



Thomas Earl Kinzer

June 27, 1953 - April 17, 2017

THOMAS EARL KINZER

Thomas Earl Kinzer, 63, died April 17th at IU Health Hospice of Bloomington. He is survived by his wife and partner in life for 42 years, Veralyn (Turner) Martin. He was a graduate of Bloomington High School and Indiana University, where he earned the Bachelor of Arts and Master of Education degrees.

Tom was a reflective and spiritual man. He loved the beauty of nature, particularly the great Northwoods of Wisconsin, where he spent vacation time with his family every year, and the mountains of Colorado. He was an avid sailor in his youth, and continued to spend time outdoors enjoying golfing, fishing and photography. His love of reading was usually focused on improving his understanding of learning, education, and spirituality.

Tom devoted his life to the education and mentoring of the youth of Indiana. He began his career teaching junior high school English for two years at Washington Community Schools in Washington, IN. For the next 31 years (1979 to 2003), he taught English at Owen Valley High School in Spencer, IN, where he was also the advisor for the high school newspaper for many years.

Tom concluded his career at Ivy Tech Community College in Bloomington where he was the Secondary Initiatives Coordinator (2008 to 2012), and then an assistant professor of Life Skills and then English (2012 to May 2016).

In addition to his teaching duties at Owen Valley, Tom was a member of the leadership team involved in improving educational programming. Owen Valley

was a member of the national High Schools That Work program and, in 2002, was named by the federal government as an All American High School. He served on two committees headed by IU School of Education professors, on state and national committees to establish minimum scores on ISTEP and NAEP exams, and as a Pearson Educational Services scorer for the SAT writing assessment. During his time at Ivy Tech, he was a member of the CELL dual credit advisory committee, the Franklin Initiative Advisory Council and the steering committee for the Monroe County High School Plus Coalition. Tom was a member of the Indiana State Teachers Association, Indiana Retired Teachers Association, Indiana Teachers of Writing, National Education Association, National Council of Teachers of English, National Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, and the Journalism Education Association. From 2013 through May 2016, he was on the Region 8 Works Council for the Governor's Indiana Career Council.

A man of deep faith, Tom was an active member of the First United Methodist Church in Bloomington since 1975, where he taught Disciple Bible courses, special adult courses and a high school class, chaired the Outreach Commission, and served as a member of the Administrative Council, Council on Resources, Strategic Planning Task Force, and the Staff Parish Committee. He was also a delegate to the South Indiana Conference for several years and a member of the conference's Commission on Communication. At the time of his death, he was working with the Fruitful Congregations Journey, a major church improvement initiative.

Tom was surrounded in life by a large and loving family. He was the son of the late William and Patricia (Merritt) Kinzer. He was father to five children, Charles Kinzer (and wife Lori), of Terre Haute; Debra Holland, Diana Spoolstra (and husband James), and Donna Martin (and husband Kenneth Jackson), all of Bloomington; and Linda Applegate of Tampa, FL. He also had two brothers -- Douglas Kinzer (and wife Lauren) of Bloomington and John Kinzer of San Antonio, TX; and a sister -- Cynthia Turner of San Antonio, TX. He was adored by his 16 grandchildren -- Stacy Gano (and fiancé David

Knight); Rebecca Turner (and husband Bryan); Alex Trisler (and fiancé Jenni Zengerling); Jason (and wife Stephanie), Jarrod, Evan (and wife Christine), and Eric Spoolstra; Kyla Jackson; Jasmine, Alexis and LeLand Kinzer; Robert and Christopher Applegate; Susan McKeever (and husband Travis); Melissa Holland Mansika (and husband Arron); and Michele Eimon (and husband John) -- and 15 great-grandchildren -- Stephanie and Andrew Gano, Vera and Thad Turner, Elyria and Xavier Thomas Trisler, Gianna, J.R., and Kellan Spoolstra, Alora and Aidan Applegate, Aislyn McKeever, Lily and Noah Eimon, and Maxwell Mansika. Two more great-grandchildren are expected this year.

He is also survived by nieces Erin Kinzer, Bettina Sturm and Michele Turner; and nephews Victor Kinzer and Russell Turner. He was preceded in death by his parents; his stepmother, Mary Forester Kinzer; sons-in-law Gary Holland and Joseph Applegate; sister-in-law Bernadette Kinzer, and brother-in-law Dayton Ray Turner.

A celebration of life service will be held at the First United Methodist Church of Bloomington at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 13th. Internment of his ashes will follow the service in the church columbarium.

Memorial gifts may be made to the Tom Kinzer Memorial Scholarship, which will benefit an Owen Valley student attending Ivy Tech, at Ivy Tech Community College, 200 Daniels Way, Bloomington, IN 47404; the EPIC Teaching Scholarship at Owen County Community Foundation Inc., PO Box 503, Spencer, IN 47460; or the First United Methodist Church columbarium fund or education mission fund at 219 East Fourth Street, Bloomington, IN 47408.

Tribute Wall

JM

“ I went college with Tom (we were both in Education) and enjoyed the many education classes that we both attended. Tom is a true educator, cared about people and his students. I also had the privilege of teaching English at Bloomington South with both his mother and step mother. Both Tom and his parents were great people and all will be greatly missed.

With great sympathy,

Jack Morrison

Jack Morrison - May 13, 2017 at 10:18 AM

MG

“ It was 1985 and Tom & Vee decided that they wanted to find a one level home in Bloomington. I turned out that they were the best buyers that I had ever worked with. We visited a number of houses until the condo in Sherwood Green was chosen. Throughout the negotiations, inspections and closing, they were calm and cheerful. Had a feeling that their prayers were answered.

Then there were those happy years being members of the Bloomington Yacht Club. Good fun, good food and times spent above, in and out of the water. Great memories that will never fade away.

We are so sorry that Tom is gone. He was that rare person who always gave you the feeling that you were special in his eyes.

*With great sympathy,
Mary & Joe Gajewski*

Mary Gajewski - May 11, 2017 at 10:05 PM



“ *Dish Garden with Fresh Cut Flowers was purchased for the family of Thomas Earl Kinzer.*



May 10, 2017 at 07:08 PM



“ *The first time I met Tom is such a perfect example of him (and his wife Vee). See, I didn't really meet him in person.*

I was sailing in a regatta in Bloomington that would forever be known as the mud-bog regatta. It poured rain, the club grounds were a sea of mud, it was ludicrous to think of camping as we'd intended, but every motel in town was jammed full for a football weekend.

Tom's brother, Doug, was also racing and called Tom and Vee who were out of town and asked if a dozen or so filthy sailors could spend the night in their condo . . . "Of course!" came the answer. "Tell them to wash their clothes, get showers, sleep in the beds and eat whatever they can find, too."

Over the years, I got to know Tom and Vee far better, but that initial memory lives on. Tom didn't preach his religion and "do unto others . . .". He lived it.

Carolyn Shearlock - May 02, 2017 at 12:59 PM

BL

“ Tom's son Charlie and I became good friends in high school and there were many nights and weekends spent at the Kinzer household. They always treated me like part of the family and, as such, Tom never hesitated to point out when I had done wrong or when a path I was on was not the wisest of choices. While some of my actions would've invoked anger in most people, Tom always met it with a calm demeanor, very carefully chosen words, and a life lesson that went beyond just what was happening in that moment. I haven't seen Tom in many years, but when I learned that he was about to leave us I felt such a deep sadness. I'll be forever grateful for the impact he had on my life.

Brian Lester - May 01, 2017 at 11:21 AM

BS

“ Our hearts go out to all who knew and loved Tom. Charlie and I have so many memories of him over the years. He was everlastingly peaceful and accepting, and Heaven will be as enriched by his spirit as much as Earth has been. Bridgette Z. and Charlie Savage

Bridgette Z. Savage - April 30, 2017 at 04:42 PM

RD

“ Emily and I got to know Tom well when he came to Colorado and spent a long time living in our basement family room. He was a good listener and a hard worker at whatever he undertook. Calmness radiated from him at all times. We watched him move along his life's path strewing accomplishments behind him that always made the world better. He will be missed by all who knew him.

*Ray Dangel
Broomfield, CO*

Ray Dangel - April 28, 2017 at 10:15 PM

 Mark
Wheeler

“ A note from one of his many former students: Once, while handing an assignment back to me, he said, "You should be a writer!" The assignment was to describe a waterfall. His words were an off the cuff comment that caught me completely by surprise. That a man of his sophisticated taste in literature would say that to me, a high school freshman, was shocking to me, since I'd never thought of myself that way. It also changed the way I thought about him. That was 31 years ago. I'm a teacher now, and I choose my words carefully because of a small compliment from Tom Kinzer all those years ago. Again, I'm just one of the many students he taught. Think of all the lives he's affected throughout his career!

Mark Wheeler - April 28, 2017 at 09:32 PM

JB

“ Judy Bancroft lit a candle in memory of
Thomas Earl Kinzer



Judy bancroft - April 28, 2017 at 09:20 PM