



## Jeffrey Frank Falkner

June 29, 1972 - January 23, 2024

Jeffrey "Jeff" Frank Falkner

Jeff passed away peacefully encircled by his loving wife Julie, family, and friends on January 23, 2024. He lived courageously for 18 months with an extremely rare form of cancer, EHE (Epitheloid hemangioendethelioma).

Jeff was raised in Fridley, Minnesota, the second son of James and Barbara Falkner (Miller). As a young man, Jeff played sports during every season: football, basketball, and especially baseball. At Fridley High School he lettered in baseball, both as a pitcher and at various other positions on the field and at the plate. A dedicated baseball fan, along with his best friend Rick Taylor, he worked at the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome. Throughout his life he regularly attended both Minnesota Twins and St. Paul Saints games. Later, Jeff loved attending his nephews' (Hayden and Beck) baseball games and tournaments and encouraged their development as players.

A born scholar and lifelong learner, Jeff was committed to his personal and intellectual development by reading widely and voraciously. Attending the University of Minnesota, he earned stellar GPAs for a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science in 1994 and a Masters of Education in 1997. Later, he received a Masters of Industrial and Labor Relations from Cornell University. His love of educational training was exemplified professionally for nearly

twenty years at Bremer Bank as Senior Training and Organizational Effectiveness Consultant. He was proud of the philanthropic mission of the Otto Bremer Foundation, and its charitable contribution to communities where Bremer branches are located and convinced family and friends to open a bank account.

Even before his diagnosis, he studied the science of happiness. During the past year and a half, he consumed all available EHE research and potential treatments. Jeff's generous donations of pleural fluid and tumor tissue to the EHE biobank will advance research for years to come.

Art, literature, culture, cinema, and especially music was central to Jeff's intellectual curiosity. His passion for visiting art galleries, attending film screenings and music shows began with friends as a teen when he regularly watched independent, art house and foreign cinema. In later years, after the demise of repertory cinema, Jeff, a stickler for quality film, was an evangelist for the Criterion Collection (the presenter of "classic and contemporary films" for home viewing).

Music was an enduring part of Jeff's life: from folk to country or punk, post-punk to jazz, blues, classical and bluegrass. He attended shows by eclectic artists such as the Meat Puppets, Fugazi, My Bloody Valentine, Sigur Ros, Richard Thompson, Bonnie 'Prince' Billy, and Gordon Lightfoot. Moreover, he was an open-minded enough listener to argue for the critical re-evaluation of the most odious music, e.g. the early music of Barry Manilow. Since learning of his potentially shortened life, he made efforts to attend as many shows as possible. In 2023 the most meaningful artists he enjoyed in person were Wyess Blood and Natalie Merchant (his favorite female artists).

Jeff was also a talented musician. In grade school he followed in his brother Jim's footsteps playing violin. At sixteen, he found his instrument: the guitar. At

his friend Rick Taylor's apartment, he borrowed Rick's mom Kay's Spanish nylon string guitar. In a matter of weeks, he became so skilled she gifted him the instrument. He would later purchase a Gibson Les Paul. He also loved singing. For Julie and the audience on his wedding night, he sang and played guitar with the band on Steve Earle's "Feel Alright" at the Landmark Center in December of 2010.

Travel and nature were his passions. His love of escaping the Twin Cities and into nature and on the lake began as a kid when his dad purchased their cabin in Birchwood, Wisconsin. On weekends or vacations his family would enjoy the bucolic bounty of fishing, hiking, and, of course, playing sports. On winter break during his university days, Jeff travelled to both Florida and Arizona. After his marriage to Julie, his travel adventures hit full stride with regular visits to his in-law's family in South Dakota as well as visiting numerous continental and international destinations. He and Julie also visited Jeff's paternal grandfather's family, the Falkner clan in Austria. He and Julie loved Portugal and prior to his diagnosis of EHE, he studied Portuguese with a notion of potentially retiring there.

Despite Jeff's wanderlust, he loved home: St. Paul and the splendor of the Cherokee Regional Park area of his West Side neighborhood and the panoramic view of the city. At home, Jeff was a faithful friend and companion to his pets: Amelie and Sugar. Jeff had a love of furry friends that began as a small child in his paternal grandparents' barn and woodshed where he petted the farm's mousers to his mom's chagrin. Pets provided an outlet for the loving nature of Jeff, and the goofy and playful part of his personality.

In the last months of his life, Jeff would tell everyone that he was thankful. To quote Jeff, he "lived a good full life in 50 years." And he would tell everyone the many things that he was thankful for. First, Julie, his wife and partner who

was by his side lovingly during the best and the worst times. And he would tell you about Michelle and her husband Dan, who had assisted her sister Julie during Jeff's illness and had been a great sister-in-law and "always good guy" during his entire marriage. And Rick Taylor, he was thankful for such a great friend. And his mom and dad, who had provided the childhood that shaped him into the man he became. And his older brother Jim, who had instilled his love of baseball and to excel academically. And his younger brother Matt who he had proudly doted on as a child and had the most optimistic expectations for. Also his two cousins, Sherm and Mike Wick, who were like brothers to him and their mother Rita's comforting memories shared during his final days in the hospital. Jeff told Julie's mother that he thought his mother would be thankful for how Julie was taking care of him and fighting for him.

Jeff was thankful. Thankful for so much more, and he would gladly tell you.

For everyone who knew Jeff, his death is a major loss: from the nurses at Fairview University Medical Center who enjoyed the calming music he played on his phone, to those of us who have known him for all the major events of our lives. Jeff was there with his calm demeanor, optimism, and sense of humor.

Jeff was preceded in death by his mother, Barbara (Miller) Falkner and father, James W. Falkner.

He is survived by his loving wife Julie Pearson-Falkner, his brothers Jimmy Falkner and Matt Falkner (and wife Xueping Chen), niece Audry Falkner, God daughter Amelja Sorg Taylor, nephews Hayden and Beck Leighty and Anthony Chen, his aunt Rita Wick, and cousins Michael Wick, Sherman Wick (and wife Holly Day), Aimee Stanton, Brian Wick, Karen Scott and many more Wisconsin and Austrian cousins.

Memorials in Jeff's name can be sent to the following organizations:

The Negative Space <https://thenegativespace.charityproud.org/Donate>

Camp Courage MDA Camp (specify camp scholarships in Jeff's name)  
<https://mda.donordrive.com/campaign/Jeff-Falkner-Memorial-Camp-Courage-Scholarship-Fund>

EHE Foundation <https://fightehe.org/>

The visitation will be held on Friday, February 2 from 3 to 5pm at Macalester Plymouth United Church. A celebration of life will follow at 5:30 pm at Macalester College Weyerhaeuser Memorial Chapel.

Burial will be Saturday February 3, at Acacia Park Cemetery in Mendota Heights.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

FEB 2. 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM (CT)

Macalester Plymouth United Church  
1658 Lincoln Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55105

## Memorial Gathering

FEB 2. 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM (CT)

Macalester College Weyerhaeuser Memorial Chapel  
62 S Macalester St.  
Saint Paul, MN 55105

# Tribute Wall

JI

“ Jeff, you shall always remain the best friend and brother I could ever imagine. I miss you every day and always will...

-----  
**Jimmy** - February 29, 2024 at 06:25 PM

KV

“ Kari V. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Jeffrey Frank Falkner.

-----  
**Kari V.** - January 31, 2024 at 06:55 PM

LD

“ Love, Pam Joel & Bruce D'Angelo planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Jeffrey Frank Falkner.

-----  
**Love, Pam Joel & Bruce D'Angelo** - January 31, 2024 at 03:37 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Jeffrey Frank Falkner.



-----  
January 31, 2024 at 03:37 PM

JE

“ Jeannie and Matthew Entenza planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Jeffrey Frank Falkner.

-----  
**Jeannie and Matthew Entenza** - January 31, 2024 at 02:47 PM



“ *Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Jeffrey Frank Falkner.*



January 31, 2024 at 02:47 PM



“ *We got to spend Thanksgiving 2021 with Julie, Jeff and Jeff's Dad. Jeff was very happy we didn't have a dog that barked. Maggie and Sugar got along well. We were able to spend a weekend in July 2023 with Jeff and Julie and see a Saints game. Jeff always taught me something in every conversation!*



**Katrina Ramos** - January 31, 2024 at 02:36 PM



“ *1 file added to the album Jeff*



**Tom Moehn** - January 31, 2024 at 10:33 AM



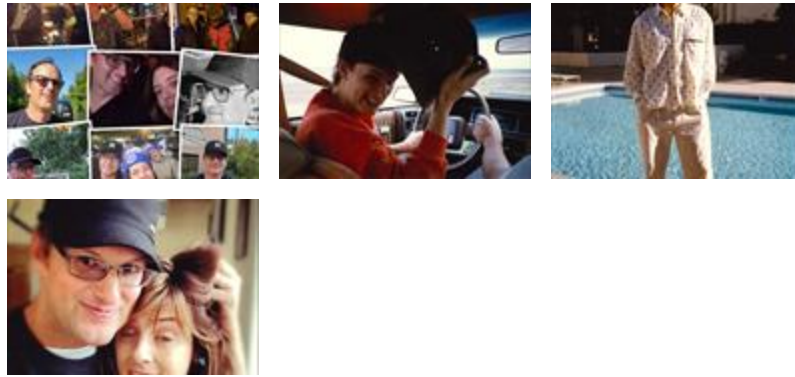
“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Jeffrey Frank Falkner.*



January 30, 2024 at 06:57 PM



“ *4 files added to the album Jeff*



Noah Cure-Hendrickson - January 30, 2024 at 12:29 PM



“ *Teresa Biss lit a candle in memory of Jeffrey Frank Falkner*



Teresa Biss - January 30, 2024 at 11:43 AM



*We shall forever hold you in our hearts, Julie, and smile with beautiful memories when we think of and talk about Jeff. The team at Bremer has been blessed by the gift of working with him.*

Teresa Biss - January 30, 2024 at 11:45 AM

JF

“ 7 files added to the album *Bremer colleagues*



**Julie Pearson Falkner** - January 30, 2024 at 08:56 AM

KB

“ *Karla Brown From Bremer Bank lit a candle in memory of Jeffrey Frank Falkner*



**Karla Brown from Bremer Bank** - January 29, 2024 at 10:49 AM



“ *Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Jeffrey Frank Falkner.*



January 29, 2024 at 09:26 AM