



## Thomas Nisonger

December 14, 1943 - December 8, 2025

Thomas Nisonger passed away at Bloomington Hospital on December 8, 2025. He was born December 14, 1943 in Ashtabula, Ohio, the only child of Irvin J. Nisonger and Mary Gienger Nisonger who preceded him in death. He is survived by his wife of 55 years Claire Witten Nisonger of Bloomington, and two adopted children: Suzanne Nisonger of Denver Colorado and Stanley (Jennifer) Nisonger of Crawfordsville IN, In addition his many library students whose lives he touched.

He received a BA from the College of Wooster, an MLS in Library Science from the University of Pittsburgh and a PhD in comparative politics at Columbia University

He was first employed as a librarian at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg Canada from Nov 1974 to May of 1981. Then he started as head of acquisitions at the University of Texas at Dallas. After he rose to associate library director, he decided he would prefer teaching as a professor rather than administration and moved to Indiana University Bloomington in August of 1988. He retired as full professor in June 2005.

He taught several required courses so that most library students took them. It has been his great pleasure to meet them again in later years and many make sure they visit him when they return to Bloomington from their positions though out the country.

Tom's dissertation topic was Lenin's purge of his opponents in the Leningrad party. Once the topic came up: Did you ever use your dissertation topic in real life? Tom said "No, he had not purged any of his opponents".

Tom had several professional memberships in various Library Associations. His honorary societies were Phi Beta Kappa, Beta Phi Mu (Library Science), Pi Sigma Alpha (Poli Sci) and Phi Alpha Theta (history). He received several teaching awards, including the Trustees Teaching Award, K.G. Saur Award for best research article in 2000, and the TERA Award for teaching excellence at Indiana University. He served on several library boards and dissertation committees.

A Fulbright Fellowship Exchange Program to Oxford University ended before it began when Margaret Thatcher terminated that position. It turned out to be a good twist of fate as that is when he was accepted at Indiana University.

Tom would introduce himself on the first day of classes by telling the story of meeting Claire at the Empire State Building. When getting on the subway he realized he had left his wallet at the Bernard College Library when he paid a fine. He returned to find his wallet still there and said "This testifies to the integrity of librarians". Anniversaries were celebrated by Empire State related activities: watching one of several movies or visiting the Empire State Quarry south of Bloomington.

The most fitting memorial to Tom is to support libraries with your patronage, presence and donations.

Allen Funeral Home and Crematory 4155 South Old State Road 37 has been entrusted with the arrangements and online condolences, photos and memories may be shared with family and friends at [www.allencares.com](http://www.allencares.com)



# Tribute Wall

MU

“ I took collection development from Dr Nisonger. I remember his class session on Pr0nography, and his calm navigation of the subject and the lively discussion we had in a space that he held with professional grace. I also remember that he loved Morel mushrooms, and I still think about him every time I see one. I remember him well, and hope you find peace.

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**Meika Ungricht** - January 03 at 04:44 PM

RS

“ Tom epitomized the intellectual curiosity and commitment to sharing knowledge of a librarian scholar. His generous spirit was appreciated by his students and colleagues. As one of them, I send condolences to Claire and the family.

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**Ralf Shaw** - January 02 at 10:34 AM

JP

“ I will always remember Tom's wit and wonderful sense of humor. Like the others said, he was a kind, intellectually curious man devoted to his students. My condolences to Claire and their children.

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**Joanne Passet** - December 24, 2025 at 07:42 AM

SP

“ One of the kindest instructors I every had. I fondly remember his collection development course in library school, and I hope I have at least in some way lived up to his instruction in my professional work. My sincerest condolences to his wife and his family.

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**Scott Pletka** - December 23, 2025 at 04:34 PM



“ I was fortunate to have Dr. Nisonger teach several classes I took while getting my MLS. He was such a kind and thoughtful instructor. I'm happy to say I have been employed at Monroe County Public Library for 22 years and got to see Dr. Nisonger on his frequent visits there. He always told me which library he had recently visited around the world. Sending condolences to his family. He will be missed.

Elizabeth Gray - December 22, 2025 at 03:48 PM



“ Tom was a kind man and good friend and colleague. When we were both at SLIS we often lunched together in the library cafeteria. After retirement we lunched once a month for years. I always appreciated his intellect at lunch and at the bridge table, where he excelled. I will miss him and his friendship.

Steve Harter - December 21, 2025 at 10:44 AM



“ My sincerest condolences go out to Dr. Nisonger's wife and his entire family during this difficult time. He was not only a very learned and knowledgeable professor but he was also very approachable and kind. I will always remember my time at Indiana University and our conversations about being from the Mahoning Valley in Ohio.



Jeannine Berroteran - December 20, 2025 at 01:36 PM



“ I send my condolences to Claire and their two children. I know the last few months have been hard for them. I remember Tom as such a kind and caring person. Shirley Fitzgibbons

Shirley Fitzgibbons - December 19, 2025 at 11:49 AM