

## Candle In The Wind

"**Candle in the Wind**" was originally composed in 1973 by Elton John with lyrics by Bernie Taupin. It holds a distinctive place in popular music history due to its two primary incarnations, each tied to the life and tragic death of an iconic public figure.

The original version appeared on Elton John's 1973 double album *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road*, with Bernie Taupin's lyrics as a tribute to **Marilyn Monroe**, who had died in 1962 at the age of 36. The song opens with the line "Goodbye, Norma Jean," referencing Monroe's birth name (Norma Jeane Mortenson). It portrays her sympathetically, reflecting on the pressures of fame, the media scrutiny she endured, and the fragility of her existence, likened to a "candle in the wind."

In 1997, following the death of **Diana, Princess of Wales** in a car crash on at age 36, Elton John—who was a personal friend of Diana's—performed a quickly rewritten version at her funeral in Westminster Abbey. With new lyrics by Taupin beginning "Goodbye England's Rose," the adaptation retained the melody and much of the emotional structure while shifting the tribute to Diana. "Goodbye England's Rose" or informally "Candle in the Wind 1997" became the best-selling physical single in music history since record charts began in the 1950s, with estimates exceeding 33 million copies sold worldwide. Elton John has stated that he has never performed this version publicly since Princess Diana's funeral and has no intention of ever doing so again.

My wife and I recently lost one of our best friends, Gail, after a three-year battle against metastatic melanoma. Gail never stopped living her life, and she was also a force to be remembered! She rallied her girlfriends to be her own "Gail Force," all running [Miles For](#)

[Melanoma 5-Ks](#) as a team to raise money for melanoma cancer research. Gail even participated in the event in 2025, just eight months before passing away. She was competitive gale force right up until the end. [Click here to donate to the Melanoma Research Foundation.](#)

Suzi and I became friends with Gail in 1983 at the University of Vermont, and our lives and families have been intertwined ever since. We have been on numerous vacations with she and her husband, Jay, over the years, with Gail's zest for life taking us on some great adventures, from Block Island to the Abacos to NYC and especially the memories we made at the happiest place on earth, Disney World (yes, even as grown-ups we would all go to Disney together year after year!)

Suzi and Gail even started a successful small business together after we all became empty-nesters with the kids off to college. Gail was the sales "force" and Suzi was the operator and together they turned SeaCoast Bags from an idea while drinking painkillers on vacation at the beach into a retail store on Cape Cod. Gail also became one of the very first clients of Double Eagle Partners when I launched in 2022, and her "Gail Force" in my early days drove me to create a successful business because of her encouragement and guidance.

After 43 years of friendship, you sort of take it for granted that you will always have each other's friendship forever. But sometimes forever comes too soon.

Which got me thinking about how I might be able to use Gail's untimely passing to remind my other clients that it is a blessing and gift to your heirs to have your financial house in order should your life end like a candle in the wind. Being financially prepared will make

things at least a little easier on your loved ones. Here is a list of some things that we should all pay attention to and feel free to contact me directly if you need some help:

1. **Make sure that all of your accounts have a listed beneficiary.** This will avoid the probate process and allow your heirs to get access to the accounts much more quickly.

- IRAs & 401k's automatically go to the spouse, but having listed your spouse as beneficiary makes the process much smoother
- Joint brokerage accounts automatically go to the survivor but listing beneficiaries after that couldn't hurt.
- Brokerage accounts with "transfer on death" still benefit from a listed beneficiary, just in case.
- Checking accounts should always be joint accounts, even by using an adult child for continuity after death.

2. **Establish a Revocable Living Trust for your assets.**

- This avoids a lengthy probate process after you pass.
- You still control the assets while you are living, but your Successor Trustee will then get Power of Attorney should something happen to you and then your assets can be managed seamlessly.
- Living Trusts have much more flexibility than a Last Will & Testament and can be very tax efficient for estate planning purposes.

3. **Aggregate your financial accounts with one Financial Advisor and as few Financial Institutions as possible.**

- This will ease the transition for your heirs and ensure that accounts don't inadvertently go by the wayside after your death.
- It will also make your financial life much more controllable whilst you are alive to have everything in one financial household.

#### **4. Add a Trusted Contact to all of your accounts.**

- This should be someone that your financial advisor or banker can reach out to, should you become disabled.
- As you get up there in age, consider giving this person a Durable Power of Attorney to help you manage your financial matters.
- Please note that all Powers of Attorney cease to exist upon a person's death, including the Limited Power of Attorney that Double Eagle Partners uses to manage your accounts. Once you pass away, I am no longer your Advisor and cannot access your accounts.

#### **5. When a loved one passes, please DO NOT cancel their cellphone nor dispose of their laptop!**

- As everyone's financial life is intertwined with their digital life, you will need access to your loved one's electronics for login information, usernames, passwords and most importantly, two-factor authentication with their cellphone for many many months!
- I once had a client pass a few years ago and the adult children cancelled his cellphone not thinking it was needed any longer, just so that they'd save \$50 a month. It cost 100x that much in time and aggravation trying to get into the various accounts (mortgage, utilities, email) that were controlled by that laptop and iPhone.

And in conclusion, a final goodbye to Gail.

It seems to me you lived your life like a candle in the wind.

Never fading with the sunset or when the rain sets in.

And your footsteps will always fall here along Cape Cod's greatest shores.

Your candle's burned out long before your legend ever will...

Rest in peace my dear friend.