



Thomas Matthew Klaver

April 12, 1971 - June 24, 2025

Tom Klaver of Clarion died June 24, 2025. He was the son of Gary and Jerilynn Klaver, born April 12, 1971, in Wheat Ridge Colorado and later moved with his family to Plano, TX, Tulsa, OK and Jewell, IA. There he attended South Hamilton Schools and in high school he participated in band and sports. He was an outstanding high school musician and was given a full scholarship to the University of Iowa. While there he was a member of the University of Iowa marching band, pep bands, symphony band, orchestra and the Old Gold Singers. A college highlight was marching in 1991 Rose Bowl parade and the Bowl game.

After graduating with honors from the University of Iowa he accepted the position as the high school band instructor in Mt Vernon, Iowa.

In 1997 he enlisted in the Navy and was stationed at Great Lakes Naval Training Center as a musician. He was a soloist and member of the Ceremonial band, several small groups, and was the bass and rhythm guitarist in the Navy rock band Horizon.

Tom missed teaching and after his enlistment ended, he became the high school band director in Denison, Iowa. He also taught at CAL, South Hamilton and Clarion. All of his bands received a Division I rating at the State Music contest and many of his students were selected for the All-State Band.

Tom spent the last 10 years of his teaching career as the Junior High School band director in Clarion. He was a kind and caring teacher who had a special heart for the "Charlie Browns" of the world.

His hobbies were playing in the Karl King Band, the Fort Dodge Area Symphony, golfing, bird feeding and flower gardening. He was an avid sports fan of the University of Iowa, Chicago Bears and Chicago White Sox.

Tom loved and was loved by his family, friends and students.

He is survived by his mother Jerilynn Klaver; brother and best friend Jay (Julie) Klaver and their children Hayden, Kylie, and Thomas; Uncle Jim (Sonjia) Michaelson.

He was preceded by his father Gary, grandparents Ben and Kathryn Klaver, Jerry and Lois Michaelson; Aunt and Uncle Gwen and Jerry Farnham and cousins.

Tom's family is thankful for the support from the Clarion community throughout his illness.

An open house visitation will be held at the Clarion Congregational United Church of Christ, 121 3rd Ave NW, Clarion, IA 50525 on July 13, 2025, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm.

Cards and notes with memories of Tom would be appreciated by his family and memorials will be given to his church. These may be directed to the family or Adams Celebration of Life at 25631 Co Hwy D35, Iowa Falls, IA 50126. With honor, Adams Celebration of life is serving the family.

Events



VISITATION

2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Clarion
Congregational United
Church of Christ 121
3rd Ave NW, Clarion,
IA 50525

Tribute Wall

L

Lisa Bergschneider Westwood

Cliffy will be missed by so many. Today's visitation was evidence of that. RIP Cliffy. ❤️



A

Anonymous

Our condolences on your great loss. He was a wonderful man and will be hugely missed.



Tribute Store

A memorial tree was planted in memory of Thomas Matthew Klaver.

R

Roger Ringnald

Tom came home with my son Ryan from the U of I, and our first meeting was out in my shop. It didn't take long for me to love Tom (Cliffy) as one of my own sons. He and Ryan would come to Clarion to play in pep bands, TubaCristmas, and many UCC Congregational Church Choir accompanying brass ensembles. There are endless fun and funny stories that I could tell, but it is more important that I tell you about Tom the teacher. He ended up coming to Clarion as the Middle School Band Director ten years ago, and what he did for and with "kids" was always phenomenal. He knew his craft, and he knew how to entice kids into wanting to play in the band and even come to lessons. It was difficult to catch Tom during a school day because he was always surrounded by students wanting a lesson, needing help, or just wanting an adult to talk to. Non-band students loved Klave just as much, and many relied on his time and advice in making tough decisions. And then there is Tom the musician. I remember him as a high school student at All-State Auditions, and Tom would be playing his scales faster, cleaner, and more octaves than anyone else. I had several students of my own panic when they heard him playing. Then Tom and I played together in the Fort Dodge Symphony and the Karl King Band, and he took my place when I retired from playing. It didn't matter if a tuba, baritone, or trombone was needed, Tom would not only be anxious to play, but also play without errors. He was one of the finest musicians I have ever played next to. He passed away as my Son#3, and many tears have been shed for a musical and teaching gift to the world, but God must have needed the best low brass player He could find, and Tom was called home way too soon for us mortals to accept. I love you Tom, and there is a big hole left in your life and the musical world with your loss.

L

Lance Jensen

Tom was a great friend and amazingly talented man. I will always have fond memories of all the things we did together in junior and senior high school. Sorry I could not be at the visitation. God bless. Lance

H

Helen Ellwood

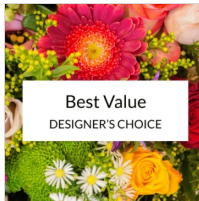
So many memories of sharing music with Tom and Alisha at South Hamilton and then again at the University of Iowa in the Old Gold Singers. Our prayer is that they are sharing music together in heaven. Sending love and prayers to Tom's family from the Ellwood family. Tom and Helen Shana and Andy Hilary and Jake





The Michaelson Family

Forever in our hearts



"Designer's Choice Bouquet"

was purchased for the family of Thomas Matthew Klaver



[Tribute Store](#)

Show your support with flowers



Dave and Melissa Oleson

Our thoughts are with you.



"Peaceful Condolences"

was purchased for the family of Thomas Matthew Klaver



[Tribute Store](#)

Show your support with flowers

C

Chris Arends

As you grieve know that we are remembering you and your family.

B

Brent Olthoff

A lot of great memories as kids when life was much simpler. Tom had a great sense of humor, was fun to be around and we could always count on him to push the buttons of some teachers once in a while - all in good fun. He was devoted to music, and it is great to see so many comments from former students and bandmates. I always enjoyed hearing his solos and the passion in which he played. My condolences to the family. Brent Olthoff, SH Class of '89

J

Jim Klein

Tom was a great member of the South Hamilton community. I enjoyed having him as a student and then a fellow educator at SHHS. I'm sure he is missed by all.

J

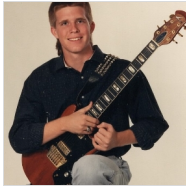
John Lupkes

A great man taken away from the world too soon. He was the last band teacher I had at CAL before graduation. I remember his humor and discipline in equal measure. He always had time for students to voice their opinions and ideas. Our rivalry between the Packers and the Bears was a great source of fun and friction during the school year. He will be missed, and I extend my condolences to all of his friends and family during this difficult time.

W

Weston Barnes

HE WAS A GREAT TEACHER AND FRIEND ❤️❤️!!



Shelly Devlin

I have so many fond memories playing in brass quintet with Tom when I was at the University of Iowa. I wish to extend my condolences to your family.

**"Red Designer's Choice"**

was purchased for the family of Thomas Matthew Klaver

 **Tribute Store***Show your support with flowers*

S

Shelly Devlin

I have so many fond memories playing in our brass quintet together in college! One of my fondest memories was when he told me that he could "single tongue 99 notes in one minute". I said, "How do you know that you have exactly 99 notes?" Here's the funny part....he pulled out a stopwatch and a calculator, held the calculator up to his tongue and tongued the "+" button on the calculator as fast as he possibly could. When the stopwatch hit one minute, the screen said "99". Not only did I think it was super funny, I was also very impressed! Tom was a fantastic musician and such a cool person. I'm fortunate to have those good memories. :) Shelly Devlin

**"Material_candle_red_thumbnail"**

was lit in memory of Thomas Matthew Klaver

 **Light a candle***Show your support by giving a symbol of remembrance*

J

Jenny Kreitlow

Prayers to the family. I am an elementary sub and liked observing him with his band students as they did lessons!! He will be missed!

B Beulah Meints

Tom was a character. He had a big personality & was incredibly gifted with music. I especially enjoyed listening to him make his baritone sing so beautifully. Tom could put a smile on just about anyone's face. I'm sorry to hear of his passing. May God comfort you in your mourning. Beulah (Olson) Meints South Hamilton '88

T Tori Bailey

I remember in middle school for a competition he was one of the judges for our school. He was nice and corrective and supportive. He even complimented on my army flute case, saying how cool it was. Years later I became friend with Kylie, and met him again. He was always happy to see me and catch up. This man was truly a kind man with a big heart for his community. I am sad to hear of his passing and hope that he is having as much fun playing music as he did here on earth. My love and support are with his family always.

L Lacy

Honorary Uncle, T Klav., made such a magnificent impact on so many kids in the musical world. He also made a massive impact on myself. His encouragement in band has definitely transferred over into the real world. I know that anytime I'm struggling with something that I just need to "play with balls" and tackle everything with confidence and gusto! I am so thankful he chose the education field and blessed all the little middle school weirdos (such as myself, HannahJo, and Ky) with silly Pirate Love songs and goofy jokes. I am so glad I got to have him as one of my band teachers! He is definitely part of the reason why I am pursuing a teaching degree. I hope to inspire and encourage kids like he did for me and so many others. Wishing your family strength, comfort, and peace.



S Sandra Textor

The apple doesn't fall from the tree. Tom had his dad's sense of humor and his mother's kind and caring way. The Textor family will keep you close, Jerilynn and Jay.

A

Americus Barrows

I knew Tom klaver as my teacher. He was such a sweetheart and taught me many things, not just band stuff but he taught me how to look at things positively and taught me how to be kind and accepting to others. Every day at school he'd always make me smile, I'd get my daily hug and he'd even give me one when he was sick, we'd always laugh to. I'll forever miss him because he was my best friend and father figure. he was there when I needed him and I'm so grateful for that, I hope he's in a better place with his father and other loved ones while playing his tuba. I'm glad I got to meet him the 3 years I knew him was the best 3 years I've ever had. Rest in peace T-Klav

J

Jen Wright

I got to know Tom at Denison High School. I wasn't in band, however, he was my study hall teacher every year. I remember the countless conversations we would have with him about music, the Navy, and life in general. He loved to share his knowledge and he loved teaching. He was funny and kind. Rest in peace, Mr. K.



"Material_candle_purple_thumbnail"
was lit in memory of Thomas Matthew Klaver

♥ Light a candle

Show your support by giving a symbol of remembrance

E

Eliana Doering

Mr. Klaver had such a joy and passion for music, it was impossible not to enjoy his class. We would beg him to give us hall passes so we had an excuse to hang out in the band room and hear his stories. One of the good ones for sure. ♥

E

Eli Stanley

Mr. Klaver nurtured my love of music and knew what I needed as a kid. I could tell he had faith in me and that gave me the ability to have faith in myself. He helped me gain confidence when I had none. I wouldn't be where I am today without him.

L

Lisa Bergschneider Westwood

Cliffy. This world is not the same without you.



J Janet Tryon

I met Tom because of his mother and golf. He was the best son to his mother, Jerilynn. Every mother would like a son like Tom. He was good looking and a good golfer too. I did enjoy seeing him play in the Karl King band. Heaven has a great musician. Janet Tryon

A Anonymous



Tribute Store

A memorial tree was planted in memory of Thomas Matthew Klaver.

B Benjamin Enabnit

Mr. Klaver was a kind and gentle man but he knew how to push you to reach your potential, especially when it came to his students. He was greatly loved and his loss will be forever felt by us all. Rest in peace my friend.

Y Yeri

Mr. Klaver was the best band teacher I had and still to this today I fondly remember some of his non musical lessons ("Early is on time, on time is late", "Leave a place better than how you came in"). His passion for music was infectious! I loved learning under his guidance. I'll miss him dearly.

C Cristi Flores C

My time with Mr. Klaver was at CAL, and my absolute best memories of band are all credited to Mr. Klaver and his wonderfully contagious love for music. It's because of him that I learned the true beauty of being a musician, of loving music, and of adoring the experience of making music with a group of people. Mr. Klaver was patient, kind, funny, and so devoted to his craft. I always laugh to myself at how many marches we did haha; it was a well-known truth that Mr. Klaver's Navy band background led to many a John Phillip Souza piece! And I'm grateful for every one. I'll always remember his oft-used catchphrase used on us sleepy students during 7am jazz band: "If you're early, you're on time; if you're on time, you're late; if you're late, you're lost!" Well, Mr. Klaver, if breaks my hearts you left us early, but I'm happy knowing you made it on time for heaven. I'll always remember Mr. Klaver fondly, and I give my sincerest condolences to Mr. Klaver's family and friends for losing such a light in this world.

L

Leah Dunkelberger

Mr. Klaver was my favorite band director at Mount Vernon. He had a passion for music that was contagious. He was one of the positive influences that put me on my own path to becoming a teacher. I wanted to be able to inspire kids the way he did. May the many memories of his life bring peace and comfort during this time. Rest in peace Mr. Klaver.

A

Anonymous



Tribute Store

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Linda Jansen

I have fond memories of Tom from our years at South Hamilton. He was a stand up guy, respected by the staff, and loved by his students. He had a positive impact on many lives. He will be deeply missed.
Linda Jansen

L

Laurie Hansen

Mr. Klaver was such an awesome band instructor, Denison students really respected him. So sorry to hear of his passing!



"Material_candle_purple_thumbnail"
was lit in memory of Thomas Matthew Klaver

❤ Light a candle

Show your support by giving a symbol of remembrance

A**Ayslyn Garnette**

Mr. Klaver is one of my ALL-TIME favorite teachers. He was there for me during some of my hardest moments in high school. He was the best listener and gave me great advice and self confidence. Klaver helped me believe in myself even when things were hard and all I wanted to do was give up - I'm so happy I had the chance to learn from the best band director and that he encouraged me to try new things as well as endure through hard things. He will be so missed and I know how much of an impact he has made in the lives of his friends, family, and students is immeasurable. Love you Klaver ❤️ -Ayslyn Garnette (Bentley) | South Hamilton

**A****Anonymous**

M**Miriam Twedt**

Mr. Klaver was a patient teacher with a genuine love for music and his students. He shared my love for tuba and is responsible for my tuba-related achievements in All State Bands, honor bands, marching band, college symphonic band, Tuba Christmases at Ames, IA, and beyond. He is a huge reason I still play today - he was always adamant that I carry my talents into adulthood! Grateful for his mentorship and friendship at South Hamilton. May God grant his family the peace the only He can give.

S**Stacy Souder Bolin**

Tom (aka Cliffy) became like a brother to me when we both played sousaphone together in the Hawkeye Marching band. I have many fond memories of fun times together, especially the 1991 Rose Bowl. He also was an usher in our wedding in 1992. Thinking about his wonderful personality always brings a smile to my face.

H

Heather Nerem

Thank you for all of the laughs and for the great memories, Tom. Thank you for being the best teacher a kid could ever dream of having. They all adore you. Thanks for having such beautiful flowers to look at when walking or driving by. Thanks for all of the smiles and waves as you walked by in all of the parades. You were so proud of your music and your students. When people were around you they couldn't help but be happy because you were such a positive man with a kind soul. Hope you are playing your heart out on that tuba in Heaven. You will be missed in the community and our hearts break that you are gone. You are loved by many. Prayers to your family, friends and coworkers through this very difficult time. In my mind and heart you will always be just 2.5 blocks away ❤️💙



"Material_candle_gold_thumbnail"
was lit in memory of Thomas Matthew Klaver

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Betsy Brown

When Tom came to Mount Vernon to begin his teaching career I was an eighth grader that had put the trombone on a shelf and quit band. Soon after though it became known that he was a teacher you would love to have. I signed up and never stopped playing my instrument. I'm still doing so 30 years later. He gave us the space to be ourselves, gave me much needed self-confidence, and later taught me that sometimes you have to leave to follow your dreams. There are lots of memories, but the one that always makes me smile is the last year he was there we all met at school and then created a caravan out to the tiny rental house he lived in on a gravel road. We woke him up with Happy Birthday and the school fight song. He came outside in his underwear and just shook his head and smiled. I'm so sorry to hear of his passing but glad he is no longer suffering. May the many memories that people will share with you bring you comfort. He was truly one of a kind!

C

Crystal Roquet

Mr. Klaver was a great man. He always set aside time to visit with his students and each of my 3 kids got the privilege to have him as thier advisor while in middle school and they absolutely loved talking to him every chance they got. He was my oldest daughters band teacher and she absolutely enjoyed being part of his band class. My family extends its heart and thoughts to you during this time.

R**Ryan Amundson**

I grew up playing music with Tom at South Hamilton. Concert band, orchestra, small ensembles, marching band, pep band, jazz band, Swing Choir band, and Broken Glass (rock band). To say Tom loved music would be understating it. He lived it and breathed it, and it oozed out of his pores. I would confidently say he was the most talented musician to ever come out of our school. Many great memories making music and listening to all kinds of music with Tom. Rest In Peace. Ryan Amundson, Class of '89.

B**Brandon Burns**

I was one of his band students at Denison. Mr. Klaver was an incredible teacher. And an inspiration! Band was one of my favorite things during my high school career. I loved pep band and marching band because of him. He made it so much fun. My fondest memories of high school are of my time in band. He was also played a big part in my decision to enlist in the Navy. When I came home on leave, he was the first person, outside my family, I wanted to see. The medals I wore on my chest couldn't hold a candle to seeing him tear up, his face glow with the look of pride when I walked through the door to the band room wearing my uniform. Even if I did technically out rank him.

A**Anonymous**

Mr. Klaver made music fun. I'll never forget playing Birdland at the IJC's and playing bass with him in the orchestra pit for spring plays.

**Tribute Store**

A memorial tree was planted in memory of Thomas Matthew Klaver.

M**Michele & Randy Chalfant**

So sorry for your loss! Hugs of healing to you all!

J**Jake Blackman**

Mr. Klaver was my high school band teacher in Denison. He gave me my love for tuba and made being the tuba player in the band a cool thing. He was much more to me than any teacher I ever had; he was a mentor and someone I really looked up to. I will forever be eternally grateful for the lessons and memories he left with me.

T

Trisha Boettger

Wow. So many amazing memories from my 20s include you....hanging out at the Kingston apartments, forking your yard when you moved out, shaving your very hairy chest one night when you had too many to drink, and much more. Thank you for sharing your passion of music with all those you met. Trent is playing the tuba because of you. Until we meet again, Klaver Klav, LOVE YOU!



"Material_candle_purple_thumbnail"
was lit in memory of Thomas Matthew Klaver

❤️ [Light a candle](#)

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M

Michael Boettger

Got to know Tom when he moved to Denison to teach. He lived next door to me in Denison. Over the time we had a blast getting involved with figure 8 racing BaRK!! Then challenging his band majors to a pop chugging contest before the football games, that they never beat me lol. You will be dearly missed by many. Your passion for your students was amazing. I will remember you always TK!!



Roy and Sky Hoang

Thank you for being an amazing teacher. Rests in peace.



"Garden Blessing"
was purchased for the family of Thomas Matthew Klaver

🌸 [Tribute Store](#)

Show your support with flowers



A tree was also planted in memory of Thomas Matthew Klaver.