

A man with a beard and glasses, wearing a maroon t-shirt and a black baseball cap, is shown from the chest up, playing a cymbal. He is looking upwards and to the left. In the background, there are two guitars: an acoustic guitar on the left and an electric guitar on the right. The background is a warm, golden-yellow color with musical notes and a blue sky with clouds at the bottom. The text "Celebrating Bruce Tyler" is written in a large, stylized, cursive font with gold and blue colors and a 3D effect. The background also features a large, stylized musical note on the left and a cymbal on the right.

Celebrating **Bruce Tyler**

NOVEMBER 7, 1950 - SEPTEMBER 12, 2026

Saturday, October 3, 2026
1:00PM - 3:00PM
CAGGIANO MEMORIAL HOME
62 Grove Street • Montclair, NJ 07042

Obituary

Bruce Elliott Tyler was born on November 7, 1950, in Montclair to Bernice Turner and George Tyler. His family then moved to Verona, where Bruce spent his earliest years. He returned to Montclair after kindergarten to live with his beloved aunt, Mae Turner, and her family. He continued to reside in Montclair for the rest of his life.

Bruce discovered his musical gift for percussion while attending Glenfield Middle School. After graduating from Montclair High School, he went on to earn an Associate's Degree in music from Essex County College. Bruce studied drums with Carl Wolff, Andrei Strobert, Freddie Waits, Charlie Persip, and other skilled drummers with the New York Jazzmobile. He was especially proud of his accomplishment of earning a Bachelor's Degree in anthropology from Montclair State University.

A lifelong student and avid reader, Bruce pursued wide-ranging interests in music, politics, art, science, anthropology, and world culture. His knowledge and love of percussion as a drum teacher inspired generations of students eager to be professionally trained.

Throughout the years, Bruce proudly performed with numerous master musicians and notable ensembles, including Jazz Prophets, Tayata, a jazz fusion ensemble, and Black Lace Blues, an eclectic blues band, to mention a few.

He performed at venues throughout the tri-state area, including Trend Coffee & Tea House, Trumpets Jazz Club, DLV Lounge, Franklin Tavern, Tierney's Tavern, Maplewoodstock, and many more.

Despite playing several different genres, the Blues always held a special place in Bruce's heart. The Blues, "...speaks to you," he once said. "It's heartfelt, and it tells a story."

His hands-on contributions, led Bruce to found Jazz Month in Montclair in 2003. Bruce was also instrumental in leading the development of the Montclair Jazz Archives, housed at the Montclair Public Library. He had a passion for preserving the history of past and present local musicians, performances, and venues in and around Montclair and the greater Newark area.

Bruce served in many capacities with the Montclair Arts Council, Jazz House Kids, Montclair Jazz Festival, memorial Woodstock celebration in New York and many others.

He was an important contributor to the long-running Montclair Blues and Jazz Festival, an annual celebration that became a cherished part of Montclair's cultural life and a predecessor to today's Montclair Jazz Festival.

Bruce was also an avid collector of drums and beads. After working for years in the bead business, including at Timeless Treasures, he amassed an extensive collection of precious beads and exhibited portions of it at the Montclair Public Library.

To many in Montclair, Bruce was simply Bruce—a familiar presence walking or bicycling through town, often with his drumstick bag in hand. He seemed to know everyone, and everyone seemed to know him. He was a drummer, teacher, historian, collector, mentor, lifelong student, arts advocate, neighbor, and friend.

His personality was colorful. He was caring, fun, silly, but don't get on his bad side. He could be a firecracker, at times (smile).

Montclair is richer because Bruce was here. His music, generosity, curiosity, and devotion to his community will continue to resonate long after he played his final beat on September 12, 2026.

He leaves to mourn his musical family, lifelong friends and countless others.



Order of Service

Musical Prelude

Welcome Invocation

Scripture Readings

Old Testament

New Testament

Musical Selections

Special Speakers

Reflections & Acknowledgements
(2 minute limit)

Poem

Musical Selections

Presentations

Song

Obituary

Eulogy

Closing Remarks & Special Thanks

Recessional

Repast will follow at:

415 First Montclair House
56 Walnut Street, Montclair, NJ
Community Room (Street Parking)

To Say Goodbye

*To say goodbye is not the end
To all my family and friends
For life goes on, you must endure
For my eternity is sure.*

*Remember all the good times
The memories we've shared
The precious jewels of laughter
'The tender love and care.
I found my resting place
God's peace surrounds my soul
'Let love abound in all your hearts
Let heaven be your goal.*

-Author unknown

Acknowledgement

*The family of the late **Bruce Tyler** wishes to express our gratitude and deep appreciation for all acts of kindness during this time. We greatly acknowledge and thank you for your calls, support, and prayers. God bless you all.*



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