



## Derick Lee Bluford

December 10, 1962 - December 9, 2021

Derick Lee Bluford, 58, was born on December 10, 1962 in Sioux City, Iowa and was called home on Thursday, December 9, 2021, at CHI Mercy Hospital in Council Bluffs, Iowa due to complications from Covid.

Derick was the son of Rev./Dr. Grady L. and Dr. Harriet L. (Trosper) Bluford. He graduated from Sioux City North High School in 1981 and Morningside College in 1985 with a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education. Throughout his career he served as the Director of Instrumental Music at Bishop Heelan Catholic High School in Sioux City, Lewis Central High School in Council Bluffs, Iowa; Del Rapids High School, Viborg High School and Lake Andes Public Schools, all in South Dakota. At the time of his passing, he was employed as an Instrumental Music Educator at Elkhorn Middle School and assisted at Elkhorn High School in the Elkhorn Public Schools. Additional employment included the Securitas Security Company and Advanced Automotive in Omaha, Nebraska.

Derick maintained a private instrumental studio and fostered lifelong learning as well as mastery of one's craft. He served as an adjudicator and as a guest clinician for both jazz and concert bands throughout South Dakota, Iowa and Nebraska. Derick loved Drum Corps International and had the honor of serving as brass instructor for the Blue Stars Drum and Bugle Corps.

He was honored to perform with numerous well known instrumental groups throughout his career. Some of these included: The Sioux City Municipal Band, South Dakota Symphony, Bluffs Big Band, Bass Trombone Faculty for the Clark Terry Big Band Jazz Camp and the Rich Matteson Mile High Jazz Camp.

When he wasn't teaching, Derick enjoyed playing video games, watching cartoons and movies, and following his interest of a diverse plethora of sports. His other passion was working on and rebuilding cars.

Derick was preceded in death by his mother and father and survived by his sister Dr. Michelle Bluford of Omaha, Ne. Other survivors include two aunts and one uncle: Beatrice and Everett Jackson of Tullahoma, Tenn; Verona "Cookie" Trospen of Sioux City, Ia and numerous cousins, colleagues and friends.

Honorary Pallbearers are Henry Larweh, Marvin Larweh, Maynard Larweh, Carter O'Neel, Drew Veomett and McKaylee Houg.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held on Monday, December 20, 2021 at Reichmuth Funeral Home in Elkhorn, Nebraska. Visitation will be held from 4pm - 5:30pm with family present and The Celebration Life Service will begin at 5:30pm. Memorials may be sent to the Derick Bluford Family in care of Reichmuth Funeral Home.

For your safety and the safety of others, please wear a mask during the Celebration for Derick.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 20. 4:00 PM - 5:30 PM (CT)

Reichmuth Funeral Home - Omaha / Elkhorn  
21901 W. Maple Rd.  
P.O. Box 711  
Elkhorn, NE 68022  
402-289-2222  
services@reichmuthfuneralhomes.com  
<https://www.reichmuthfuneralhomes.com/>

## Celebration of Life

DEC 20. 5:30 PM (CT)

Reichmuth Funeral Home - Omaha / Elkhorn  
21901 W. Maple Rd.  
P.O. Box 711  
Elkhorn, NE 68022  
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# Tribute Wall



“ *Reichmuth Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Derick Lee Bluford*



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**Reichmuth Funeral Home** - December 15, 2021 at 10:32 AM



“ *Derick Lee Bluford*

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December 10, 2022 at 09:12 AM

JB

“ I am sorry I am so late to respond. I am sorry to hear of Derick's passing. Although we have not spoken since we graduated from Morningside, I still have fond memories of Derick from our years at the Morningside band camps and at school there. I remember one year at camp when he got angry (about a girl I believe) and punched one of the dorm room doors and injured his hand. (or was it both of them?) I remember he and I competing in the 'disco' dance competition at one of the band camps as well. I believe he won and I got second place. The memories are still in my brain, but the details are a little fuzzy.

*I remember Derick's passion for music and his great sense of humor. I am sure that he shared both of those with the students he taught.*

*While we did not remain in contact, I just want his family to know that I was proud to have known him and that his memory will live on.*

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**Jon Buck** - December 29, 2021 at 09:18 AM

TT

“ I never studied under Mr. Bluford but got the privilege of working with him during the jazz festivals that were held at A.L. He was always respectful to those of us who were working the festivals. He will be missed.

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**Tyler Tomaszkiwicz** - December 21, 2021 at 01:50 PM

JH

“ I want to say first that I wish I could have been at Derick’s Celebration of Life....

*I was in my freshman year of high school in Dell Rapids when Mr. B arrived...My father had been the director for around ten years before that and took a job as director of bands in Madison, SD. We stayed in Dells and he commuted because my mother still worked as the Choir instructor at Dells.*

*I was the old band director’s kid and Derick was the new director... I know it wasn’t easy for him in a lot of ways and it shouldn’t have been so easy for me but I became a friend and ally to him rather quickly. I learned things from him that I wouldn’t have learned otherwise. I only have love and great memories of that time and of him and his devotion.*

*He will be missed as he was a true inspiration and true friend.*

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**Jason Dirk Hegg** - December 20, 2021 at 07:25 PM

CJ

“ Chris Johnson purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Derick Lee Bluford.



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**Chris Johnson** - December 19, 2021 at 08:49 PM

BJ

“ Derick was my childhood friend and the Blufords were my neighbors growing up on Hamilton Blvd. in Sioux City, Iowa. Derick was a kind and thoughtful person who I will greatly miss. My condolences to his family. My heart is with all of you and I know there is a great heavenly reunion with Harriet and Grady Bluford and Sarah and William Jones.

*Love, Bravie Jones-Harrington*

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**Bravetta Jones-Harrington** - December 14, 2021 at 01:56 PM

KD

“ Kyle, Vanessa, Ivy, and Zoe Dreessen purchased the *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* for the family of Derick Lee Bluford.



**Kyle, Vanessa, Ivy, and Zoe Dreessen** - December 14, 2021 at 11:10 AM

WB

“ Derick was our student band director when I was a sophomore. He was so kind making sure I got to jazz band practice by picking me up because he drove right past my house. He was such a wonderful person!

**wendy bruce** - December 14, 2021 at 10:28 AM

LM

“ We are so grateful for Derick’s kindness and patience through our middle school band years! He was a great man and will be missed! Our hearts ache for his family at this time.  
Love, the McKays



**Lynae McKay** - December 13, 2021 at 07:21 AM



“ Such wonderful high school memories of Derek. Band and choir mate. I will always remember his talent and kindness.



**Mary Vaught** - December 12, 2021 at 10:13 PM

SL

“ *Mr. Bluford was my band director in Dell Rapids. He was tough and demanding in the BEST possible way teaching me so much about timeliness and kindness. He was REALLY good at his job. I am so sorry for your loss.*

*Respectfully,  
Suzie (Berg) Long*

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**Suzie Long** - December 12, 2021 at 09:18 PM

LH

“ *I am so sorry to hear this news. I met Derick in 1986 or so when we played in the LeMars Big Band. I was so impressed with his pedal tones and how easy he made it look when he was playing bass bone. Please accept my sympathy at this sad time. I will dig out my cassette tape (HA!) recording rom one of our concerts and take a listen this afternoon. I will keep you in my thoughts and prayers.*

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**Laura (Hahn) Hanna** - December 12, 2021 at 03:23 PM