



## Matthew Paul Henkel

February 18, 1979 - May 19, 2021

Matt Henkel, 42, of Byron, formerly of Sublette and Amboy died on May 19, 2021, with his family by his side. Matt fought a courageous 13-year battle with brain cancer and spent his last few months participating in a clinical trial in hope of advancing the cause of conquering GBM. Matt fought this battle with an unbelievable amount of love and support from family, friends, co-workers, and the community.

Matt was born in Mendota, IL, on February 18, 1979 to Paul and Susan Henkel. He was raised in Sublette and spent the majority of his life raising his family in Amboy, before moving to Byron. He graduated from Amboy High School in 1997 and from Illinois State University in 2001. In 2002, he married Cammie Cook, his high school sweetheart and wife of nearly 20 years.

Matt's love of golf led him to a career in course management. He started as an intern at the Byron Forest Preserve and was promoted to assistant superintendent, before realizing his dream of becoming superintendent of PrairieView Golf Course in 2010. In 2018, Matt assumed the role of general manager/superintendent before cancer tragically cut his career short. Matt embraced technology in the golf industry and was instrumental in bringing PrairieFire to life. When he could no longer work, it brought him great joy and pride to view the daily usage reports and know that so many people were spending quality time together and enjoying his dream.

Matt was a beloved father, son, uncle, brother, boss and friend to many and will be remembered for his smile, kindhearted nature, and willingness to help

out anyone. Matt was truly humbled by the many acts of kindness and love showered upon him and his family and wanted everyone to know how much he appreciated all that has been done to support his fight over the years. Special thanks to the caregivers at Serenity Hospice for their flexibility, understanding, and compassion. Thank you also to Bridgette Oester and Jones Funeral home, who were instrumental in coordinating the donation of Matt's brain to the NIH Brain Bank at UCLA.

Matt is survived by his wife, Cammie, son Ashton, and daughters Claire and Mara, his parents Paul and Sue Henkel of Sublette, sisters Rachel (Andrew) Tarr of Amboy and Sarah (Ken) Gehant of Compton, grandmothers Patricia Syskowski of Mendota and Betty Henkel of Sublette, many aunts, uncles, and cousins, his in-laws, Les and Deb Cook of Amboy, Jenny and Scott Full of Amboy, and Breann and Brian Welker of Dixon, and 9 nieces and nephews whom he loved dearly. He was preceded in death by his younger sister, Catharine Henkel, grandfathers, Stan Syskowski and Cletus Henkel, and uncle, David Henkel.

At Matt's request, his body will be cremated, and there will be no services. Matt felt fortunate to have been able to spend the past year celebrating his life in large and small ways with his friends and family that he loved so much. Cancer taught Matt many lessons about the value of time, and he would much prefer everyone use the hours that would have been spent attending services to make memories with family, volunteer, or engage in a random act of kindness to brighten someone else's day.

Memorials may be directed to the Matt Henkel fund at First National Bank in Amboy to be used for his children's college education, the Wee One Foundation, or the donor's choice. The omission of flowers is requested.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Matthew Paul Henkel*

October 08, 2023 at 11:30 AM



“ *Matthew Paul Henkel*

December 31, 2022 at 02:40 AM



“ *My condolences and sympathy to the Henkel family and their extended families.*  
*Elizabeth A. Bontz*

**ELizabeth** - May 24, 2021 at 09:59 AM



“ *You have our deepest sympathy & are in our prayers.*  
*Tom & Kim Lauer*



**THOMAS LAUER** - May 22, 2021 at 10:03 AM



“ *Christina Knight lit a candle in memory of Matthew Paul Henkel*



**Christina Knight** - May 21, 2021 at 01:14 AM

EL

“ I feel blessed to have Matt choose to come and visit me in southern CA when he was in and out of treatments. He leaves all of us with such good memories. Prayers for all the family.



Ellen - May 20, 2021 at 09:19 PM

SH

Proud to have known Matt. He will be always remembered.

shaw - May 22, 2021 at 01:31 PM

LE

“ Our deepest sympathy to the family.  
Doug, Lori and Bryce Erbes



Lori Erbes - May 20, 2021 at 08:44 PM

MS

“ MARY SPERANZA lit a candle in memory of  
Matthew Paul Henkel



MARY SPERANZA - May 20, 2021 at 04:41 PM

KB

“ *Karen Blaine lit a candle in memory of Matthew Paul Henkel*



Karen Blaine - May 20, 2021 at 03:16 PM

KC

“ *Kay Cameron lit a candle in memory of Matthew Paul Henkel*



Kay Cameron - May 20, 2021 at 12:17 PM

SF

“ *Sincerely with love Aunt Jane, Uncle Joe, & family purchased the Small Garden Dish for the family of Matthew Paul Henkel.*



Sincerely with love Aunt Jane, Uncle Joe, & family - May 20, 2021 at 10:19 AM

JS

“ *Jane Schmidt lit a candle in memory of Matthew Paul Henkel*



Jane Schmidt - May 20, 2021 at 09:57 AM

DS

“ I have met Matt s Mom before but not Matt personally. This family has been thru so much and their love and devotion is something we should all strive to achieve! Matt sounds like a young man of unbelievable strength that fought the fight and is still helping my the donation of his organ as a study to help solve this disease! My sympathies to the entire family and friends of this outstanding young man. May he live in Gods peace. Diane Shehorn-Schnake

Diane Schnake - May 20, 2021 at 09:28 AM

DM

“ Sincere, heartfelt condolences. Cherish the memories.

Diane Morey - May 20, 2021 at 07:18 AM

SE

“ My condolences to the family. Prayers for all of you.



susan England - May 20, 2021 at 12:53 AM

KH

“ Condolences from the Hicks family in Idaho. Never met Matt, but his story hits pretty close to home as my father in law died of Glioblastoma 4 years ago and his story brought back a lot of memories. His comments about the steroids and the weight gain were a struggle for my FIL too. Thank you for allowing so many of us in the turf family to share your journey. God bless you all.

Kevin Hicks - May 19, 2021 at 11:46 PM

AE

“ So sad for your loss. He certainly fought the fight, so sorry he lost his battle. Keeping you all in my prayers 🙏🙏🙏

Anna Evoy - May 19, 2021 at 11:03 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Matthew Paul Henkel.



May 19, 2021 at 10:15 PM

VF

“ Vicki Farbo lit a candle in memory of Matthew Paul Henkel



Vicki Farbo - May 19, 2021 at 07:46 PM

MP

“ Michelle Poydack lit a candle in memory of Matthew Paul Henkel



Michelle Poydack - May 19, 2021 at 04:24 PM

ML

“ *My most sincere condolence to you all...personally, from the Landgraf family to yours, on behalf of ACS / Relay For Life of Upper Illinois Valley, and on behalf of Mendota High School Student Services, of which our esteemed colleague, Matt's sister Rachel Henkel Tarr, is such a valued member. Heartfelt acts of kindness in Matt's honor have already begun, and will continue. We are so sorry for your loss, and for all that has been endured.*

---

**Mitch Landgraf** - May 19, 2021 at 04:03 PM