

# Chicago musician struck, killed by car while riding bike in Avondale

Kevin Clark played kid drummer in 2003 hit film 'School of Rock,' was part of several bands

BY DAVID STRUETT, CST WIRE REPORTER  
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Kevin Clark stuck with his music after appearing nearly 20 years ago as drummer Freddy "Spazzy McGee" Jones in the wildly popular movie "School of Rock."

He formed bands, wrote songs, taught children. At 32, Clark had just started a new band that performed live for the first time over the past weekend on the North Shore.

"He told his bandmates just yesterday:

"You know, this is finally the life I want to live. And we're going to make it. You're my musical family — my family — and we're all going to make it," his mother, Allison Clark, said.



Kevin Clark

Clark was riding a bicycle early Wednesday

when he was struck and killed at a notoriously dangerous intersection on the Northwest Side. He was hit by a Hyundai Sonata around 1:20 a.m. in the 2600 block of North Western Avenue, Chicago police said.

Paramedics found him on Logan Boulevard and took him to Illinois Masonic Medical Center, where he was pronounced dead at 2:04 a.m., according to the Chicago Fire Department and the Cook County medical examiner's office.

The driver of the Hyundai, a 20-year-old woman, was issued several citations, police said.

Clark grew up in Highland Park and started playing drums at age 3 by "hitting pots and pans in the basement," his mother said. He started private lessons at age 5 and could also play guitar, piano and violin.

"He loved music. He's just a raw talent. He's got a heart of gold," Allison Clark said.

At 12, Clark landed a role in the 2003 hit "School of Rock" with actor Jack Black. Clark played an outspoken kid who was the band's drummer. Although he had no acting experience, his prowess at drumming helped him land the gig.

"He wasn't an actor, wasn't thinking about being an actor," Allison Clark said.

A friend who played piano had recommended Clark attend the auditions, she said. They saw an ad in the back pages of the Highland Park News: "Looking for 10- to



Kevin Clark pictured in a 2003 promotional photo for "School of Rock." SUN-TIMES FILES

12-year-old kids who can play an instrument in a movie with Jack Black."

She remembered Clark being called back to the audition room and playing "Iron Man" with the film's guitarist, Joey Gaydos Jr. "He just kind of shined," his mother said.

Clark didn't continue with acting, but music remained in his blood.

"He was motivated and loved to write songs," said Robbie Goldberg, Clark's roommate in Lake View East and bandmate in the Robbie Gold Band. "He loved to take the guitar off the wall and make a funny song."

The pair met in high school and played Nirvana and Green Day together, Goldberg said. As adults, they played gigs at Stanley's, the Taste of Chicago and House of Blues.

"It was great working with Kevin," Goldberg said, adding that he was shocked to hear of the death of his roommate of five years.

Goldberg wasn't sure why Clark was biking in Avondale when he was hit but said Clark had several friends on the Northwest Side.

Clark's past projects included Dreadwolf and Funk it Let's Jam. Clark was also a shift

manager at Starbucks at Ashland and Irving and had taught music at a School of Rock location in Libertyville, his mother said.

His most recent project was the band Jess Bess and the Intentions. "They were unbelievably fantastic, and they would've gone somewhere," his mother said.

Rivkah Reyes, who played bassist Katie in "School of Rock," wrote on Twitter that she'd "never forget your hugs and your laugh and the sheer joy on your face when we'd run into each other in Chicago. Thank you for always showing up for me with that 'big brother I never had' energy."

A memorial was planned for Wednesday night at Teddy O'Brian's in Highwood.

Clark's mother said she had taken dozens of calls from his musician friends by Wednesday afternoon.

"You know, we're all really in shock. It was just this morning," Allison Clark said. "He was just a 32-year-old kid. It doesn't make sense. A lot of our jammer friends — mostly 65-plus — have lost their lives recently. So hopefully he's up there jamming in the sky with them."

## Police digging in yard of Northbrook home for body of woman missing for 38 years

BY MITCH DUDEK, STAFF REPORTER  
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As investigators dug deeper into the backyard of a Northbrook home Wednesday in search of the remains of a woman who went missing nearly four decades ago, the police chief made it clear that the excavation could take several days.

"We began digging Tuesday, and it's a slow and methodical process," Northbrook Police Chief Christopher Kennedy said Wednesday, noting less than a foot of earth had been removed so far.

"We'll go down as deep as we need, maybe as many as 5 to 7 feet," he told the Chicago Sun-Times Wednesday morning.

A wooden shed in the yard was moved, and investigators are digging under the spot where it had been, Kennedy said.



Linda Seymour

Linda Seymour lived in the home before she went missing in 1982. Her son James Seymour Jr. lives in the home now.

Reached Wednesday, he declined to comment on the search for his mother.

Kennedy said interviews conducted by Northbrook police detectives led investigators to dig up a section of the yard at the home in the 1400 block of Orchard Lane.

Kennedy declined to elaborate on those interviews or the circumstances surrounding Linda Seymour's disappearance.

A tent was set up over the dig site, and dogs were used by investigators to search the area several weeks ago, Kennedy said.

The Doe Network, a nonprofit that maintains a database of missing persons, said Linda Seymour was last seen about 2:30 p.m. on Dec. 21, 1982, in Northbrook.

The home is less than a block from Meadowhill Park, which is well known for housing a number of recreational facilities, including a velodrome.

Neighbors, none of whom wanted to be identified, said Linda's husband, James Seymour Sr., lived at the home until he died in 2009. The couple had two sons together. Seymour Sr. later remarried and had more children.

Linda Seymour's disappearance was known among neighbors, most of whom moved in well after she went missing in 1982. What was behind her disappearance was a mystery to them, but they hadn't assumed foul play.