



## Peter Gent

August 23, 1942 - September 30, 2011

GEORGE DAVIS PETER GENT died September 30, 2011 in his hometown of Bangor, MI due to complications from pulmonary disease. He was 69. Peter Gent was an athlete and novelist, perhaps best known for his novel North Dallas Forty.

Born August 23, 1942, Peter was the middle of three boys born to Charles Gent and Elizabeth Davis. Peter attended Bangor Public Schools where he led the high school basketball team to the 1960 State Championship. He went on to be a center/forward with the Michigan State University basketball team, leading the team in scoring for three consecutive seasons and graduating with an advertising degree.

He was drafted by the NBA Baltimore Bullets, but on a lark tried out for the Dallas Cowboys. He made the football team and was a receiver/flanker 1964-69 alongside quarterback Don Meredith, with whom he enjoyed a close friendship off the field.

After leaving professional football, Gent wrote a semiautobiographical bestselling novel, North Dallas Forty. He also wrote the screenplay for the hit film based on the novel, along with several other novels. Gent made his home in Texas for many years but eventually returned to Bangor.

He is survived by his children, Carter Gent of Kalamazoo and Holly Gent Palmo (Vince) of Austin, TX; his four grandchildren, Ava, Austin, Joe and Nick; brother Jamie Gent (Cindy); nieces and nephews.

The family will meet friends 2-4 and 6-8 PM Wednesday at the BANGOR CHAPEL, D. L. Miller Funeral Home, where a memorial service will be Wednesday at 8:00 PM. According to his wishes cremation has taken place.

# Cemetery Details

**Cremation**

## Previous Events

### Visitation

OCT 5. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Bangor Chapel  
258 West Monroe Street  
Bangor, MI

### Visitation

OCT 5. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Bangor Chapel  
258 West Monroe Street  
Bangor, MI

### Service

OCT 5. 8:00 PM (ET)

Bangor Chapel  
258 West Monroe Street  
Bangor, MI

# Tribute Wall

MD

“Pete and I agreed his brother Charlie was Mr Crunch Time. Charlie was my hero. Jamie had too many concussions he was my contemporary. Pete's book was villified but it was true

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Michael E. Dillon,m.d. - April 09, 2020 at 04:41 PM

CA

“To The Gent Family,  
I'm very sorry for the death that you've experienced in your family recently. There are some scriptures found in gods word, that has encouraged me in the past when it comes to losing one of our loved ones. John 11:25 says... "He that exercises faith in me, even though he dies, will come to life."  
I also agree with the bible when it says at Acts 24:15... That "there will be a resurrection, of both the righteous and unrighteous"! Revelation 21:4 states " Death will be no more." "The former things have passed away." What a wonderful time to live when these scriptures will be fulfilled!  
My thoughts and prayers are with you at this difficult time.. please know that I' am thinking of you and your family during this hardship.  
Thank you for your time,  
Sincerely,  
Caleb Aniol

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Caleb Aniol - October 22, 2011 at 07:15 AM

JC

“ My family and I are saddened to here the passing of a great athlete & writer.Pete was a good friend of our family,he always checked in on my mother after my father was gone to see if she needed anything,my father Don Cobianco & mother Kay always told me great stories about Pete,they were all classmates.My father still has the original NORTH DALLAS FORTIES book Pete kindly signed for him years ago,they were really close.I did not get to know Pete to well because I was much younger but had the honor to know him and he was a very kind person to me.i attended Bangor school with his daughter Holly whom i knew well.Pete's entire family were just very nice to be around.My father told me Pete was also a great basketball player for Bangor & Michigan State before going onto Dallas to play for the Dallas Cowboys.My sympathies go out to his family,may you R.I.P. We all loved you Pete! JOHN COBIANCO

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**John Cobianco** - October 08, 2011 at 10:31 PM

JD

“ I first saw Pete in action at Michigan State in the winter of 1960-61 when States basketball team came to Evanston to play Northwestern. He was a tough, smart, rawboned no nonsense player. And was a great athlete. I was never surprised when he turned to pro football. He had the right stuff and was a fine player on an emerging team.

met Pete in 1973 when he visited the NBC studios in Chicago's Merchandise Mart for an interview about the recently published North Dallas Forty. We became fast friends for the rest of his life. The common bond in our friendship was the discovery that the "32-B" Michigan State Kappa he wrote about in the book in fact was a sorority sister and good friend of my wife there. So it went through the years. He told me all about the life he led growing up, in Texas before and after the Cowboys and the love he felt for his kids, daughter Holly and his true best friend, son Carter.

Friend is he singular word that describes the way we got along. I got to know and enjoy his mother as well after he moved back home to Bangor, not just because she was a "Davis either. She was terrific. When I told him I was getting out of television for good and wanted to write, Pete urged me to write about something I knew well. When I replied I always wanted to write about George Halas, the Papa Bear, he said he had an agent in New York I should contact. That man, Paul Bresnick had been Peter's editor for Last Magic Summer and he turned out to be the right man for me. Peter gave the book great promotion, Papa Bear was a success, and I was and always will be eternally grateful for that act of friendship and kindness.

We spoke several times a year and had many an entertaining and informative conversation. Through all that, the friendship mattered and always will matter the most. I miss him of course as we all do, and will treasure that wild, crazy, and wonderful guy forever.

Jeff Davis, Evanston, Illinois

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Jeff Davis - October 07, 2011 at 03:55 PM

SS

“ I never met Mr. Gent and only new him from his writings. North Dallas Forty is one of my favorite books and i have read it more that a half dozen times. The sexy, harsh, drug filled frenzy was very exciting and intriguing to me as a young man. I always thought I would like to meet him but did not think he would feel the same as me. Perhaps i was wrong. My sympathies to his family. My memory of his work will live on and remind me of a wonderful and exciting time in my life. Thank you Peter Gent.

*Sanders Slevatz, Lawton MI*

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**sanders slevatz** - October 06, 2011 at 01:43 PM

EW

“ My condolences to the Gent family, one of the great families of Bangor. Peter was a hero of mine after the BHS team won the state basketball championship in 1960 and I tried to emulate him in my basketball career at BHS. My biggest thrill was in 1994 when I was standing next to him, talking with him as we were among the first inductees into the BHS Sports Hall of Fame. May Mr. Pete Gent rest in peace.

*Earl Winblad*

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**Earl Winblad** - October 06, 2011 at 06:37 AM

TS

“ *My condolences to the Gent family at the passing of Mr. Gent.*

*Back in the 70's, it was pretty cool to be from Bangor when North Dallas came out both in print and at the theatres. I remember introducing my young daughter to him at Harding's Market maybe 10 years or so ago - she had never heard of the book or the movie, but she new who the Dallas Cowboys were. It made a little girl feel pretty special that he would take a few minutes to speak with her - after all, he was a COWBOY! Over the years we always delighted in bumping into Mr. Gent in town on the odd occasion. He was a giant of a man for our little town, and he will be missed!*

*Sincerely-  
Tehry Smith*

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**Tehry Smith** - October 05, 2011 at 04:41 PM

PC

“ *I knew Pete when we both attended Michigan State University. We were both from small towns in Michigan, and he used to stop by and visit me in my home town of Marshall. I had lost touch with him over the years, and was saddened yesterday to read his obituary in the Wilmington Star News in Wilmington, NC. I remember Pete as a straight A student, and a remarkable athlete. He made a terrific study partner and we spent many hours going over our notes from class. Not only was he my friend, but a wonderful, caring, and funny individual. I have very fond memories of him. Please know that he and his family are in my thoughts and prayers.*

*Pam Aylward Chrisitanson*

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**Pamela Aylward Smith Christianson** - October 05, 2011 at 12:25 PM

TB

“ I Never Had The Pleasure Of Meeting Peter, But My Heart Goes Out To Anyone Losing A Loving Family Member. I Just Remember The Scripture "To Live Is For Christ, To Die Is To Gain".

*Tony Branscomb "Gent"*

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**Tony Branscomb** - October 04, 2011 at 11:14 PM

BE

*I Also Never Got The Pleasure of Meeting Peter, My Prayer's and thought's are with the family during this time of losing their family member. May God Bless the family.*

*Brenda Gent Ellison*

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**Brenda Gent Ellison** - October 05, 2011 at 07:36 AM



“ Pete was a big brother to everyone in Bangor. We all looked up to him and we all lost something in his passing. God Speed Pete and deepest condolences to his family.

*Rick Dillman*

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**Rick Dillman** - October 04, 2011 at 09:56 PM

RW

“ Pete was exceptional.....he expressed this in a variety of evolving ways throughout his life. It was my pleasure and benefit to be connected with him athletically during my high school and college years. My prayers and sympathy go out to his family and friends. All who have known him will indeed miss him.

*Ron Welch*

*BC Springfield HS '61*

*MSU '65*

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**Ron Welch** - October 04, 2011 at 06:28 PM

BB

“ I was a neighbor of Pete and his family. Through the years, I have prayed for him and his family over a thousand times. He was and will always be my all time favorite football player.

When we were young, Rick Lange and I always said we live in "Pete Gent" town. I have used Pete as an example of drive and desire often in both my sermons and coaching.

I hope his family will be comforted by both friends and the eternal love of our Holy Heavenly Father.

*Bert Baker Ex. 15:2*

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**Bert Baker** - October 04, 2011 at 01:32 PM

PH

“ Pearl (Baker) Helmboldt lit a candle in memory of Peter Gent



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**Pearl (Baker) Helmboldt** - October 04, 2011 at 12:22 PM



“ Condolences to the entire Gent family. May God Bless you and guide during this difficult time.

*Lisa (Babor) Williamson*



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**Lisa Babor-Williamson** - October 04, 2011 at 12:20 PM

CS

“Pete was an exceptional athlete. I recall being an assistant coach under Mr. McGregor and Pete leading the Junior High basketball team to three undefeated seasons. God bless you Pete and your family.”

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**Chuck Stafford** - October 04, 2011 at 04:50 AM

TT

“Although Pete and I had little contact since college, I was saddened to hear of his passing. Our Bangor class of '60 was a close knit group who went from K - 12 together. Losing one from that special group is difficult to fathom. My sincere sympathy is extended to his family and all those close to him. He will be missed.

Tom Taylor  
Venice, Florida

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**Tom Taylor** - October 03, 2011 at 06:25 PM

MV

“Peter Gent was the most interesting and pleasant men I have ever met. We would talk for vast amounts of time and I would hang on his every word, as he seemed to have an endless supply of them! I will miss our conversations greatly, as he opened my eyes to the hidden side of professional sports and Hollywood, and I doubt I will ever know anyone so animated, pleasant, and absolutely honest all at the same time. The time I knew Pete was short, but the positive impact on me will last my lifetime. My deepest regards go to his family and close friends and I am deeply saddened that I am out of town during the visitation.

Good bye, Pete, find peace and play on.

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**Michael Varricchio** - October 03, 2011 at 02:18 PM

SL

“ *Shirliann Akerly Lewandowski lit a candle in memory of Peter Gent*



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**Shirliann Akerly Lewandowski** - October 03, 2011 at 08:46 AM

SL

“ *I remember well when we were kids on the block (Douglas from Center to Chase Sts) the many hours Pete and Charlie and I played in the leaves, threw balls, and did whatever. It was a different world then, so many years ago when we were kids. It was great to know that a person you grew up with had such success in their life and became "someone". God Bless you, Peter's family, and may you know that there are many of us out here wishing good thoughts for you all in this time of sorrow.*

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**Shirliann Akerly Lewandowski** - October 03, 2011 at 08:45 AM

CJ

“ *Reading North Dallas Forty as a young teenager in the 70's helped give me a lifetime love of literature and reshaped my thinking about "fairness" in this world. May peace be with Mr. Gent and his family.*

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**Chuck Jaymes** - October 02, 2011 at 05:07 PM

DH

“ Dear Carter, Austin, Holly, and Jamie:



*I've lost a huge piece of my heart and my life. I've lost a dear, dear Friend, a Big Brother, a Buddy and--as we so often joked between the two of us--an "adopted Son". I worked with Pete for over 29 years helping him push the mountains of paperwork that life throws at all of us. He loved to write--but he hated paperork--that was part of my job, and I loved it.*

*He was not only a treasure of Bangor's, and of all the people's lives he touched, but he was MY personal treasure too. A treasure does not fade because the physical being no longer exists, or because paper and personal belongings no longer occupy a familiar place. Instead, the treasure becomes more precious. It transforms itself into an illusive, yet steadfast, force that repeatedly blows through our lives--some times powerful & blustry, some times cold when the despair of grief seems overwhelming, yet always a soft and comforting whisp that will make us smile deep within wonderful memories.*

*"The Wind Beneath My Wings"--Pete was part of my wind--He always will be. I will miss him very much, and consider myself fortunate to have known him. My sincere condolences to his entire Family, and to the world that has lost one of its "Most Unforgettable Characters".*

*Debbie Holmgren  
Kalamazoo, MI*

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DEBRA HOLMGREN - October 02, 2011 at 03:34 PM



“ I just learned of Peter's passing.

*My prayers go out to the Gent family. He was a great writer and great athlete I recall reading the wonderful story of the magical baseball season he had enjoyed so much with his son. I gave it to my father to read. It was very special because my Dad grew up in Bangor with his extended family. We are all blessed with Peter's legacy and we are so much better for it. May Gog Bless Peter, his family and friends. My only regret is that, according to Peter in his book, the fundraising money we raised so many years ago for youth baseball via Donruss and Leaf candy ended up helping Kalamazoo and not Bangor!*

*God Bless You Peter.*

*Mike McIntyre Northfield, Illinois*

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**Mike McIntyre** - October 02, 2011 at 01:15 PM

SM

“ Carter, My deepest condolences on the loss of your Dad. I can't believe it was 20+ years ago that he asked me & Derrek to play with you guys from Bangor up at Western. To me, that was the "BigTime" playing up there with you guys & getting to face the likes of the K-Zoo maroons & Derek Jeter. In '92, your Dad came down to RV to speak to us Seniors & it was good to talk to him again. I ran into him at his book signing for Last Magic Summer as well & I cherish my signed copy.

Just want you to know that week has remained a fond memory of mine for over 20 years & I can't imagine it ever fading. Picking us up was meant to help you guys out due to being short handed, but instead it provided me with a life-long memory, and for that, I am forever thankful to your Dad.

Thanks Pete!

Scott Mangold

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Scott Mangold - October 02, 2011 at 12:12 PM

JD

“ Carter, Holly, Jamie, i send you my most heartfelt condolence at the loss of Pete. Ed and I enjoyed many happy hours having coffee and good conversations with Pete and with Liz. As neighbors we watched Pete raise Carter and saw the love and concern he had for him. Just know you all are in my thoughts at this time and I always carry with me the good memories of your wonderful family. Pete, you are in a far better place now but know I have missed our lively conversations.

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Janice Dziubinski - October 02, 2011 at 09:14 AM

  
Claudia  
Koenig

“ Thank you Pete. I met you when I was 11 and you took time to speak to a kid who was struck speechless and was in awe of you. We met again as adults, but I will never forget the first time. Bangor has lost a community treasure.



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**Claudia Koenig** - October 01, 2011 at 06:47 PM

CP

“ May God richly hold you in His hands and comfort your family... Thank you for all the memories you gave all of us who were lucky enough to know you....  
Carolann Pacer-Ramsey

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**Carolann Pacer-Ramsey** - October 01, 2011 at 06:14 PM

DZ

“ Munson Lake, Jeep, Papa Gent and my close friend Charlie. What great memories with his crazy father. Little brother Jamie.....What fun.

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**Dave Zook** - October 01, 2011 at 04:52 PM

BS

*So sorry to hear about the passing of Peter Gent. Loved talking with him at his book signings and had vowed to myself to spend some time talking with him again. Am so sorry I didn't.*

*Virtually every time I drive home to South Haven, on the way through Bangor I'd glance down the side street where he lived.*

*Remember listening to the radio as a kid to the 1960 run by the Bangor Vikings team, and ...their dramatic come-from-behind victories in many games on their way to their State Championship. Peter, Jamie and Charlie Gent and Richie Waite.*

*Later, after reading "North Dallas Forty" and seeing the movie, I remember the critiques of his book, that made some literary best-selling lists, and the one comment that stands-out today in my mind. "Peter Gent was not a football player who happened to be a writer, but a writer who happened to play football."*

*Condolences to Carter and Holly and the entire family. And to Bangor.*

*Barry Shanley*

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**Barry Shanley** - October 02, 2011 at 01:02 AM