

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gene Kornblum of St. Louis Music Passes Away

ST. LOUIS, MO – September 18, 2024 – ([GUITARpr](#)) – **Gene Kornblum**, who built **St. Louis Music Inc.**, the family business founded in 1922, into one of the premiere companies in the musical instrument industry, passed away in St. Louis on September 17, 2024

Eugene (Gene) Maurice Kornblum was born July 21, 1935. He was raised in St. Louis and graduated from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School in 1957 with a degree in economics. He was active in student organizations at Penn and served on the senior editorial board of the *Daily Pennsylvanian* newspaper. After returning to St. Louis, he enlisted in the Missouri Air National Guard that was called to active duty in France in 1961 during the Berlin crisis. Thanks to his knowledge of French, he easily adjusted to living in a small town near the airbase located in eastern France.

Under his direction as president of St. Louis Music Inc., the company grew from 40 to over 350 employees working in the company's headquarters, research and development center, warehouse, and factory in St. Louis as well as a factory in Yellville, AR. The company did a broad international export business with its Crate and Ampeg amplification equipment. It also imported and designed Alvarez acoustic guitars as well as Knilling string instruments. During Gene's tenure with the company, St. Louis Music's equipment and instruments were endorsed and/or played by such notable musicians as: The Grateful Dead; Crosby, Stills and Nash; Fleetwood Mac; Johnny Cash, ZZ Top and many others.

He served as a board member of the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) and was president of the Guitar and Accessory Marketing Association (GAMA). As a leader in the music industry, he encouraged and fostered the careers of numerous music industry professionals.

Upon his retirement in 2005, he served on the boards of trustees of the St. Louis Symphony, Opera Theater of St. Louis, the St. Louis Art Museum, the Foundation for Barnes Jewish Hospital, the Newmark Institute, and Arts & Faith St. Louis. Gene was also active at Washington University, auditing classes every



semester and heading up a fund-raising initiative for the School of Law that honored his friend, Professor David Becker. In 2013 the Law School awarded him the Dean's Medal.

A memorial service will be held at Temple Emanuel, 12166 Conway Rd., St. Louis, MO 63141, on September 22 at 12:30 PM. Memorial contributions can be sent to The Siteman Cancer Center, 4921 Parkview Place, St. Louis MO 63110 or a charity of your choice.

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