



## Neal Franklin Eichholz

February 6, 1937 - December 1, 2023

Neal Franklin Eichholz, 86, of Crawfordville passed away unexpectedly at his home on December 1, 2023. Born in St. Augustine Florida, he grew up in New Smyrna Beach. After attending the University of Florida, he transferred to Florida State University because the turkey hunting was better around Tallahassee. In 1962, he received his B.S. in Business at FSU. He worked for Western Electric, Ford Motor Company, Bell Telephone Company, and earned his Brokers License selling real estate. Never satisfied working in business, he decided to return to school to follow his passion for nature. In 1974, he earned his Master of Science at the University of Georgia writing his thesis on "Turkey movements, behavior, and population dynamics".

Neal is survived by his wife and companion of 34 years Lorrie Stanford. Remaining family includes his nephew Gator Connell (Beatriz) of New Smyrna Beach, niece Cheryl Vick (Kevin) of Houston, and niece Erin Anderson (Donnie) of Edgewater and several great nieces and nephews. He is predeceased by his parents Harold Henry Eichholz and Irene Euphrasine (Pappy) Eichholz and his sister Carol Hart.

During his 30 year career at the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, he worked in West Palm Beach, Tallahassee, and Perry and retired in 2004. Privately, he assisted his friend and mentor Lovett E. Williams, Jr. to establish a trophy hunting program in Guatemala to conserve and protect the ocellated turkey which is threatened by commercial and subsistence hunting. This project was partially funded by the National Wild

Turkey Federation and was described in the book "The Oscillated Turkey in the Land of the Maya" published in 2010 which he co-authored.

Born with a natural gift for music, he had played guitar since he was 8 years old. During college, he played regularly with dance bands at sorority functions. Since 2004, he played at the Wakulla County Senior Citizens Center with the Picking and Grinning Band. He played at the Seineyard at Wildwood with the "Rick Tittle Band" and more recently with the "Lost Creek Band" and "Tina and the Boys". He also was a talented artist who enjoyed drawing, painting, and pen and ink sketches. He documented wildlife habitat around Florida through photography and recording the sounds of nature.

A lifetime of turkey hunting, and a career in wildlife management led to his devotion to the preservation of Florida's natural environment. He developed multiple proposals for the purchase of land by the State of Florida to preserve it for the future. At the time of his death, he had nearly finished an extensive memoir which will be completed.

A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date.

Skip & Trey Young along with Paula and Kimberly are assisting the family.

850-926-5919 [Familyfhc.com](http://Familyfhc.com)

# Tribute Wall

CG

“ I became acquainted with Neal sometime in the late 70s or early 80s when attending meetings of the Tallahassee Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation.  
Early on I could easily tell Neal had forgot more facts concerning wild turkeys than I knew at that time. I picked his brain for any tidbits that could help me slay an old gobbler...  
Neal felt so sorry for me that he did the unthinkable and took me hunting a few times to his favorite "turkey hidey hole" and called up a Boss gobbler which I shot and from that point on " I ate, breathed, and hunted only Boss Gobblers for the next 25 or so years ! It became an obsession as all turkey hunters will attest to .. I only broke this obsession due to another new goal of one of as many different North American big game animals as possible until the money ran out or my body wore out. Both have now occurred I think !

*"Neal, Thanks for the memories pal and find some turkeys for us" !*

*Chet Grimsley*

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**Chet Grimsley** - March 24, 2024 at 10:45 PM



“ Neal Eichholz has always been a part of my Wild Turkey family. He was a proud Minorcan. I remember his skill of storytelling and great sense of humor. An outdoorsman, artist, musician, and most of all a great friend to my father Lovett Williams.

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**Heather Thomas** - January 25, 2024 at 10:23 AM

EA

“ I love you Uncle Neal! You will be missed by many. I often wondered where my love for nature and Toads came from!!!! I love you! Erin

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**Erin Anderson** - December 26, 2023 at 03:52 PM

CB

“ My condolence to Lorrie and Neal's family I was a close friend of Neal from the University of Florida. He taught me how important it is to preserve Florida's Wildlife. His passion for guitar music rubbed off on me. In 1957, he bought a black Chevrolet hardtop and I a Pontiac. We got caught up in a riot one night during motorcycle week in Daytona. Some nights we would drive out to the woods and listen to the frogs sing. We used his beach buggy " The Gopher" to ride the beach looking for sea turtles returning from their nest. Neal was a great friend that never changed. I'll miss him. Cliff Bell

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**Cliff Bell** - December 23, 2023 at 06:54 PM

LS

Thank you Cliff. Neal really enjoyed your visit earlier this year. You were able to remember so many great stories. Best wishes to your family.

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**Lorrie Stanford** - December 26, 2023 at 01:31 PM

LM

“ Dear Lorrie,  
I was so shocked and devastated to hear of Neal's death when you called. He and I were the last of the generation of grandchildren of Marcus and Rosalea Pappy. He was my only first cousin left on that side of the family.  
I will miss exchanging emails with him regarding politics, religion, hunting and family.  
I will always remember the welcome you and he gave me when I visited you shortly after the death of my husband.  
Take care of yourself and please keep in touch.  
Latrell Mickler

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**Latrell Mickler** - December 11, 2023 at 04:30 PM

LS

Thank you Latrell. 😊

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**Lorrie Stanford** - December 26, 2023 at 01:35 PM

RT

“ Neal, you were my best friend and Tina and I will never forget you. Thank you for the music lessons and our trips to St Marks Wildlife and educating Tina and I on every aspects of nature. Our life will never be the same now that your gone. Rest In Peace my friend!  
Rick & Tina Tittle, Dubuque Iowa

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**Rick & Tina Tittle** - December 06, 2023 at 12:21 PM

LS

You and Tina were great friends to us. He had a wonderful time at his 80th birthday because he could play guitar with you and Charles Smith. He loved sharing his knowledge of nature and wildlife with anyone that was interested. He would say "Science doesn't care what you believe".  
I love both of you.

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**Lorrie Stanford** - December 08, 2023 at 08:06 PM

“ I met Neal Eichholz when I was about 4 years old - he was my neighbor on Park Boulevard in New Smyrna Beach, Florida. Memories from that time are limited, but I do know that he was a nice kid. He was friends with my cousins and older kids on the block.

When I was at FSU, I started as a music major, and of all people who happened to be in my music theory class, Neal showed up! And we were happy to see each other. He would come to our 8 am class when we were all half asleep and not so eager to learn music theory, and he would hold up a finger or two at me - and I would smile, knowing that he had shot a turkey or two that morning - before the sun came up and before any of his classmates thought of getting out of bed.

He and I both disappeared from the music department and I didn't hear of Neal for another few decades when I was teaching school for the Department of Defense in Germany. Somehow his name and email address came across my computer and I wrote him. He was friendly and I was glad to renew that old neighborhood friendship we had once known - but he was very quick in letting me know that he lived with a lady he loved - Lorrie. And I knew that he was "not available."

I didn't see Neal again until a couple of years ago when he came to a New Smyrna Beach Class Reunion that was held at the Slovenian hall in Samsula, FL. I got to meet his special lady - and I was so glad to see him in person again.

After that, I never saw Neal again, but I loved seeing his posts on Facebook. He showed the most wonderful pictures of birds and other animal - exotic and gorgeous - and it was a treat seeing them. AND he knew the Greek philosophers and posted their wisdom as well. I looked forward to his postings every day - and admired his skill and knowledge of wildlife and philosophy while realizing that he was also an accomplished musician.

*Neal made an impact on my life - in small and meaningful ways. I shall always envy those who knew him well and saw him daily - and I extend my deepest sympathies to Lorrie and all the family who were able to embrace him daily. My sympathies also go out to Larry Marchinton, a classmate, who was Neal's friend and admirer.*

*The world has lost a loving friend. I shall miss him.*

*Patricia Shaw Cosby*

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**Patricia Cosby** - December 05, 2023 at 10:21 PM

LS

*Thank you for sharing your memories Patricia. Neal told me you reminded him about the FSU music theory class. He said everyone played piano except him and the professor had perfect pitch. He said he was in over his head. He also told me he almost failed an accounting class because he had played music the night before a test and fell asleep during the exam. The test proctor woke him up. He told me all about how smart and successful you are. Great memories!*

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**Lorrie Stanford** - December 08, 2023 at 07:52 PM

DM

*I worked with Neal for several years in Gainesville as a much more narrowly focused young botanist. Neal's tutelage in birding, finding turkeys, and how to drive in the woods without getting stuck were immensely helpful. I absconded to Wyoming, coming back in the 1980s, but never again actually met him.*

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**David Martin** - April 23, 2024 at 01:58 AM

PF

“*Paula Fluty lit a candle in memory of Neal Franklin Eichholz*



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**Paula Fluty** - December 05, 2023 at 03:58 PM