



## **Annapolis Parrot Head Club Dec. 18, 2011**

# **Ralph MacDonald, Coral Reefer, dies** *Played with Belafonte, Sinatra before receiving Grammy awards*

**By Karen Sampson Hoffman**  
**Annapolis Parrot Head Club Website**

The band to which the saints will march in has gained a percussionist; Coral Reefer Ralph MacDonald died this morning, Dec. 18, 2011, at the age of 67 following a battle with lung cancer.

Known to Parrotheads as the man on the pans, Ralph MacDonald has performed with Jimmy Buffett and toured with the Coral Reefers and Club Trini since the mid-1980s. His performance resume begins in his late teens, when he joined Harry Belafonte and his band. He has performed with Frank Sinatra, Billy Joel, Aretha Franklin, Paul Simon, among others. He grew-up in Harlem, N.Y., the son of Trinidad's Macbeth The Great. In his music, Ralph remained true to his Caribbean heritage and Calypso roots.

Before becoming a Coral Reefer, Ralph was an accomplished singer and songwriter, beginning with Harry Belafonte's 1966 song *Calypso Carnival*. This was later followed by Roberta

Flack's hit, *Where Is The Love* and the hit *Just the Two of Us*, originally performed as romantic piece and later redone by Fresh Prince Will Smith as a father singing to his son. He received two Grammys as a performer and a producer.

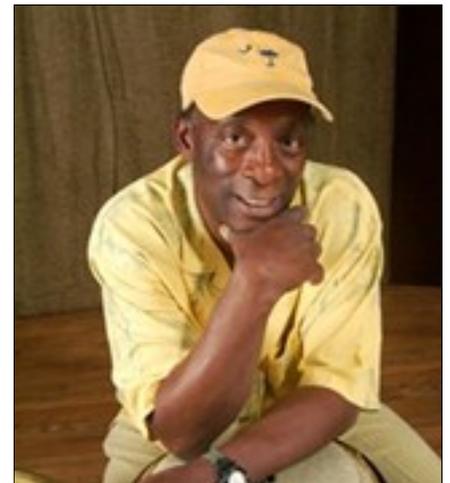
As of Sunday morning, Ralph's family was in the process of making final arrangements.

"Thank you all for your support of my dad and our family," said daughter Nefra-Ann MacDonald in a statement. "Ralph MacDonald, my papa. I'll miss you."

Blogger and troprock artist Paul "Lifestyles" Leslie announced Ralph's passing.

"He was a lovely man," Paul said. "His music will live on, and through his music, so will Ralph."

"Here's to Ralph MacDonald, who shared his verve for living and gift of music with all of us," wrote Peter Mayer of the Coral Reefers and a long-time friend of Ralph's on his Facebook page. "My prayers are with his family, and all who knew and loved him. Thank you,



Ralph MacDonald

Ralph, for the gift of your beautiful songs to our lives. You will always remain with us as we celebrate your life today."

In addition to Nefra-Ann MacDonald, Ralph is survived by his wife, Grace, daughter Atiba, sons Anthony and Jovonni MacDonald, his sister, Sylvia Pristell, and three grandchildren.