



## Joseph James Thibedeau

July 22, 1929 - February 27, 2019

Traverse City – Joseph “Joe” J. Thibedeau passed away peacefully on Wednesday, February 27, 2019 in the loving care of his family.

Born July 22, 1929 to the late Joseph E. and Minnie (Green) Thibedeau in Newberry, Michigan, he was a kind and gentle person who loved everybody and put his heart and soul into everything he did or said. He liked to be active and was full of fun with a great sense of humor. He thoroughly enjoyed the four children from his marriage to his high school sweetheart, Doris Jean Oosting in 1949 at Alma, Michigan, followed by eight grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren all who were equally loved and shared his time and energy.

After graduating from Alma College in 1951 he went on to his career of teaching high school math and coaching football, basketball, and baseball in Vicksburg, Michigan for two years, Alma high school and Traverse City Central high school for a total of over forty years, retiring in 1993. Always a dedicated teacher and loyal coach, his students were his pride and joy. During his career he humbly received many honors and awards always with the feeling it was too much for him.

Other than academics, he was an avid trout fisherman with an annual trip or two to the U.P. with friends and family. He did not miss opening of baseball season, World Series, spring basketball tournaments, Super Bowl, Oleson’s Island, Camp Greilick and all activities while being active with Scenic Trails Council, Boy Scouts of America. Gardening was a passion along with trips to California by tent, pop-up camper, travel trailer and motels combined with a good game of cribbage whenever possible.

Surviving are his wife, Doris, of sixty-nine years; sons Joseph A. (Jane) Thibedeau, Martinez, California, and Donald R. Thibedeau, San Diego, California; daughters Marjorie A. (Mark) Gatzke, Traverse City, and Linda M. (Ken) Schopieray, Interlochen, sister Peg (Robert) Potoczak, Newberry, Michigan; grandchildren Trisha, Cheney, Heidi, Joseph R., Jenna, Wendy, Julie and Andrew; great-grandchildren Tyler, Lane, Anthony, Christopher,

Sylvanus, Scarlet, Emby, Kaylee and Joseph J.

Preceded in death by his sisters Eunice (Larry) Korcal, Nancy (David) Quick, and brother Robert Thibedeau.

Visitation will be at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 30, followed by a Memorial Service at 12:00 noon, Central United Methodist Church.

The family asks that memorial contributions be directed to; Boy Scouts Of America, Scenic Trails District; 1499 Business Park Drive, Traverse City, MI 49686, Hospice of Michigan, 10850 E Traverse Hwy #1155, Traverse City, MI 49684, or the charity of your choice.

# Events

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**MAR** **Visitation** 11:00AM - 12:00PM

**30**

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Central United Methodist Church  
222 Cass Street, Traverse City, MI, US

**MAR** **Memorial Service** 12:00PM

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Central United Methodist Church  
222 Cass Street, Traverse City, MI, US

# Comments

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“ My sincere condolences to the Thibedeau family. Like Mr. Thibedeau, I grew up in Newberry. When my wife and I were student teaching in Traverse City, he and his wife had us out for dinner and made us feel right at home. I will always remember that.

**David Sleeper** - April 18, 2019 at 06:37 AM

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“ Thinking of all of you as you commit to memory the joys you have shared with your beloved husband, father, and grandfather. May God bless each of you.

The Family of Tom Shrader

**Barb Shrader** - March 29, 2019 at 09:41 AM

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“ Knew Joe Thib as an alum of Troop 36. So many great memories! He had a positive impact on all that got to be in his presence, and I was glad I got to be one of them. He will be missed. Rest in peace big Joe!!

**Jim Allen** - March 17, 2019 at 12:52 PM

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“ Mr. T. was one of my favorite math teachers, very patient, and smart. Thanks for the memories. Marnie Lane



**Marnie Knapp Lane** - March 16, 2019 at 09:43 AM

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“ Enjoyed many casual strolls thru Camp Greilick with Joe while visiting troops during summer camp. Many cherished memories.

**Herb Morris** - March 15, 2019 at 09:24 AM

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“ I was Water Front director at Camp Greilick in 1982, Joe was on camp staff also; he was a quiet force, a great leader, lead always by example. He added greatly to my Scouting experience. A truly remarkable person.

**Brian Granger** - March 14, 2019 at 05:43 PM

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“ My first experience with Joe was in the early and late 80's, keep in mind I'm only 27, at an TLT and adult leader training. Joe was a great mentor as a youth and adult to me. Over the years we became friends and spoke often at events for long periods. I will miss you my tall friend and your words of wisdom to me, along working with you at events. May you have peace and happiness now and continue the journey you set the example for for many of us. John Jordan

**John Jordan** - March 14, 2019 at 09:32 AM

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“ Always a warm smile. Very knowledgeable and personal. A gentle giant.

Former Scout Executive, Tom Stoeber

**Thomas Charles Stoeber** - March 14, 2019 at 09:13 AM

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“ Mr. T was camp Commissioner at Camp Greilick one of my first years as Scoutmaster. His encouragement helped me gain confidence as a scout leader and his relaxed and confident style was just what I needed! Because of his example, I was willing to try to be a commissioner and make a difference for someone just like he did for me!

Dave Ski

**David Sliwinski** - March 14, 2019 at 08:44 AM

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“ Rest In Peace Mr. T. Thank you for your service to many of us whom you taught math. For me it was Calc. You even let me arrive to class late so I could work a job in the mornings. Your guidance and kindness will not be forgotten.

**Tim Ewing** - March 14, 2019 at 05:14 AM

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“ Mr. Thibedeau was a favorite teacher of mine, as he was of many. He was kind and polite, a true gentleman. I have great memories of his patience teaching Algebra to a classroom of young people, forever positive in his guidance.  
I was at a Math Conference in the U.P. during my teaching career, when I ran into Mr. Thibedeau in one of the sessions. He remembered my name, and was pleased I had gone into the field of Education, as he and my father had. It was such a delight to see him, and be able to talk “shop” for a bit.  
He will be greatly missed by so many.

**Mary Dame** - March 09, 2019 at 01:38 PM

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“ Mr. Thibedeau was one of my favorite teachers, taking the time for one on one instruction and patiently explaining. He was the major influence in directing me into a career in Information Technology, a budding industry at the time. A wonderful man that I am most grateful to have learned from. - Mike Reed, Class of '75.

**Mike Reed** - March 08, 2019 at 11:09 PM

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“ Mr. Thibedeau was one of my favorite teachers! He will be missed...Rest in Peace, Mr. T.

**Andy G** - March 08, 2019 at 06:57 PM

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“ Sending lots of love from the class of 1990!

**nikie** - March 08, 2019 at 08:15 AM

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“ RIP Mr. T. You were one of the best men I ever met. My Scoutmaster and a generally all around nice guy. My condolences to the family.

**Larry Hamilton** - March 06, 2019 at 10:56 AM

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“ Mr. Thibedeau was such a great guy ! He treated me so patiently and kindly even though there were times I did not deserve it! That is true of all of the adult scout leaders there during my time as a scout- I have to believe the Mr. Thibedeau was a huge influence at that time and - I am glad the good Lord has allowed me to value now what I was simply too immature to appreciate then. The time and care Mr.

Thibedeau put into troop 36 was a Godsend and he planted seeds of honor, integrity, and community involvement that I know have produced good fruits not only in myself but many, many others fortunate enough to spend time with him. He just had that “ I believe in you “ look on his face..what a gift!!

I will never forget the time Mr. Thibedeau I spent together in the scouts' gear room in the basement of CUMC; he saw that I really liked that room, and the gear, and taught me a lot about what each item was and how to care for it (anyone else remember the smell of that room?- smoky canvas !). I know he had something to do with my appointment as quartermaster- that really meant the world to me- I couldn't get over that there was actually a quartermaster badge and boy was I ever proud to get that (still am)-I know I thanked him then, but if you'll allow me: thank you sir!

I had a great time back then in the fellowship hall, and in the woods; I'm even pretty confident Mr. Thibedeau made sure I even learned a few things; I was blessed beyond measure; that's certain- Mr. Thibedeau was a fantastic part of that time and I thank God for him.

“Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.” 1 John 4:11,12

Thanks for sharing the love Mr. Thibedeau.

Darrell Bell

**Darrell Bell** - March 05, 2019 at 04:34 PM

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“ I first met Joe through the Methodist church in Traverse City and we became friends working with the Boy Scout troop sponsored by the church. Anyone that knew Joe knew his love of and devotion to the scouting organization. He was a master at holding the boys attention when passing on a bit of his knowledge and experience. I will forever be indebted to him for his scouting leadership with my two youngest sons, he made a huge difference in their lives! We will miss his smile and quite demeanor. God Bless you Joe! Jim Lovinggood family.

**James Lovinggood** - March 04, 2019 at 08:48 PM

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“ Very sorry to hear about your loss, we have a lot of great memories with Uncle Joe. Mike and Diana Korcal, David and Layna Korcal

**Michael Korcal** - March 03, 2019 at 08:59 PM

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“ Prayers and good thoughts for the family

**Kathie Skwierc** - March 02, 2019 at 06:34 AM

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“ Our thoughts and prayers are with Doris and their family in the passing of dear Joe. The world has been a better place and we enriched by having known and shared his sweet spirit. God rest him, and may the Comforter be with you in the loss of one so dear. Elsie & Don Randall

**Elsie Randall** - March 01, 2019 at 07:30 PM

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“ Condolences from the class of 1971. Many of had the pleasure of having him for a teacher with many lasting memories.

**Ann Gassman Silny** - February 28, 2019 at 11:35 PM

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“ Mr. Thibedeau was my most influential teacher in high school. He always believed in the greater good of his students, and we (I) tried to live up to his vision of us. I can't wait to see him in heaven! Condolences to his family.

**Debra Tanis Hobson** - February 28, 2019 at 10:04 PM

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“ Mr. Thibodeau was a tremendous math teacher and always willing to give extra help to those who needed it. Rest in Peace Mr. T,

**Margaret Haddix** - February 28, 2019 at 08:10 PM

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“ Mr. T was our Scout leader at Troop 36. He was a great leader and mentor. He was a fantastic person.

**David Barr** - February 28, 2019 at 07:54 PM

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“ Mr. Thibedaux was my honors advanced algebra teacher. He was a wonderful teacher and an even better person. He taught in my dad's department, but at the high school with mother and I know they too had much respect for him. Wishing his family and friends comfort and strength and sending prayers.

**Liz Larson-Shidler** - February 28, 2019 at 07:33 PM

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“ My brother speaks so highly of Joe, he was in Scouts with him, and was a mentor in a time, when fathers aren't always available for young boys. Thank you, my brother grew up into a loving, caring, human being, beyond kindness, and a family man with a successful business. If he hadn't had Joe in his life, I'm sure the outcome could have been different. The foundation he gave him, I'm sure made an impact. Weather it be Scouts, or Joe as a person, my brother got a true gem when Joe came into his and our life. Such a tribute to Scouts and Joe. Thank you, from his little sister (who is now 60).

**Jill McCumby** - February 28, 2019 at 03:52 PM