



## Dr. Samuel Schuman

September 26, 1942 - November 11, 2014

Dr. Samuel Schuman died Tuesday afternoon, November 11, 2014, peacefully and at home as he had wished, after an 18 month ordeal with lung cancer. He was 72.

Sam was born September 26, 1942 in Chicago, to Marie Friedlander Schuman and Stanton Schuman, who predeceased him. He grew up in Glencoe, Illinois and attended New Trier High School. His early memories were happy ones: of his dad returning in 1945 from the war in Europe, of family camping trips, of competitive speed skating, of middle school football success (thanks to an early growth spurt), of Boy Scouts (he was an Eagle Scout and Order of the Arrow). During high school, he became very active in Jewish youth group organizations, and at one time, thought his vocation might be the rabbinate. He learned to play folk guitar then, too, and that became an essential part of his life in college as well. He was graduated from Grinnell College with a B.A. in English Literature in 1964. At Grinnell, he met Nancy, the love of his life, whom he married in 1962. Grinnell friendships and influences have remained important to Sam throughout the years.

Sam continued his studies at San Francisco State University, earning his M.A. in English Literature in 1966, and assuming his first teaching position, in Humanities, at St. Mary's College in Moraga, CA. Son Daniel Benton Schuman was born to elated parents Sam and Nancy during these San

Francisco years; with Sam's PhD in English Literature (Northwestern University, 1969) came the equally wonderful event of daughter Leah Juliet Schuman's birth. Sam's academic focus had become Jacobean drama, and he was fortunate to have the opportunity to study with Shakespearean scholar Samuel Schoenbaum, serving as his research and editorial assistant for the publication *Renaissance Drama*. Sam's dissertation was "The Theater of Fine Devices: Emblems and the Emblematic in the Plays of John Webster."

The family moved to Mt. Vernon, Iowa when Sam accepted his first full time tenure track teaching position in the English Department of Cornell College. Sam was always a teacher at heart, and loved having the opportunity at Cornell to teach talented students, not only in his own academic specialty, but also doing such diverse things as co-teaching modern fiction classes with his friend poet R. P Dana, teaching a "winter term" workshop in canoe building, and supplementing the family's income with a summer "Learn to Swim" program for children at the college pool; he also directed two Shakespeare plays. During his time at Cornell Colleges as a result of a Ford Foundation grant, Sam and family went to England for the first time, and it was there, while staying at a colleague's Yorkshire home, on a rainy day, that he discovered the writings of Vladimir Nabokov, which were to become his second scholarly specialty.

Sam became involved in the Honors Program at Cornell, and found this satisfying work, so in 1977, he made a career choice to move into the position of Director of the Honors Program (now the Honors College) at the University of Maine – Orono. From this first administrative position, Sam learned a great deal, but he also enjoyed teaching Honors courses. While in Maine, the family had many outdoor activities – mostly hiking – but Sam also became a serious runner, and in 1978, ran a 2:59 marathon, which qualified him to run the Boston marathon the next year.

In 1981, the family moved to Greensboro, NC, when Sam became the Academic Dean, then Vice President for Academic Affairs at Guilford College. Sam continued to teach occasional courses at Guilford, including once, a course in personal physical fitness. From Guilford, Sam moved to become Chancellor at University of North Carolina Asheville in 1991, and though he remained in that position only two years, he became committed to the furtherance of public liberal arts colleges as an important genre of American higher education. Sam also taught at UNC Asheville, but then in 1995, moved to University of Minnesota – Morris, in Minnesota, another public liberal arts institution, as Dean and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. He later became acting Chancellor at UMM (in 1998), then Chancellor from 2000 – 2006. Sam was proud of his role in helping UMM complete successfully its first ever capital campaign, of recruiting and retaining some fine faculty, of mentoring some promising administrators, and of strengthening international education at the school. He retired (the first time) from UMM in 2006, accepting a one year appointment as the Caruthers Chair Visiting Distinguished Professorship in the Honors College of University of New Mexico before coming back to Asheville. Sam then assumed several different part-time roles at UNC Asheville, including teaching. He also returned to University of New Mexico for an additional semester in 2012.

Over the years, Sam was involved in a number of professional/academic organizations: The Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges, the Nabokov Society (of which he served as president), the National Collegiate Honors Council (of which he also served as president). His civic involvements included serving as president of the Mt Vernon, Iowa PTA, serving as Assistant Scoutmaster in Orono, Maine, board membership of Minnesota Public Radio, board membership of Prairie Pioneer Public TV, board membership of WCQS in Asheville, board membership of Asheville United Way, and board membership of the Asheville Arts Council.

Sam was a dedicated physical fitness participant, and running, cycling, swimming and hiking were all pursuits to which he was dedicated. In addition to the 20+ marathons and numerous triathlons in which he participated, The Assault on Mt. Mitchell, The Tongariro Alpine Trek (New Zealand), the Going to the Sun Road bike ride (Glacier National Park), and the bike ride from Argentina to Chile through the Andes are examples of the challenges he enjoyed. A special pleasure was participating in competitive running or cycling events with each of his children, and hiking with his wife. Sam was pleased to be honored with the naming of the UNC Asheville physical fitness facility, which was celebrated in 2013.

Sam was a prolific writer, and a fine public speaker (despite his rather shy personality). He has published over 300 scholarly articles, and 7 books. He even once wrote a regular column for Runner's World magazine entitled "Running Around", describing suggested running routes in cities to which he had traveled.

Sam (and Nancy) were fortunate to travel to many destinations around the world, and loved the varied experiences they had. But Sam also loved his home in Chunn's Cove in Asheville, his garden, his dogs (now Maggie, previously beloved Tigr), and his bike rides on the Blue Ridge Parkway which were a few of his favorite things. This true Renaissance man was now no longer restless to move on, he was happy to be settled here in Asheville in his retirement.

Sam is survived by his wife of 52 years Nancy, his children Dan (Angela) Schuman, and Leah Schuman (Scott Cook), and his three treasured grandchildren, Hannah, Rachel, and Abigail, his brothers David (Sharon) Schuman, Joseph Schuman, and his sister Sarah (Stanley) Dietzel and five nieces and nephews.

Friends may call between 6 and 8 p.m., Friday, November 14 at Morris Funeral Home, 304 Merrimon Avenue. A private family only memorial service will be held at a later time.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to either 1) the Sam and Nancy Schuman Scholarship, Office of External Relations, UM Morris, 600 E. Fourth ST., Morris, MN 56267 or 2) Founders Scholarship, UNC Asheville Foundation, CPO 3800, One University Heights, Asheville, NC 28804, or 3) any educational, arts, conservation, or hospice organization of the donor's choice.

Sam and his family wish to thank all his treatment and care providers for their wisdom and compassion - at Western North Carolina Cancer Care and affiliated services, and at Care Partners Hospice Services during his illness.

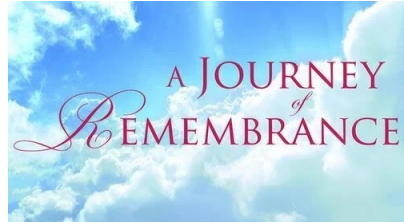
# Cemetery Details

**Private**

# Tribute Wall



“ *Morris Funeral & Cremation Care created a Tribute Video in memory of Dr. Samuel Schuman*



**Morris Funeral Home** - November 14, 2014 at 08:29 AM

MD

*How wonderful to see all these family photos and glimpses into Sam's life! Thank you!*

*Marianne and Dennis Dietzel*

**Marianne Dietzel** - November 15, 2014 at 03:03 PM

SS

*This is a great tribute to ann amazing man from an amazing family who led an incredible life and touched so many. Thanks for sharing Sam.*

**Susan Schwartz** - November 16, 2014 at 07:51 PM



“ *Dr. Samuel Schuman*

October 07, 2023 at 11:15 AM

RS

“ *I was Lutheran Campus Pastor during part of Dr. Schuman's chancellorship. His commencement addresses were a source of pleasure for his language style and clarity and beauty of thought.*

**R. Mark Swanson** - April 01, 2015 at 09:57 PM

NS

“ just heard of Sam's passing - being 8 days older and a classmate from New Trier, losing any of our classmates strikes a mortal nerve. Our heartfelt condolences to the entire family. Norm Sandler

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**Norman Sandler** - December 04, 2014 at 10:33 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Dr. Samuel Schuman.



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November 19, 2014 at 08:00 AM

DA

“ ~ SAM SCHUMAN ~



*It is farfetched to think one's life can be accurately represented with just one mere word, yet I wish to share a thought – and this comes immediately after the hotel clerk spoke with me how captivated she was by his obituary (we had asked her to print for us after having no luck a day later trying to find copies of the Nov 13th of Asheville's Citizen Times).*

*PILLAR comes lucidly & without forcing it. Married 50+ years, raising two excellent children, displaying reliable consistency, demonstrating outstanding capabilities throughout a career in academia is certainly a life worth honoring, let alone modeling. These traits may have become less-integral nowadays, not because they're less important, but perhaps as they require a diligence not often found in society; good things in life don't come easily.*

*I am grateful Sam was my uncle and had a positive impact in my life. A pillar of the family is gone, yet his tremendous legacy will continue to influence those of us left behind. Nana was steadfast love, and Sam was a pillar. I am undeniably fortunate for having been impacted so greatly.*

*Dave Keys*

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**Dave** - November 15, 2014 at 10:02 AM

MD

“ Last year, aware that he did not have much longer, Sam Schuman gave me a gift which keeps on giving, the first twelve volumes of "Shakespeare Survey," an important annual for teachers of Shakespeare. I treasure these books, both for the substantial criticism and scholarship which they provide and for the memory of this learned fellow scholar and this immensely kind and generous man. We never met; after he made this precious gift, I suggested that we meet for lunch, but he demurred -- and now I understand why. In his great modesty and sense of scholarship, he wanted the gift to be the thing.

*It is. It will remind me, as long as I am able to continue teaching Shakespeare's incomparable plays, of a good and great man and his thoughtfulness. I extend my warmest best wishes to his loving family.*

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**MARIO A. DICESARE** - November 15, 2014 at 09:46 AM



“ Secret Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Dr. Samuel Schuman.



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November 14, 2014 at 08:45 PM

SB

“ Sam’s passing is a great loss for all. I was most fortunate to have worked with him when he was UNCA’s Chancellor and was elated when he returned as interim Dean of Faculty several years later.

He was shy, but warm and out going in his unique genuine style. One of the most intelligent people I have known, in a way intimidatingly so, but he never imposed his intellect on others. Rather he listened, made his well thought out points and never let himself slip into either an ego trip or defensiveness if challenged. Sam was always eager to hear the views of others, respected others and their thoughts, and took note, even if some comments were shall I say less than ground breaking.

There was a subtle twinkle in his eye, a smile that could melt a glacier, yet a firmness of position when needed without being overpowering or intimidating. He was self confident, but never arrogant or authoritarian.

Sam was a kind, good, caring, giving, friend and human being. He was an exceptional role model as a human being. I was honored to have known him, learn from him, shared the gym with him- but I could never keep stride once he warmed UP ! - and felt a kind supportive feeling when I was in his presence. He was a man of concise clear words of wisdom, and occasionally a casual chat. Efficiency of words unlike myself-filled with meaning – I am ashamed to say something I have never mastered well.

Thank you Sam for being a part of my human existence. I got the better deal! And will never forget my debt to you.

Shirley Browning

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Shirley Browning - November 14, 2014 at 08:28 PM

MK

“ *A scholar, a gentleman, and a gentle man. It was a treat to get to know Sam when he served on the Board of Directors at WCQS Public Radio. His sweet day sponsorship messages every year to honor Nancy on her birthday and their anniversary always made me smile. We are all better for knowing him. Deepest sympathies. - Michelle Keenan*

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**Michelle Keenan** - November 14, 2014 at 10:35 AM

AG

“ *Sam and I were best friends in junior high school and high school. We went to college only 60 miles apart but our visits were ever less frequent as the years passed. Still we did keep in touch, meeting at reunions and professional meetings. Sam's career was a straight arrow; ever ascending, as befits a boyhood member of the order of the arrow. His scholarship was disciplined, incisive, upbeat, relevant and valuable. Mine has been something of a roller coaster. He was a model that it was not my lot to follow, but still he was still the model I wished to emulate.*

*. What we shared was enthusiasm for life, a sense of history and our place in it. He could change my mood for the better with a smile and he had a ready smile. His good will and benevolence was balanced by rigorous priorities as befitting a master administrator.*

*I will miss him dearly. I send my deepest sympathies to his family, including his brothers and sister and their families, and I wish to include his extended family which doubtless was vast and even greater than he knew.*

*Alan Gorr*

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**Alan Gorr** - November 14, 2014 at 09:25 AM

NS

*Thanks for this tribute, Alan. I have been worrying that I didn't have an address for you, so I am glad to know that somehow you did get word of Sam's death. You were the boyhood friend he most often remembered - building the ark for the temple was a very significant event for him, and il trust, for you. All Sam's sibs, and of course our son and daughter and grand daughters are here, and that is helping me immensely. Take care.*

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**nancy Schuman** - November 14, 2014 at 09:46 PM

JS

*Hi Alan. I thought of you when Sam asked me to say Kaddish at his memorial.*

*Joe*

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**Joe Schuman** - November 19, 2014 at 05:11 PM

MM

*“ I sent my deepest condolences. Shortly after Sam became chancellor at UMM, he came to visit me in my office in Minneapolis as part of his effort to reach out to alumni. I was touched and humbled that he would make such an effort.*

*Mary Martin, UMM, Class of 1975*

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**Mary Martin** - November 14, 2014 at 08:59 AM

SO

“ *Sam was and will remain a bright star in the big Minnesota prairie sky. He brought light, direction, clarity, beauty, and magic to our fine little college and to those of us lucky enough to share it with him.*

*I looked to Wendell Berry's poems for some solace at this flickering of a light so bright and this is the page that opened. It seems a fit.*

*A man is walking in a field  
and everywhere at his feet  
in the short grass of April  
the small purple violets  
are in bloom. As the man walks  
the ground drops away,  
the sunlight of day becomes  
a sort of darkness in which  
the lights of the flowers rise  
up around him like  
fireflies or stars in a sort  
of sky through which he walks.*

*Wendell Berry, Sabbaths: 2008 IV*

*Sandy Olson-Loy*

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**Sandy Olson-Loy** - November 14, 2014 at 08:49 AM



“ *He was a true scholar and a gentleman. His quiet intelligence, deep knowledge and tireless work at UMM were well respected.*



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**Deb Economou** - November 13, 2014 at 10:55 PM

SS

“ *Sonnet for Sam*

*I think of you and see a butterfly,  
Rising to a stratospheric lane,  
Above the reach of any human eye  
That strains to glimpse its yellow wing in vain.  
Each metamorphosis you lead the way:  
Through academic brambles, marathons,  
Creating works and knowing what to say  
When others struggle to find paths undrawn.  
That time in Italy when I gave up--  
My bike completely stuck below the hill--  
You coasted back to me and changed my luck,  
With magic wrench, a smile, and force of will.  
Nabokov catalogued the butterfly,  
But you create its path beyond the sky.*

*Sharon Schuman, November 11, 2014*

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**Sharon Schuman** - November 13, 2014 at 10:21 PM



“ *I am so sorry to hear about Sam's passing. He was such a kind man and it was a honor to work in the Chancellor's Office while he was there. I will never forget joining him and Nancy for Thanksgiving dinner my freshman year. It was such a touching gesture and it meant a lot to me. I remember him refurbishing bikes for students and I thought it was such a cool thing to do. He just exuded such generosity, sincerity, and brilliance. He will be sorely missed but never forgotten by the many lives he has touched.*

*Ashley Lostetter (Sorenson) '07*

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**Ashley Lostetter** - November 13, 2014 at 09:56 PM

TM

“ HE HATH BORNE HIMSELF BEYOND  
THE PROMISE OF HIS AGE,  
DOING IN THE FIGURE OF A LAMB  
THE FEATS OF A LION.

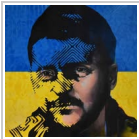
*Much Ado 1:1*

*We extend our deepest sympathy to Nancy and family.*

*Ted and Judith Underwood (UMM)  
Fremont, California*

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**Ted Underwood, colleague U of MN Morri** - November 13, 2014 at 09:14 PM



“ *My condolences. It was an honor to share the  
stage with this man in Twelfth Night.*



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**Alex Hatheway** - November 13, 2014 at 09:03 PM

MC

“ *I knew Sam at Guilford. My deepest sympathies for your loss.*  
*Mike Barker, '84*

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**Mike Barker, Guilford College** - November 13, 2014 at 07:36 PM

CS

“ Nancy, we are all so sad to learn of Sam's passing. We know he has struggled this past year, but we are glad he was able to do many of the things he wanted to do. Those of us who had the privilege of working with Sam at Guilford College are blessed to have been in his presence and to share in a life well lived. He was a most unusual person in all the right ways, and I know that liberal arts education in this country is strengthened by his involvement with it. The obituary is a wonderful tribute to Sam, especially well written. We all hold you, Leah, Dan, and the rest of the family in the Light. Thank you for letting all of us share in his life.

*Charlotte Straney*

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**Charlotte Straney** - November 13, 2014 at 02:26 PM



“ He told me to "break a leg" as he shook my hand at graduation. I was so moved - all those students he talked to that day, he took the time to remember me give me a theatrical send off. The photo that was taken by the professional photographer is of me laughing in deep appreciation. I think of him every time I see that photo in my mom's hallway in the corner of my diploma.

*He was a great leader - kind, accessible, wicked smart. A life certainly worth celebrating.*

*Tiffany Roufs - '05*

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**Tiffany Roufs** - November 13, 2014 at 10:57 AM

JK

“ I am so sad to hear of the loss of Dr Schuman, and my heart and prayers are with you, Nancy and your family. Sam was a wonderful person who will definitely be missed. Thanks for the memories, Sam! God bless you all.

*Jane and Ron Kill*

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**Jane and Ron Kill** - November 13, 2014 at 10:57 AM

DS

“ One of my most fond memories is of the long walks we would take from Mt. Vernon to Lisbon when we lived in Iowa. I learned so much from and about him on those walks. My dad was an amazing thinker and teacher.

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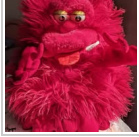
**Dan Schuman** - November 13, 2014 at 10:52 AM

B'

“ Sam was a wonderful man and I enjoyed working with him as the Alumni President. UMM was very fortunate to have him and we are all sad to hear about his passing. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Schuman family.

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**Blaine Hill, Class of '87** - November 13, 2014 at 10:06 AM



“ *Sad news to wake up with. Sam was Chancellor for most of my time at UMM. But I first met him when he was a Dean and teaching my freshman Tech and Form in Poetry class. He was a great teacher and made this early morning class much easier to attend. During that quarter he was named interim Chancellor. I remember him telling a story about someone, one of his kids, I think, traveling in Russia. This person had arrived in Leningrad and departed from Saint Petersburg, much as we had started the class with a Dean and ended with a Chancellor. Over the next 4 years, he was a great leader for a University going through a lot of changes, quarters to semesters and Division II to Division III, not to mention the countless petty weekly scandal or crisis that gripped a small, liberal arts community. He was always thoughtful and engaged. Chancellor Sam was what made University of Minnesota, Morris different. I was just a freshman in the one class he taught in addition to his administrative duties, but he knew me. Whenever he'd pass me on his bike, always wearing a helmet, or we'd cross paths at the RFC, where we both liked to swim, and he was always wearing a much better swimsuit than me, he would greet me, "Urness!" Might just be a passing greeting or the start of a conversation, but it always brightened my day. Thank you to his family for sharing him with me at with all the other students he affected in his long career.*

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**Michael Urness** - November 13, 2014 at 09:42 AM

JH

“ We remember Sam with fondness from his time at Guilford College. He was an important part of the Guilford community and brought wise leadership as Academic Vice President. Our thoughts are with the Schuman family.

*Judith and Cyril Harvey  
Retired faculty and staff  
Geology Department  
Friends Center*

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**Judith Harvey** - November 13, 2014 at 09:38 AM

TB

“ All who knew Sam will recall him for his intellectual depth and for his eloquence that was of a rare order. But to me his most memorable qualities of all were his absolute integrity and his unfailing concern for others.

*- Tom Byers, Special Assistant to Sam during his Chancellorship at UNC-Asheville*

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**Tom Byers** - November 13, 2014 at 09:31 AM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Dr. Samuel Schuman.



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November 13, 2014 at 07:06 AM

TF

“ We are deeply sorry for your loss. We never met a man who lived life to the fullest like Sam. From family, to friends, to fitness, to academics, he held nothing back.

*Love, The Haddon-Cook family*

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**The Haddon-Cook family** - November 13, 2014 at 07:02 AM

AC

“ I distinctly remember my senior year of high school being invited to a dinner at the U of M President's mansion with Dr. Schuman and a few other prospective students. I was still on the fence about my college choice at the time and it was this night that sealed my decision and changed my life for the better. I don't remember anything specific that he said, but I do remember the care and attention he gave to every student in attendance and thinking it must be pretty special if the head of a college campus was this dedicated to making every student feel valued.

*Rest in peace, Dr. Schuman. My thoughts and prayers are with your family and loved ones, of which there were many.*

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**Alex Carlson** - November 13, 2014 at 04:54 AM



“ I first met Sam during an NCHC meeting in about 2004. He struck me as someone who knew almost everyone in Honors, and who humbly and quietly spent time “investing” in others. I was privileged to interact w/ Sam when he attended 3 CCCU Honors workshops, shared in our Spirituality and Honors, and Sustainability and Honors, sessions at successive NCHC meetings in 2011-13. My favorite memory of Sam was when he visited ORU in Oct. 2007. I can honestly say that I’ve never met a more gentle, humble, scholarly, and encouraging person. As I’ve often openly shared in public and w/ him in private, I considered him my “Brother in the Lord”. I, like many others, am deeply sadden because I’m going to miss his sincere, smiling face. Yet, I rejoice that I am privileged to have been profoundly impacted by him. Thanks Sam! Shalom to Nancy, family and friends. John Korstad (Prof. of Biology & Honors Pgm Dir., Oral Roberts Univ., Tulsa, OK)

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**John Korstad** - November 12, 2014 at 11:28 PM

AD

“ I was very lucky to get to know Sam during my senior year at UMM, as I was preparing to persue my Masters degree in Russian Literature in London. He was so encouraging of my academic ambitions, and I now know that his interest in my studies kept me going when I was far away from home. After I completed my degree, he invited me out to Morris to discuss his ideas for expanded international programs at UMM, and was a guide to me as I considered a career in international education - one I am proud to have today, at a small liberal arts college like UMM. Sam was a kind and encouraging mentor, and a kindred spirit. I was lucky to know him, just a little.

Sam and I loved to talk Nabokov as I pursued my Masters degree, so the first few lines of "Pale Fire" seem an appropriate farewell.

*I was the shadow of the waxwing slain  
By the false azure of the windowpane;  
I was the smudge of ashen fluff - and I  
Lived on, flew on, in the reflected sky.*

Warm wishes to Sam's wife, children and all his family and friends as you remember him.

Andrea Dvorak

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Andrea Dvorak - November 12, 2014 at 10:39 PM

KL

“ One of my favorite memories of Sam was when I was a resident advisor at UMM and he dehydrated fruit with my floor (I think he was chancellor at the time). I really appreciated his willingness to engage with students. I was sad when we only overlapped for such a short time upon my return to UMM as a faculty member. Miss you, Sam!

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KK Lamberty - November 12, 2014 at 10:11 PM



“ *Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Dr. Samuel Schuman.*

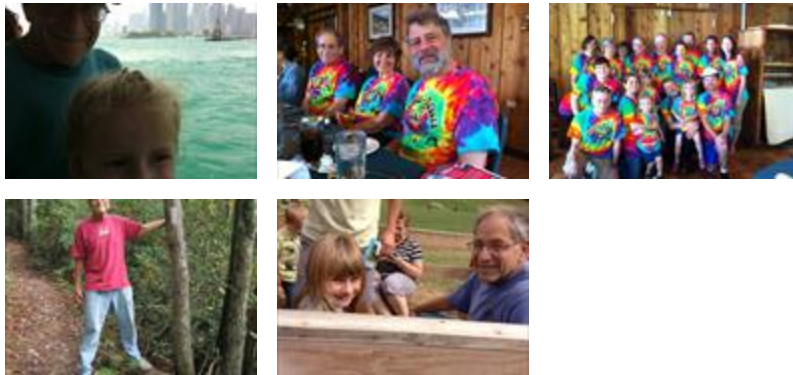


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November 12, 2014 at 06:09 PM



“ *9 files added to the album Pictures of Sam*



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**Leah Schuman** - November 12, 2014 at 05:07 PM



“ *One of my favorite memories is doing "airplane rides" when Dan and I were little. My Dad would lay on his back on the floor with feet in the air, and we would balance on his feet, arms out-stretched. He would make this odd multiphonic whistle/hum sound for the engine noise. I've never heard anyone else make quite that sound in my whole life. He would tickle us, and I can remember rolling around on our green shag carpet (this was circa 1973, after all) and laughing uncontrollably.*

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**Leah Schuman** - November 12, 2014 at 04:47 PM