



David Malcom Burley

November 9, 1966 - April 6, 2025

David Malcom Burley, 58, of Minnetonka, Minnesota, passed away unexpectedly on Sunday, April 6, 2025, in a motorcycle accident in Wisconsin - doing what he loved, in the spirit of adventure that defined his life.

Born in Katanning, Western Australia (WA) and raised in WA, David carved a life that was unapologetically his own. He was bold, generous, curious, and endlessly driven. Whether establishing restaurants, diving coral reefs, or feeding people with both food and spirit, he did everything with intention and fire.

David lived his life as his own masterpiece - wild, tender, full of color and complexities. He was an adventurer in every sense of the word. He traveled the world, dove oceans and seas, flew the skies, and moved through the world like it was a gift meant to be fully opened. He found joy in motion, in beauty, in feeding people, in music and art. He had a big laugh, a sharp tongue, and a bottomless capacity for generosity.

He helped reshape how Minnesotans gather, eat, and connect - building restaurants that felt like home and sparked a deep sense of community.

Through the Blue Plate Restaurant Company, which he co-lead with his dear friend and longtime business partner Stephanie Shimp, he nurtured that vision into one of the most respected hospitality groups in the state - rooted in neighborhood values, creative integrity, and uncompromising standards.

But what set David apart wasn't how much he did. It was how he made people feel. He was disarmingly openhearted - quick to welcome, to listen, to offer

help without hesitation. He gave freely: meals, stories, rides, encouragement, space. Everyone who knew him felt the deep steadiness of his presence. You could count on him and he showed up.

David was the most incredible father. His three children - Charles Sparrow, Benjamin Javidan, and Isabella Javidan - were his heart. He raised them with love, humor, and a fierce sense of wonder. They carry his strength, his spark, and his warmth, and they adore him. His love for them shaped every corner of his life.

He is preceded in death by his father, Keith Burley.

David is survived by his children, Charles, Benjamin, and Isabella. He is also survived by his mother and stepfather, Jan and Tony Sefton, his brother and sister, Craig and Cheralyn Burley, his sister-in-law, Rochelle Burley, his nieces and nephews, and by his two beloved cats, BamBan and GinGin. He left behind a chosen family of remarkable depth. Friends, colleagues, staff, and the communities he poured himself into are forever changed by his love and presence.

David Burley's absence is enormous. His memory is etched into every heart he held, and he held so many.

There will be a public visitation on Tuesday, April 15, 2025 from 4:00 - 7:00 PM at Washburn-McReavy, 5000 West 50th & Highway 100, Edina, MN 55436.

Friends, guests and those who knew him are invited to "Last Call", an open house Wednesday, April 16, 2025 from 5:00 - 9:00 PM at The Freehouse, 701 N Washington Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55401.

www.Washburn-McReavy.com

Edina Chapel 952-920-3996

Previous Events

Visitation

APR **15**. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Edina Chapel
5000 West 50th & Highway 100
Edina, MN 55436

Celebration of Life

APR **16**. 5:00 PM - 9:00 PM (CT)

The Freehouse
701 N Washington Ave
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Tribute Wall

GK

“ David was my best friend and miss him every single day. I suspect we rode between 70-80k miles on motorcycles together, saw 7 Rolex 24 races with our kids, had several dirt biking adventures and many late nights of drinking and eating great food. He was a catalyst that brought people together and introduced me to so many great people. 2025's low lights have unfortunately eclipsed the highlights and hope for a far better 2026 for everyone who knew him. See you some day on the best roads in heaven david....

Greg Kolles - December 14, 2025 at 07:08 PM

ET

“ David was amazing. He was unique and he had a great sense of humor. In 1993, just before purchase of the Highland Grill, I asked whether they had any emergency/cash reserve fund for the business. He held up his arm and pointed to his watch! Definitely starting the Grill a shoestring. We will all miss him. Farewell, my friend.

Eric Norman Talsness - April 16, 2025 at 04:40 PM

DP

“ Met David several times over the years - mainly through the motorcycle community. Loved! Going to his restaurants & they're always good.

Had the pleasure of riding with him a couple times and he was an impressive rider with experience & skill beyond my own.

Very personable and present. Would run into him on occasion and we'd have a little chat.

I guess it is true that he passed doing something he loved... but too soon. My condolences to his family...

Was happy to lend a hand this morning.

RIP David

Don Papa - April 16, 2025 at 04:03 PM

BP

“ I met David years ago thru a great friend Drew Marto at his wedding. Then in August of 2022 I got to meet him again. We rode to Minneapolis after Sturgis. We went to one of his restaurant's where we had drinks. Then he invited us to his place where he made us this great steak meal. We then sat out on his balcony and chatted thru the night. We even talked about him meeting us in Sturgis sometime. He was truly a great person. I will say a prayer for him, his family and friends. May he Rest In Peace for now he is riding with the Angels.

Bob Perry

Bob Perry - April 16, 2025 at 02:14 PM



“ David was a champ and will be greatly missed by me and many more. We met at Doc's party and became fast friends. He always had my back and came to the rescue when other restaurateurs failed. His had great ideals and a zest for life. David supported many foundations and charity events, diving in and making a big splash whenever I asked. He fought the good fight alone for many others, long before they joined. His determination, creativity, and humor will remain. I missed your visitation today but will cheers you again tomorrow and look forward when we're all back together many years from now to remember just how damn good it all was. Catch you later, "mate".

Adam Southam - April 16, 2025 at 12:39 AM

F7

“ Fellow pilots - Cloud 7 purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of David Malcom Burley.



Fellow pilots - Cloud 7 - April 15, 2025 at 06:01 PM

BK

“ Brigid K. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of David Malcom Burley.

Brigid K. - April 15, 2025 at 03:15 PM

SH

“ On behalf of DinoMights, I offer condolences on the passing of David. David was so generous to donate gift cards to Blue Plate and desserts to the DinoMights fundraisers over the years. His gifts made a difference for youth living in Minneapolis and St. Paul. We are saddened by his loss.

Scott Harman - April 15, 2025 at 02:25 PM

LR

“ Lexington R. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of David Malcom Burley.

Lexington R. - April 15, 2025 at 10:19 AM

HM

“ Hospitality Minnesota purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of David Malcom Burley.



Hospitality Minnesota - April 15, 2025 at 08:44 AM

HM

“ Hospitality Minnesota planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of David Malcom Burley.

Hospitality Minnesota - April 15, 2025 at 08:44 AM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray* was purchased for the family of David Malcom Burley.



April 14, 2025 at 10:45 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of David Malcom Burley.



April 14, 2025 at 06:00 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* was purchased for the family of David Malcom Burley.



April 14, 2025 at 05:16 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of David Malcom Burley.

April 14, 2025 at 05:16 PM

EB

“ I knew David from working at Crosstown Cycle, he was a pretty funny guy even though we didn't chat much, I worked on a couple of his motorcycles. Eventually I realized I was seeing him all 12 days of the State Fair, taking his ticket at the back gate and had been dining in his establishments for years. This is such a tragic loss and I'm sending my thoughts up from Austin, TX. Rest peacefully and I hope the roads are paved better up there... probably not as good as the alphabet soup in Wisconsin.

Evan Baskerville - April 14, 2025 at 04:17 PM



“ A grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of David Malcom Burley.

April 14, 2025 at 04:12 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of David Malcom Burley.



April 14, 2025 at 01:09 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of David Malcom Burley.

April 14, 2025 at 01:09 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of David Malcom Burley.



April 14, 2025 at 01:01 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of David Malcom Burley.

April 14, 2025 at 01:01 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of David Malcom Burley.



April 14, 2025 at 11:23 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of David Malcom Burley.

April 14, 2025 at 11:23 AM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of David Malcom Burley.



April 13, 2025 at 04:37 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of David Malcom Burley.

April 13, 2025 at 04:37 PM



“ I was absolutely shocked to hear of David's death. People like David go through life with an air of invincibility. I worked at the Edina Grill around 2000 until 2002-03. Before being employed there I used to hang out and visit my sister, Sarah, who was a server, and David figured if I was there bussing and setting tables and running food I might as well get paid to do it. He and I would talk music every time he was in - sometimes arguing over which bands were better. He had a hot temper and didn't suffer fools. What I remember the most, though, is his laugh. It's been years and years since I've seen him but I remember that laugh well. He laughed with his whole body. He was never showy about his generosity - he just helped. I am heartbroken for his children, his family, his friends, and his staff. That staff at the Edina Grill when I was there was like family to me (one actually was - my sister) so I know everyone who worked at a Blue Plate restaurant has to be reeling still. I am so very sorry for your loss.

Emily (Hanson) Westphal - April 12, 2025 at 07:28 PM