



Norman W Ten Brink

May 17, 1943 - March 30, 2023

Dr. Norman W. TenBrink, age 79, passed away on March 30, 2023, after a valiant four-year battle with leukemia. He went peacefully to be with his Lord and Savior. Norm was born May 17th, 1943, in Shelby, Michigan to Lawrence and Louise (Wissman) TenBrink. He had many childhood adventures growing up on a small farm with a creek and cedar swamp in rural New Era, Michigan. He developed a deep love of the outdoors and the natural world that stayed with him throughout his life. After graduating from Shelby High School, he went to Hope College, graduating with degrees in Biology and Chemistry. He attended the University of Michigan with the intent of pursuing Dentistry, but one geology course was all it took to turn him to his life's calling. While at U of M, Norm met Shirley Bishop and they married on June 4th, 1967. Norm called Shirley his "Christmas in July"; her birthday was July 25. Norm fast tracked his new major in Geology, graduating from U of M in 1966. He went on to earn his MS with a specialty in Glacial Geomorphology at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania and then completed his PhD at the University of Washington. He then did a post-doctoral fellowship at Ohio State University Institute of Polar Studies.

Shirley and Norm returned to western Michigan to be nearer to family with a desire to raise their children in a Christian environment. In 1973, Norm accepted a faculty position at Grand Valley State University where he taught and continued his research for more than 30 years. Norm's academic accomplishments were many, but his largest successes were multiple Nation

Science Foundation grants that funded his research (including the first million-dollar grant awarded to Grand Valley State University). These grants allowed Norm and his students to do extensive research in SW Alaska, Denmark, Greenland, the Antarctic, and throughout the Western United States, including working on the Calypso with Jacques Cousteau. Also, while at Grand Valley, Norm developed a Water Resources Institute and later founded the GVSU Teaching and Learning Center. His enthusiasm and excellence as a teacher and mentor inspired many of his students to love learning, with several having gone on to pursue successful careers in the field of geology.

Norm and Shirley had two sons, Andy and Ryan. Norm's passion for his summer research work was only equaled by the love for his sons, so they were often found right alongside Norm and his students during the field season. These adventures lead both boys to develop a strong love for the west, with Ryan living in Colorado and Andy living in Nevada. His lifelong love of nature and the outdoors led to purchasing land on Hamlin Lake and hand-building a lakeside cabin with the help of friends, neighbors, and family. The cabin provided a home base for deer hunting, fishing, hiking, water skiing, and family adventures that will never be forgotten.

In retirement, Norm and Shirley spent summers in the beloved cabin on Hamlin Lake and winters in Green Valley, Arizona. Norm's joy in exploring and learning about the Southwest was infectious. He and Shirley quickly found new friends and spent time with hiking clubs, hunting clubs, volunteer groups, and socializing. In 2010 Shirley developed cancer. The cabin's rural location wasn't ideal for treatment and after much discussion, the cabin was sold (but only after Norm secured lifetime hunting rights). Norm and Shirley returned to Holland to be close to family and Shirley passed away in 2015.

Norm and Shirley were active members of at Christ Memorial Church in Holland and Valley Presbyterian Church in Green Valley, AZ. In 2017, mutual friends introduced Norm to Carol Gunneman. They had much in common and soon fell in love and were married in June of 2019 to the joy of both of their families. Their union was blessed with family, friends, and their faith. With

these three, Norm and Carol found much joy and happiness along with the demands of Norm's cancer treatments. Carol's love, strength, steady hand, and nursing background allowed Norm to enjoy each and every day he was blessed with.

Norm is survived by his beloved wife, Carol, his sons, Andy (Joanne Lowden) TenBrink and Ryan (Lauren Hatfield) TenBrink, brother Lee (Milly) TenBrink, nephew, Steve (Deb) TenBrink, niece, Mary Jo (Scott) Boerman, stepbrother, Ken (Pat) Dekok, stepsister, Jan Fisher, brothers and sisters in law, Greg (Judy) Harrison, and Beverly Heft. Additional treasured survivors included Carol's children (whom Norm quickly grew to love), Mark (Anita) Tuneff, Mark (Brenda) Kappus, and Dave (Kim) Gunneman, their extended families, and lifelong friends Jerry (Norma) Heyerman, Al Werner, Chris Waythomas. A celebration of Norm's life will be held on Saturday May 20th 11am to 2pm at the Langeland-Sterenberg Funeral Home, 315 E. 16th St., Holland, MI 49423. Memorial contributions may be given to Crossroads Nogales Mission, 338 N. Morley Avenue, Nogales, AZ 85621 or Hospice of Holland, 270 Hoover Blvd, Holland, MI 49423. Messages or memories for the family may be left at www.angelandsterenberg.com.

Cemetery Details

New Era Cemetery

Previous Events

Memorial Service

MAY **20**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Langeland-Sterenbergh Funeral Home
315 E 16th St
Holland, MI 49423
(616) 392-2306
info@langelandsterenberg.com
<http://langelandsterenberg.com/>

Tribute Wall



“ *Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes created a Norman Ten Brink Memorial Service in memory of Norman W Ten Brink*



Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes - May 20, 2023 at 03:25 PM



“ *Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of Norman W Ten Brink*



Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes - May 18, 2023 at 11:44 AM

JD

“ *So sorry to hear about your Dad's passing. We have such good memories of your Mom and Dad here in Ludington. We did not know about the service. Sad we were not there. Bruce and Joyce Dykhouse.*

Joyce Dykhouse - June 18, 2023 at 07:07 AM

AH

“ I wish I could conjure up a couple of specific memories of our family gatherings over the years, but when I think of you, Uncle Norm, the first things that come to mind are the glorious smell of your pipe and the infectious sound of your laughter. I also will be eternally grateful to you for encouraging me to pursue a PhD; it’s largely because of your influence that, like yours, my career is also my life’s passion. I’m grateful to have had you in my life. You will be missed, Uncle Norm, and remembered fondly.

Amy Harrison-Levine - May 19, 2023 at 01:10 PM

JH

“ We have so many memories of fun family gatherings of the “Bishop clan” at the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays , most every year. We shared meals, played games, and talked into the wee hours, watching our children grow up. Norm always led grace at our meals. We also enjoyed visits to their cottage, and gathered for our father’s family gatherings, in the summers. So many great memories!



Judy Harrison - May 18, 2023 at 10:46 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Norman W Ten Brink.



May 17, 2023 at 10:25 AM