



## **Norman 'Norm' Staska**

June 18, 1929 - June 24, 2021

Age 92, of Brooklyn Park MN, passed away on June 24, 2021. Norm is survived by his wife, Joan McGonigal-Staska along with her children, Jeffrey (Jerri) McGonigal, Betsy (Mark) Bornholdt, Molly (Jim) Ibister and five grandchildren. Also survived by siblings Berlyn (Kathleen), Colleen Borchert, Ronald (Claudette), Sandra (George) Winzenburg, and many nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his father William, mother Genevieve, sister Janet Frederick, stepson Kevin McGonigal.

Norm was born on June 18, 1929 in Owatonna, MN. He graduated from Owatonna HS in 1947. He entered the US Navy as a Musician in 1950, serving until 1954. While earning his Bachelor of Science degree in Music Education at the University of Minnesota (1957), Norm arranged music for the U of M Marching Band. He also earned his Master of Education degree in 1969. Norm proudly taught instrumental music in Litchfield (1957-59) and Columbia Heights (1959-84). He was devoted to music education, once stating, "Band provided a place for kids to blossom, especially shy kids who needed to shine, but wanted a sense of collegiality."

Norm studied clarinet with Earl Hanlon of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra and studied orchestration with Dominic Argenta of the U of M. He collaborated with James 'Red' McLeod to co-author two method books, still in print by the Alfred Music Publishing

Co., titled *Scale Etudes* (1963) and *Rhythm Etudes* (1966). Both books are familiar to band and orchestra directors across the country.

Norm was also an accomplished professional musician going back to his days as a teen. He arranged for and directed the Norm Staska Orchestra. He was also a member of the following ensembles: Don Strickland Dance Band, Ray Stolzenberg Dance Band, Rod Aaberg Orchestra, Dick Cavitt Orchestra, Whoopee John Orchestra, Golden Tones Orchestra, Bob Heine's Big Band, Moonlight Serenaders, River City Saxophone Quartet, Jack Teeter's Band, and the Bellagala Big Band. He also directed the St. Paul Police Band.

Norm was a member of the following organizations: American School Band Directors Assoc., Navy Musician Assoc., University of Minnesota Alumni Assoc., Retired Educators Assoc. of MN, MN Historical Society, Owatonna HS Alumni Assoc. and The Evergreen Club.

A self-proclaimed chatterbox, he loved to share all kinds of stories. As the Staska family historian, Norm published his Family Tree in 2000, 2003, and 2005.

A Memorial Service will be held on Thursday, July 15, 2021 at 11:00am at Evans-Nordby Funeral Home, 6000 Brooklyn Blvd., Brooklyn Center MN 55429, 763-533-3000. Local road construction may require extra time for travel. If you cannot attend in person, the service will be live streamed on Zoom.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85619342618?pwd=NjVOeFZI...>

Meeting ID: 856 1934 2618 - Passcode: Staska

Memorials may be made to The Evergreen Club / Attn Ellen Sorenson, 2841 Ardan Ave. Mounds View MN, 55112

## Memorial Service

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Thursday, July 15th 11AM



Evans-Nordby Funeral Home, 6000 Brooklyn Blvd., Brooklyn Center, MN

[Driving Directions](#)

