



# Thomas Jay Novara

December 19, 1979 - January 21, 2025

IN MEMORY OF:

Thomas Jay Novara

Serving Location:

CRAIN FUNERAL HOME – MURPHYSBORO

1421 Walnut Street, Murphysboro, Illinois

Thomas Jay Novara, Age 45, of Murphysboro, passed away on Tuesday, January 21, 2025 at his residence.

He was born on December 19, 1979 to Eugene Zachary and Jeri Lynn (Congiardo) Novara in Carbondale, Illinois.

Thomas was a gifted musician having received many awards and college scholarships to Illinois Wesleyan for his undergraduate and then attended and graduated from Southern Illinois University where he was (ABR). He was a composer and teacher, and played most instruments. Thomas was a multi-instrumentalist, a keyboardist for several bands, and was a piano tuner and technician in the quad state area. Thomas was also a clock repairman and was a avid card player, especially Bridge.

Along with his parents, survivors include his aunts, uncles, cousins, and many close friends.

He is preceded in death by his grandparents, Tommy and Carol Congiardo and Leonard and Leita Novara; and uncle, Thomas Dean Congiardo, for whom he was named.

Funeral Mass will be held on Monday, January 27, 2025 at 10:00 AM at St. Andrew Catholic Church in Murphysboro with Father Joel Seipp officiating. Visitation will be held on Sunday, January 26, 2025 from 5:00 PM until 8:00 PM at Crain Funeral Home in Murphysboro and the day of mass from 9:00 AM until the time of service at the church.

Interment will follow the service at Pleasant Grove Memorial Park.

In lieu of flowers please donate to your favorite charity in memory of Tom.

Crain Funeral Home in Murphysboro is in charge of arrangements.

# Cemetery Details

## Pleasant Grove Memorial Park

31 Memorial Dr.  
Murphysboro, IL 62966  
(618) 687-1145  
crain@crainsonline.com

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN **26**. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Crain Funeral Home - Downtown Murphysboro  
1421 Walnut St  
Murphysboro, IL 62966  
(618) 684-2131

## Visitation

JAN **27**. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Andrew Catholic Church  
724 Mulberry St.  
Murphysboro, IL

## Funeral Mass

JAN 27. 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM (CT)

St. Andrew Catholic Church  
724 Mulberry St.  
Murphysboro, IL

## Interment

JAN 27. 11:15 AM - 11:45 AM (CT)

Pleasant Grove Memorial Park  
31 Memorial Dr.  
Murphysboro, IL 62966  
(618) 687-1145  
[crain@crainsonline.com](mailto:crain@crainsonline.com)

# Tribute Wall

JY

“ I never actually got to meet Tom, but we had been friends for over 10 years. Similar interests and passions led to us meeting on line and we always stayed in touch. Every now and then we wouldn't talk for a month or so and I would think " I wonder what Tom is up to...?" Today I had that thought and I am absolutely heart broken to learn that he passed, and it was almost 5 months ago. Tom, I'm so sorry. I'll keep my clocks oiled and I promise I'll learn bridge. I'll keep a bottle of French's mustard in the car..... just in case.

Jason young - May 17, 2025 at 07:51 PM

JR

“ I am so sorry to hear that Tom has passed away. He was such a kind person, and a brilliant musician. I am happy to have known him, and will miss his good humor.

John Rinaldi - February 11, 2025 at 06:28 PM

MN

“ Tom was such a kind, funny, and truly gifted soul, and a snazzy dresser. I feel that I would be remiss if I failed to mention this last bit. Please accept my condolences and prayers.



Marva Nelson - February 09, 2025 at 09:50 AM

DF

“ I'm so saddened by this news. May God bless Jerry and family as they heal from this loss. Tom was such a gifted soul.

Deborah (Holt) Frey - January 27, 2025 at 12:11 PM

MD

“ From our family to yours, we are so sorry for your loss. It was a pleasure watching Tom play the organ and piano on his videos. He had such passion and dedication. Our children enjoy watching Tom play, and we will continue to playing his videos for them. Your family with be in our prayers.

*The Parrent Family  
Michael, Mary, Ava & Theodore*

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**Mary D'Anna-Parrent** - January 26, 2025 at 05:13 PM

LB

“ It did not seem possible that Tom would spend his Tuesday afternoons with a bunch of bridge playing senior citizens, but his charm and enthusiasm were so wonderfully refreshing. He was so very smart and eager to learn he captured all our hearts. I think I can speak for all the Saluki Bridge Club player to say he will be very, very missed.

*Linda Brandon*

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**Linda Brandon** - January 26, 2025 at 05:10 PM

MD

“ From our family to yours, we are so sorry for your loss. It was a pleasure watching Tom play the piano and organ on his online videos. What great talent and dedication! He put a lot of hard work into his music, and it was beautiful watching him put so much passion into his work. We donated to WDBX Community Radio for Southern Illinois in Tom's honor. We will continue sharing Tom's videos with our children. They really enjoy watching them. Your family will be in our prayers.

*The Parrent Family  
Mary, Michael, Ava & Theodore*

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**Mary D'Anna-Parrent** - January 26, 2025 at 05:06 PM

SW

“ Words cannot express how deeply Tom will be missed. He touched so many lives and shared his musical knowledge and gifts with everyone. I will never forget playing duets with him, and asking him at all hours about which pianos to choose for students. He donated countless hours to helping future pianists find great instruments to learn on. Then he helped move them (so easily and happily), and cared for them with such joy.

*I'm not the only one that describes him as a genius. He was a treasure and a great friend.*

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**Stephanie Wooley** - January 26, 2025 at 10:11 AM

VD

“ Such a heart-breaking loss. There's no way to make sense of it or find words to soothe his parents and others in his circle of family and friends. A too short life, but spent so richly, following a passion he discovered early for music, and then sharing his immense talent with everyone who heard him play piano and organ. I didn't travel down from Chicago many times, but I remember one visit many years ago where we stopped at his parents' home and listened to him explain how he was restoring an antique organ. I was struck by his excitement and amazed at the complexity of this undertaking by such a young man. The beautiful recordings he's left behind extend his ability to move and inspire us, even beyond his death.

*Val D'Anna*

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**Val D'Anna** - January 26, 2025 at 08:33 AM

JW

“ Tom was amongst my closest friends for many years. He had a peerless charm, and was a brilliantly expressive pianist. So very unique an individual. I will miss him forever. My deepest sympathies to you, Gene and Jeri.

Jen Wingard - January 25, 2025 at 06:42 PM

AT

“ Always such a nice guy. His talent was over the top even in elementary school. I'm tremendously sorry to hear of his passing.

April Heern Twenhafel - January 25, 2025 at 06:16 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Thomas Jay Novara.



January 25, 2025 at 04:21 PM



“ My deepest condolences, love, sympathy, and prayers of peace go to your family. You will be very missed several days later I am still waking up thinking this is really just a nightmare. I'm not waking from. It was nice to be acquainted with you for all the years that I knew you and I look forward to seeing you on the other side in the most glorious angelic choir of musicians and instruments beyond any human comprehension in that perfect place called heaven. Rest in peace you are very loved and missed.



Roger Craft - January 25, 2025 at 03:38 PM

DO

“ I am so sorry for your loss. Tom was such a special person. I will miss his funny Facebook posts and listening to him play the piano. He has left us many wonderful memories.

Donella Odum - January 25, 2025 at 02:20 PM



“ Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Thomas Jay Novara.



January 25, 2025 at 12:34 PM

TF

“ The Don and Berlyn Coffey Families purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Thomas Jay Novara.



The Don and Berlyn Coffey Families - January 25, 2025 at 12:29 PM

AH

“ So very sorry to hear this he was such a special person, i remember him coming to moms house as a little boy with his dad, i think he played an instrument for her one time, prayers for you both and hugs

Anita Harris - January 25, 2025 at 11:42 AM

SN

“ *Jeri and Gene, my heart aches for you both, my deepest condolences. Tom was a very special young man. So much talent, I loved listening to him play the piano and organ. So witty, smart, and a friend.*  
*He will be missed by many. Love and prayers for you both and family. RIP Tom*

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**Suzie Naegele** - January 24, 2025 at 11:47 PM

FD

“ *Sorry for your loss*

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**Frank D'Anna** - January 24, 2025 at 10:38 PM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Thomas Jay Novara.*



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January 24, 2025 at 09:13 PM

MK

“ I met Tom when he first worked at the Baldwin store. I am a pianist of 70 years, and was amazed to learn of his musical talents as I grew to know him. Our friendship began with a stray kitten who moved into the store, and we named him "Baldwin". We had a great time playing with him as I shopped for piano and organ music and took guitar lessons. As time passed, I attended many of Tom's concerts and had him tune my piano. I heard him play every instrument he touched! He was truly a musical genius as well as a most entertaining Facebook friend. I already miss him  
( and his beautiful new cat) beyond belief! My deepest sympathy to all his family and friends  
May peace be with all of us. With love,

Mary K. Kucharik

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Mary Kucharik - January 24, 2025 at 08:55 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Thomas Jay Novara.



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January 24, 2025 at 08:32 PM