



## Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D.

January 17, 1937 - August 27, 2023

NORFOLK – Funeral service for Leon G. “Hank” Handke, M.D., 86, of Norfolk will be held at 10:00 a.m., Friday, September 1, 2023 at the St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Norfolk. Officiating the service will be Rev. Paul Hirsch. The service will be livestreamed on the St. Paul’s Lutheran Church website at [www.stpls.com](http://www.stpls.com). Burial will be held at St. Paul’s Lutheran Cemetery, Norfolk. Military rites will be conducted by the American Legion Post 16, V.F.W. Post 1644, and the United States Air Force. Visitation will be held from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m., Thursday, at Stonacek Funeral Chapel, Norfolk. Hank went to meet his heavenly Father on Sunday, August 27, 2023 at his residence, rural Norfolk.

Dr. Handke was born on January 17, 1937 to Elwin and Vernie (Hass) Handke of Pilger, NE. He attended grade school in Pilger and graduated from high school in Wisner, NE in 1954. In 1958 he received a biology degree from Wayne State College and later earned his Doctor of Medicine degree from the University of Nebraska College of Medicine. He did an internship in general medical practice at Broadlawns Medical Center in Des Moines, IA.

In 1960, Hank married Connee Troutman of Winside, NE, and of this union was born four children. In 1964, he was drafted into the United States Air Force as a flight surgeon stationed at Brooks AFB in San Antonio, TX and McClellan AFB in Sacramento, CA. He joined the general practice of Felix Hach, M.D. in Ankeny, IA in 1967, and moved to Pierce, NE in 1973 to begin a

solo medical practice.

On June 9, 1984, he married Pamela David. Hank and Pam enjoyed traveling the world for both adventure and mission work, seeing amazing sites, creating wonderful memories, and sharing the love of God to many in need. These missions included several trips to Latvia, Russia and 6 months serving the medical and educational needs for God's children in Cote d'Ivoire, West Africa.

Dr. Handke was a beloved and trusted physician to patients and their families in Pierce and Madison counties in rural Northeast Nebraska until his initial retirement in 1991. He didn't stay retired for long. He performed locum tenens work and eventually returned to work full time as an emergency room physician at Our Lady of Lourdes in Norfolk until 1995. He returned to a full medical practice and he retired for good in 2000.

Hank enjoyed many hobbies. His meticulous sense of detail built many model airplanes to exacting specifications. He was a voracious card player, with a passion for bridge and cribbage where he regularly beat anyone who dared challenge him. He had a quick wit and a wonderful sense of humor, with a catalog of jokes spanning decades. He loved his country and respected those who served to protect our freedom. He was a kind and generous husband, father, and friend to many. Most of all, Hank knew the love of his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and he saved as many souls as he did lives.

Hank is survived by his wife Pamela Handke of Norfolk, his children, Lane (Cathleen) Handke of Pierce, SueAnn (Larry) Schwanke, Lee (Jennifer) Handke, Luke (Shawna) Handke all of Omaha; 11 grandchildren, 1 great grandson, 1 great granddaughter on the way; siblings, Maralee Bahe of Norfolk, Darrel Handke of Lincoln, Linda (Butch) Koehlmoos of Ord, and many nieces, nephews, and friends. Hank is preceded in death by his parents Elwin and Vernie.

Pall bearers will be Philip Handke, Garrett Handke, Drew Fasse, Dana Handke, Meredith Fasse, Micah Schwanke, Nathan Schwanke, Peter Handke, and Zachary Handke. Honorary pall bearers will be Ken Shriver, Rocky Thompson, Dr. Bill Foster, and George Welch. The family requests that memorials be made to St. Paul Lutheran Church in Norfolk, of which Hank was a loyal member. Condolences may be expressed to the family on-line at [www.stonacekfuneralchapel.com](http://www.stonacekfuneralchapel.com).

# Cemetery Details

## St. Paul's Cemetery - Norfolk

1200 N. 13th St.  
Norfolk, NE 68701

# Previous Events

## Visitation

**AUG 31.** 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Stonacek Funeral Chapel - Norfolk  
1200 N.13th St.  
Norfolk, NE 68701  
(402) 371-7676  
[info@stonacekfuneralchapel.com](mailto:info@stonacekfuneralchapel.com)  
<https://stonacekfuneralchapel.com/>

## Funeral Service

**SEP 1.** 10:00 AM (CT)

St. Pauls Lutheran Church - Norfolk  
1100 Georgia Ave  
Norfolk, NE 68701  
(402) 371-1654  
<http://www.stpls.com/>

# Tribute Wall



“ Stonacek Funeral Chapel created a Tribute Video in memory of Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D.



Stonacek Funeral Chapel - August 31, 2023 at 10:27 AM

BF

*Many years ago, while in the nursing program I was privileged to be standing next to him during a delivery of a baby. I remember looking at his face after the baby was born and saw a tear coming down his cheek. The compassion, kindness and warmth he showed that new mother was so heartwarming. Something I will never forget. The medical world was so blessed to have him.*

Barb Fish - August 31, 2023 at 07:40 PM

RS

“ Hank was a special member and friend. He took great care of me when I was extremely ill. He and Pam would take my wife and I for lunch after church. We thoroughly enjoyed our time together. May the Lord bless Pam and Hank's whole family with the knowledge that they will see him again, never to part for all eternity.

Rev Howard Shane - March 06, 2024 at 09:23 AM



“ Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D.

October 05, 2023 at 03:46 AM

WT

“ Hi Tiger,, August 27th you woke up in Heaven... I am so blessed to have known him as the caretaker of my parents... now each time I hear this song I reflect on you ... catch you on the flipside,,, goodbye Mein Freund!!

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxsNGXoGVok&ab\\_channel=To byKeithVEVO](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxsNGXoGVok&ab_channel=To%20byKeithVEVO)

Bill Thoendel

Norfolk, NE

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William E. Thoendel - September 30, 2023 at 11:55 PM

NB

“ Our deepest sympathies to Pam and family. Hank was not only a great doctor but also a kind and caring person. I always remember his visits to Tim when he was ill, they meant so much to him. He will be greatly missed.

Nancy Biga and family

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Nancy Biga - September 09, 2023 at 05:40 PM

NG

“ I just happened to read today about a Norfolk man driving through town with a steer in his car, and that reminded me of my medical school classmate who was practicing in Norfolk. I look up Leon Handke on Google and was saddened to find that he had died just a week ago. Even though I had not seen him since med school, I felt the loss of a bond of friendship established so many years ago.

*I grew up in Millard, Nebraska, and Leon and I were accepted into the class of 1958 at the University of Nebraska Medical School, where we met. We both had our first child in 1962. After graduation we went our separate ways. At that time almost all recent graduates were drafted into the military, so I enlisted in the USAF and was assigned to a small air base in Klamath Falls, Oregon. After fulfilling my military obligation, I stayed in the Pacific Northwest practicing family medicine and urgent care in several types of practices. I finally retired a few years after Leon did, at the age of 80.*

*I want to express my condolences to Leon's family and friends.*

*Most sincerely,  
Norm Gosch, Tacoma, Washington*

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**Norm Gosch** - September 04, 2023 at 02:25 AM

JZ

“ Just want to express my condolences to the family for a man who will truly be missed for a life well lived. Doc was one of the few remaining men that I knew who really knew how to live. Work hard, play hard and be a true honest and upstanding human being and always being there to help his fellow man. Would like to share this particular memory of one of the few times i was invited out to eat at a restaurant with Doc as a guest of his son Lee. When asked how he wanted his steak cooked he told the waiter to just slap it on the rump and send it in. I am sure he changed his eating habits over the years since, but that was the kind of sense of humor I remember.

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**James Zierke** - September 01, 2023 at 03:56 PM

JC

“ Our deepest sympathies and prayers go out to Pam and all of those who were fortunate enough to know Hank. Hank was a kind and joyful person whose love for Pam was evident. Hank will be missed and remain in our prayers. The James Coy Family - Lincoln, NE

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**Janet Coy** - September 01, 2023 at 10:40 AM

JK

“ I just want to offer my condolence to the Handke family. Dr. Leon Handke had a tremendous impact on the Norfolk area and everywhere he went in this world.

*Jo Ann Koepke*

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**JoAnn Koepke** - August 31, 2023 at 06:47 PM



“ 2 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



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**Stonacek Funeral Chapel** - August 31, 2023 at 10:23 AM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray* was purchased for the family of Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D..



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August 31, 2023 at 08:29 AM



“ *Dr Handke will be missed as a great doctor and a wonderful friend. He was always so kind and compassionate.*

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**Glenda Horst** - August 30, 2023 at 09:46 PM



“ *Brian and Kathleen Salak purchased the Rose R emembrance for the family of Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D..*



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**Brian and Kathleen Salak** - August 30, 2023 at 09:38 PM

BS

“ Brian and Kathleen Salak planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D..

Brian and Kathleen Salak - August 30, 2023 at 09:38 PM



“ Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D..



August 30, 2023 at 06:55 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D..



August 30, 2023 at 06:49 PM



“ Basket Full of Wishes was purchased for the family of Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D..



August 30, 2023 at 10:05 AM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D..



August 30, 2023 at 09:58 AM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D..



August 29, 2023 at 08:54 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D..

August 29, 2023 at 08:54 PM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D..



August 29, 2023 at 06:39 PM



“ Our sympathy to Lane and all Leon's family. What a great man and physician Leon was. He leaves a wonderful legacy. Edd & Delpha Riley

Delpha Riley - August 29, 2023 at 03:26 PM



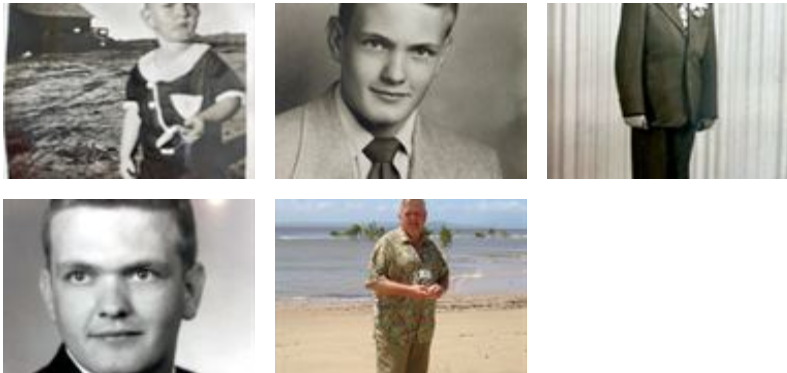
“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D..



August 29, 2023 at 02:25 PM



“ 165 files added to the album Life Tributes



Stonacek Funeral Chapel - August 29, 2023 at 02:07 PM



“ With Deepest sympathy to Pam and his family. He was a great doctor with the best bedside matters. Prayers for family at this difficult time. Take care

Gloria Bethards - August 29, 2023 at 12:48 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D..



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August 29, 2023 at 12:37 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D..



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August 29, 2023 at 12:26 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D..

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August 29, 2023 at 12:26 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D..



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August 29, 2023 at 10:28 AM

FA

“ *FRPS Administration purchased the Blue Caribbe an Bouquet for the family of Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D..*



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**FRPS Administration** - August 29, 2023 at 10:06 AM

DF

“ *Sending deepest sympathy to you, Pam, and the family. Dr. Hanke radiated kindness and calmness when in his presence. He was a true gentleman. May God give you strength and courage during this sad and difficult time.*  
*With sympathy,*  
*Dr. Herb & Sondra Feidler*

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**Dr. Herb & Sondra Feidler** - August 29, 2023 at 10:03 AM

PM

“ *He will be missed!*

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**Pat Meierhenry** - August 28, 2023 at 11:31 PM

JS

“ *Jennifer Stevens lit a candle in memory of Leon Handke*



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**Jennifer Stevens** - August 28, 2023 at 07:12 PM

MM

“ Dr Handke had the best bed side manner in the world. My favorite memory of Dr Handke was in 1977. He delivered our son Jason at 8 pm at the Norfolk Hospital. When he got home his wife was in labor so he came back to the hospital and his son was born also that night. RIP Dr Handke.

Marlene Moritz - August 28, 2023 at 07:10 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Leon G. "Hank" Handke M.D..



August 28, 2023 at 04:33 PM

JM

“ Jim Veronica Miller lit a candle in memory of Leon Handke



Jim & Veronica Miller - August 28, 2023 at 04:32 PM

CS

“ carol sokol lit a candle in memory of Leon Handke



carol sokol - August 28, 2023 at 03:54 PM

BP

“ *Brad Polt lit a candle in memory of Leon Handke*



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**Brad Lana Polt** - August 28, 2023 at 01:16 PM