



David A. Jespersen

DEC 25, 1946 - JAN 24, 2020



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David A. Jespersen

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David A. Jespersen, age 73, passed away on January 24, 2020, at his home in Grand Rapids. He was born on December 25, 1946, to Donald and Helen (Herlein) Jespersen in Muskegon, MI. He graduated from Muskegon High School, where he was first chair clarinetist in the orchestra. He went on to play clarinet with the University of Michigan marching and symphony bands in 1965-68, and then as a member of the 81st Army Band while he served his country. David graduated from U of M in English and went on to earn his MS in Library Sciences. He was head librarian at the Clinton Community Schools for almost 20 years. He taught 7th and 8th grade and was also a band teacher. An avid music lover and stereophile, he would fly across the country to hear favorite artists and orchestras—Hilary Hahn, the Vienna Philharmonic—and, in his own back yard, particularly appreciated the high quality of the West Michigan Symphony under the direction of Scott Speck. He liked good books, and would happily spend an evening discussing Thomas Pynchon, Alice Munro, and Hamlet, all mixed together with an analysis of Mahler's 3rd and the beauty of the lake at Muskegon State Park. He will be missed by friends and several cousins. He is preceded in death by his parents. Services will be held at a later date. Arrangements entrusted to The Walburn Chapel of Sytsema Funeral & Cremation Services, 1547 W. Sherman Blvd., Muskegon, MI 49441. Share memories with the family at www.sytsemafh.com.



Tribute Wall

David A. Jespersen
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David Austin shared an album called **Memories Album**.



June 1 at 10:20 AM



David Austin shared an album called **Memories Album**.



June 1 at 10:16 AM



David Austin shared an album called **Memories Album**.



June 1 at 10:11 AM



Tribute Wall

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DA

David Austin posted:

I first met DJ at our mutual arriving at the 81st Army Band, where the Commanding Officer gave a very long haranguing to us 3 new arrivals. It was all about how we were going to tow the line in his organization, there weren't going to be any wearing of beads in his band, there wouldn't be any of this or any of that in his band. This went on for at least 20 minutes or so while we all stood at attention. I started feeling woozy and finally collapsed near fainting. Afterwards, DJ connected with me, and we immediately realized that we were kindred spirits, and became best buddies during our time together at the band. I eventually got shipped out to a band in Viet Nam, (because he was the better clarinet player of the two of us), while he stayed behind, and kept me informed via letters (which I still have), of the trials and tribulations of Army life. He had a healthy disrespect for authority, and we chafed together enduring the orders of the likes of Pineapple and Sgt Curlee. One time, after a major league cleaning and inspection of our shared room, we decided to eat our electric skillet cooked dinner off the floor as a minor rebellion. I still remember those many drives we took together smoking dope on the back roads around Ft Campbell, Kentucky in his old 64(?) Dodge with push button automatic. We served our country, but it wasn't voluntary, we were both drafted, After the Army, we saw each other a few times. He visited me in Missouri, we took a trip together to Colorado (we both took lots of Kodachrome slides with our 35mm cameras), we corresponded via letters haphazardly thru the years (later with email). I visited him at his parents house in Muskegon where we visited the wild Lake. Years later, we visited him in Ann Arbor, I still have the tshirt from the 1998 Ann Arbor Blues & Jazz Festival. Besides music, DJ had a deep seated love of English literature, once fantasizing about becoming a college professor, but dreading the 250 page thesis he would need to write on Charles Dickens. I got him to read a Richard Brautigan book once, but I could tell Brautigan was no Charles Dickens in his mind. He did seem to mildly like my suggested Robert Heinlein Stranger in a Strange Land. I do know that he will be fondly remembered by his former girlfriend, Alix Anne Shaw. There was also a Kay in his past. He had a wilder side than many people realized. I still remember the twinkle in his eye as he passed the bong. Those long drives in the Kentucky countryside. He liked gargoyles. I mentioned one time that I had been hanging out with some anarchists, and he immediately told me about Noam Chomsky. Because of my Missouri roots, we sometimes referred to me as Jesse James, Ry Cooder's Frank and Jesse James was sort an informal theme song for the 2 of us (that DJ came up with). In his letters, he often signed them Orville Flerm, or P Grimes, or R Zimmerman. The latter may have been a reference to one of his idols Bob Dylan, but I don't know what the others referred to. We tried to reconnect with him in late summer of 2019, but never heard back from him, I suspect he might have been edging toward the door. RIP water brother.

February 22 at 4:51 PM



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RG

Rita (Street) Gagne posted:

Shared memories with Dave at our 50th class reunion and at the MHS band reunion. We spoke of how fortunate we were to be a part of such a wonderful organization. Dave was an extraordinary musician, leader and an amazing man.

February 25 at 1:55 AM

SS

Sylvia J Mac Queen Street posted:

Dave led the clarinets thru junior and senior high. He had exemplary talent but also worked to finesse his skills. I shall always remember his quiet smile and genuine kindness.

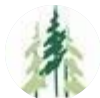
February 23 at 11:25 AM

KS

Karol A Settergren shared a photo to the **Memories Album** album.



February 23 at 9:07 AM



Sytsema Funeral & Cremation Services shared a photo to the **Memories Album** album.



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Media

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June 1 at 10:20 AM





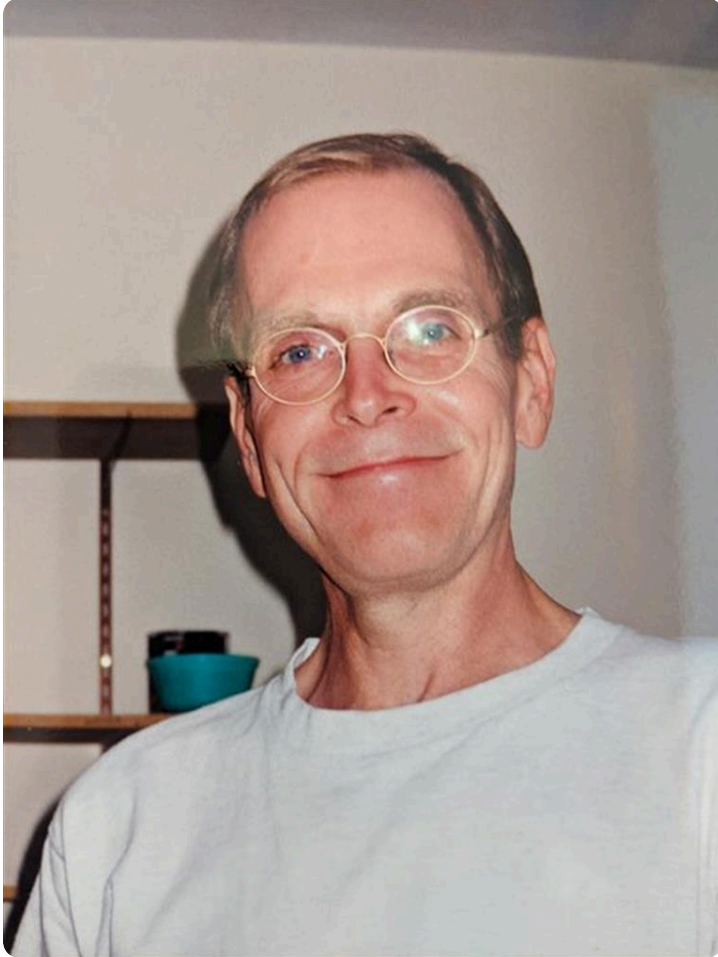
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David & Susan Austin, DJ



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David and the MHS "65" clarinet section



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Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring David by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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