



Melvin "Mel" George Thorne

July 7, 1945 - August 9, 2025

Melvin "Mel" George Thorne, age 80, of Pickford, Michigan, passed away at his home on August 9, 2025. He was born on July 7, 1945, at his family farm in Pickford to Levi and Emeline (O'Brien) Thorne.

Mel grew up in Pickford and attended Pickford Area Schools until his junior year, when he moved to Detroit, Michigan, and graduated from Wayne Memorial High School in Wayne, Michigan. After high school, he lived in Detroit for three years and worked for the City of Plymouth, Michigan. Mel also spent several summers on Mackinac Island, driving draft horse carriages, before returning home in 1969 to take over and run Thorne Farms, established in 1910. The farm later became recognized as a Michigan Centennial Farm in 2010, a source of great pride for him and his family.

Alongside farming, Mel was deeply involved in his community. He and his wife, Cathy, were involved with Pickford High School Track and Field, inspiring young athletes for many years. They also shared a love for the outdoors and athletics, spending countless hours watching sports on TV, attending local sporting events, and hunting together. Mel spent 25 years driving a school bus for the Pickford School District, becoming a friendly and familiar face to generations of students. He was always willing to share his farming knowledge, mentoring many people over the years and encouraging them with his positive attitude and outlook on life.

Mel was a devoted husband to Cathy. She spent three years in Medilodge, he visited her every single day, no matter the weather. His unwavering commitment was a testament to his deep love for her, his dedication to family, his passion for farming, and his lifelong commitment to the Pickford community.

Mel is survived by his stepchildren, John (Susan) Edington of Pickford, Todd (Debra) Edington of Barbeau, Michigan, Sharon (Marty) LaJoie of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, and Diane Gervais of Pickford; grandchildren, Derrick (Julia Stenglein) Edington, Nicholas Edington, George (Taylor Talaska) Edington, Jacob Edington, Nathan Edington, Matthew Edington, Kaitlyn Edington, Timothy Edington, Kaye Rutledge, Natalie Shaw, Tiffany (Kyle Maleport) Shaw, Alivia LaJoie, Alicia Gervais, Alex (Ashton Kearns) Young, Scott (Erica) Gervais, and Stephanie Gervais; great-grandchildren, Conner, Abigail, Levi VanLuven, Elizabeth VanLuven, and Lillian VanLuven, Harper Shaw, Bryson Shogren, and Karson Maleport; sister-in-law, Patricia Thorne of Vicksburg, Michigan; along with several nieces and nephews.

Mel was preceded in death by his bride of thirty-six years, Cathy; his parents, Levi and Emeline; siblings, Jean (Charles Newbern) (Cyril) Judson, Bud (Dorothy) Thorne, Dolly (Charles) Lawrence, Frank (Betty) Thorne, and Chuck Thorne.

Visitation will be held on Thursday, August 14, 2025, from 10:00 AM – 12:00 Noon, at Family Life Funeral Homes, 24549 S. M-129 Pickford, MI, 49774. The Funeral Service will begin at 12:00 Noon with the burial to follow. Pastor Josh Jones will be officiating.

Mel's final resting place will be at Oaklawn Chapel Gardens in Bruce Township, Michigan.

Memorial Contributions can be made in Mel's honor to the Pennington Home, 665 S Pleasant St. Pickford, MI 49774 or the Panther Legacy Project (Fund the Fieldhouse Project), 333 S. Pleasant St. Pickford, MI 49774.

Condolences may be left to the family at www.familylifefh.com.

Obituary as submitted by family.

Cemetery Details

Oaklawn Chapel Gardens

15264 S. M-129
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG 14. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Family Life Funeral Homes - Pickford
24549 S. M-129
Pickford, MI 49774
(906) 647-3400
flfh@familylifefh.com
<https://www.familylifefuneralhomes.com/>

Funeral Service

AUG 14. 12:00 PM (ET)

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Tribute Wall

JC

“ Remembering from the class of 1965 P.H.S. as Mel was a part of. He and his good friend , Charlie Pennington, could say or do something and make it appear as "Not Me type of reaction. Sympathy to the family of Mel and prayers for peace and comfort.

Joyce Crawford-Henderson - August 12, 2025 at 09:26 AM

SP

“ I have fond memories of Mel especially how tolerant he was with us crazy kids back in the 80's! I always enjoyed whenever I would run into him at the co-op or around Pickford and have a nice big hug and chat. Mel was a great man and will be missed. Condolences to the family from Lawney and I.

Shelli Patrick-Libby - August 11, 2025 at 09:27 PM

HT

“ Harold Thorne purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Melvin "Mel" George Thorne.



Harold Thorne - August 11, 2025 at 07:06 PM

HT

“ Harold Thorne planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Melvin "Mel" George Thorne.

Harold Thorne - August 11, 2025 at 07:06 PM

CJ

“ I remember many times my dad, Frank Thorne, and my uncle Melvin running foot races on the road out in front of the house in Pickford.

But most of all I remember his love for all of us and the fun that we had even when bailing hay, putting it in the barn, chasing animals out in the fields and learning to drive a tractor.

RIP Uncle Mel, you will not be forgotten.....

Carol Thorne Jones - August 11, 2025 at 04:48 PM

ML

The memories I have with Mel and Ma Thorne are endless. They were such a huge inspiration to us high school kids for my entire high school years. They are together again which is exactly how I will remember them both. I and so many of us are forever grateful for the two of them. Thanks for the memories Ma and Mel Thorne.

Missy Hatfield LaPlaunt - August 12, 2025 at 08:23 AM

TH

To Mel and Family, Mel, my hay guy for 30+ years. Always fair, honest, and kind. I am so going to miss your great and gentle spirit on this earth. I know you will rest in peace, because, for you, that is the only it can be. Tess Hoey

Tess Hoey - August 12, 2025 at 10:42 AM