



Gary "Brian" Bowman

February 15, 1963 - January 18, 2026

We are deeply saddened to announce the passing of Gary Brian Bowman of Unionville, Indiana, on January 18, 2026, at the age of 62. Brian is survived by his parents Gary and Carolyn (Smith) Bowman; his sister Angie (Kris) Dearduff and brother Kevin Bowman; and many cherished aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews, and friends. He was completely devoted to his family, and is profoundly missed by his wife Martha Heath Bowman, and children Ian Bowman and Olivia (Brandon) Schnell.

Brian was born in Hartford City, Indiana on February 15, 1963. From an early age, Brian had a passion for the outdoors. Cycling, fishing, rock climbing, archery, spelunking, birding, hiking, camping, and hunting were all activities that he avidly pursued. After graduating from Blackford High School and finishing his Bachelor of Science degree in natural resources at Ball State University, Brian became interested in native plants, and this became one of the passions that shaped the rest of his life.

In 1989, Brian became the naturalist at Hayes Regional Arboretum in Richmond, Indiana, and in this role, he developed his talent for educating visitors of all ages. He continued studying Indiana's native plants, and earned his Master of Science degree in Plant Ecology from Ball State University. In 1991, while working at Hayes Arboretum, Brian met and married Martha

Heath. They moved to Bloomington, Indiana so Martha could attend Indiana University, and Brian accepted a position teaching forestry, landscaping, and horticulture at Hoosier Hills Career Center. Like many IU families, they chose to stay in the Bloomington area; teaching in the Monroe County Schools would become Brian's career for 33 years, until his retirement in 2025. Brian dedicated his years as an educator to working with students who hadn't always been successful in a traditional setting. Whether working with vocational students or adult learners, educating students at the Teen Learning Center, or as one of the founding faculty members at the Bloomington Graduation School, Brian believed every student could succeed, and he was proud of all of them.

Brian is remembered by his family and friends as a self-proclaimed plant nerd. He could identify any tree or wildflower, in any season of the year. Brian loved spending time hiking in the woods with his family, close friend Bruce, and faithful dog Bonnie; these hikes could become a slow (albeit educational) experience, as he stopped to investigate any interesting flora that caught his eye. Until his death, Brian worked to cultivate native plants, and educate himself and others about conservation.

Friends are invited to visit with family to remember Brian at Allen Funeral Home in Bloomington, Indiana from 1:00 to 3:00 pm on Saturday, February 7th. In summer 2026, Brian's ashes, along with those of several beloved family pets, will be scattered by family and close friends in a private ceremony, in the Indiana woods he loved. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests you consider honoring Brian's memory through a donation to the Indiana Nature Conservancy or the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network, or by planting a native tree in your own community.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life Gathering

FEB 7. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Allen Funeral Home and Crematory
4155 S. Old State Road 37
Bloomington, IN 47401
(812) 824-5905
<http://www.allencares.com>

Tribute Wall

JM

“ Julie M. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary "Brian" Bowman.

Julie M. - February 07 at 04:16 PM

HF

“ His family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Gary "Brian" Bowman.



His family - February 02 at 10:15 AM

HF

“ His family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary "Brian" Bowman.

His family - February 02 at 10:15 AM

TT

“ I am Brian's cousin Tracy. We shared many happy, family times gathering at our grandmother's house and also at his parents Gary and Carolyn's house in Hartford City. Carolyn is my first cousin. My family loved being in Hartford City visiting with family. My siblings and I loved playing together with our cousins. I remember Brian best when he was a baby and a toddler. He was a sweet little boy. I am greatly saddened by his passing

Tracy Alley Trujillo - January 30 at 09:02 PM

DS

“ Daniel S. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary "Brian" Bowman.

Daniel S. - January 30 at 06:28 PM

CM

“ Carol M. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary "Brian" Bowman.

Carol M. - January 30 at 04:07 PM