



## Walter Henry Volkmann

November 7, 1927 - January 31, 2013

Visitation for Walter Henry Volkmann, 85, of Kankakee, will be from 10 a.m. Monday until the 1 p.m. funeral service at St. John United Church of Christ in Kankakee, where he was a member. The Rev. Barbara Lohrbach will officiate. Burial will be in Mound Grove Gardens of Memory, Kankakee. Memorials may be made to St. John United Church of Christ or to Hospice of Kankakee Valley. He died Thursday (Jan. 31, 2013) at his home. Clancy-Gernon-Hertz Funeral Home, west Kankakee, is in charge of arrangements.

Mr. Volkmann was the third-generation owner and operator of Volkmanns' Jewelers in Kankakee. He was born Nov. 7, 1927, in Kankakee, the son of Walter Carl and Louise Marie Genz Volkmann. He graduated from Kankakee High School in 1945, where he was an accomplished athlete and a member of the first Sweet 16 basketball team in school history. He graduated from the University of Illinois, where he was in the marching band. He was a registered jeweler with the American Gem Society. He was a member and past president of Kiwanis, Jaycees Little League, Downtown Merchants Association, the Chicago Guild American Gem Society and St. John United Church of Christ church council. He was a Kankakee School District 111 board member and on the Kankakee YMCA board of directors. He was a veteran of the U.S. Army, serving during the Korean War and a member of Kankakee American Legion Post 85. He was a member of the Kankakee Elks Club and involved in many other community organizations over the years. He enjoyed his family and,

especially, his children's sporting events and their fishing trips.

Surviving are his wife, the former Barbara Rose, of Kankakee, whom he married June 18, 1957, at St. John United Church of Christ; two sons, Walter Eric (Renee) Volkmann, of Paris, Ill., and Neil C. (Kim) Volkmann, of St. Louis, Mo.; one daughter, Joyce (Jeff) Volkmann Yonke, of Kankakee; 10 grandchildren, Erica, Alexandra, Olivia, Audrey, Jay, Hannah, Henry, Ellie, Neila and Jordan; one sister, Jeanne Volkmann James, of Kankakee; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; and three sisters, Barbara Smith, Florence Kuester and Venita Thomas.

# Cemetery Details

## Mound Grove Gardens Cemetery

1000 N. Greenwood  
Kankakee, IL 60901  
(815) 933-6726

# Previous Events

## Visitation

FEB 4. 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM (CT)

St. John United Church Of Christ  
1045 W. River  
Kankakee, IL 60901  
(815) 932-3336  
<http://www.stjohnucc-kan-il.org/>

## Funeral Service

FEB 4. 1:00 PM (CT)

St. John United Church Of Christ  
1045 W. River  
Kankakee, IL 60901  
(815) 932-3336  
<http://www.stjohnucc-kan-il.org/>

# Tribute Wall

CV

“ Wally, as Mr. Volkmann was known by our family, was a wonderful man who shared a rich history with the Sanborn side of the family. His constants included twinkling eyes, warm smile, and questions about our family. He loved to share news about his own children, too. Thank you for your commitment to Kankakee as an honest and knowledgeable business man, volunteer, and amazing father.

**Cynth Watson Veronda** - February 12, 2013 at 09:38 PM

 Seth  
Horn

“ Friend and classmate of Joyce and Jeff. Volkman's was always a staple of the Kankakee community. I remember buying my first Girlfriend ring there in 1972. Prayers and support to all of the Families and continued success for Volkman's. Seth Horn

**Seth Horn** - February 06, 2013 at 08:49 PM

 Tommie  
Tommie

“ Tommie Tommie lit a candle in memory of  
Walter Henry Volkmann



**Tommie Tommie** - February 06, 2013 at 07:02 PM

CC

“ Hi Neil

*We were so sorry we are unable to make the visitation yesterday. We had appointments and did not get done in time. We remember all the good times we had with your parents during your colt league baseball days and all the good service he gave us at Volkman's Jewelery. We have a lot of good memories of you and the team. Our sympathy to you and your family and our thoughts and prayers are with you.*

*Carl & Jan Coleman*

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**Carl & Jan Coleman** - February 05, 2013 at 02:14 PM

DE

“ Eric,

*So sorry to hear of your fathers passing. He was a very loving and caring man who always made you feel welcome. Know that my thoughts and prayers are with you and all your family during this difficult time. May God Bless you, give you strength and comfort as he carries you through the days to come. Remember the love you shared and all the memories you made because those will last last a lifetime.*

*Debbie Sarowatz Eilts*

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**Debbie Eilts** - February 05, 2013 at 07:16 AM

SA

“ Dear Barbara and family,  
We were saddened to learn of Wally's passing. We know it has  
been a difficult journey for all of you.  
He always had a smile, and was humerous too.  
Our thoughts and prayers are with you.  
Sincerely, Stan and Karen James

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**sajre100@comcast.net** - February 04, 2013 at 05:36 PM

EL

“ I have a lot of good memories of Wally, but the way he did  
gymnastic "tricks" with his kids at holidays or after dinner always  
stands out. Joyce, Eric & Neil would all take turns getting flipped  
and tossed until Wally was exhausted, but he'd keep going. It was  
so giving and such fun.

*Ellen Kuester Lawless*

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**Ellen Kuester lawless** - February 04, 2013 at 09:53 AM

MT

Yes, Ellen, I had forgotten about that until this morning. He was pretty  
spry for a guy in his mid-40's. I was always impressed with that display  
and more than a little jealous that I was too big to be tossed around like  
J, E & N.

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**Michael Thomas** - February 04, 2013 at 12:22 PM

MT

“ *Uncle Wally had the best smile. I know he always had trouble telling me apart from Mike but it never bothered me. I thought it was funny that it made him a bit more uncomfortable then it did me. My memory is of two large drawings he did from an art class he took at the U of I. I couldn't believe how hard the professor graded. I thought they were fantastic but he got like a B- for one and a C+ for the other. I am sure his artistic talents helped him be the excellent jeweler that he was.*

*Marc Thomas*

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**Marc Edward Thomas** - February 03, 2013 at 04:25 PM

AM

“ *You all have my sincerest condolences. I have fond memories of Mr. Volkmann and his work is still a part of my life. I have several pieces of jewelry from his store that remind me of my parents and Kankakee. You never know how one life will effect another. Thank you for creating memories for mine. The Volkmann family is in my prayers.*

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**Amy (Witt) Mange** - February 03, 2013 at 02:45 PM

MT

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



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**Michael Thomas** - February 03, 2013 at 01:36 PM

DS

“ Bert and I send our deepest condolences to Barbara and family in their loss of a wonderful husband, father and grandfather. Our memories of Walter are those of a brilliant, humorous and generous man, always a gentleman and a friend who we will never forget. I remember the times that my first husband, Dr. Sirano Siaroff would come into the jewelery store to look over the beautiful jewelery, it was alway Mr. Volkmann who helped him, for watch repair or in picking out that perfect gift for me or his daughters. His reputation of being honest and the "go to guy" was the perfect fit for Kankakee. Our thoughts and prayers continue with you during this most difficult time. Sincerely and with love, Diane Siaroff and Bert Jacobertobson

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**Diane Siaroff** - February 03, 2013 at 01:07 PM

MT

“ I don't think there was ever a kinder, gentler man I knew than Uncle Wally. I have a lot of precious memories of him and will always remember that infectious smile of his that made people want to be his friend. I remember when he returned from service in Korea, not knowing a lot about it but enough to see feel excitement in my extended family that he was now back. I remember his courtship with Barbara Rose , my speech teacher of all things, and how honored and big I felt when twin brother Marc and I were acolytes in their wedding in 1957. I recall them singing "Love and Marriage" at the rehearsal dinner at the Kankakee Hotel (they did a very decent job!). When they returned from their honeymoon in Germany the family had a picnic at Aunt Bim's Gazebo on the Kankakee River. They had even bought a blue VW Bug...one of the first in Kankakee and it sat next to Aunt Bim's Edsel. Barb and Wally bought a small house on the east side of town. I can't remember the exact location, but it had a cherry tree in the back yard and aunt Barb invited us to help pick cherries and play badmitten. He gave me my first job working at the Volkmann building and took me to a gem show in Chicgao to try to train me to be a window dresser for the store (I wasn't very good at it but I appreciated the faith he had in me) He helped me pick out my wedding bands when I got married. These are just a few memories and and I was proud to call him my uncle.

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**Michael Thomas** - February 03, 2013 at 11:53 AM

PP

“ Wally pierced my ears in the back room of jewelry store with a needle and a cork didnt feel a thing. He was the best and sweetest guy! My thoughts and prayers go out to all who loved him.

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**polly pilcher** - February 03, 2013 at 11:17 AM

PH

“ *Pat And Bruce Huot lit a candle in memory of Walter Henry Volkmann*



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**Pat and Bruce Huot** - February 03, 2013 at 08:47 AM

PH

*Wally will always be remembered as a true gentleman, a person of honesty and integrity. It was an honor to be his friend. Our prayers are with Barb and the entire family.*

*Pat and Bruce Huot*

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**Pat and Bruce Huot** - February 03, 2013 at 08:55 AM

KR

“ *Wally was a kind and caring member of our family and our community. May he now rest in peace. Loving thoughts are with Barb, Joyce, Neil and Eric...*

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**Karen Ross** - February 03, 2013 at 07:28 AM

MT

“ *We are thinking of you and your family. I cant help but think all the family members Uncle Wally is meeting in heaven ! I have so many fond memories.*

*Love,*

*Mary Angela and Family*

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**Mary Thomas-DuBois** - February 02, 2013 at 09:26 PM

TR

“ Wally's pocket!

Tom Rust - February 02, 2013 at 08:59 PM

S(

“ So sorry for your loss Eric to you and your family. Thoughts and prayers to you all!

Susan Trobaugh (Draper) - February 02, 2013 at 08:19 PM

MT

*I don't think there was ever a kinder, gentler man I knew than Uncle Wally. I have a lot of precious memories of him and will always remember that infectious smile of his that made people want to be his friend. I remember when he returned from service in Korea, not knowing a lot about it but enough to see feel excitement in my extended family that he was now back. I remember his courtship with Barbara Rose , my speech teacher of all things, and how honored and big I felt when twin brother Marc and I were acolytes in their wedding in 1957. I recall them singing "Love and Marriage" at the rehearsal dinner at the Kankakee Hotel (they did a very decent job!). When they returned from their honeymoon in Germany the family had a picnic at Aunt Bim's Gazebo on the Kankakee River. They had even bought a blue VW Bug...one of the first in Kankakee and it sat next to Aunt Bim's Edsel. Barb and Wally bought a small house on the east side of town. I can't remember the exact location, but it had a cherry tree in the back yard and aunt Barb invited us to help pick cherries and play badmitten. He gave me my first job working at the Volkmann building and took me to a gem show in Chicgao to try to train me to be a window dresser for the store (I wasn't very good at it but I appreciated the faith he had in me) He helped me pick out my wedding bands when I got married. These are just a few memories and and I was proud to call him my uncle.*

*Michael Thomas*

Michael Thomas - February 03, 2013 at 11:50 AM

CS

“ Sending my deepest sympathies, thoughts, love, and prayers.

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**Carol Sperry** - February 02, 2013 at 01:50 PM

KH

“ I learned today of the passing on of my beloved uncle Wally Volkmann. Wally was a hard working, quiet, unassuming businessman. He succeeded his father in the family business when family businesses were an integral part of the community. People wanted to do business with him. They trusted him, and he was highly respected in his community. He was the first one to arrive at work and the last to leave, and as most family businesses, it was not about the money...not at all. It was about the Volkmann name. But, then came the big stores. Who would ever buy jewelry at Walmart? But, people do. They are missing so much of what community is all about. Volkmann's Jeweler's still exists and a third generation is at the helm...in a most difficult time. Move on, Uncle Wally, I will miss you, but I will see you later!

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**Kimberlee Hill-Blair** - February 02, 2013 at 01:43 PM

CM

“ The family standard was to always shop for fine jewelry at Volkman's. Mr Volkman's easy smile and excellent advice were always welcome....

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**Coleen McCabe** - February 02, 2013 at 01:22 PM

EV

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



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**Eric Volkmann** - February 02, 2013 at 12:08 PM

EV

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



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**Eric Volkmann** - February 02, 2013 at 12:06 PM

EV

“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



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**Eric Volkmann** - February 02, 2013 at 11:56 AM

EV

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



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**Eric Volkmann** - February 02, 2013 at 11:50 AM

EV

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



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**Eric Volkmann** - February 02, 2013 at 11:45 AM

JP

“ *Wally, we'll miss your smiling face and gentle presence.  
Love to Barb, Eric, Neil and Joyce.*

*Jane and George Potter*

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**Jane & George Potter** - February 02, 2013 at 10:55 AM

SV

*It's been many years since we lived in Walter's neighborhood.. but remember him as a very kind man who always had time to say "hello". Also remember "Toby" who traveled nearly every day to the store. Our sympathy to the family. Paul and Sheila Vakselis*

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**Sheila Vakselis** - February 02, 2013 at 01:05 PM

JR

“ *Jesse Rodriguez lit a candle in memory of  
Walter Henry Volkmann*



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**jesse rodriguez** - February 01, 2013 at 12:50 PM