



## Gregory Lee Ballard, Sr.

January 29, 1955 - November 9, 2016

Gregory Lee Ballard, Sr., 61, best known for his long-standing career as a professional basketball player, assistant coach, and scout in the National Basketball Association, passed away on November 9th, 2016, after a courageous battle with prostate cancer, surrounded by his loving family.

Gregory was born to parents William Ballard and Annie Clark on January 29, 1955 in Los Angeles, CA. He grew up in a family with three brothers and four sisters. Greg's athleticism flourished while attending Garey High School in Pomona, California where he played basketball, football, and baseball. He played baseball well enough to be drafted by the Montreal Expos as a right-handed pitcher in the 15th round of the June 1973 amateur draft.

Instead, Gregory accepted a basketball scholarship to attend the University of Oregon where he played the forward position on coach Dick Harter's famed "Kamikaze Kids." As a result of his collegiate career, Greg was inducted into the Pac-12 Hall of

Honor in 2009 and the University of Oregon Athletic Hall of Fame in 1993. Upon graduation, Greg was selected fourth in the first round of the 1977 NBA draft by the Washington Bullets and helped win an NBA Championship in 1978 during his rookie season. He played eight seasons with the Bullets (now Wizards) and two with the Golden State Warriors. He finished his career with the Seattle SuperSonics in 1989. He played for a total of 11 NBA seasons. Greg made the transition to coaching in Italy for Il Messaggero Roma. After his stint in Italy, he returned to the NBA where he went on to a long career as an assistant coach and scout. Greg served as an assistant coach and scout with the Atlanta Hawks for nine seasons (2004-2013), previous to that he worked with the Minnesota Timberwolves, Dallas Mavericks, and he finished his NBA career as a scout for the Washington Wizards for two seasons. Off of the court, Greg was so much more than basketball. He was a husband, father, grandfather, and dedicated to serving others as a spiritual, humble, laid back, hard worker, that loved cookies, trips to the movies, watching any and every sport, a master of dissecting basketball plays, a subtle comedian, a handy man and a giant who was always giving and brightening any room he entered.

Ballard's legacy lives on with his wife of over 40 years Donna E. Ballard of Tyrone, Georgia,;

Four children Lawrence Ballard and his wife Kelli Spangler-Ballard, Darrell Ballard, Gabrielle

Ballard, and Gregory Ballard Jr.; Three grandchildren Jordyn Ballard, Lake Li Ballard, and

Ezekiel Emmanuel Johnson; He is survived by three sisters, one brother, and numerous

nieces and nephews.

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

JAN 6. 4:00 PM (ET)

Parrott Funeral Home & Crematory  
8355 Senoia Road  
Fairburn, GA 30213  
(770) 964-4800  
info@parrottfuneralhome.com  
<https://www.parrottfuneralhome.com/>

# Tribute Wall

IS

“ *Isaac lit a candle in memory of Gregory Lee Ballard, Sr.* ”



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**Isaac** - February 09, 2020 at 01:05 AM

LB

“ I have just heard of Greg's passing and was very saddened, even though I hadn't seen him in nearly forty years. I attended University of Oregon while Greg was there, and like everyone else, loved watching him play basketball in the tight, loud, pounding world of Mac Court. But more than that Greg and I were nextdoor neighbors. We lived in the same apartment building on Ferry St. for two years. There were only 8 apartments, and we lived next to each other upstairs and easily became casual friends. He was so kind, funny, and reliable! That summer, he subleased my apartment so I wouldn't lose it when I returned to Eugene in the fall. ( He was already promised a bigger downstairs apartment in the Fall, when he could become the on-site manager.) When Fall came, I saw him a lot, since he didn't have a land line installed downstairs for the first 6 weeks ( no cell phones then), and as he had used my phone all summer, his Mom continued to call him on our line. She was so nice and fun to chat with, while my roommate ran downstairs to get Greg. He would linger to talk after those calls - nicest guy. One humorous thing I remember - The owners asked him to trim back the bushes along the driveway and the building, and he cut them back to just sticks! They were mostly rhododendrons, and visiting later, I saw it took 5 years for them to successfully grow back enough leaves to look like bushes again! I send my sympathy to his family. I have never forgotten his friendly, easy-going, good-hearted personality and how easy it was to have him for a neighbor... Rest in Peace.

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**Lois Fearey Barnum** - August 02, 2019 at 05:03 AM



“ Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Gregory Lee Ballard, Sr..



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January 04, 2017 at 02:33 PM