



## Peter William Strickholm

January 3, 1958 - January 28, 2025

Peter Strickholm passed away on Tuesday January 28th. Dearly loved by his family and many friends, Peter was an outdoor wilderness expert, jazz pianist and composer.

Born on January 3rd, 1958 in Minneapolis, Minnesota to Leila and Alfred Strickholm, Peter watched his older brother Steve take piano lessons, and at the age of 5 began taking lessons himself, which led to his life-long musical journey. Graduating from Bloomington High School North, he went to Colorado College where he pursued his three passions: Music, Math and Mountains. While there, he completed the NOLS (National Outdoor Leadership School) Programs in both Summer Backpacking and Winter Wilderness Survival.

After graduating and while living in Bloomington, Peter became active in the local spelunker group, leading different local caving trips. Several years later he returned to the Rockies and the University of Colorado at Boulder for his M.A. in Music Composition. Back in Bloomington again, he studied and received the M.A. from I.U. in Biology, applying his math skills to forecasting wildlife populations.

During his life Peter made Bloomington his “base camp”, leaving for annual summer backpacking trips with his father and brother into the Sierras and the

Southwest. The photo is from his favorite spot in Chaco Canyon, a place where he felt especially connected to nature.

Peter suffered a cardiac arrest 9 years ago, from a bad reaction to high-blood pressure medications. This damaged the Basal Ganglia area of his brain (from oxygen deprivation) and left him completely immobile and paralyzed, requiring 24/7 care. Unable to communicate, he was lovingly cared for in a medical room in his parents' home, surrounded by a cadre of committed nurses and friends, for whom his family is forever grateful. Peter was pre-deceased by his father Alfred, which required his family to relocate him to Providence Care Medical Facility, part of Saint Mary of the Woods College in Terre Haute. He received their expert and loving care for the past three years and was in Hospice when he passed away.

Peter is survived by his mother Leila, brother Steve and sister Julie. There will be a Celebration of Life later this Spring and we look forward to sharing his love and life with his many friends around the country and in the Bloomington community.

Allen Funeral Home has been entrusted with the arrangements.

# Tribute Wall



“ Thinking of you, Lee, Steve, and the rest of the family. I have warm memories of neighborly chats with Peter when he lived a few blocks from me, in the Madison St condos along the B Line, and also of when he was coming to the Wednesday night contra dances at Harmony School. His music was a joy in his life. He was blessed to have a loving family that cared for him and helped him deal with mental and physical health challenges. Teri Klassen

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**Teri Klassen** - May 17, 2025 at 11:35 AM

FT

“ From Paul, Ewa, Sue, Gail, and Tim purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Peter William Strickholm.



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**From Paul, Ewa, Sue, Gail, and Tim** - May 15, 2025 at 10:34 AM

BS

“ I loved hearing Peter play the piano in church. Once, after reading a poem I had written at the UU, Peter came up to me and said, "This is what you are supposed to do." I have never forgotten his belief in me. I know this has been a long journey for Lee and the rest of his family. Thinking of you with love, Barb

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**Barbara J. Schwegman** - February 27, 2025 at 10:03 AM

MC

“ My dearest Lee, my thoughts and prayers have been with you all these years.  
Love hearing Peter’s compositions at UU. Am so happy they keep his memory alive. With love, Mary Jo

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**Mary Jo Conley** - February 12, 2025 at 08:52 AM

RC

“ Peter and I were classmates at U-School and then at North. I always enjoyed visiting with him at class reunions and concerts. He could be charming to talk to. May he rest in peace.

Becky

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**Rebecca Carter** - February 09, 2025 at 04:09 PM

AM

“ I remember Peter with affection and enjoyment from the Puck Players days when he would accompany some shows on the piano. I send you, his family, my condolences at this time.

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**Antonia Matthew** - February 09, 2025 at 10:42 AM

SC

“ Smithville Communications planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Peter William Strickholm.

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**Smithville Communications** - February 06, 2025 at 02:02 PM

TD

“ My deepest condolences to you all. I remember him playing the piano almost every time I was there....just to play or compose Tynka Dees

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**Tynka Dees** - February 05, 2025 at 02:30 PM

CG

“ Our hart felt condolences to the Strickholm family upon learning of Peter’s passing as well as to what must have been a very difficult 9 years prior.

*I can still remember living in the same neighborhood (Blue Ridge) and going over to his house as a kid. I knew that he was different and gifted when he had some 600 plus original piano compositions that he could play on command. Coincidentally his songs were all named and recalled by number. I remember bringing a tape recorder so that I could verify he was playing the same song 64 that he had played the week before.*

*Even before that I knew that he was a genius and in a different area code than me. One of my first impressions of him was when I saw his bedroom door and he had Pi written out to the 1000th numeral. While I on the other hand had a sign on my bedroom door that said Welcome to the City Dump. I have met many people over my life time and just a very few of them I believe qualify as a true genius and Peter was one of them.*

*Again condolences from the Gregory family.*

*Chuck Gregory*

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**Charles Gregory** - February 05, 2025 at 12:31 PM

AH

“ *I knew Peter in high school and did some things with him through Young Life. I had never met anyone as smart, talented and intense as Peter. His times in the wilderness must have been very rich. My condolences to the Strickhom family. Anne Heise*

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**Anne Heise** - February 05, 2025 at 11:33 AM

CC

“ Peter and I were good friends in high school and we had our own little spelunking club consisting of Peter, our fearless leader, Tom Hoffa, Phillip Russel, and myself Connie Turner. We had some great adventures in those Indiana caves, but also a few frightening experiences when we thought we were lost. Peter always remained calm and with his photographic memory would guide us back through long winding passages and get us safely to the cave entrance.

Peter was such an incredible musical genius and would sit down at the piano and just play his own creations as they came to him. I saw Peter a few times after high school because we both lived in Colorado, and I also saw him at class reunions. He was such a remarkable person because he achieved so much as he struggled with his mental health issues. We always had so much to talk about after many years apart, and I will always remember Peter as one of my most unique and gifted friends.

My condolences to his family after what must have been a very difficult period during his time in a coma, and now his very sad departure from this earth. I believe Peter is now free to play his beautiful music once again, somewhere in the universe.

Sincerely,  
Connie Turner Cohen

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**Constance Cohen** - February 05, 2025 at 11:15 AM

LH

“ Steve--my condolences to you and your family. I had not heard of Peter's struggles until this morning and I am so sorry for what he went through. His life sounds like it was wonderful and amazing until the accident. Wishing you and yours well. Laura Heise

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**Laura Heise** - February 05, 2025 at 08:36 AM