



Russell S. Omens

April 20, 1951 - November 17, 2017

Russell S. Omens, adoringly known as Russ/Rusty, passed away on November 17, 2017, in Bradenton, Florida.

Russ was born to Charles and Esther Omens on April 20, 1951, in Chicago, Illinois. He was a cherished husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle, son, friend, and pappy to his pooches. Among his most admirable qualities was the great care he took of his relationships. He will be deeply missed by all who had the great fortune of knowing him.

Russ earned his doctorate in Clinical Psychology from the Illinois School of Professional Psychology in 1997. He held two academic appointments and authored many professional publications. He was a highly respected psychologist who devoted his life to helping others.

In addition to his illustrious career, Russ was an accomplished songwriter and musician. Music was his passion, his life's work. He began writing as a very young man and played many instruments, especially the guitar and piano. His enduring wish was for his music to live on. Listen to it, and play it when you can.

Russ is survived by his wife of 14 years, Carrie Meo-Omens; two daughters, Nicole (Ryan) Meo and Danielle (Ceeg) Meo; two grandchildren, Clarence and

Elyse who were the light of his life; sister, Ellen (Tom) Booth; sister-in-law, Victoria Sanderson; father-in-law, William Clarkson; nephews and nieces, Clayton (Heidi) Booth, Edan (Russell) Koopman, Rachel (Kyle) Sanderson, and Jill Sanderson; and three great nieces and nephews. Russ is preceded in death by his parents Charles and Esther, his mother-in-law Jill Marshall, and his beloved pooch Angus.

Russ' life will be celebrated in the spring in Chicagoland.

Memorial contributions may be made in Russ' honor to Nate's Honor Animal Rescue, Bradenton, Florida. <https://honorsanctuary.ejoinme.org/MyPages/InMemoryofRussOmens>

Tribute Wall

RK

“ I went to grad school with Russ. He was a loyal friend and only had goodness in his heart. Rest in Piece my friend.

Rob Klukoff

Rob Klukoff - May 07 at 10:43 PM

RM

“ Dr Omens helped me in 2011 when I was going through difficult times in the military. He had a gift and I felt we had a bond. I wish I had been able to know him better and outside of the client-patient relationship. "The good, it seems they all die young."

Richard Marx - September 01, 2018 at 12:00 AM

DB

“ Sending my condolences to the family and wishes that you find peace in your loving memories at this difficult time. I'm so very sorry for your loss.

Dana Beede - December 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ I grew up in the northern suburbs of Chicago with a small group of close friends, some of whom were already accomplished musicians, but none more so than Russ. I will always remember Russ and Dave Kossy jamming on acoustic guitars, weaving melody and harmony in an absolutely brilliant fashion.

Russ was a remarkable guitarist and vocalist and a serious student of music, but he was also an intelligent, compassionate and insightful person so it was no surprise to his friends when he chose a career that would allow him to help others find some measure of peace and comfort in their own lives.

My wife and I were privileged to attend Russ's wedding to the lovely Carrie Meo and on that day Russ was the happiest we have ever seen him. Sadly, we did not maintain contact over the distance and years, but we heard from others that their love continued to strengthen and endure.

Our heartfelt condolences go out to Carrie and family. Russ will never be forgotten.

Patrick and Vicki Michel

December 09, 2017 at 12:00 AM

PF

“ Russ, my old friend, missing you for too long. Even in life the distance between us rendered visiting one another improbable. We shared many fond memories of our college days at the end of the tumultuous 60's and into the uncertainty of the 70's. I remember clearly when that which ultimately took you first visited itself upon you. You fought a brave fight for so long and accomplished much in the course of your lifetime. My one regret is that we were never able to go on the road thru Europe together. We were so close but, lost the opportunity at the last. Perhaps there will be other road trips in our future. Roll on brother. In Peacr and love; Puck



Paul Fior - December 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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Paul Fior - December 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

GI

“ End? No, it doesn't end here. Death is just another path, one which we must all take. The grey rain-curtain of this world rolls back, and all change to silver glass And then you see it White shores, and beyond, a far green country, under a swift sunrise.

Gina - November 28, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ I came to know Russ by means of our mutual friend, Dave Kossy, when we were both in our forties or thereabouts. We struck up an immediate friendship because of our shared interests, and if I could add just half a year to his life for every time we had breakfast, collaborated musically, attended a concert, or just talked politics, philosophy, music, football, and so on, he surely would've outlived anybody reading this. In one of our last conversations, we both expressed regret that we had not met sooner. It's not for me to say what I would have added to his formative years, but I told him I sure as hell would have been a guitar player.

To borrow from a line in Tennyson's *Ulysses*, "life piled on life" was not enough for Russ. He was voracious in just about everything, but especially in the life of the mind and the spirit. Books? Everything from comic books, newspapers, and magazines to Tolkien, Lovecraft, fantasy fiction, and, of course Freud and Jung. Music? Here, too, his tastes were widely varied. Dylan, the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, Procol Harum, Cash, Young, Hendrix, and other stars of the sixties on to Springsteen, Costello, Tom Waits, Patti Smith, Fleetwood Mac, Radiohead, and so on, and that's just rock. Motown, rockabilly, country, sweet soul music, the blues, and jazz, too--Thelonious Monk, Charlie Parker, Miles Davis, all the greats and some lesser lights, too. Then there was classical, too: Bach's *partitas*, Beethoven, Mahler, Mendelssohn, and Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* and *The Firebird*, to name a few.

So much reading and so much music that he was always running low on space. His wall-to-wall record collection before he moved to Florida made me worry for the support beams of his home--how much weight could they endure, especially when combined with his stacks of books and musical instruments? And that collection included vintage bootlegs he'd started gathering when he was just a record clerk attending practically every rock show there was, presumably at a discount, when tickets ran about \$3--and he had the stubs to prove it! Vinyl recordings I'd discarded in years past, he still had, and in pristine condition, starting with the original boot,

Dylan's The Great White Wonder. If nature abhors a vacuum, so too Russ. Every pod, pad, Kindle, flash drive, hard drive, cloud, or dropbox he ever had was soon filled to the brim.

And his own musical life was equally maxed out. He wasn't just a consumer of music--he wrote and played, too, in just about any style, and with professional skill. The very fingers on his picking hand seemed to have evolved to allow for dextrous riffs. Not surprisingly for someone responsible for countless songs either solo or in collaboration with Dave Kossy in their concept band Zendik or their duo, the Mighty Oak, or with me or many others along the line, he was playing and recording until the last months of his sadly abbreviated life.

But let me close by pointing out that Russ had a brimming heart, too. Back in 2012, I was in a lot of mental distress because of a bad case of tinnitus. Even though as a clinical psychologist, Russ spent hours and hours listening to his clients and even though he often had his own health woes to keep him occupied, he would call me frequently just to see how I was doing and to offer support, always patient, comforting, and empathetic. Though he drew a hard-luck hand with his Crohn's, he soldiered on, never losing his sense of humor or his humanity as he added more than his share of love and beauty to the world.

To say I'll miss him would be understatement, but, ironically, an overstatement, too, because I can hardly hear a tune or pick up an instrument without having him right in my head and in my heart. If it turns out that life endures past the grave and that the universe isn't infinite, I'm betting that Russ has commenced filling up all the black holes as you read this. We can only hope that he leaves some space for the rest of us.

John Buckvold - November 25, 2017 at 12:00 AM