



Eric R. Waltman

Musician, Joyous Man, Civil Servant, Husband, Father, and
Friend

October 4, 1950 - May 19, 2025

Dear Citizens,

I can't tell you the number of occasions that Eric Waltman simply made better by being there, and now I'm sad to report that he has passed.

Eric was one of the most joyous, smiling, sweet men I have ever met. He would greet you with a warm handshake and a characteristic tilt of his head. He was truly engaging.

Best known locally as a musician, Eric played the stand-up bass. His stature was small and he would nearly climb the huge instrument. Other times he would play his almost non-existent electric bass. No matter which he had in tow, his enthusiasm for his music was exuberant. Honestly it was hard to keep your eyes off of him, you simply had to feel his contagious joy.

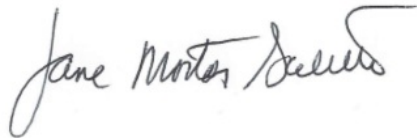
I had occasion to work with him on two NJN films, in which we used the music of his band, the Snake Brothers, for our sound track. I do believe it was important to him when mentioning its name, or at least I was indoctrinated to believe as much. Eric was home-grown and the Snake's music was as "Down Jersey" as you could get, the perfect backdrop for our film "Down Jersey" and "Bayshore Artists."* Director Louis Presti loved the Snakes and Eric was our go-to guy. He always made dealings pleasant.

I remember CU once hosted a tour of his garden. He was really all in and had a lot of knowledge to share. Gardening wasn't simply a passing phase, he was totally committed. He had 50 years of experience growing things, plus a certification from the Rutgers Master Gardeners program of which he was very proud. He enjoyed sharing and helping others with their gardening interests.

He also beamed when he spoke of his "harem," his wife Betsy, his two brilliant daughters, and his beloved mother. Our condolences to his family and friends. Godspeed, Eric, and thank you for the joy you brought to other's lives.

Details for his service below.

Sincerely,



Jane Morton Galetto
CU Maurice River Board President

*you can watch the films on the CU website www.cumauriceriver.org and enjoy listening to the Snake Brothers Band.

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Eric Waltman Obituary

Eric Robert Waltman, beloved son, husband, and father, passed away peacefully at home on May 19, 2025 at the age of 74, after over a year of battling ALS.

A lifelong resident of Millville with deep, old roots in the area, Eric graduated from Millville Senior High School (class of 1969), West Virginia Wesleyan College (BA, 1973), and Fairleigh Dickinson University (MA, 1985). He and Betsy met at college and moved back to South Jersey after graduation. After stints as a Teamster in the glass factory shipping yards, as a school security guard, and as a professional bassist on the bar circuit, he eventually settled on following his parents into civil service. He worked as a Probation Officer for the Superior Court of New Jersey in Bridgeton, specifically the Family Crisis Unit, where he was a proud leader and bargaining team member with

his union, the Probation Association of New Jersey. He retired in 2005 after twenty-five years of service.

Eric was, first and foremost, a musician. He played upright and electric bass for most of his life and was a founding member of longtime area band The Snake Brothers, who were fixtures at local festivals and events for over 30 years. His other musical projects included Lush Pile and the CarPettes, Smoked Country Jam, and The Basement Band. In the 1970s, he visited Romania with the West Virginia Wesleyan Jazz Band and later toured the eastern US with Smoked Country Jam, for whom a folk festival in western Pennsylvania is now named. He and Betsy spent some summers living above The Ugly Mug in Cape May when Smoked Country Jam was the house band.

A Master Gardener both by Rutgers certification and 50 years of experience, he turned his suburban yard into an organic pollinator habitat and small-scale vegetable and berry farm, including one of Millville's first compost piles. Every summer, he kept his family fed with organic produce and usually had a free vegetables stand in the front yard for the neighbors during peak harvest. He often grew too much and was always happy to share.

Always athletic, he played doubles tennis with a group of friends and cousins regularly for decades until his symptoms began in early 2024. Eric also volunteered his time and expertise with various organizations around town over the years, including The Barn Studio of Art, Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River, and Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center. He greatly enjoyed supporting local artists as well as local conservation efforts.

Eric is survived by his devoted and beloved wife, Betsy; his mother, AnnaLouise; his two daughters, Anna (Jonathan Matyasovski) of Woodbury Heights, NJ and Kaye Tevis "Kate" (Nathan Brown) of Robbins, NC; his loyal animal companions, Jaxon and Maggie; many nieces, nephews, and cousins; and a large circle of longtime friends. He was predeceased by his father, Millville City Clerk Conrad A. Waltman, and his brother, John L. Waltman.

Friends, family, and community members are invited to pay their respects on Friday, May 23rd at Christy Funeral Home, 11 West Broad Street, Millville, NJ. Visitation will be held from 10:00 to 11:00am and a memorial service will begin at 11:00am. In honor of Eric's commitment to our local environment, the family requests memorial donations to Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and its Tributaries in lieu of flowers. We also encourage you to plant something native in his memory. Memories of Eric and condolences for his family may be shared on his tribute wall.

CU ON THE RIVER

www.CUMauriceRiver.org



Citizens United To Protect the Maurice River and Its Tributaries | P.O. Box 474 | Millville, NJ
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