



## Robert “Lain” Hawkrige

May 12, 1958 - October 29, 2020

Robert McLain Hawkrige Jr. “Lain”, was born on May 12, 1958 in West Chester, Pennsylvania. He attended St. Andrews Academy and St. James Academy. He graduated from Washington College in 1980, returned to Kent County in 1987 and never left. He worked for UPS and received his Master’s in Education from Widener University. His career as a teacher included teaching in the Baltimore City and Kent County Public Schools before joining the faculty of Radcliffe Creek School, where he was an Orton-Gillingham teacher for 10 years. He retired from teaching to care for his parents, Robert McLain Hawkrige and Sally Middleton Hawkrige, who both predeceased him. During this time he tutored and coached people with learning disabilities primarily through Washington College and Bowman Educational Services/LINKZ.

Lain married Arlene F. Lee, his college sweetheart, in 1984 and again in 1999. He is survived by his wife and two sons, Ian McLain Hawkrige and Jennings Lee Hawkrige, and Ian’s partner, Sarah Bradham; his sister, Sally Hawkrige and nephew, Tim Beken; his godsons, Will Wood and Art Mason; and, his many beloved Middleton and Hawkrige cousins.

During his time as a UPS delivery driver Lain marched in the 1997 Teamster’s National Strike, an expression of a lifelong passion for economic, social, and racial justice. In recent years he became a founding member of the Social Action Committee for Racial Justice in Kent County. He was a primary organizer of the SACRJ food delivery program during the Covid-19 pandemic, extending vital food aid to schoolchildren and seniors in need during the shutdown of regular services. He personally delivered food to the seniors in the Baywood community, whom he came to call his friends.

Lain Hawkrige was deeply committed to family, community, young people, and equality for all. He loved chess, music, history, wine, scotch, and books of all kinds. Lain never missed a wine tasting at the Imperial and, later, he could be found discovering new scotches at the Retriever. He was a dedicated member of Lani Parks’ book club. Lain started an afterschool Scholastic Chess club with Michael Harvey that taught students in every Kent County school. He was devoted to his Library Chess program every Wednesday afternoon and the Thursday Night Chestertown Chess Club. For years he played chess at the Tea Party festival as Ben Franklin and served as a Tea Party Festival

Committee member. He made many friends in his journeys throughout the county, including during his weekly trips to the Chestertown Farmer's Market.

His fascination with music began as a child in the Holy Trinity Church choir and was evident every Thursday night during his Musicology Show on WKHS. He spent hours each week preparing to share his love for different artists and genres of music with his listeners. But he loved WKHS mostly for the opportunity to work with KHS students like "Johnny Rocker" and his fellow adult DJs. His most recent contribution to Kent County's music scene was his work as board member for the Chestertown Jazz Festival.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, services will be private for family members. The family requests those who wish to express sympathy consider making a donation to the Social Action Committee for Racial Justice in Lain Hawkrige's name.

# Comments

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“ A tribute video has been added.



**Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home** - November 03, 2020 at 12:45 PM



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**julie** - November 03, 2020 at 09:13 PM



“ I came to know Lain on a deeper level when we worked together "WE CAN'T BREATHE" mural on College Avenue. He was in perpetual motion all day long and we chatted from time to time. I noticed he was a man fully engaged...body-mind and spirit... with performing many tasks to supply everyone with what was needed to get this job done. He was a steady, cheerful and exuberant man with a mission.

While I many fond memories of that day, Lian stands out as the most engaging person I met. His smile and behavior spoke volumes about what we were there to do...to come together as people of all shades of skin color that we are declaring our commitment, right here, right now, with painted words that say, "We are in this to turn our town into a place where all people of color know they and their ancestors are respected for who they are, what they've done to build this town, what they do and what they bring to make our town a better place. And that we will now commit to doing so much more to give them the respectful treatment they deserve. That we will work to assure there is no path for racism to find it's way here anymore."

These painted words on two of our streets are a salute the inherent dignity and worth of every member of our black community. Lain was in his glory contributing his vision, sweat and talent. What better legacy than can a person have? What better way to model for others the way to bring about needed change? We can carry on knowing Lain is with us still, laughing, smiling, handing out a can of paint, offering a paint brush, and looking out over the scene with great relief and pride that finally, at last... a real concerted effort is happening.

Carol Dobson

**Carol Dobson** - November 09, 2020 at 01:30 PM

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“ 62 files added to the album LifeTributes



**Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home** - November 03, 2020 at 12:45 PM

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“ The Ruehrmund Family lit a candle in memory of Robert “Lain” Hawkridge



**The Ruehrmund Family** - November 02, 2020 at 11:49 AM

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“ Gail Kendall Claggett lit a candle in memory of Robert “Lain” Hawkridge



**Gail Kendall Claggett** - October 31, 2020 at 07:13 AM

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“ I was do saddened to hear the news of lain he will be sadly missed Jent county has lost a wonderful and kind person , my thoughts prayers go out to his family !!



**Shirley Foster** - October 30, 2020 at 03:21 PM