carry the truckload of



shit around anymore and that even though he could not lick it on the physical, his consciousness and pure spirit stayed intact. I didn't know how much I would miss Pat, but I loved this man, and saw him through so many hard times. It makes me feel better though to know the burden is lifted finally and his spirit is free. He is with each of us and will always remain in our hearts.

I hope we can remember the "soul" family we had together and stay in each other's lives not only for ourselves, and our children, but also for Pat.

-Jennifer Welch

ON APRIL 23 MY GOOD FRIEND AND BROTHER, PAT LONG, DIED. It was a shocking, tragic death, fueled by alcohol and depression but had been slowly, painfully developing over many, many years. Pat was a kind, gentle, caring man. I don't recall ever once hearing him say a negative, hateful word about another person (no matter how well deserved). He was a loving father, a loyal friend and family member. He was a musician, a poet, a writer and an artist as many of you are.

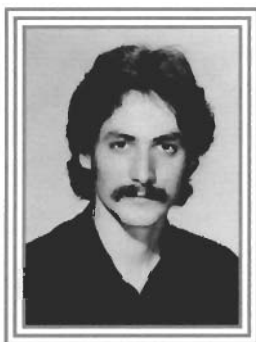
Unfortunately, as you are aware, our world today most often doesn't seem to have much use for this type of person anymore. Oh, they may be admired in an abstract way, sometimes even supported (if they manage to make the right people or companies a lot of money), but their value and worth, what they contribute to our world just isn't recognized or accepted or appreciated too much anymore. Now, I'm not saying Pat was a saint, but I know I've tried to be a better man because of him. When I feel ashamed when I'm critical or mean-spirited toward others it's because he showed me I could choose not to be that way, that hatefulness (even in jest) can be destructive. Yet I also know he accepted me and loved me for who I am, not what I am not. I hope he knew I felt the same way about him.

My sister, Julie, and I attended Pat's memorial service in Tulsa. Folks from all over Oklahoma, Tennessee, Arkansas, Texas and as far away as Oregon and Washington came to pay their respects to him. We told stories about Pat, about what he'd meant to us, how he'd influenced our lives and why we'll miss him. As we talked on the flight home to Seattle we realized just how much we miss this group of friends – family, really – and how much we still need to have them in our lives.

To me, the most important part of our gathering was for Pat's daughters, Cassie (Cassandra) and Olivia, to really find out what his true value and worth had been, what a successful human being he had been for 49 years based on his character and values, not his productivity statistics or income tax bracket. Of course, they already knew how much they loved and cared for their father but now they've seen how loved he was by all these people they barely know or had never heard of. The tears and laughter, the stories and memories, the joy of music shared after the service late into the night was a fitting tribute to a good man. When Tim Brown so eloquently asked "Hey, Kev, know what the difference between a pepperoni pizza and a musician is? A pepperoni pizza can feed a family of four" we all understood and roared with laughter, and that too helped ease the pain.

I'm not sure how many of you knew Pat or ever met him, but I thought you should know of his passing. Maybe it will inspire you to pick up your old guitar, sketch out a drawing, jot off a quick haiku or just call a friend that you've loved and shared your life with. And don't ever forget, we're all in this life together.

–Doug Martin



*After my Mom died I asked people to write about her,  
and the following was from Pat:*

Hi Julie,

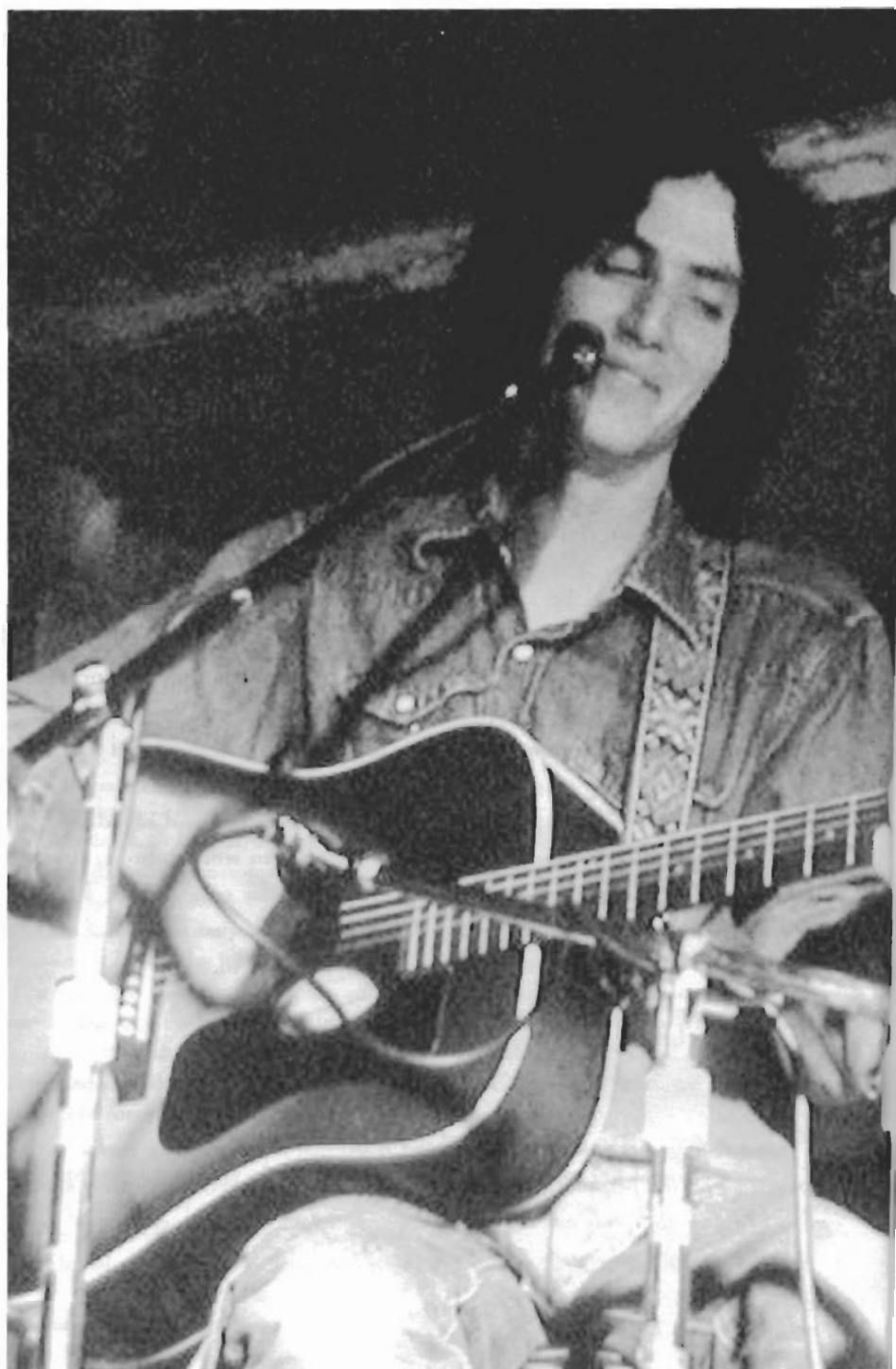
Your mom was my mom and my mom was your mom. What can I add? She always had an ace up her sleeve and a rare tolerance for children who didn't want to listen. God help us all who have children. I remember vividly coming home thru your yard from good old Hoover Elementary. A wasp was flying over my head and I was terrified. I couldn't move. I just kept screaming. Billee came out and saved me. She told me to look around. There was nothing to worry about, it was gone. I wish I could have been there to tell her the same thing. There's nothing to worry about, it's gone. No more heavy, just a lot of memories. Why don't you write me when you feel like it.

Your other brother,  
Pat

*I instantly forgave Pat for what he did and regret that he didn't know and experience his full potential. For him there are no more heavies. I can never know how he felt on the inside and can only imagine how hard it must have been to hide it from us. Nothing left to worry about.*

-Julie Martin Perrine







He laid himself down to dream tonight  
But he thought instead  
He talked but more he listened  
But not to me  
He listened to his heart  
He will be a music man  
His fingers will caress a world  
And give it all the comfort  
that eludes even he

His instrument will sing  
His voice will soothe  
the tears of millions  
And even though he sometimes feels alone  
he knows there's something there  
Lovers will love him  
And the poet will be his friend

But what is this magic  
That fills the air with sound when they are done?  
It seems that after all their time together  
The poet and the music man are one

The poet – his pen will bring a tear  
to the eye of the joker  
And a smile to the face of a world  
torn in hatred and war  
He will touch the hearts of all  
And all who read his beauty  
will become beautiful within

And it laid them to rest  
In eiderdown dreams

“The Poet and the Music Man”  
(Chris Whitney – Pat Long)



Pat Long was the best singer with whom I have ever had the privilege of being on stage. For side men, if the front man is good, everything else falls into place. For the couple of years that I was lucky to be on stage with Pat, he never let anyone down, in the audience or in the band. Pat could put more truth into one single note than most singers hope to achieve in a lifetime. Sing on brother.

—MICHAEL MCCARTY

A wonderful person and a great singer-songwriter who could hold a note longer than anyone I've ever heard. Amazing.

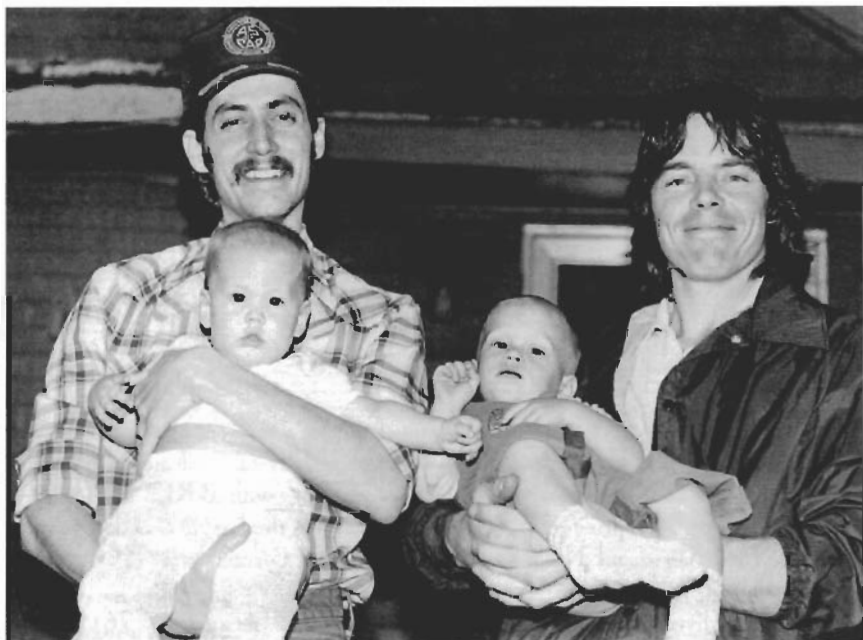
—STEVE GRUNDER

Not having seen Pat for so many years, it's hard for me to understand why his death swooped down and grabbed me by the neck and still hasn't let go. Maybe because it seems so unfair that such a good person could be so ill-treated by life; maybe because it reminds me how much I loved this sweet, sensitive artist, his soulful voice, and his honest, heartfelt songs that I was lucky enough to be able to contribute to; maybe because it brings home to me how strongly I feel connected to a wonderful bunch of people, and how much they mean to me, but also how I've never bothered to express it to any of them; and maybe because it triggers the realization that some things we put off never get done. Thank you, Pat, for reminding me about what's important.

—GARY JOHNSON

Pat and I came up together, gigging as Welch and Long as teenagers and in our bands New Rodeo and Blue Rose Cafe, and we eventually moved to Nashville together also. He was always the singer, great voice, and I was just the guitar player mostly, except when he made me sing . . . I learned Train to Birmingham from him. Well, I learned all kinds of things from him actually. I loved him very much.

—KEVIN WELCH



Dear Pat,  
Thanks for your friendship, and that voice  
flowing from a heart of gold.

Love always,  
JOHN HADLEY

MY FRIEND PAT LONG is gone. I say these words out loud, and I can make no sense of them. They are foreign, jarring. I shuffle them around in my head like a lousy poker hand, knowing in my heart that no combination of them makes anything good. They're not right; they don't belong together in the same thought. And yet this hard sad truth hangs over me like it's hanging over all of us who knew Pat and loved him for his gentle nature, his wry sense of humor, and his generous and loving heart.

I met Pat in 1976. He and Kevin Welch and two or three other yay-hoos played in a band called Blue Rose Cafe. They lived in Oklahoma but I got to know them in Colorado, where I lived and played music at the time. That Pat was a talented singer and songwriter was obvious. He was serious and thoughtful. But he had something more, and as I grew to know him I discovered his funny impish spirit, his love of a good joke, and what a truly nice man he was. He cared about people, and his friendship and word was something you could always count on.

In Nashville, in the '80s, we used to throw the frisbee sometimes, in the late afternoons and into the night. Pat would make these long, lazy, leaping catches, and they seemed almost effortless. He had an athlete's grace, and I always thought he would have made a great first baseman. I'd love to throw the ol' frisbee with you one more time, Pat. I miss you a lot. And like I said, the words don't even seem real yet. I hope they never do.

—Mark Paden

I JUST HEARD OF PAT'S PASSING, and wanted to take a moment to say to you how sorry I was to hear the news. Pat was a wonderfully talented musician, and it was an honor to know him and to play some of his songs with BRC. I remember the "lawyers' gig" in spring of '77, which I think was the last time BRC played together. Pat, Kevin and Nick Rorick did "Train to Birmingham."

Pat and Patti lived with Terry and me for a month or two in summer '76, between apartments. I think they had a dog, and the mailman wouldn't deliver the mail because of him! Some mighty fond memories of those days, with nights at the High Horse Tavern sitting in. The first time I sat in with them, I wondered, who are these guys!?? They're great!! It was the writing, always a great song, always that great voice.

My sincerest condolences to you Jack, for the loss of your son Pat, and to our world for the loss of a wonderful poet.

—Mark Dilac

I REMEMBER PAT so well even though I haven't seen him in many years. Pat was such a wonderful musician and songwriter. In the past year or two, I've been singing a song of Pat's that I'd learned many years ago from a Blue Rose Cafe tape: "You'll Never Be Alone." That song has always touched me and the people for whom I sang it. I played a show last Friday night during which I sang it and asked that everyone remember Pat.

-Nancy K. Dillon

WELL I NEVER GOT TO KNOW PAT AS WELL AS A LOT OF YOU,

I was really on the fringes of the Blue Rose days, but I did go to lots of shows and actually was closer to Pat than I was to Kevin back then. I always loved talking about songs with Pat and we shared a common love of the music of fellow Oklahoman Jimmy Webb. Of course like many I remember the High Horse days and I did get to do some features on the band for the *Oklahoma Daily* student newspaper. As I continued to work with Kevin in Austin and then here at the Blue Door, I did get to see Pat on occasion

and was always so glad to. The last time I saw Pat, he and his dad and sister and George and a whole bunch of the old Norman gang came to see Kevin at the Blue Door. I mentioned to Pat that I sure would love to see him on that Blue Door stage sometime. Well Kevin got him up to sing "Train to Birmingham" and as I smiled at this wonderful moment I had no idea it would be the first and last time he sang here. So now I sit with this great Blue Rose collection Neil Kingsley made for me and I am loving his wonderful rich and understated voice all over again. And Kev, hey man you did really play

some good stuff back then!!!! You really could have become Mike Henderson!!

Kevin and Kieran Kane called Pat on his birthday during their show last March and what a great moment that was for everyone. Blue Rose Cafe along with Ray Wylie Hubbard and the Cowboy Twinkies were my first foray into music on a real personal level and that is where I have stayed ever since. Thank you Pat for all the great music.

Love, Greg Johnson  
and all of us at the Blue Door

PATRICK WAS MY  
FRIEND. HE WAS MY  
BROTHER.

I remember sitting on  
the rooftop of the house  
in East Norman with  
Patrick, Doug Martin,  
Chris Whitney, Kevin  
Welch . . . watching



the sun set . . . and  
Patrick wrote a song  
about it, and I haven't  
forgotten it to this day.

I remember Patrick's  
excitement, when brother  
Mike and Ron came to  
Norman, as Bear Left  
. . . how he loved to  
listen to Mike play  
banjo . . . and picked it  
up himself. I remember  
how proud he was,  
when Linda first visited  
in Norman, and then  
Jimmy. He never failed  
to introduce them to  
anyone he knew . . .  
and we loved them, too.

I remember New  
Rodeo. I remember  
Blue Rose Cafe. I  
remember my friend and  
his bands being on the  
road. I remember  
Patrick falling in love  
with Patti and getting  
married. I remember  
when Blue Rose Cafe

played its last time.  
I remember living in  
East Tennessee, when  
Patrick and Kevin  
called and said they  
were moving to  
Nashville. I remember  
Cassie being born and  
holding her in my arms.

Most of all,  
I remember Patrick . . .  
his family . . . his  
friends . . . the love he  
shared with me. He  
was always there when  
I needed him. I will  
always remember that.

I remember "Just a  
boy from Oklahoma,  
on an endless one night  
stand . . ."

—James Lucas

PAI AND I BECAME PARTS OF EACH OTHER at that awkward and trying time of  
adolescence, and I know he made that time more bearable for me. Through those  
years we shared almost every waking moment, as well as sharing our families.  
What I will always cherish the most was our shared laughter. Whether the  
rolling around belly-laughter, or just the silly giggling, those times kept us sane.

—Jim Best

*A life well-lived doesn't end  
any more than music ends . . .  
it echoes through time  
with whispers of beauty and grace . . .  
If we listen,  
we can hear the encore with our hearts,  
for the song plays on,  
just as love lives on.*



CASSIE & OLIVIA



the orange light of the modern world  
swirls in the early night's haze  
while the flute's comforting tones float  
over the tireless banjo's refrain  
while it weaves around the guitar's melody

one hundred and fifty years are awash  
in the melodies of America  
on this back porch tonight  
another good man gone

harmonies drop like teardrops  
off of silver strings  
joy and sorrow shout out as one  
a strong gathering voice is missing from home  
another good man now gone

the harp player tries to fend off the blues  
tryin' to hold off that relentless train  
the tracks ringing every man's name  
one name now less to call  
but we sing it out anyway  
we miss this good man now gone

deep in the dusky woods  
the fireflies raise their sails  
the crickets defer to second fiddle  
but the moon and the stars  
cut through the tears  
so the voices and music  
can celebrate and honor  
our good man  
now gone

NEIL KINGSLEY  
4/28/03