



## Edward Michael Vertuno, Jr.

October 20, 1963 - August 29, 2025

Edward Michael Vertuno Jr., who built a legacy in Tallahassee as a musician, raucous band frontman and sound engineer, died Aug. 29 after a valiant struggle with cancer. He was 61.

Music was Ed's passion. A dynamic performer on stage, he was soft-spoken in person, kind and generous. As a sound engineer, he was a creative perfectionist whose helped musicians perfect their craft.

He was his parents' first-born, a father, a big brother and a life partner.

Born in La Grange, Illinois, Eddie was about eight years old when the family moved to Tallahassee, where he would live the rest of his life.

As a big brother, he taught Jimmy how to play sports, catch snakes, jump curbs on a bike. He introduced him to the finer points of rock-n-roll with a steady diet of KISS, Led Zeppelin and Deep Purple.

Music caught Eddie at an early age. The spark that kindled a lifelong passion flickered in high school, when he bought his first electric guitar from JC Penny while the rest of the family was out of town.

Soon came the band era, including the Dirty Senators, the Polka Playboys

and most famously Hooker. With teased hair, a thumping sound and Ed up front on vocals and guitar, Hooker chased big dreams. They toured half the country in a Yellow Dog school bus, including a trip to Austin, Texas in the early days of a little startup music festival called South by Southwest.

The music played on after the performing ended. Ed's ears and expertise with a soundboard were unmatched. Bands who worked with him called Ed a "sound wizard" and a "guru" who "made us sound better than we were." Even when he struggled through his cancer treatments, he insisted on making the long weekend drives to his work at a club in Destin. "The music," he said, "is what I love."

The only thing that could eclipse his love of music was the joy of being a father. He loved letting baby Siarra fall asleep on his chest. As she grew older and found her own love of music, he was dedicated to her band and sports career in high school. He was the nicest, kindest person she knew, and would get her into any show she wanted to see. "Your name will be at the door," he always told her. And it always was.

He was a strident fan of Formula One, Ferrari and the endurance car races in Sebring and Daytona. He loved old black-and-white movies and TV shows. Ed could fix anything that was broken. He eagerly mentored anyone, from bands to apprentice engineers, who wanted to learn the art of audio/visual productions.

Fly high Ed, rock on and always remember: more cowbell.

Ed was preceded in death by his father Edward Sr. He is survived by his daughter Siarra; mother Beville; life partner of 30 years Tammy Poole; brother Jim and his wife Jyll and their daughter Olivia, and numerous cousins and aunts and uncles who love him.

A public celebration of Ed's life and music will be scheduled and announced later. The family requests that donations may be made in Ed's loving memory to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Dayne Parker of Bevis Funeral Home (850-385-2193 or [www.bevisfh.com](http://www.bevisfh.com)) is assisting the Vertuno family with their arrangements.

# Tribute Wall



“ I was a student at Florida High when I met Eddie and his bandmate Melvin. They helped staff members with various things around the school. I had no idea they were in a band called Hooker at the time. I went to see them perform every chance I got. Last time I saw Eddie was at Floyd's Music Store running sound during a show. He was a great individual and always a pleasure to be around. I was gutted to hear of his passing. Thank you so much Eddie for the great times. My thoughts are with you all.

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**Derek Carmichael** - September 15, 2025 at 09:41 AM

TP

Thank you Derek for your kind words. There will be a Celebration of Life November 9th, at Legacy at the Riverfront. All are invited. Hope to see you there.

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**Tammy Poole** - September 15, 2025 at 10:09 PM

GV

“ Gina & Alfonso Varela purchased the Written in the Stars for the family of Edward Michael Vertuno, Jr..



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**Gina & Alfonso Varela** - September 08, 2025 at 10:59 AM

EM

“ Ed was one of a kind on the sound board, and always went out of his way to make club shows sound and feel like the vibe of a massive arena. Between him, Brad Messersmith and Jason Albright; the showcases with my brand on them (RIP Floyd's Music Store) always went without a hitch and made the local bands seem larger than life! I'll always be grateful for the times we had together and the dedication to his craft to make EVERYONE that stepped on his stage truly sound and feel like a rockstar! He was always kind, willing to educate, hilarious, and LOVED what he did! Thank you Brother! You'll never be forgotten! -Eric "OPeCKiE Productions"

Eric Moegling - September 03, 2025 at 09:00 PM



Thank you for the message, it means a lot.

Siarra Vertuno - September 03, 2025 at 09:37 PM

TP

Thank you for your kind message.

Tammy Poole - September 04, 2025 at 10:18 PM

J.

“ I was one of Eddie's biggest fans. One of the first Hooker shows I saw was with a couple of friends from standing outside the front doors of Bullwinkles looking in because we were not old enough to get in and the stage used to be just inside the front doors. Ed jumped off stage and walked over near the door playing his guitar to acknowledge us. He was a rockstar and remained that way in my eyes - forever. Over the years we worked together in many venues. My job was to bring the bands and his job was to make them sound great. We became roommates when we lived on a 45 ft tour bus traveling the country with Socialburn. Every night before he went to bed he would say "J.R. if you need me, I will be in my bunk". That actually helped me sleep better. He was a legend, an inspiration, and a friend. I miss you buddy.



J.R. - September 03, 2025 at 02:50 AM



Thank you for the message, I love this picture of him.

Siarra Vertuno - September 03, 2025 at 09:37 PM

TP

Thanks, John, this is a new story I haven't heard before.

Tammy Poole - September 04, 2025 at 10:20 PM

DM

“ Ed traveled with us as The Pat Ramsey Band opened for Johnny Winter on the Florida dates. Mac was a big fan of Hooker, and the Polka Playboys RoadHouse and others..Learned a bunch about sound techniques from Ed as well. He will be missed. Mac Daddy.

Dan "Mac" MacDonald - September 03, 2025 at 12:55 AM



*Thank you for this message.*

**Siarra Vertuno** - September 03, 2025 at 09:37 PM



*Thank you Mac for your kind words.*

**Tammy Poole** - September 04, 2025 at 10:21 PM