



Stephen E. Masters

May 15, 1967 - March 2, 2020

Masters, Stephen E.

Green Oak Township, Michigan

Stephen Masters, Our Greatest Showman, passed away unexpectedly from a heart attack on March 2, 2020, at the age of 52 years. Stephen Edward Masters was born on May 15, 1967 in Saginaw, Michigan.

Stephen is survived by his parents, Edward and Suzanne (Wendt) Masters; His cats, Six and Seven; Sibling Kimberly and husband, Jeffrey Fluder, aka “the best Brother-in-Law;” Nephew Cameron and Nieces McKenna and Madison; and many other loving extended family members and dear friends survive. Stephen was predeceased by his grandparents, Donald and Beatrice Wendt and Robert and Gwendolyn Masters.

“Steve was such a positive light in all our lives and he will be so deeply missed,” indicated Fair Operations Manager McKenzie Bowman. “This was a very unexpected tragedy that we will all be mourning for a long time to come.” The Michigan State Fair Family is heavily leaning on each other and sending endless thoughts and prayers to all during this time of sorrow. Stephen returned to the lower peninsula in 2014 to accept the position of Director of the Michigan State Fair, LLC, he continued to build the bridge that connected his two worlds - his love for his family below the Mighty Mac and his adopted

heart-family and friends in the Upper Peninsula. Under the direction and inspiration of Masters, the re-incarnated Michigan State Fair grew its attendance from 80,000 in its first year in 2013 to over 170,000 in 2019, more than doubling its footprint and expanding the number of live shows, attractions and scholarship money awarded each year. "Steve taught us all so much and was responsible for taking the Michigan State Fair to the new levels that we were able to achieve in recent years," said Fair Manager, Blair Bowman Sr. "He will be remembered and missed for not only these accomplishments but what will be missed the most is his friendship."

A tireless promoter of all things great about the state of Michigan, Steve, a South Lyon resident, enjoyed spending time with his family and friends, spending time in the great outdoors, boating on the lake, traveling, music, and watching his beloved Green Bay Packers.

Before joining the State Fair team in March of 2014, Masters was hired in 2004 to serve as the Executive Director of the Bays de Noc Convention & Visitors Bureau and as a member of the Upper Peninsula State Fair Management Team through 2014. Steve was a member of the management team that was responsible for a successful transition when the U.P. State Fair operations moved from State to regional governance. Under his direction, Delta County and the Upper Peninsula gained greater exposure as he was instrumental in recruiting and organizing world-class events that brought thousands of visitors to the region. It was a perfect position for Steve as he poured his heart and soul into promoting Delta County as, in his words, it was "a great place with great people, and a wealth of indoor and outdoor activities with something for every visitor during every season."

Steve was actively involved in the communities in which he lived. He was a member of the Eagles Aerie 1088. He was elected to the position of township supervisor for Maple Ridge Township, member of the Delta Force Leadership

Development program, served on the boards of the Upper Peninsula Travel and Recreation Association and the Michigan Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus.

Steve's lifetime of Fair, Festival, Event Production and Carnival experience began during his youth growing up in Saginaw, where his family owned and operated Masters Rides Carnival. It continued with six years spent with Bill and CJ on Skerbeck Brothers Shows as Operations Manager followed by Wade Shows as Assistant Controller. Steve graduated from Central Michigan University in 1991 with a degree in Journalism and Public Relations. He was actively involved in several campus activities, clubs, and a member of Beta Theta Pi Fraternity.

Friends are welcome to visit with family at the Wakeman Funeral Home, 1218 N. Michigan Ave., Saginaw, Michigan, on Tuesday, March 10th from 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Pastor Matthew Hauser will officiate a Visitation from 10 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. with the Church Service starting at 11:00 a.m., Wednesday, March 11, 2020, at Peace Lutheran Church, 3427 Adams Ave., Saginaw, Michigan. Steve will be laid to rest in Spaulding Township Cemetery at a later date. A luncheon at Bayne's Apple Valley, 5395 Midland Rd. Freeland, MI will immediately follow after the service.

The Celebration of our Greatest Showman, Stephen Edward Masters, to be held at the Suburban Collection Showplace in Novi, Michigan, on Friday, March 13, 2020, "has been cancelled", but will take place at a later date.

Those wishing to express their love and sympathies are asked to consider a memorial contribution in lieu of flowers and cards to the Stephen Masters Memorial Fund. Please contact Flagstar Bank. The Stephen Masters Memorial Fund will provide college scholarships for his surviving nieces and

nephew, a Michigan State Fair 4-H Scholarship, and a Michigan Upper Peninsula State Fair Scholarship. Sympathies of Steve may be shared with his family on his memorial website at WakemanFuneralHome.com, Wakeman, Peace Lutheran Church, and at the Celebration for our Greatest Showman.

In the words of our Greatest Showman, Stephen Masters:

“I WANT TO SAY SOMETHING TO ALL OF YOU
WHO HAVE BECOME PART
OF THE FABRIC OF MY LIFE

THE COLOR AND TEXTURE
WHICH YOU HAVE BROUGHT INTO MY BEING
HAVE BECOME A SONG.
AND I WANT TO SING IT FOREVER

THERE IS AN ENERGY IN US
WHICH MAKES THINGS HAPPEN
WHEN THE PATHS OF OTHER PERSONS
TOUCH OURS
AND WE HAVE YET TO BE THERE
AND LET IT HAPPEN

WHEN THE TIME
OF OUR PARTICULAR SUNSET COMES
OUR THING, OUR ACCOMPLISHMENT
WON'T REALLY MATTER A GREAT DEAL.

BUT THE CLARITY AND CARE
WITH WHICH WE HAVE LOVED OTHERS
WLL SPEAK WITH VITALITY

OF THE GREAT GIFT OF LIFE
WE HAVE BEEN FOR EACH OTHER.”

Cemetery Details

Spaulding Township Cemetery

5636 Cole Road
Saginaw, MI 48601

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 10. 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Wakeman Funeral Home, Inc.
1218 N. Michigan Ave.
Saginaw, MI 48602
(989) 752-8531
wakemanfh@charter.net

Visitation

MAR 11. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Peace Lutheran Church
3427 Adams Ave.
Saginaw, MI 48602

Service

MAR 11. 11:00 AM (ET)

Peace Lutheran Church
3427 Adams Ave.
Saginaw, MI 48602

Tribute Wall



“ *Stephen E. Masters*

September 13, 2022 at 05:01 PM



“ *Stephen E. Masters*

September 13, 2022 at 02:27 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Stephen E. Masters.*



March 09, 2020 at 10:55 AM



“ *Family of Mike Balon and Elisa Fixler purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Stephen E. Masters.*



Family of Mike Balon and Elisa Fixler - March 09, 2020 at 10:46 AM

MB

“ We’re still in shock over the news of Steve’s passing! We had the great pleasure and honor to know Steve since he Joined the Michigan State Fair. He provided the leadership and resources our entertainment team needed to showcase the best talent from around our state. Steve was kind, transparent, wise, enthusiastic, very hard working, warm, an encourager, creative and gentle. He was the leader and professional the Fair needed, and he will be terribly missed. He sometimes felt more like a brother..., perhaps the big brother we all wanted in our life. We wonder, perhaps unconventionally, but perhaps not, if God didn’t decide that Steve was just the man he needed to organize a grand celebration in heaven to welcome other pilgrims’ home to Him. God’s Peace, Steve.

Mike Balon Elisa Fixler

Denise Balon Heather Balon

Michael R Balon - March 09, 2020 at 10:41 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Stephen E. Masters.



March 08, 2020 at 03:06 PM

BK

“ Steve was such a wonderful man always upbeat! My family and I got to know Steve by him coming to my Salon to have his haircuts. He loved his family ! He made a lot of friends in the UP! He always had a smiles on his face! He will be missed! We want to extend our sympathy to his family!! Sincerely Barb and Butch KULACK

Barb and Butch Kulack - March 07, 2020 at 08:40 PM



“ *Tender Tribute was purchased for the family of Stephen E. Masters.*



March 07, 2020 at 04:30 PM



“ *I had the honor to work for the Master's . Steve was a great person inside and out. I am sorry for the lost, my heart go's out to the family . Your in my thought's and prayers. Steve will be missed so much.*

Brenda Newberry - March 07, 2020 at 12:27 PM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Stephen E. Masters.*



March 06, 2020 at 08:44 PM



“ *Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of Stephen E. Masters.*



March 06, 2020 at 10:05 AM



“ *Majestic Heart* was purchased for the family of *Stephen E. Masters*.



March 05, 2020 at 09:56 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet* was purchased for the family of *Stephen E. Masters*.



March 05, 2020 at 09:26 PM

SS

“ Our families were devastated to hear the news of the passing of our dear friend and colleague, Steve Masters. His position as the Executive Director of the Michigan State Fair was a culmination of a lifelong association and love of the Amusement industry. We are most fortunate to have known and worked with Steve and the Masters family throughout their tenure in the carnival business. Always a vibrant, zealous ambassador of all things carnival, festival or fair related, his loss will be deeply felt throughout the collective industries. His witty, jovial demeanor accented by his sparkling blue eyes were truly his calling card. He had a deep respect for the traditions of our industry fueled with an insatiable excitement to integrate today’s cutting edge technology, thus keeping the fair going experience current yet warmly nostalgic. The hours of dedication that Steve devoted to the resurrection of the Michigan State Fair after it was briefly disbanded from its original location are immeasurable. With the confidence, support, guidance and direction of the Bowman family, Steve has been extremely instrumental in the surging success of the Michigan State Fair, now held at its new home at the Suburban Collection Showplace in Novi. Steve could be seen in all facets of the fair whether it be plotting out the footprint for the carnival, vendors or 4-H livestock, conducting promotional tv or radio interviews, greeting guests upon arrival or announcing the closing of the grounds each night over the PA system. If you were quick enough to catch him zooming by on a golf cart, he couldn’t help but to stop and make sure that all systems were running smoothly. Admittedly, there were days of chaos, laced with a bit of frustration, that kept him on his toes but he soldiered through until things we’re running like a well oiled machine while on his watch. Our entire Schmidt and Arnold families would like to extend our sincerest condolences to the Masters family, most especially to his parents Ed and Sue, his sister Kim and her family and the Blair Bowman family. You’re world was certainly a brighter place for having Steve in it, as was ours. God Bless you Stephen Edward Masters, until we meet again on heaven’s brightest midway. 🙏❤️
With love and my sincerest condolences,
Sandy Schmidt

Sandy Schmidt - March 05, 2020 at 08:41 PM

DS

“ *I had the pleasure of getting to work with Steve just briefly as a member of the State Fair Senior Day Committee last year, and we were just beginning to work again. He was an absolute delight to work with, kind, funny, and extremely capable. My deepest condolences to his family and friends.*

Derek Stogner - March 05, 2020 at 04:06 PM

ME

“ *There's something very special about the first real friend you make at college.*

You always made everything more fun. People were drawn to you. You were kind. You were a protector, a partner in crime, and a brother.

RIP Steve. My young life was better because you were in it.

__ kai __



Michael Erickson - March 05, 2020 at 08:47 AM

GS

“ I only met Steve a few brief times and sincerely enjoyed his smile and openness to meeting new people. I work for his dad, Spaulding Township Supervisor, Ed Masters, and have been so very blessed to get to know his wife Sue as well. The "Masters Family" are some of the most loving, caring, and down-to-earth realistic people I have ever had the good fortune to meet. My heart bleeds for their loss. Peace and love, Ginger Scheffler, Spaulding Township Secretary.

Ginger Scheffler - March 04, 2020 at 04:29 PM



“ Joyful Memory was purchased for the family of Stephen E. Masters.



March 03, 2020 at 09:48 PM