



Joseph L. Stern

March 24, 1963 - February 19, 2026

Joseph L. Stern died on February 19, 2026. Joe was born on March 24, 1963 to Nancye Leland Poor Stern and Mark Levine Stern. Joe was the adoring husband of Linda (Ossenbeck) Stern and devoted father to Dylan Joseph Stern and Noah Thomas Stern. He was a true friend to so many people and so many of his friends immensely impacted his life. His family is truly grateful for all the support provided from his many special friends.

His passion for life was amazing! He was so proud of his two sons and was totally dedicated to supporting them in all their sports, academic and professional endeavors - often offering guidance to improve their lives. He enjoyed all things regarding health fitness - going to the gym to work out, playing tennis, going bike riding, practicing yoga and going on amazing & challenging hikes during the many trips he took around the world with his family. He was always willing and ready to explore new ways to keep healthy. If there was a rock or a wall to climb, he was immediately ready to tackle it! He graduated from Walnut Hills High School in 1981; attended The Ohio State University and University of Cincinnati. He was a true fiercely devoted Buckeye fan! He worked at Gibson Greetings and H-M Company. In the end, Joe suffered with immense physical pain in his body and sought medical help to determine the cause. He could not attain the pain relief he needed and wanted so sadly, he concluded he needed to end his life.

The family request that we hug each other often to remember Joe as a man

with great courage and a passion for life! In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to Alliance of Hope, Save the Animals Foundation or Rockdale Temple.

Service will be at Rockdale Temple in Amberley on Friday, February 27, 2026 at 11am. The receiving line will occur after the service leading to the Heldman Social Room for the luncheon.

Alliance of Hope: <https://support.allianceofhope.org/give/47659/#!/donation/checkout>

Save the Animals Foundation: <https://www.staf.org/index.php/idonate/>

Rockdale Temple: <https://www.rockdaletemple.org/payment.php>

Cemetery Details

Spring Grove Cemetery

4521 Spring Grove Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45232

Previous Events

Memorial Service

FEB 27. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Rockdale Temple
8501 Ridge Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45236

Tribute Wall

BA

“ Joe was always the social nucleus of our friends, neighbors and classmates. He did more than just "staying in touch" with lifelong friends, he took the time to maintain and enhance his friendships and relationships.

Joe and I have known each other since I moved in down the street when we were both two years old. Hard to believe we have known each other for six decades.

We weren't just friends that had grown up together. If we are both in Cincy, we would make it a point to have lunch together on a weekly basis.

At these lunches, it was Joe that had contact information and updates on folks from the old neighborhood, classmates from Walnut Hills High School, the JCC and about any other group he was a part of.

If I was going to be traveling abroad, Joe and Linda had certainly been there, and Joe would discuss a list of "must see" attractions.

Of course, there would always be discussions regarding Ohio State football every summer and fall. I think he usually started talking about it in the spring.

It was usually Joe that reached out. He took the initiative.

Most of Joe's closest friends were the ones he had been maintaining his whole life. In this day and age, this is not always the norm, as people see something and move on without maintaining the relationships they have had for years.

Joe was the best in that regard. He was the nucleus.

Brad Agin - March 05 at 09:26 AM

DA

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



David Agin - February 27 at 11:38 PM

DA

“ 1 file added to the album *Joe being Joe*



David Agin - February 27 at 11:37 PM

DM

“ *The most concise thing I can say about Joe is that Joe was Joe. I have never met another human being like him and I never will. The way he became a vegetarian, nobody does that. But then he would never talk about it, he just always was happy being Joe and an example to us all. Joe seemed to be there in so many momentous times in my life, both difficult and triumphant - standing on the frozen Ohio River with his dad, dropping weights on my head, going to City Championships in baseball, finding out my grandfather passed on out trek home from wrestling practice in seventh grade (after a day at Walnut Hills and wrestling practice, we had to walk to Montgomery road to catch the 4, then get off in Pleasant Ridge and walk again to our houses). Joe taught me so much about being genuine and fearless. I can never forget him because he is more than just in my head, he is like muscle memory inextricably woven into the fabric of our beings and with us forever. Thank you Joe for being who you are, a person to wonder at and admire.*

Douglas May - February 27 at 07:27 AM

MH

“ He meant a lot to me. I hope he knew that!

Joe was the cool older cousin, I remember my friends would always say who was that good looking guy at your house and man that guy is so cool?! His personality just lit up a room!

While growing up in Michigan, I remember his visits because he always tried to tell me to do better...which was well received and never followed, but I definitely needed to hear it.

I remember skiing with him and Linda up North, we would always do fun things with them! I think I peed my snowsuit that trip. Lol

He was always so interested in what I was up to, like so interested. He visited me in college, like he cared that much!

The most recent random visit is when Joe and the family came to see me in Dayton. The whole family is just so amazing!

To be honest I felt like he was more of an Uncle than a cousin. He was always on the go, always late for something and just a positive light in my life.

I remember the first time I met Linda, I was probably in middle school, we went to a big fancy dinner, tons of family. It might have been like an engagement thing. I was too young then to know. Wow when I met Linda, she was (and still is) a calming force, with her huge infectious smile and just so radiant. I remember thinking, who was this woman who settled/tamed my cousin Joe, lol. The same amazing woman who loved him with her whole heart even when he was probably annoying everyone on a regular basis.

I remember visiting them in their new house before Dylan was born. I remember his love for their dogs.

I was in high school when Dylan was born, just a prayer answered

for them...and then Noah! Both boys were just the center of his (both of their) world.

I'm very grateful for you cousin Joe! I think you know how I felt about you or at least I hope you did.

I'm so thankful I was with my parents last weekend when my dad last spoke with them. You had a voice that I will never forget.

Ride that bike, jog that 10 miles, ski in the winter, hike with the dogs and watch over the family as I know you will.

Please give Grandpa and Grandma Hunt and your dad huge hug and kiss from me, but even importantly give Russell a fist bump from me.

I hope that in time Linda will heal, but what I know for fact is those boys take such good care of her! They raised such amazing men!

So cousin Joe- tomorrow I will have to say goodbye and I'm really sad mad about it.

Please know though that I will think of you often and when I need some of your wisdom that you once gave me when I was younger, I promise I will listen if you visit me in spirit and leave me little hints. I love you!- Molly

Molly Hartley - February 26 at 04:44 PM



“ I’ve had the pleasure to know Joe for a little over year when HM Company bought our company and we merged. Joe, Pat, and I went to check out this ice bar in Orlando. We all thought how cool it was to be in 80F Florida, in a freezer with drinking out of a cup made of ice. Joe was really nice and welcoming. He’s definitely going to be missed in the company.



Chloe Fleming - February 26 at 08:25 AM

LS

Thank you, Chloe for your kind words and memories!

Linda Stern - February 26 at 09:05 PM

RO

“ Dear cousin Linda, Im so sorry to hear about the loss of your beloved Joe. Though I never had the opportunity to meet and get to know him, I know how much you loved him! You and your sons are in my thoughts. Sending you all my love. Robin

Robin Ossenbeck - February 25 at 03:36 PM

LS

Thank you, Robin for your kind words. It is good to hear from you!

Linda Stern - February 26 at 09:08 PM

RO

“ Dear Cousin Linda, I am so sorry to just hear the news about your beloved Joe. Though I never had the pleasure to meet him, I know how much you loved him. Im sure he is in a better place now and only hope to see you again someday to give you a big hug. Best always your cousin Robin

Robin Ossenbeck - February 25 at 03:27 PM

CW

“ Dearest Linda, Dylan and Noah,

I am deeply saddened to hear about the passing of your loving husband and devoted father, Joe. While I never had the pleasure of meeting him, It is clear how cherished he was by you and your sons. I am sending you all my love and strength during this heartbreaking time.

Carole (Ossenbeck) Whitacre

Carole Whitacre - February 25 at 01:32 PM

RO

Dear cousin Linda, I never got the opportunity to meet Joe but it sounds like he was a wonderful man! Im so sorry for your loss and believe he is in a better place now. Hope to see you soon on a better day. All my love your cousin Robin

Robin Ossenbeck - February 25 at 03:05 PM

LS

Thank you so much for your kind words, Carole!

Linda Stern - February 26 at 11:04 AM

RC

“ I know how much Joe meant to his friends. How they loved and admired him. How much he will be missed. My condolences.
Roz Chaiken

Rosalind Chaiken - February 25 at 12:32 PM

LS

Mrs. Chaiken- Thank you so much for your kind words! Joe's friends have been amazingly supportive of Dylan, Noah & me! We are very appreciative to have these friends in our lives!

Linda Stern - February 26 at 11:06 AM

SO

“ Joe was the best athlete in Ridgewood(Joe would tell you that but he was.) We still talk about the time Joe made this incredible diving catch in the outfield to preserve our(Cincinnati AZA softball team) 6-5 victory in the last inning of our semifinal game against Mu Sigma(Louisville) in the 1980 annual SOK softball tournament in Columbus which we ended up winning...But more importantly Joe was a kind gentle soul who we will all miss dearly. Hug someone a little tighter today. Rest in peace brother.

Steve Ostrow - February 24 at 05:23 PM

LS

Steve- Thank you for your kind words and the fun memories of the softball tournament. I appreciate you taking the time to share this with us!

Linda Stern - February 26 at 11:08 AM

DM

Correction Steve: Joe was the best athlete period. Of our sophomore class he was the only wrestler who sniff a varsity win. It was around mid season that all the sudden he started winning (we had all just started wrestling that year when Coach Knoffer showed up. Joe wrestled in the PHSL championships with only one year under his belt. I watched from the bleachers.

Douglas May - February 27 at 06:34 AM

DW

“*Joe was a great man and always someone who exuded excellence. I have great memories growing up with Noah and getting to know Joe as a result. I was very lucky to get to see and talk to Joe one last time at Oktoberfest last fall.*

My sincerest condolences to Noah, Dylan, Linda, and the rest of the Stern family. Joe will be greatly missed!

David Wertheim - February 24 at 04:49 PM

LS

Thank you for your kind words and sharing your memories of Joe, David!

Linda Stern - February 26 at 11:11 AM

“Memories, there are a lot of memories of my cousin and none bad. Until eighteen, I had lived across the street from Joe. Sort of catty-corner, the houses were offset and the lots had corners that didn't touch. You could cross the street diagonally and not go through the neighbor's yards. Nor would you go under the large slippery elm tree that we would climb into and watch cars pass beneath us. Our grandmother, Rae, lived in Joe's house, before he was born. She moved out when Uncle Mark got married.

I knew the house well. It was on a bit of a hill and there were several steps to the front door which let you in past the aquarium and to the magical hallway with the perfectly curved wall. It had a head-shaped indentation for many years, about 19 inches above the floor. I preferred the back door into the kitchen where there was usually scrambled eggs and cottage cheese. This entrance passed by grandma's garden, where I could earn a dime by pulling weeds.

One of my favorite memories of the house was Joe's dad, seemingly asleep with his eyes closed in his recliner. He would be snoring softly, often with a cigar, watching the Cincinnati Reds on TV. Of course, it was black and white. I was never afraid to wake him and always asked loudly "What's the score" or "Who's at bat." Amazingly, he always knew the answer.

My brightest memory of Joe was when I was almost 24. He was 11. That day, we used the basement door that connected through the garage. I had just bought my first car. A phone-company green, 1969 Ford Econoline van, fully equipped with an AM radio and two bucket seats.

We had decided to "build it out." It needed a platform bed and drawers for storing stuff out of sight. We had no real idea of what we were doing but decided we needed to use screws instead of nails so it could easily be taken part. Grandpa Poor had two boxes of tools in the storage room. We used these tools envisioning how these had been used on the Delta Queen where he had been a pilot. It

was a wonderful, warm, spring day.

As we finished, I was thinking of sleeping in my new bed. I am sure that Joe was dreaming of traveling. His wanderlust had started young. Everything seemed perfect, the bed turned out well, and Joe seemed quite like the younger brother I never had.

Joel Hunt - February 24 at 03:49 PM

LS

Joel- What memories you have shared here for the boys and me. I recall Joe telling me some of those memories but not in the detail and manner in which you have! Thank you for taking the time to share them with us.

Linda Stern - February 26 at 11:15 AM

PC

“ *Joe has been part of my life since Kindergarten at Rockdale. We grew up together. A little piece of my heart broke when I read that he passed. So many memories and fun growing up, sneaking out of services, just being kids. Joe, you will always be in my thoughts, my heart and my memories. Love you forever my friend, may your memory always be a blessing to those that loved you and had the pleasure of knowing you. ❤️*

Pamela Chundrlek - February 24 at 02:38 PM

LS

Thank you, Pamela for your kind words!

Linda Stern - February 26 at 09:19 PM

JH

“ *My sincere condolences to Linda and family. i enjoyed working with Joe at Gibson years ago. May God's comfort and blessings be with all of you during this time. Johnnie Hunter*

johnnie hunter - February 24 at 01:46 PM

LS

Thank you, Johnnie for your kind words!

Linda Stern - February 26 at 09:20 PM

NS

“ *Our sympathy and warmest thoughts are with you all. We have such sweet memories of Joe and the family over the years as he and Linda hosted reunions, at Dylan’s and Noah’s bar mitzvahs, and their visits to Cleveland. We will miss Joe terribly and feel blessed to have had him in our lives.*

Nora Stern - February 23 at 08:32 PM

LS

Thank you, Nora!

Linda Stern - February 25 at 07:14 AM

RH

“ *My memory of Joe was someone who was dedicated to his family, social, and always seemed to be in great physical shape from cycling and tennis.*

Ryan Hunt - February 23 at 07:30 PM

LS

Thank you, Ryan!

Linda Stern - February 25 at 07:14 AM

MI

“ *I’m so sorry. Cliff Ridge gang. Super competitive, but remarkably humble and always determined, that’s how I remember Joey admirably. I’ll miss him, til hopefully we join up for a football game in our Father’s house* ❤️👊🏻👊🏻

Mickey - February 23 at 04:55 PM

LS

Thank you!

Linda Stern - February 25 at 07:15 AM

SW

“ 1 file added to the album *Joe being Joe*



sandra weisser - February 23 at 04:38 PM

LS

Joe & Kirby!! □

Linda Stern - February 25 at 07:16 AM

SW

“ *Joe was our go to for all things fitness and health, travel to all remote areas of the world; we got to have many meaningful conversations about Kirby, vegan, and just enjoying the neighborhood. He and Linda have THE BEST attitude and made the most surprising and secretive Halloween appearance. No one knew the masked attendees....it was literally hours before their identity was discovered-Linda blew their cover! Mark and I have so many fond memories, including the time we had to call Joe to teach us how to use our fancy bike pump. Alas, we also should have had his help putting the bikes on the car; we were so embarrassed he saw us drive away and there the bikes fell OFF. Love to Linda, Dylan, Noah. Joe filled a lot of space with his energy, love, humanity and zest for life.*

sandra weisser - February 23 at 04:23 PM

LS

Sandy - thank you for sharing these memories of Joe!

Linda Stern - February 25 at 07:17 AM

JM

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



John Magnus - February 23 at 04:16 PM

LS

Thank you, John for sharing these photos, for your life long friendship with Joe and your support for the boys and me!

Linda Stern - February 25 at 07:19 AM

JM

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



John Magnus - February 23 at 03:58 PM

LS



Linda Stern - February 25 at 07:19 AM

CD

“ Dear Linda, Dylan and Noah,
Joe was a loving husband, great father and fun travel partner to you all. We enjoyed seeing all the pictures of your travels around the world. There were times when my phone would ping and there would be a picture from Joe showing Linda doing something funny like taking a picture of a ceiling lying flat on the floor!!
May his memory be a blessing and bring you solace at this difficult time.
Please accept our heartfelt condolences and wishing you comfort in the days ahead.
Colin and Joy D’Souza

Colin and Joy D’Souza - February 23 at 02:52 PM

LS

Thank you, Joy & Colin for your kind words and sharing your memory of Joe texting you photos of me during our travels!

Linda Stern - February 25 at 07:21 AM

GR

When a loved one dies long before his time, it turns everything upside down. Any answers to the question "Why?" ring hollow. As your family navigates this heart wrenching time, know that you are in my thoughts. Every day I will take a moment to let your grief remind me of what is most important in life and, in so doing, I honor the life of your darling husband and father, Joe.

Glynnis Reinhart - February 25 at 07:54 PM

BA

In honor of our dear, sweet Joe:

He's Gone

*You can shed tears that he is gone
Or you can smile because he has lived.*

*You can close your eyes and pray that he will come back
Or you can open your eyes and see all that he has left.*

*Your heart can be empty because you can't see him
Or you can be full of the love that you shared.*

*You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday
Or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday.*

*You can remember him and only that he is gone
Or you can cherish his memory and let it live on.*

*You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your back
Or you can do what he would want: smile, open your eyes, love, and
go on.*

(author unknown)

Beth Agin - February 26 at 02:29 PM

PO

*i didn't know joey well but played with him on cliff ridge in ridgewood
when visiting my friend alan friedman. we also played on the indian
creek little league team together. i'm so sorry for your loss. may his
memory always be for a blessing. perry ohren*

Perry Ohren - February 26 at 04:08 PM

LS

Thank you, Glynnis for kind comments!

Thank you, Beth for a great way to look at this situation. Thank you for sharing this!

Thank you, Perry for kind words and for sharing your memory!

Linda Stern - February 26 at 09:28 PM