

In the begging there was .. oh wait...

Four score and ...no no that's not right ...

If you have a ravioli and you cut it open ... oh that was some of Ben's notes ...

Oh, here we are. Benjamin started really early in life making things.

It began with his early love of food and how he could so easily make a living picasso of himself out of some strained peas and apple sauce while bouncing around in an infant bouncy seats.

We have video of him on one of those plastic toddler pedal bikes as he approaches a big puddle. You can see him lean over the handlebars in wonder looking at the water, studying it. He would go forward a bit, then back as if worried he might get wet. Then he decided this needed hands on investigations. Dismounting the bike he started stomping through the puddle up to his knees and once the water seeped into his clothes and shoes he proudly mounted the bike to drive on through the puddle.

Leggos were of course a favorite building material early on and he would spend hours pouring over those little picture instructions for hours. Then when the model was built, he would disassemble it and add it to a mountain of others to build whatever he could imagine.

Add in k'nex to the building experiences and he crafted all sorts of vehicles, buildings and of course weapons. He built a gun with k'nex and rubber bands that would fling rods of plastic across the room and make a hole in sheetrock. Sadly he never learned how to mud and tape over those holes.

Then we move over to tools. I am sure Jim and I have never seen a 10 mm socket after Ben asked to borrow it for just awhile. Ben was just a little tike when he would grab a power drill that was half his size and try to bang it into some 2x4 trying to help build something. He later would grab a random hunk of metal deciding it would make a knife. Almost any tool he could imagine would get brought to bear on that hunk of metal with the hopes of creating some sort of edge. He learned how very expensive wood chisels are not only ineffective on metal but the chisel tips easily get grooves and chunks of it chipped off with enough force.

Ben loved to try to build things he observed on YouTube. From building a culinary "masterpiece" to learning a new guitar song one stanza at a time he would plug away until he found some success. He once saw a street artist fling tons of spray paint and pans and buckets around and poof incredible space paintings. Sure enough after spray painting himself and everything in a 5 foot radius he made some wonderful paintings. He saw some one glue a bunch of colored

pencils together and then cut them up and widdle them down .... Poof he made some colorful rings to give to others as well as a huge pile of woodchips and shavings that may still be in the shop.

In video games, Ben would always play characters that would make build the entertainment experience for everyone and make it better. The support type character was always Ben's goto and he loved helping others have fun in games.

He was wonderful building safe learning experiences with kids. Away from kids he would joke about how kids were yucky and too much work, but then you watch him with anyone under 3 feet tall and he enchanted youth and helped build entertaining experiences with learning.

Ben took his love for making things into 3d design and made that into a career where he could make changes in military ships. Unlike his earlier adventures in learning how to make things, he was able to find successes in his ship modification designs with so much less mess to clean up after he was done.

Most of all, Ben made friends and smiles. Just look around this room. Today we gather to share Ben's connections with us all and to celebrate all the joy he managed to create in our lives.