



Norman Thiel

March 7, 1959 - December 23, 2024

Dateline: Jerseyville, IL

The days God wrote for Norman Thiel were completed on December 23, 2024, when he died unexpectedly and went into the presence of Jesus, his Savior. Born and raised in Jerseyville, IL. Norman spent many of his years farming the family land, repairing and tinkering with farm equipment, and building community with those he worked alongside. Norman always had a dad joke to make a room both laugh and groan, and was quick to lighten the atmosphere with playful banter and an easy smile. An avid musician and trumpet player, Norman spent the past 12 years in the Godfrey New Horizons Band, sharing his love of music with the local community. In 2013 Norman was appointed assistant director of the Godfrey band, spending the past 3 years on the board of New Horizons International Music Association where he delighted in expanding the mission of the organization.

A loving husband and father, Norman is survived by his wife of 40 years, Kathryn "Katie" Gates Thiel, and his three children, Mary Beth of Colorado Springs, Jana of San Diego and Matt of Bloomington, Indiana, siblings, Leslie Thiel (Marsha Thiel) of Mt. Sterling, KY, Marcia Scott (Lyle Scott) of Paola, KS, brothers in law, Gary Gates(Rebecca Gates) of Harlan, Indiana and Harold Gates (Roxanne Gates) of Jackson, MO and sisters in law, Peggy Scott (Timothy Scott) of Chatham, IL and Hazel Buren (John Buren) of Macomb, IL and numerous nieces and nephews. Norman was preceded in death by his parents, Fred B. Thiel Jr. and Muriel O. (Turner) Thiel.

There is no end to the positive impact Norman had on his community, consistently showing care, concern, and kindness to anyone who might need support. His legacy of generosity and joy will live on through those who knew him. Visitation will be Sunday, December 29, 2024 from 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. at Gent Funeral Home in Alton where funeral services will be at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, December 30, 2024 with Pastor Chance Newingham officiating. Burial will be at Oak Grove Cemetery in Jerseyville. Memorials may be made to Hope Orphan Home (hopeorphanhome.org) or Godfrey New Horizon Band. Additional information and online guest book may be found at www.gentfuneralhome.com

Cemetery Details

Oak Grove Cemetery

Jerseyville
Jerseyville, IL

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC **29**. 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

Gent Funeral Home Inc
2409 State Street
Alton, IL 62002
(618) 466-5544
<https://www.gentfuneralhome.com/>

Funeral Service

DEC **30**. 10:00 AM (CT)

Gent Funeral Home
2409 State Street
Alton, IL 62002

Tribute Wall

MP

“ I just found out that Norman passed away. Very sad to hear. I worked at Cape Electrical store here in Jerseyville. Norman would come to purchase something and was always jolly and smiling. He would tell a joke or a story followed by a hearty chuckle. You could tell he was a good man and liked by many including us at the shop. He will be missed in our small community. We will be praying for your family.

Mike Price - January 11, 2025 at 05:59 PM

AR

“ Katie, Heidi and I are so saddened to hear of Norm's passing. In a very short time we got very attached to his warm and playful aura. Playing in the section with him was a treat, and as much as we are looking forward to future New Horizons camps, Norm will be greatly missed.
Al and Heidi Rochlin

Alan S Rochlin - January 04, 2025 at 11:49 AM

DS

“ Sending my deepest condolences to Katie and the rest of Norm's family. I got to know Norm and Katie a bit at two band camps, and am sad to lose that budding friendship. Diane Scholfield

Diane Scholfield - January 01, 2025 at 07:35 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Norman Thiel.*



December 31, 2024 at 11:46 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Norman Thiel.

December 31, 2024 at 11:46 AM



“ *We are so saddened to hear of Norman's passing. We had a wonderful time with Katie and Norman at the Mt. Tremblant camp. Our condolences to the family.*
Diane Lynn Ayotte & Rudy Pilz

diane lynn ayotte - December 30, 2024 at 07:59 AM



“ *Dear Katie,*
We were very sorry to learn of Norm's passing. We have nice memories of spending time with you and Norm at the Mt Tremblant camp last year. Sending you and your family our sincere condolences.
Teresa Janik & Steven Ries Stratford, ON Canada

Teresa - December 29, 2024 at 06:02 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Norman Thiel.

December 29, 2024 at 03:36 PM



“ I met Norm and Katie at the 2023 Cincinnati NH Band Camp when we shared dinner together the first evening. We traded band camp experiences and told stories of growing up in Illinois farm country. Katie and I sang together in band camp choirs in 2023 and 24 where I got to know her better. Norm was a wonderful musician and leader of NHIMA during the transition period and Covid. I will miss his indomitable spirit.

Becky Gillespie Galena, IL

New Horizons Band Dubuque, IA and The Villages, FL

Becky Gillespie - December 29, 2024 at 03:34 PM



“ We are so saddened to learn of Norman's passing. We did not know Norm personally, but rather enjoyed his musicianship from the audience over many performances the last few years. One could feel his jovial nature just by observing him - whether he was directing a piece, or joking with Stanley between numbers. He truly was a gifted musician and friend. Our family sends our prayers to Katie and the rest of Norm's family and friends in this difficult time. He will not be forgotten.

Pam & David Maibaum - December 29, 2024 at 02:48 PM

CK

“ I am so saddened to learn this news . I will always remember Norm's devotion to NHIMA when he was president. And his kindness to me during my illness when I served on the Board of NHIMA. His humor was infectious and so was his smile. My deep condolences to his family. Carol Katz

Carol Katz - December 29, 2024 at 11:49 AM

TH

“ It was truly an honor and pleasure to work with Norman while serving on the NHIMA Board of Directors even if it was for a short time. Norman was an incredible and special person always willing to lend an ear and always ready to tell a good joke. While attending the Mont-Tremblant music camp, I had the pleasure of having lunch with Norman and his wife Katie at our little well known village restaurant. I shared with them stories about Quebec, Montreal and a little bit about the Quebec culture. Norman will be missed by many. My heart and condolences go out to Katie and her family. Au revoir mon ami.

Ted Halmos

Ted Halmos - December 29, 2024 at 10:25 AM

ML

“ Norman was a one in a million "character" (we mean that in the highest possible sense!). Thinking back decades now to the fun we had with him in the Jerseyville Municipal Band; though our interactions since then have been infrequent they were always memorable- that's just how big his personality was. Much love and our condolences to Katie and the family.

-Mark and Debbie Landon

Mark Landon - December 29, 2024 at 09:45 AM

MS

“ *In the absolute of "calendar time" I have only spent two weeks with Norm and Katie. And yet I feel as though Norm, Katie and I have always bantered, chortled, groaned and guffawed at one another's commentary. Katie and Norm are the kind of folks that you hold close because they bring so much fun, joy, generosity and thoughtful deeds you just want to celebrate every moment. What an incredible team! My heart goes out to you and the family, Katie. Thank you so much for sharing Norm with us. I already miss him very much. Thankfully his light shines on.*

love,
Michelle

Michelle Skomars - December 29, 2024 at 12:50 AM

PS

“ *I met Norm, personally at NH Cincinnati Camp in 2022. We happened to sit outside the dorm one afternoon, chatting. He was so personable and rattled off "dad joke" after "dad joke". I'll cherish this memory the rest of my life.*

Paula Sousa - December 28, 2024 at 10:23 PM

NS

“ *New Horizons Orchestra of Spokane purchased the Days of Sunshine Bouquet for the family of Norman Thiel.*



New Horizons Orchestra of Spokane - December 28, 2024 at 10:07 PM

NS

“ *New Horizons Orchestra of Spokane planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Norman Thiel.*

New Horizons Orchestra of Spokane - December 28, 2024 at 10:07 PM

PL

“ *What a homecoming to have Christmas in Heaven! Katie and girls, our prayers are with you in this unexpected separation. It is always so hard, but especially in this way for you. In God's timing you will be together again with Norman/dad's big arms around you. Until then, love each other well, cherish the blessed memories, and remember when to reach out when you need it. Love you all. Patty and Matc Lane*

Patty Lane - December 28, 2024 at 10:01 PM

PR

“ *We are so very sorry to hear of Norm's passing. We met him and Katie this summer at the Lakeside NHB band camp. He was instrumental in helping us sign up for Grouper through our insurance company so we could reap the benefits of our work in band. God's peace to Katie and Norm's family and friends. You are in our prayers.*

*Paula Sue and Todd Russell
Cape Coral, Florida*

Paula Sue Russell - December 28, 2024 at 06:13 PM

DA

“ Dear Katie,
I didn't know Norm well, but with two Cincinnati band camps under my belt, I certainly appreciated his humor, the lively lunchtime conversations, and those tremendous trumpets. Cincinnati this year will have a hole in its heart. My best wishes to you and your family. Remember the wonderful memories you made together.
Debby Abbott

Deborah Abbott - December 28, 2024 at 05:21 PM

DM

“ Dear Katie and family, My sincerest condolences to you and your family. Katie, you and Norm were a power couple that together brought joy and hope to so many people. I'm going to miss him so much. He was present, accessible, friendly, and always willing to listen when I needed to talk. He was willing to do the hard work of keeping up with all of us on the Board of Directors of NHIMA and having good conversations with anyone who wanted or needed to talk, no matter how difficult the topic. I admired his resilience, ability to grasp the big picture, and willingness to tell a groaner joke. I'm glad to have been able to spend some time with both of you in Cincinnati. May you find strength in the love of family, friends and the memories of Norm's life well lived.
Donna Morse

Donna Morse - December 28, 2024 at 04:51 PM

BV

“ Katie and family, I can't express how sorry Joe and I are to hear about Norman's passing. He was truly a blessing to us both and we considered him a friend. We love you and will be praying for you during this difficult time. Joe and Brenda Vath

Brenda Vath - December 28, 2024 at 04:24 PM

IC

“ Dear Katie and Family - My deepest sympathies with your sudden and unexpected loss. In life there are few people, who bring continuous positivity, encouragement and friendship. Norm was that person in my life. I remember when he applied to join our NHIMA Board and we knew that he would be the right person. His positive energy, his laughter, his jokes, his generosity were contagious. Everyone was made comfortable in his amazing presence. He was always available through good times and bad. I feel so enriched by Norm's passion and goodness. We will miss him terribly. Thanks Norm, for all you did for NHIMA and thanks, Katie, for being there by his side always. May his memory be a blessing to all. With love, Irene Cohen

Irene Cohen - December 28, 2024 at 01:52 PM

RR

“ Katie and family- I have only known Norman for a few years. He was a role model for all of us who volunteered at NHIMA. His passion for growing the organization was contagious and motivational. His pride in our collective achievements was contagious. We will miss him and his humor. It has been a pleasure and an honor to have worked with him. My sincere condolences on his passing. May his memory be a blessing to Katie and your family.

Russ Rosen - December 28, 2024 at 01:13 PM

JH

“ *Katie and Family,
Please accept my deepest condolences on Norm's passing. He was a really, really good guy and had become a good friend while we served on the Board for New Horizons International Music Association. He did a wonderful job leading our group through challenging times and will be greatly missed. I especially admired his positivity and good humor. May his memory be a blessing to all who had the privilege of knowing him, but especially to you and other family members. Jon Hawes*

Jon Hawes - December 28, 2024 at 11:42 AM

AK

“ *Katie and family- I will always remember my talks with him and how he ended every conversation with a joke. I am blessed to have known him. Please know we are thinking about all of you.
The Kneipp Family*

Amy Kneipp - December 27, 2024 at 10:20 PM



“ *Basket Full of Wishes was purchased for the family of Norman Thiel.*



December 27, 2024 at 10:16 PM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Norman Thiel.*

December 27, 2024 at 10:16 PM

DB

“ We served with Norm at Youth Music Camp for many years. Always enjoyed being around him and his family. May God Bless your many memories of him. Love in Christ, Curt & Deb Bier

Deb Bier - December 27, 2024 at 10:16 PM