

# GASTON ALIVE

MAGAZINE

HOME | GARDEN | STYLE | FUN | FOOD | HAPPENINGS

## Tommy Bynum Heating & Cooling Proud Of The Past Focused On The Future

p6

Darrell Scott Comes To DSBG

p10

Remembering Austin

p12

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# FROM THE PUBLISHER

This month is something of a special issue. We normally focus on “feel good” topics: music, artists, charities, interesting people and food. However this month we are breaking precedent a little by printing an article on the opioid epidemic, and the dangerous and sometimes tragic consequences it can have. Perhaps your family has been affected as mine has, but regardless we all need to be informed of this looming threat in our community. See page 12 for more.

On a lighter note, we are excited to feature an interview with musician Darrell Scott. Darrell will be at the Lost Hollow Music Festival at Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden Sunday October 14th. You may know Darrell as a solo performer, or as the opening act and band-mate of Zac Brown of the Zac Brown band. See page 10.

Happy fall, ~ David

featured this month

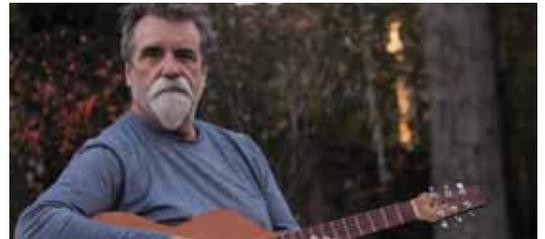
06

TOMMY BYNUM,  
A NEW BEGINNING



10

DARRELL SCOTT COMES  
TO DSBG



12

REMEMBERING AUSTIN



HOME | GARDEN | STYLE | FUN | FOOD | HAPPENINGS

# Save the Dates

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TRIAL BY FIRE

OCTOBER 13

NATURAL WONDER



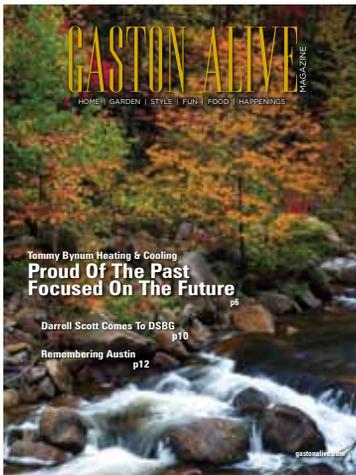
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OCTOBER 27 | MAIN STREET | FOLLOWING BOOFEST



on the cover



A fall scene at Wilson Creek North Carolina is on our cover this month. Fall means it's time to have your heating system checked out-see story about Tommy Bynum Heating & Air Conditioning classic values, new directions, page 6



To be part of our team, or to submit art, photo or story ideas, please email us at: [info@gastonalive.com](mailto:info@gastonalive.com)

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GAJ9|18

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# NEW BEGINNINGS

*By David Hamrick*



Kirby Overby, General Manager & Tommy Bynum

We are talking today with Kirby Overby, general manager of Tommy Bynum Heating & Air.

**GA: Kirby, you are new to Belmont, but Tommy Bynum has been around a long time...I see your vans everywhere...**

**Kirby:** Tommy Bynum Heating & Cooling has been providing comfort to the people of Belmont and Gaston County for over 40 years! We are looking forward to continuing to provide outstanding service at a fair price to the people of Belmont and Gaston County!

**GA: Why were Southern Comfort and Tommy Bynum such a good fit?**

**Kirby:** Mr. Bynum is a devoted Christian, as are both of the owners of Southern Comfort. As a result, both companies share common core values. Following the golden rule in business means treating our customers, employees and the community like we want to be treated – with integrity, respect and humility.



## GA: If I am new to the area or considering changing heating and air companies, why should I consider Tommy Bynum Heating and Air?

**Kirby:** Trust. Our industry, like a lot of others, has a few bad apples. Unfortunately, those bad apples are starting to taint all of us with a bad reputation. Our goal is to treat customers according to the golden rule. In other words, treat them like we want to be treated. That means delivering good service, on time, at a fair price.

Buy local. Our company is based right here in Belmont. Our owners and most of our employees live in Gaston County. Their kids go to school here. They attend churches in Gastonia, Belmont, Mt. Holly, Cramerton, Dallas and other local communities. Why not give your neighbors a chance to earn your business and keep those dollars here in Gaston county?

## GA: What are some things to consider when choosing a heating and air company?

**Kirby:** Can I trust them? Will they be here to honor the warranty on my new equipment purchase (Tommy Bynum and Southern Comfort combined have over 100 years of experience in this market).

Will they treat me fairly and honestly? (We will never over charge people for work that isn't done and will never try to sell you something you don't need).

Are their prices fair? Our prices are very competitive, like any type of service you can always find someone who will do it cheaper, but are they licensed and bonded, do they carry the proper insurance, will they be in business a year from now? We will be around to honor your warranty and provide you with worry free comfort for years to come, and we feel that we offer a better value than the bigger Charlotte or Gastonia based companies advertising in this market.



Ashley Nashaw, Felicia Mull

## GA: I see service or tune up contracts offered- are they really worth the money?

**Kirby:** Would you buy a new car and then never get the oil changed? Well your HVAC systems are probably the next most expensive mechanical investment most consumers will ever make, besides their car. So why wouldn't you make a relatively small investment to keep it running at peak efficiency, and to help prolong its life? Industry studies have proven that properly maintained HVAC equipment will: 1. Run more efficiently saving energy costs; 2. Breakdown less frequently saving repair costs; and 3. Last longer saving on eventual replacement costs.



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## GA: What if I am building a new house-do you do new construction?

**Kirby:** We do. We also can help design system retrofits if you are doing a home improvement project or addition, or if your duct work or system are aging and need to be improved or upgraded.

## GA: Are their advances in heating and air systems? How efficient are some of the new systems?

**Kirby:** There have been many advances over the years with energy efficiency just being part of it. Variable capacity systems, enhanced humidity control along with indoor air quality products allow us to design a system to keep your home more comfortable as well as healthier.

## GA: How do I get started with you guys?

**Kirby:** Just give us a call at 704-825-4463!



Chris Miller, Tech, Tommy Bynum



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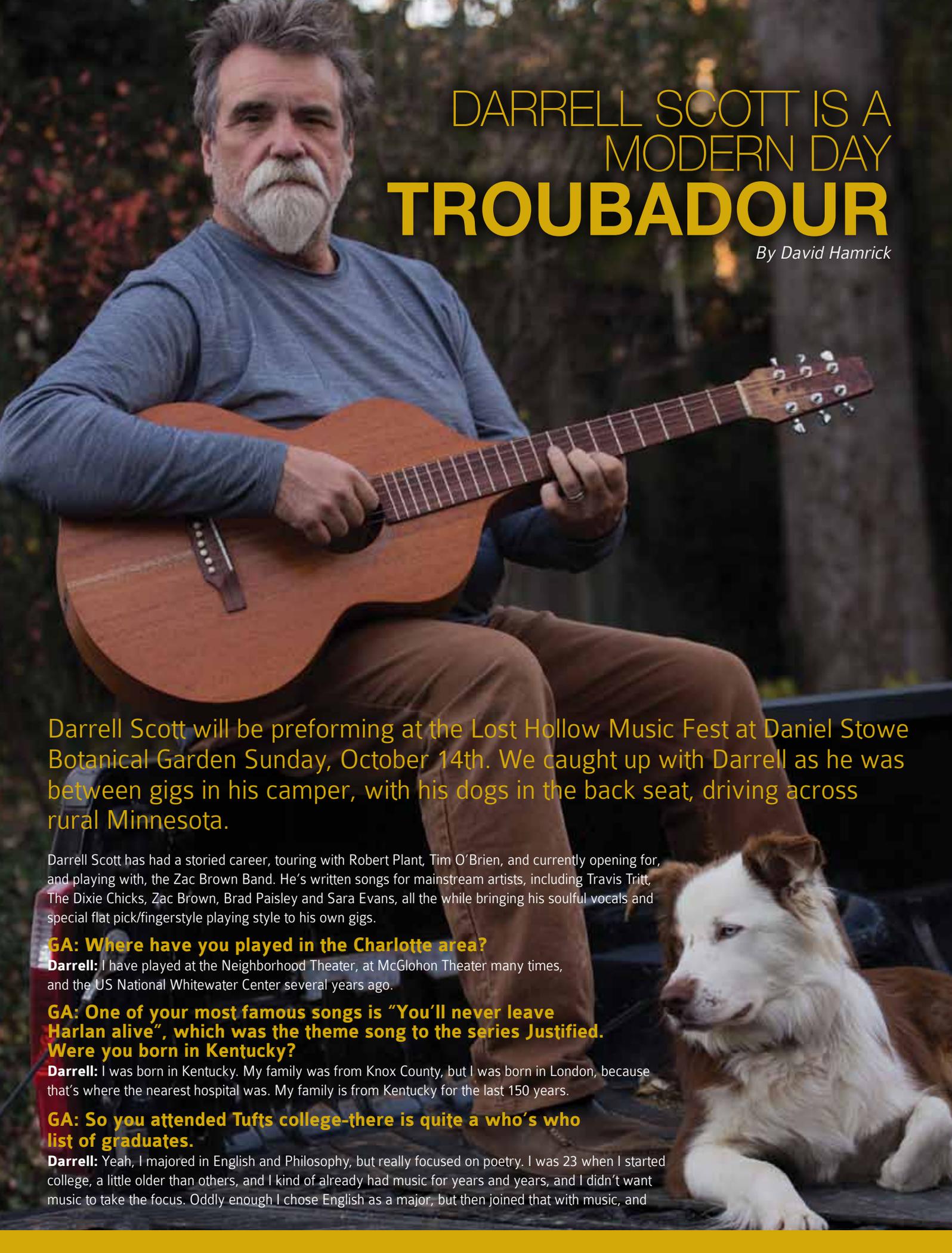
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A photograph of Darrell Scott, a man with a grey beard and mustache, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt and brown pants. He is sitting outdoors, playing an acoustic guitar. A dog is lying down in the foreground on the right side. The background is a blurred natural setting with trees and foliage.

# DARRELL SCOTT IS A MODERN DAY TROUBADOUR

*By David Hamrick*

Darrell Scott will be performing at the Lost Hollow Music Fest at Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden Sunday, October 14th. We caught up with Darrell as he was between gigs in his camper, with his dogs in the back seat, driving across rural Minnesota.

Darrell Scott has had a storied career, touring with Robert Plant, Tim O'Brien, and currently opening for, and playing with, the Zac Brown Band. He's written songs for mainstream artists, including Travis Tritt, The Dixie Chicks, Zac Brown, Brad Paisley and Sara Evans, all the while bringing his soulful vocals and special flat pick/fingerstyle playing style to his own gigs.

**GA: Where have you played in the Charlotte area?**

**Darrell:** I have played at the Neighborhood Theater, at McGlohon Theater many times, and the US National Whitewater Center several years ago.

**GA: One of your most famous songs is "You'll never leave Harlan alive", which was the theme song to the series Justified. Were you born in Kentucky?**

**Darrell:** I was born in Kentucky. My family was from Knox County, but I was born in London, because that's where the nearest hospital was. My family is from Kentucky for the last 150 years.

**GA: So you attended Tufts college—there is quite a who's who list of graduates.**

**Darrell:** Yeah, I majored in English and Philosophy, but really focused on poetry. I was 23 when I started college, a little older than others, and I kind of already had music for years and years, and I didn't want music to take the focus. Oddly enough I chose English as a major, but then joined that with music, and

that's called song writing, so it was a natural fit. I didn't know that at the time, but after all that work on poetry, it completely turned my song writing around. It made me a much better writer. I wanted to do better work, better lyrics, better words.

### **GA: So your dad was a musician?**

**Darrell:** He was very much a Kentucky born and bred, simple... mountain music, country music; he was a laborer. Music to him was the thing he loved, but he didn't make his living with that. Later in life, when I was 14 or 15 he realized that was how he wanted to make his living, and what that meant was playing local bars playing country music. Which is partly how I came play music too, was through his band.

### **GA: Was your mom a musician?**

**Darrell:** My mom and dad divorced when I was young, and then got married gain to each other, and then divorced again, so there was a lot of weaving in and out. But she loved country music as well, and she was a singer. I had a thorough education in country music through my mom and dad.

### **GA: Do you still play with your family?**

**Darrell:** We do gigs every couple of years. All my brothers are on the west coast, I grew up playing in a brother band and playing with my dad. I have four brothers, so there are five of us altogether, and we all play music. Music was our hobby growing up as a family, instead of bowling or little league or football.

### **GA: Tell us about Driggs the dog?**

**Darrell:** Well, actually they are in the truck right now. I have another dog called Miller- they're both Australian Shepherds. Right now we are in our camper, so when the jobs and gigs make sense, probably when we play the gig you are writing about we will have the camper and the dogs.

### **GA: How do you write songs?**

**Darrell:** Basically it's being attentive and observing, and what makes me grab an envelope or a McDonald's bag or a tablet or a guitar, is when something is stirring in me. So the first thing that happens is the inspiration. And then in could be a tune, or lyrics or a title, it could be a number of things. But otherwise I don't make myself write unless I get that inspiration, and then pretty much I have to write.

### **GA: As you have gotten a little older, how has song writing changed?**

**Darrell:** I would say that I write less, is what I notice. I don't know if that's a phase or that's just how it's going to be.

### **GA: Do you still enjoy music and performing?**

**Darrell:** The travel is a grind, that's why I try to make it as enjoyable as I can. Like right now we are in the camper, and the two dogs are in the back seat. We stop to have a picnic, and go to museums and art galleries. I try to make a journey out of it, because otherwise the travel is ridiculous. I love playing music, when I get a guitar in my hand or start singing, it makes it a special event, more than driving in the truck.

### **GA: How many guitars do you own?**

**Darrell:** Well, if we include guitars, mandolins, banjos, dobros, all that, I'm pretty certain I have over 100 instruments- they are safely locked up!

### **GA: Talk about doing a tour with Tim O'Brien.**

**Darrell:** We did years of travel; it's been a long time, maybe 4 years ago. We put out three albums during that time. Right now I'm traveling with the Zac Brown Band.

### **GA: How is that?**

**Darrell:** It's great- big giant baseball stadiums, a crazy amount of people at shows, but I really enjoy it-it's a really good band.

### **GA: So do you play solo, or?**

**Darrell:** I open the show solo, and then I play in the Zac Brown Band for the rest of the night. I've done the side man thing here or there. Mostly what I do my own, but every once in a while there is something compelling about being in a band or a project that I can't say no to. Robert Plant was one of those.

### **GA: What was the first big song of yours that you heard on the radio?**

**Darrell:** The first time it really hit was when the Dixie Chicks did "Long time gone". The first time I heard it was in the car with the kids...it was pretty impactful.

### **GA: So did you go out and buy a new Cadillac or at least a new guitar?**

**Darrell:** No, but the first time I had a Garth Brooks cut I did renovate my kitchen.

### **GA: If you hadn't been a singer songwriter, what career would you have chosen?**

**Darrell:** For years I thought maybe I would have been a truck driver, but now later in life I think maybe a cook.

### **GA: Who do you listen to?**

**Darrell:** I listen to a North Carolina guy named Malcolm Holcombe- I helped produce his previous album. And then I listen to pretty much anything I can get my hands on.



## **WANT TO GO?**

### **Lost Hollow Music Fest**

Saturday, October 13, 2018

12 p.m. **PJ Brunson**

2 p.m. **Sinners & Saints**

4 p.m. **Front Country**

Sunday, October 14, 2018

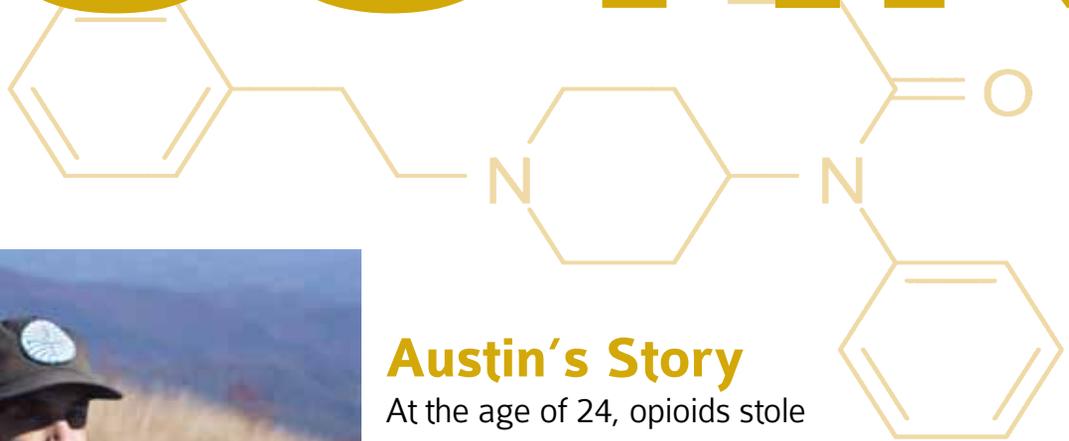
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# REMEMBERING AUSTIN



## Austin's Story

At the age of 24, opioids stole our son.

Austin was a wonderful young man. He was openhearted and generous, with a deep commitment to social justice and an optimism that saw the best in others. A great friend, he loved to travel, play basketball, and read. He embraced the world as he couldn't know or experience enough.

On May 12, 2017 Austin Chowdhury received his Master's in Urban Planning and beamed with his accomplishment. Perhaps he was so proud because he earned his degree while managing a full-blown addiction to heroin. Austin was a perfect example of a functional heroin user.

We learned he was using heroin on June 7th when he was arrested for possession after passing out behind the wheel of his car, as a reaction to drug withdrawal. The police found heroin in the car and the next day we went to court and spent the rest of the day together.

The next day we found Austin dead on his bedroom floor. How could this be? Just the night before he was talking and laughing as we watched a basketball game together.



The autopsy said his last dose of heroin was in fact a lethal mix of two drugs: Fentanyl and Cyclopropyl Fentanyl. Fentanyl is 100 times more potent than morphine and many times more potent than heroin. Later we learned a dealer brought his final dose the evening we watched basketball together.

We replay these events daily, thinking what-if. And we are left with doubt, guilt, and the never ending question: what could we have done to prevent his death?

Having just observed the first anniversary of Austin's passing, we still think we let our son down because we didn't understand the signs that screamed addiction. We were in denial, we were naive, and we could not conceive he was using heroin.



## From all of this, there are two things we want you to know:

First, addiction is a biological and chronic brain disease. People do not become addicted to opioids because of a character flaw, a lack of willpower, or a moral deficiency. They succumb to a powerful medication that changes their brain chemistry and causes physical and psychological dependence. Many are genetically predisposed to addiction.

Second, those with opioid addictions have disordered lives that are disconnected from their former routines. As their addictions deepen, they stop caring for themselves, they become estranged from friends and family, and they no longer take pleasure in pursuits that once brought order and joy to their lives.



After Austin passed away we found a notebook with his personal notes, including an entry about a session with a counselor at school. Apparently, she asked him to write down activities for a successful day. His answer was heartbreaking: eat three healthy meals, get enough sleep, shower, keep in touch with friends. We had no idea he had lost his bearings because, as we learned from his roommate, he would clean up when we visited.



And, in spite his difficulties, Austin called us every Sunday ... to the end, he was unfailingly our kind, compassionate, loving, and a generous son.

## Taking Action

Several months after Austin's death, a friend introduced us to the Gaston Controlled Substances Coalition, a local organization that works to prevent opioid misuse and to help affected persons get treatment and support.



Gradually we became involved, committed to keeping Austin's memory alive. Our mantra has been, "no one should experience our pain, no more parents losing their children to opioids".

Our personal focus is to educate the community about opioids and remove the associated stigma.

Out of fear of criticism, many families silently live in pain about the addiction of their loved ones – be they in active addiction, early recovery, long-term recovery, or if they have died – and do not seek the professional and peer support that can help them find healing and peace.

Many fear others will say their loved ones don't and didn't have the willpower and moral strength to overcome opioids. They fear few will understand that opioid

dependence often starts by following prescriptions, and that persons of all ages, races, incomes, and educational backgrounds are equally susceptible. They hear damaging words that say opioids is an issue of those people, not us. In truth, any of us could develop Opioid Use Disorder.

Odds are strong that you, your friends or family, have loved ones who are addicted to opioids. If they tell you, treat them with kindness. Help them find a counselor, a NarAnon group, a supportive member of the clergy with whom they can speak. Help them to heal.

Invite a behavioral health or addiction specialist to speak to your employees. Add Narcan, the non-addictive medication that reverses opioid overdoses, to your first aid kits and train your staff to administer it.

Encourage your spiritual leaders to speak about opioids without stigma, and to embrace suffering congregants.

And, if you feel called to address opioids as a community issue, contact your health department to see if there is an opioid coalition in your county. The group will be thrilled for you to join them. Use your influence to make inroads with community leaders who are skeptical about the causes and effects of opioids. Help the coalition build its credibility, arrange community presentations, raise funds, and work with other business leaders.

Our family also established Austin's Opioid Education Fund, at the Community Foundation of Gaston County, to support Coalition initiatives that mesh with our priorities.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Nazrul with your questions:  
[nazrul@tirecordusa.com](mailto:nazrul@tirecordusa.com)

Watch the interview of Nazrul and Tammy on the Gaston Controlled Substances Coalition's Facebook page:  
[www.facebook.com/GastonCSC](http://www.facebook.com/GastonCSC)

Learn more about opioids:  
[www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/index.html)

Learn about the Community Foundation of Gaston County, which manages Austin's Opioid Education Fund:  
[cfgaston.org](http://cfgaston.org)

Remembering Austin:  
[rememberingaustin.org](http://rememberingaustin.org)



Help line: 1-888-235-(HOPE)4673  
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