

IN MEMORY: TIM THOMAS

April 14, 2026



PHOTO COURTESY OF PARKER LUTZ

April 14, 2026

*By Thomas Rayfiel*

Tim Thomas, musician, former Development Director for Bang on a Can, devoted husband and father and longtime Coop member, died unexpectedly on January 24. He was 59 years old. Tim joined the Coop in 2004. For many years, he was co-Squad Leader on Wednesday mornings along with Grace Freedman, who recalls:

“Tim was the kind of guy where multiple people during the shift would yell out, ‘Tim!’ and get a bear hug or an enthusiastic high-five as a greeting. When it was slow, they would gather around the front desk to hear Tim’s funny stories about music, family, the neighborhood or NYC in the ‘90s. Of course, he always had ‘aux’ and we would all enjoy the greatest tunes during the shift, wide-ranging fare from ska to jazz to old-time country. I miss him and remember and appreciate all the positive energy he brought to the Coop and to the world.”

Music was Tim’s life. He was a member of many musical groups, as well as a mainstay at Bang on a Can, which promotes innovative concerts, commissions original compositions and sponsors an annual summer festival. With Tim, music was never an ivory-tower pursuit. Eddie Gormley, one of his bandmates, emphasizes:

“Tim was always interested in community involvement...primarily leading to some music project. The longest collaboration he had was with Rose Thomson, which evolved into Babe the Blue Ox, that included Hanna Fox, and then me. But Tim had so much musical energy that he created many other projects along the way involving his many other musical friends. He often created the events to showcase them, including the local Greenwood Baptist Church Soul Patrol, which performed at services. That community involvement energy extended to his blog ‘the Q at Parkside,’ participating with local community boards, marching in art parades, participating in protest marches and being there for a lot of people who needed him.”

Mark Stewart, another frequent collaborator, says of Tim:

“He made every room warmer. He was masterful in the most generous way imaginable. You knew that you would accomplish whatever the challenge was, such was his smiling, confident creative leadership. Mirth was his constant companion and he shared it freely. Big, strong, gentle and a fantastic musician to boot.”

Tim is survived by his wife, Parker Lutz; his daughters, Wrenn and Poppy; his mother, Jean; his sister, Sarah; his bandmates, Hanna Fox, Eddie Gormley, and Rose Thomson; and, as his wife puts it, “the countless dear friends who kept him going all these years.” She continues, “He adored his daughters more than anything and he never once said no to his adoring wife when asked to stop by the Coop on the way home to pick up a few things.”

*Thomas Rayfiel is the author of eight novels. He has also written “living obituaries” for VICE TV.*