



Paul T. Matonis

November 29, 2024

Paul Matonis left this earth on November 29, 2024, at the age of 72, after his brave six-month battle with a rare form of leukemia. He spent his last days at home surrounded by family. Paul was a loving husband, father, and friend, a hardworking tax accountant, talented musician, avid bike rider, mountain adventurer, dedicated Cubs fan, and all-around great guy. His family and friends described him as kind, gentle, eternally optimistic, family-focused, hardworking, industrious, creative, and incredibly handy with a roll of duct tape and some twist ties. Paul was born in Elmhurst, Illinois on March 31, 1952, and raised in Villa Park by wonderful parents George and Jane Matonis along with his four siblings, George, Rita, Robin, and Greg. He was a sweet child who loved his family, playing with other kids in the neighborhood, and watching Yogi Bear. Paul enlisted in the Army and served in Germany as a cartographer and printer from 1970 to 1973 before moving from the Chicago suburbs to Fort Collins in 1979.

Paul married Pam Shanahan on July 24, 1983, after knowing each other for eight years. Paul told his daughters that the foundation of a strong marriage is friendship, and he and Pam not only loved each other but sincerely enjoyed each other's company. They honeymooned to the Grand Tetons and Yellowstone, which was the first of many adventurous camping trips during their 41-year-long marriage. Paul and Pam bought their dream home on Mountain Avenue in 1984 where they raised their daughters Megan and

Melissa. After becoming empty nesters, Paul and Pam initiated annual trips for new adventures after the October tax deadline, including trips to Zion, Glacier, Banff and Jasper National Parks, Hawai'i, and countless hikes in the Poudre Canyon and Rocky Mountain National Park.

While working full-time as an auto-mechanic, Paul took it upon himself to study at night to pass the enrolled agent exam and begin a new career as a tax accountant, all while helping to raise his young daughters. He built his own business from the ground up in 1994 with partners Mary and Jim, and he hired his star employee (and wife), Pam, in 1999, with the secondary benefit of allowing Pam and Paul to see each other during the busy tax season. Paul was so proud of his work and so dedicated to his clients that even the week of his passing, he was still talking about getting back to the office to wrap things up.

Prior to his leukemia diagnosis, Paul rode his bike to and from work every day in sunshine, wind, rain, and white-out blizzard conditions. He would come home with frozen icicles in his beard and tell Pam that his ride was "fantastic." In his free time, Paul enjoyed hiking and mountain biking with his wife Pam, playing guitar and harmonica on the front porch, for which he earned the nickname the "Mountain Avenue Minstrel," and doing home projects with his daughters. Unforgettable trips to Mexico in 2002, Hawai'i in 2015, Italy in 2019, and Ireland in 2023 created lifelong memories his family will cherish forever. Frequent trips to the Binkley-Higgins' cabin in Pingree Park were special escapes from the daily grind, and Paul would wake up early every morning to search for moose in the valley. Other standout adventures included bike riding the White Rim in Utah's Canyonlands National Park and rafting the Grand Canyon. He was always up for an adventure!

Paul loved family above all. He adored his sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law, nieces, nephews, great nieces, great nephews, and second cousins from the

Shanahan Clan. Paul glowed with pride when he and Pam walked Melissa down the aisle for her marriage to Joe Kole in September 2021. Paul and his son-in-law formed a special bond and had many deep conversations about fatherhood and home projects. One of the most important moments of Paul's life was when his daughter Lisa Braesel, who was adopted by wonderful parents Walter and Penny in 1976, reached out to him after being matched with his cousin Janet on Ancestry.com. Paul, Pam, Megan, and Melissa fell in love with Lisa and her husband Joe Rundle and visited them several times in Illinois. Lisa and Joe came out to Colorado for Melissa and Joe Kole's baby shower in August 2024. Paul was thrilled to see his family grow when he became "Pops" for almost six weeks to his first granddaughter, darling Dillon Paulina, and he enjoyed holding and reading to her from his hospice bed at home.

Paul is preceded in death by his parents, George and Jane Matonis, and his brother, Robin. Paul is survived by Pam, the love of his life, and his three daughters, Megan, Melissa married to Joe Kole, and Lisa married to Joe Rundle, and three honorary children—his niece Lauren Bomke, who affectionately referred to him as Uncle Dad, and Will and Paul Binkley, who grew up with Megan and Melissa and played the role of sons in his life. He also leaves behind his granddaughter Dillon, siblings George, Rita, and Greg and wife Val, nephew Kevin and his family, dear family friends Dan and Jane, vocal coach Susan, Mountain Avenue neighbors, and countless friends and clients who respected, admired, and loved him dearly.

In his last days, Paul dictated the following: "Dearest family and friends—I wanted you to know how much you enriched my life. Through this scary time, your love has helped sustain me. Knowing you all has been a thrill. A real thrill."

We would like to thank the UCHealth Cancer center (<https://www.uchealthnocofoundation.org/donate/>), the oncology and ICU staff at Poudre Valley Hospital (<https://www.uchealthnocofoundation.org/donate/>), the Pathways hospice (<https://pathways-care.org/give-now/>) staff, and Abby and Jess with the CSU music therapy program (<https://music.colostate.edu/giving/>) for their tender, quality care they provided to Paul during the month-long stay in the hospital and week-long hospice experience at home. Your kindness made this impossible time more bearable for Paul and his family. We recognize and appreciate the challenging work you do for people in their time of need. If your heart desires, please make a donation to one of these amazing organizations in Paul's honor.

The holidays will always be especially hard without Paul who loved filling our home with Christmas music. We hope you will share in his love of music and enjoy the holiday album (<https://www.flyasakite.com/pauls-christmas-music-videos-5/>) he recorded in December 2023. Visit <https://www.flyasakite.com/paul-s-christmas-music-videos-5/> to enjoy. To his family, Paul will always be the mountains, starry night skies, and folk music blowing in the wind.

Please join us for a celebration of Paul's beautiful life on Saturday, June 21, 2025 at 1:00pm. Our celebration will be held at the Spring Canyon Park Creekside Shelters - 3074 S. Overland Trail, Fort Collins, CO 80526. Drive west on Drake Rd until it dead-ends on Overland Trail. Turn left (south) and park in the second parking lot. Follow the paved path over the river to the two large shelters. Bring your instruments if you want to jam out in honor of Paul after the ceremony.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

JUN 21. 1:00 PM (MT)

Spring Canyon Park Creekside Shelters
3074 S. Overland Trail
Fort Collins, CO 80526

Tribute Wall



“ Goes Funeral Care & Crematory created a Tribute Video in memory of Paul T. Matonis



Goes Funeral Care & Crematory - December 03, 2024 at 04:19 PM

JR

I am so sorry to hear about Paul. He was our "tax man" for about 26 yrs. After my husband passed away, he went above and beyond helping me with any question I asked. He even lowered my fee. I am sorry I didn't find out until now and wish I would have kept in better touch. He was such a kind soul. Know that you will all be in my thoughts and prayers.

Jane Ritchie - January 07, 2025 at 05:22 PM

JT

I am deeply sorry to hear of Paul's passing. I first met Paul at a class he offered for entrepreneurs who were interested in learning about financial business management. When my husband, Bill, and I opened our business, Greyrock Clay Center, Paul became our "tax man" and friend. I recall during the first visit to Paul's Tax Office, he was so pleased to introduce, Pam, his wife, with such pride. In the years from 1999 until our move to Idaho, Paul was there for tax questions and always as a friend. My heartfelt condolences to you, Pam, and your family. Paul was a shining star!

Judy Therrien - January 17, 2025 at 11:39 PM

AH

“ I don't know if any of Paul's family will read this more than a year later, but I wanted to tell you that as I undecorated my Christmas tree tonight, I played a tape of Christmas carols played on guitar, and it brought to my mind the recording Paul made and sent to me in 2023. As I thought of it, I felt such tenderness toward him, having some idea of the courage and effort it took to make it. He obviously had something he wanted to share with all of us. I only knew him in his tax preparing role, and while we certainly appreciated him and enjoyed his company there, his recording gave me the chance to appreciate another side of him. I am so glad he sent it to me. Reading his obituary here, I wish my husband and I had known him in other aspects, too. I just wanted you to know he is remembered. I am sorry for your loss, and I hope you know that he remains part of you and that you feel him with you. Arlene Hoffman

Arlene Hoffman - January 09 at 02:30 AM

KM

“ We are so very sorry to hear about Paul passing away. He was always so kind and caring to me when I brought our taxes in to him...for many many years. Our thoughts are with you during these difficult times. Rick & Karen Mohror

Karen Mohror - December 27, 2024 at 12:50 PM

PM

“ I miss you and I long for you my dear sweet husband. I will love you for all eternity.. Love, Pam

Pam Matonis - December 15, 2024 at 11:22 AM

SD

“ I met Paul at the Fort Collins Chamber of Commerce meetings in the 90s. What a good fellow! He was always positive. Had a great demeanor. I wasn't a regular customer but he sure helped me out when I had some tax issues that I needed help with a few years ago. He gave me some music that he had recorded on CD a number of years ago as well. We were kindred spirits in that regard with mutual love of guitar playing. My deepest condolences to Paul's family.

Scott Dennis - December 11, 2024 at 10:35 AM

JH

“ *mindy, Hannah , Myriah and John Heddens are devastated over your loss. we hope that the found memories and laughter that Paul brought will help sustain you all during this difficult time. Blessings to you all*

john heddens - December 09, 2024 at 08:53 PM

DH

“ *Paul was my tax accountant for many years and also knew his daughters at Poudre High School. He and Pam were always so welcoming at their office, even in the throes of tax season when I'm sure they worked endless overtime hours. Paul and I would discuss where the best nesting owl photos could be taken around town and many fun trips he'd been on with his family! I always knew he was in when I saw his bike parked outside the office doors, even on snowy and icy days!!! He and Pam considered their clients friends, which I will always be grateful for! Many hugs to you, Pam, and your family as you go through this very difficult time. Paul will be missed. ❤️ Debbie*

Debbie Hover - December 08, 2024 at 06:19 PM

RR

“ *Such beautiful words and photos of Paul's life. Paul singing brought me to happy tears - just what I needed.*

When my daughter and I moved to Colorado in the late 80's, Paul was one of the first people I met - I was looking for "the best" mechanic for my Jeep Wagoneer. When I met Paul, I instantly sensed I could trust him and that he was a skilled mechanic. We became quick friends. I so appreciated his soft, reassuring voice and mechanic explanations in language I could understand. His kindness and integrity were unending.

A few years later, I was sad for me but happy for him when he shared that he was going to night school to become an accountant, and I would have to look for another mechanic.

In the late 90's, I went back to school to pursue a dream of becoming a LMT. In our business class, Paul showed up to teach us about taxes with our business. Of course Paul became my accountant, and has been for 25 years.

Through the years, not only did I gain a deeper friendship with Paul, I have been fortunate to get to know and spend time with Pam and develop another wonderful friendship. Then there are the years of Tour de Fat - what stands out for me is not the parade. It was watching Paul being sure to connect with each person in his yard throughout the parade. A truly kind, compassionate and caring person to the very core. He enriched every life he touched. My heart goes out to Pam and all Paul's family and friends. Such a loss for all of us.

Rebecca Reynolds - December 05, 2024 at 10:12 PM

TS

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Tracey Seltzer - December 03, 2024 at 10:15 PM

TS

“ *These wonderful written and visual memories of Paul (obituary, photos and playlist) are just what I needed to raise my mood a bit in the wake of Paul's passing a few days ago. Although he left a couple decades too soon, he certainly packed his time with attentive work, periodic mountain and travel adventures, joyful music-making and immense love of family. He's one of the few people I've known whose "resting face" was a smile, and that smile reflected an inner goodwill. What a contributor, every day, and a kind one. He was a kick to know, playing the harmonica right up to near the end. My heart goes out to Pam, Megan, Melissa, Joe, little Dillon Paulina and all family and close friends. What a loss for us all.*

Tracey Seltzer - December 03, 2024 at 10:10 PM



“ 14 files added to the album Memories Album



Goes Funeral Care & Crematory - December 03, 2024 at 04:19 PM

JS

We lost a great one. He taught me and my family about enjoying the simple things in life, doing what you love and being there for family. Paul was dearly loved by our family and will always hold a special place in our hearts. Jen and family

Jennifer Schidowka - December 03, 2024 at 09:14 PM

JM

This is such sad news. Paul was the definition of class, honesty, honor, hard work and responsibility. I met Paul thru the Fort Collins Chamber as we were both starting our businesses at the same time in the mid 1990s. He has done accounting work for many of my clients over the years as well as my family. You could always count on a full and complete answer to any question within 24 hours from Paul. The world needs more people like Paul. My appreciation goes out to Paul's family for sharing him with us all these years. My prayers are with you at this time.

John McLaurin - December 12, 2024 at 04:45 PM

LC

My wife Ellen and I were very sad to hear about Paul's passing. Although we left Colorado in 2012, we had quite a few years of friendship with Paul and his family. We both loved the Cubs and always found something fun to talk about. We will remember him fondly.

Larry Chisesi - December 21, 2024 at 03:03 PM