



## Harold "Lee" Brandt

March 29, 1952 - November 18, 2025

H.R. Lee Brandt passed away on Tuesday, November 18th in his home in Omaha, Nebraska. Lee's Memorial will be held at Reichmuth Funeral Home, in Elkhorn, Nebraska on Monday, December 8th from 4pm-6pm. This will be an informal gathering that anyone is invited to attend.

Lee was born in Marysville, Kansas in 1952 to Harold H. Brandt and Ruth Haner Brandt. When Lee was five, he moved to Denver with his grandmother, Velma Brandt, where she raised him until he began high school. When he started 9th grade, he moved to Wyoming with his father and step-mother, Marge, and his siblings.

In his junior year of high school, Lee's father was transferred to Millard, Nebraska, as he worked for the Union Pacific Railroad. That is when he met Deb Deeds and they started their relationship. Deb remembers Lee playing ping pong, trying to show off, and it ended up paying off, as he won the high school pingpong championship.

The Brandt family was only there for about a year when they were transferred again to Utah. Shortly after that, Lee ran away from home to return to Omaha to continue his relationship with Deb.

Lee got a job at Millard Pharmacy and rented a room at Judge Hibler's house.

It was a big responsibility for a 17 year old to live on his own, but Lee was able to finish his senior year, graduating in 1970. That summer, Lee also decided to race a 1957 Corvette in a drag race at one of Omaha's Speedways. While he didn't win that race, the car did catch on fire, and that honestly makes for a better story than a win!

Lee and Deb got married in June of 1971 at Mary Our Queen Catholic Church. They lived in an apartment, but shortly after, bought their first home together near 109th and Pacific Street. The next year, Lee was recruited for the UPRR System Steel Gang as an Assistant Foreman. There, he and his gang laid continuous  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile rail lengths across the entire system (including Nebraska and all states to the west). He and Deb traveled and lived in a bunk car for the next four years. In 1973 they welcomed their first child, Deann.

Lee worked hard and in a short amount of time, he was promoted to Roadmaster in 1975, so the family was transferred to Maryville, Kansas. This was very special, as it was noted that he was the youngest person to ever receive that title/rank.

Two years later, in 1977, their second child, Chris, was born. The next year, the four of them moved to Omaha, Nebraska, as Lee received another promotion - General Roadmaster over the UPRR System.

In 1980, the family was transferred to California where they resided for three years. This was a big lifestyle change from living in the midwest, so they took advantage of the different climate and Lee and Deb became certified scuba divers and spent several weekends on Catalina Island together. The family also had a pool at their house, so their backyard was always full of neighborhood kids. Lee and Deb also found time to join a bowling league. Lee was especially proud of himself for earning a "200 patch" for bowling a 203.

Another move happened in 1983, when Lee and his family were transferred to Sandy, Utah - this is where some of Lee's family lived. This is when Lee worked on The Great Salt Lake Project. A lot of weekends were spent at Lee's parents' house in Park City, Utah. Lee also enjoyed coaching his daughter's softball team during this time.

A short few years later, in 1986, the family was transferred to Pineville, Louisiana. This was a fun chapter of their lives, as they were there the longest - 7.5 years. This is when Lee really got into cooking and he learned how to make a variety of dishes including his famous gumbo. Lee's love of cooking inspired his son, Chris' love of cooking. He also enjoyed woodworking in his shop that he made in their garage and landscaping projects as well.

In 1993, the Brandt family was on the move again, as they had a short stint (10 months) in Pine Bluff Arkansas.

Their final move in 1994 brought everything full circle, as the family was transferred back to Omaha, Nebraska. For the next 20 years, Lee's main office was at UP's headquarters but he spent a lot of time traveling for work. During this time, Lee worked with ultrasonics and detector cars. This was a whole new part of the railroad, so it was exciting for him to learn.

Lee thoroughly enjoyed his job, and was very good at it. Many times, he was called into court cases as an expert witness to help determine reasons for derailments. Other railroads, not just Union Pacific, knew Lee's skills at this and would call him for guidance.

Throughout his time at UPRR, Lee met and befriended people from all over the country and across the System Steel Gang. He stayed in touch with many of them throughout his life.

Lee retired from The Union Pacific Railroad in 2014 after 43 years with the company.

Lee and Deb spent the next several years traveling around watching their granddaughters play softball. He was especially proud of helping the Elkhorn Softball team stay fueled and hydrated by keeping their drink and snack coolers filled for away games.

Lee, Deb, Deann, and Chris spent a lot of time together throughout the last several years. They were lucky to all live within a few miles of each other, which allowed them to stay close and see each other often.

Survivors include wife, Deb Brandt; children, Deann Brandt-Uitts (Marty) & Chris Brandt; grandchildren, Emmersen (Brittany), Riley (Bailee), Merin; great grandchild, Keegan.

Siblings, Scott (Cheryl), Rick, Mark (Julie), Rex, Sherrie; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by: Parents, Harold and Marge Brandt, Ruth Haner Brandt; brothers, Mike and Ron; sisters, Sharon Douglass and Sharon Haner; and grandmother, Velma Brandt.

Memorials are suggested to the Nebraska Humane Society.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life Gathering

DEC 8. 4:00 PM - 6:00 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/>

# Tribute Wall

TF

“ *The Kyncl, Merrill, Monzon, Waldo Family purchased the Be My Love Bouquet with Red Roses for the family of Harold "Lee" Brandt.*



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**The Kyncl, Merrill, Monzon, Waldo Family** - December 08, 2025 at 11:38 AM

LI

“ *Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*



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**Linda** - December 08, 2025 at 12:14 AM

GA

“ *Gregory A. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Harold "Lee" Brandt.*

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**Gregory A.** - December 06, 2025 at 11:07 PM

MK

“ *Mike Krosch purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Harold "Lee" Brandt.*



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**Mike Krosch** - December 05, 2025 at 04:04 PM

KJ

“ Kelly J. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Harold "Lee" Brandt.

Kelly J. - December 05, 2025 at 12:13 PM

JM

“ John M. purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Harold "Lee" Brandt.



John M. - December 02, 2025 at 11:38 AM

SH

“ Sherrie purchased the Basket Full of Wishes for the family of Harold "Lee" Brandt.



Sherrie - November 25, 2025 at 03:44 PM

SH

“ Sherrie planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Harold "Lee" Brandt.

Sherrie - November 25, 2025 at 03:44 PM

SH

“ *Scotty and Nicole Harrison purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Harold "Lee" Brandt.*



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**Scotty and Nicole Harrison** - November 22, 2025 at 05:49 PM

BO

“ *Bobby and Karen Odom purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Harold "Lee" Brandt.*



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**Bobby and Karen Odom** - November 21, 2025 at 03:20 PM



“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Harold "Lee" Brandt.*



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November 20, 2025 at 06:07 PM

MJ

“ *Mark and Julie planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Harold "Lee" Brandt.*

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**Mark and Julie** - November 20, 2025 at 06:07 PM