



Leslee K. Niethammer

December 9, 1953 - March 11, 2016

Leslee Kae Niethammer was born on December 9th, 1953 in Ann Arbor and passed away on Friday, March 11th, 2016 at Arbor Hospice after a difficult battle with cancer. She leaves the love of her life, her husband of 13 years, David Earl Rhoads, who was by her side as she passed. Leslee was born in Ann Arbor to Georgena (Lirette) and Leon Niethammer. Leslee graduated with a Masters in Library Science from the University of Michigan. Leslee was the long-time Director of the Saline District Library, having served in that capacity since 1989. She saw the Library through its transition to a district library in 1991, opening a new facility in 1994, and then expanding that building in 2008. Leslee was a very active member of the Saline community and positioned the Library to be at its center. Over the years, Leslee represented the Library by serving in leadership roles for nearly every community organization and had a part in founding important groups such as the Saline Coalition for a Quality Community and Saline Leadership Institute. Leslee was passionate about nature and art, and she shared her passions with the community by installing gardens, trails, and works of art throughout the Library grounds, and by rotating art exhibits inside the building. Her community involvement extended beyond the library as well. She was a member of the Environmental Commission and the Lions Club. She was a frequent volunteer for the Saline Historical Society, 212 Art Center, and other community activities. She also represented Ed's Bread, a local business, at the Saline Farmers markets year-round where her fabulous smile welcomed customers.

Leslee is survived by her “favorite husband” David. Survivors in addition to her husband include their son David (Nancy) Rhoads II, granddaughter Gennifer Rhoads, great-grandsons Justin Pitcher and Jackson Firman, granddaughters Melanie Rhoads and Sarah Rhoads, daughter Linda (DeWayne) Hatcher, daughter Julie (Robert) Copeland, grandchildren Parker Copeland, Rylee Copeland, and A.J. (Courtney) Copeland, great-granddaughter Brooklyn Copeland, daughter Vanessa (Brian) Bradley, grandson Jaden Bradley, and daughter Natalie Rhoads (Ian) and sisters, Judy (Ron Schinske) and Sandie Niethammer (Thom Byrd); six nieces, Amanda Schinske (Mike Bernhardt), Katie Sebolt (Matt), Emily Schinske (Colin), Veronica Schinske (Rew), Greta Niethammer, Hannah Niethammer and three great nephews, Noah Sebolt, Adam Sebolt, Isaac Whitmore and one great niece, Eleanor Bernhardt, many wonderful cousins, and their beloved cats. Cremation has taken place. Rev. Dr. Jim Tuttle will preside over a memorial service at the First United Methodist Church of Saline, 1200 N. Ann Arbor Street, Saline, Michigan at 11:00 A.M. on Tuesday, March 15th, 2016. Gathering with the family is at 10:00 A.M. The visitation will take place Monday, March 14th, 2016 from 4:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. at the First United Methodist Church of Saline. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to the Leslee Niethammer Saline River Preserve and envelopes and information will be available at the church. To sign Leslee’s guestbook, to leave a memory, or for more information please visit www.rbfhsaline.com.

“Just as a well-filled day brings blessed sleep, so a well-employed life brings a blessed death.” -Robert Greene

Cemetery Details

Oakwood Cemetery

227 West Michigan Ave
Saline, MI 48176

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 14. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

First United Methodist Church of Saline
1200 North Ann Arbor Street
Saline, MI
<http://www.fumc-saline.org/>

Visitation

MAR 15. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

First United Methodist Church of Saline
1200 North Ann Arbor Street
Saline, MI
<http://www.fumc-saline.org/>

Memorial Service

MAR 15. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

First United Methodist Church of Saline
1200 North Ann Arbor Street
Saline, MI
<http://www.fumc-saline.org/>

Luncheon

MAR 15. 12:00 PM - 1:40 PM (ET)

First United Methodist Church of Saline
1200 North Ann Arbor Street
Saline, MI
<http://www.fumc-saline.org/>

Tribute Wall



“ *Leslee K. Niethammer*

October 23, 2023 at 01:07 PM



“ *To the Family of Leslee K. Niethammer,
So sorry to learn about the loss of your Dear Loved One, Leslee.
Please know that so many people share your grief with you to help
you through this difficult time of sorrow. Please accept my deepest
condolences as we await the time when Christ Jesus will awaken all
of those who have fallen asleep in death; including your Beloved,
Leslee.
(John 11:41-44)*

J. Moore/Volunteer - April 01, 2016 at 04:46 PM



“ *I think it was 1997 when I first met Leslee. She was a greeter at Ann Arbor ZBT. Her smile, warmth and calm presence lifted my spirit and I looked forward to seeing her every Sunday. After a few years, we both drifted away from ZBT. Coincidentally, our paths crossed again more recently, in a couple different ways. I was looking forward to seeing her again in April at the annual Waste Knot Awards event. She will live on forever in my heart.*

Mary Shindell - March 22, 2016 at 12:54 PM

MS

“ Dear David, family and friends,
My heart and prayers go out to you all. I have prayed for Leslee since finding out about her cancer. She and I were in so many classes together at the Saline Rec. Center. I always got a kick out talking with her after class and would be thrilled if I saw her at the Saline District Library; a home away from home.
A remarkable woman she is!
God bless you all,
Marcia Swiss

Marcia Swiss - March 16, 2016 at 07:07 AM

CP

“ Ahh..Leslee my dearest 'li-barian' friend. What times we had over 30 years of living the library dream. I will miss all our deep discussions we had over the years - the laughter to tears, our dreams and life's adventures. My heart aches but rejoices in the fact that you are an angel in heaven and will be the master librarian of all!
"He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up..."

Cheryl Poch - March 15, 2016 at 10:00 AM

CK

“ I will miss solving the world problems and sharing laughs. Your smile and friendship will be missed. Heaven gained another angel.

Carmen Knick - March 14, 2016 at 08:26 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Leslee K. Niethammer.*



March 14, 2016 at 12:20 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Leslee K. Niethammer.*



March 14, 2016 at 11:42 AM



“ *JD and Pam Hennigan purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Leslee K. Niethammer.*



JD and Pam Hennigan - March 14, 2016 at 11:13 AM



“ *Leslee was an inspiration to so many people. She had such a great smile and positive energy. She will be greatly missed.*

Mary Fortino - March 14, 2016 at 11:04 AM

LL

“ I met Leslee more than 20 years ago when I returned to work in Michigan libraries. Her sense of style and dynamic library environments have remained an influence on my career ever since. She has left an impact that cannot be measured. Please accept my condolences and wishes that you will find peace in wonderful memories of Leslee.

Laurie St Laurent - March 14, 2016 at 10:51 AM

KP

“ I enjoyed working with Leslie through the Michigan Library Association. Always cheerful and a consensus builder. She will be missed.

Kelli Perkins - March 14, 2016 at 10:50 AM

KP

“ Leslee often provided wise advice when I was director of Manchester District Library--so besides doing so much for Saline, she also contributed to a neighboring community. Thank you Leslee, you made our world a better place and you are greatly missed.
- Kate Pittsley

Kate Pittsley - March 14, 2016 at 10:33 AM

DI

“ I never tired of going to the library and seeing Leslee's smiling face! She was a shining light, working endlessly for the community of Saline. I will miss her. My prayers go out to David and family.

Love,
Diane Irwin

Diane Irwin - March 14, 2016 at 09:17 AM

“ We met in junior high in gym class. I called her Les or Lezzle-D-Dezzle. It was a close race determining which of us was less athletically gifted, although I 'won' the title for the bent arm hang. I was in line before her, and I grabbed the bar and jumped. I went up, and I went down--- just about as fast as you read that, one second at best. Les burst into tears because she was laughing so hard. She was holding her sides, gasping for breath, and wiping tears from her face. She wasn't able to do the bent arm hang -AT ALL- after my stellar performance. She has reminded me of my athletic ability for 45 years and still cracked up whenever she brought it up. We were friends through junior high and high school. I have many, many happy memories of times with her family gathered around the kitchen table, or on the back porch, or out at Sugar Loaf lake. Les and I started college together as roommates at Hope College. We studied diligently; took endless walks and bike rides (including out to Lake Michigan); and having just turned 18, were unable to fend off the temptation of those newly won legal rights. That's right, two wild girls out on the town walking to the candy store and buying a pound of chocolate. PARTY! She went on to Eastern and I went to MSU. We both moved around but always stayed in touch. We took many trips together including several to Florida, the Bahamas, New Orleans, Lake Erie, and our Out West adventure to Colorado where I talked her into riding a horse. We always had endless talks and adventures when we travelled. Although she rarely laughed at my jokes, she always laughed until she cried at my stories--and those are my most favorite memories. I had hoped that we would continue to take many more trips in the years to come. But sadly, she has gone ahead on a journey that we will all eventually make. I am counting on her being part of the welcoming committee and catching up on what she has been doing. I am sure that she is planting a garden, starting a recycling center, and organizing the celestial library. She has to have a project to keep her busy and happy, and I am sure that heaven is happy to have her help and smile. They say time heals all wounds. I hope that is true, but I know that I will always have a Les-sized hole in my heart that will never go away. My deepest sympathy to David and all of the family. May

you find comfort knowing how many care for you, now and always.

Robi Gunn

Robi Gunn - March 13, 2016 at 06:16 PM

DS

“ *Diane Slomkowski lit a candle in memory of Leslee K. Niethammer* ”



Diane Slomkowski - March 13, 2016 at 04:50 PM



“ *4 files added to the album Leslee enjoying life* ”



David Rhoads - March 13, 2016 at 04:31 PM

CW

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



Cathy Weber - March 13, 2016 at 02:42 PM



Leslee certainly believed this statement to be true.

David Rhoads - March 13, 2016 at 04:03 PM

CW

Leslee was my boss but so much more. She was an amazing woman with a zest for life. She and I "giggled" over this book. The character was so very similar to the two of us. I will miss you Leslee. You were such a treasure.

Cathy Weber - March 13, 2016 at 04:54 PM

KP

“ *Leslee was such an amazing person! She touched so many lives in the Saline Community including mine! She was one of the most optimistic individuals I have ever met. My sincere Sympathy David on your loss! You are in my thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. Know that many support you!*

Karilyn Price

Karilyn Price - March 13, 2016 at 02:06 PM

AR

“ Ah Leslee, spirited, fun-loving, and a delight to work with and to come to know. I am so sorry to learn of her illness and her passing. It is much too soon for us all to lose Leslee - always such a joy, even in the most difficult of times as we worked together on both library projects. Know that she will never be forgotten by all of those who came to know her!

I am deeply saddened and send my love and prayers-

Alyce Riemenschneider

alyce riemenschneider - March 13, 2016 at 01:25 PM

CM

“ I didn't know Leslee personally, but I wish I had, and I always admired her. Over my years in Saline as a regular patron of the library, I'd see her there with her lovely smile and read about her positive influences in the newspaper. Her grace and spirit helped to make this city a special place to live.

Cindy Matthews - March 13, 2016 at 12:24 PM

SR

“ David, I had the good fortune to work with Leslee since 1989 on Library business and have her for a friend. She always had a smile and positive attitude. But when she walked across the park bridge with flowers in her hair to be your Bride, her smile and eyes were extra bright.

You and all of Saline have lost a Treasure, but will always have fond memories of Leslee. We are all better for having her in our lives.

Bill Roach

Stephen Robison - March 13, 2016 at 11:56 AM

CP

“ *Leslee will be dearly missed by many. Her commitment to making her community a better place will live forever. My deepest sympathy to all that loved her. With Affection, Cheryl Plouff*

Cheryl Plouff - March 13, 2016 at 11:54 AM

CP

I apologize for the typo "Her commitment"

cheryl plouff - March 13, 2016 at 04:21 PM

 Geri
HL

“ *There's no such thing as an ending, just a place where you leave the story. Leslee's story will go on through everything she has created for us. "Well my Dear" time to rest.*

Geri HL - March 13, 2016 at 09:21 AM

LP

“ *Simply heartbroken over the loss of Leslee. She fought her disease with grace, dignity and optimism. Thoughts and prayers for her beloved, David and family.*

Leslie Phillips - March 13, 2016 at 08:05 AM

JD

“ *What a great loss to her family and to our community. She did so much to make the library the wonderful place it is. My deepest sympathy.*

Jasmine Dudzik - March 13, 2016 at 06:42 AM

SG

“ *Leslee was a truly wonderful lady. A great role model for the Saline Community and beyond. I valued her wisdom and knowledge. She will be greatly missed.*

Samantha Gilson - March 12, 2016 at 05:53 PM


Christen
Mitchell

“ *So grateful to Leslee for all she did for our community. I know many others who have been inspired to give back as she did-- her beautiful legacy will live on in so many of us. Much love to David and her family.*

Christen Mitchell - March 12, 2016 at 04:23 PM

MT

“ *Leslee was a dynamic, whirlwind spirit. She left this earth too soon.. She had a beautiful, caring open mind. A good friend to me and all in her acquaintance..The city of Saline benefited greatly from her service. My sincere sympathy to David, his family and Leslee's family.*

Marina Tyson

Marina Tyson - March 12, 2016 at 02:11 PM

LW

“ *Leslee was an amazing and special lady who will be missed very much. Dave and family - you are in my thoughts and prayers. Wishing you much strength and care.*

Linda Wicks - March 12, 2016 at 12:06 PM

MH

“ *The Saline community has lost a great friend. The head librarian in a small town is, by definition, a pillar of that town, an educator and a cultural ambassador. Very few people in any community have as much contact with the people - old and young - as the librarian.*

Leslee was a sweet, friendly and helpful person. Saline is a much better place because of her. There can be no better tribute.

David, take comfort in knowing the community is grieving with you.
Mark Hopper

Mark Hopper - March 12, 2016 at 12:05 PM

RC

“ *I am so sorry to hear about Leslee. She was an amazing woman and we shared some great times when I worked at the Reporter, too many to really list here. She was always cheerful, smiling and had a great sense of humor. The Saline community has lost a true friend.*

Renee Lapham Collins
Adrian

Renee Collins - March 12, 2016 at 09:01 AM

GL

“ *A person who gave tirelessly to the community she loved. I will always smile when I think of the days of scoping ice cream with Leslee and David in the Lions trailer at all community events. God's blessings to David and Leslee's family.*

Glenn Law - March 11, 2016 at 07:48 PM

SR

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



Stephen Robison - March 11, 2016 at 03:32 PM