



## Mark E. Nelson

November 11, 1963 - January 15, 2026

Mark Eugene Nelson passed away suddenly on January 15, 2026 at Lakeside Hospital in Omaha.

Mark was born November 11, 1963 in Omaha to Catherine (McKeighan) and Jerome Nelson. He lived in Omaha and Mead and other areas of Nebraska before his family settled in Yutan when he was in first grade.

He graduated from Yutan High School in 1982. He played football and was active in marching band, jazz band, choir, swing choir and drama during high school. One of his favorite high school activities was taking photos for the yearbook. He could always be found with a camera around his neck or in the journalism dark room developing photos.

During high school, Mark began dating Suzi Kruse. The two were in the school play, "M\*A\*S\*H" in 1979 as Trapper John and Hot Lips Houlihan. The next year, the school did the musical "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown," and Mark was cast as Charlie Brown and Suzi played Lucy.

After high school, Mark went to the University of Nebraska at Lincoln for one year. After struggling to find what he wanted to do in life, he decided to join the Army. He enlisted on July 7, 1983. He went to basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri and Advanced Individual Training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

While in basic training, Mark proposed to Suzi in a letter. They were married on December 23, 1983 at St. John's Lutheran Church in Yutan, during an evening that saw wind chill that plunged the feels-like temperature to 70 degrees below zero, along with a blizzard.

A week after the wedding, Mark headed to Darmstadt, Germany where he was stationed for his first permanent Army assignment. Suzi headed to Germany a few months later and the two embarked on their "Three Year Honeymoon in Europe." They were fortunate to visit many castles, go on Rhine River cruises, travel to London, Paris, Amsterdam,

Austria, Switzerland, Liechtenstein on their own or with family or on bus tours.

Another fortunate thing that happened while they were overseas was Mark's youngest brother, Wendell, was assigned to Germany. Mark pulled some strings and got Wendell a spot in his unit. Wendell's wife Lisa came over a few months later and the two couples were able to spend nearly two years together in Germany.

Mark ended his active-duty Army career in January 1987 when he and Suzi came back from Germany. They moved into an apartment in Omaha and he enrolled at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He also joined the Army Reserve, serving until 2000.

In 1988, the couple moved to Yutan, renting a house for year before buying it. On March 14, 1990, they were blessed with the birth of their daughter, Whitney Rose. On December 22, 1990, the fourth and final member of the Nelson family joined when Cheyenne Patrice decided to make her entrance seven weeks early.

Mark was a do-it-yourself kind of guy, completely renovating the two houses his family lived in. He passed on many of these skills to his daughters, who helped him with many projects including painting walls, finishing drywall and even roofing the house.

Mark worked as a construction/environmental inspector for Woodward Clyde Consultants. He later went into the construction business with his brother, Randy. They had two companies, Nelson Contracting and later Nelcon, Incorporated, that did underground/heavy highway construction.

He made a huge career move in 2001 when he joined the telecom industry, first with MicroLnk then United Private Networks and finally Level 3 Communications, which later became CenturyLink before being purchased by Lumen Technologies. He served in many different roles, culminating in the position of data center manager.

In 2021, Mark stepped away from work to help take care of his ailing mother, who passed away in 2022. Unfortunately, he experienced his own health challenges, preventing him from returning to work. Numerous falls, broken bones, along with complications from previous surgeries, culminated in many hospital stays, operations or procedures.

Mark became a Mason in 2014. That same year he joined the Shriners, taking part in many parades and functions as a Mobile Noble. He especially loved driving the "train" as conductor. Later, Mark helped form the Big Wheels of Shrine group, which also performed at many events on their three-wheeled drift trikes. One of the accomplishments Mark was

most proud of as a Mason was becoming a 32 nd Degree Scottish Rite Mason, also in 2014. He was also proud to have helped reinstate his father, Jerome, as a Mason later that year.

Mark was well known in Yutan for his elaborate Halloween display. For over 20 years, he created a Halloween destination for Yutan youth, complete with electric chair, guillotine, casket and many animatronic figures, all handmade and done before the days of YouTube so he had to use his own ingenuity and mechanical background. The highlight was the “Wheel of Misfortune,” where kids spun a wheel to find out which size of candy bar they got. Their squeals of delight when the wheel landed on a giant candy bar made him very happy.

Mark was proud to have been elected to the Yutan City Council in 1998. He also served on the Yutan Planning Commission. He was a member of the Yutan Volunteer Fire Department as a firefighter and EMT for 10 years.

Mark is survived by his wife, Suzanne; daughters, Whitney Nelson and Cheyenne (Chris) Grannan and granddaughter, Lucy Grannan; brothers, Richard (Susanne), Terry (Lynnette) and Randy (Denise) Nelson; sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law Stephanie and Wendall Pascarelli and Candy and Chad Johnson; numerous uncles, aunts, nieces, nephews and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his brother, Wendell Nelson and his mother-in-law, Nancy Kennedy.

Memorials may be directed to Shriners Hospitals for Children, P.O. Box 1525, Ranson, WV 25438 or Hollst Lawn Cemetery, P. O. Box 69 Ashland, NE 68003 or Cantare! Vocal Ensemble, <https://www.cantareomaha.com/donations>.

# Cemetery Details

## Hollst Lawn Cemetery

630 County Road L  
Yutan, NE 68073

# Previous Events

## Visitation

**JAN 19.** 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church - ELCA  
1007 2nd St  
Yutan, NE 68073  
(402) 625-2656

## Funeral Service

**JAN 20.** 10:30 AM (CT)

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church - ELCA  
1007 2nd St  
Yutan, NE 68073  
(402) 625-2656

# Tribute Wall



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Mark E. Nelson.*



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January 19 at 11:52 AM

KS

“ *Kelly Schultze planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mark E. Nelson.*

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**Kelly Schultze** - January 19 at 11:35 AM



“ *Fairest of All was purchased for the family of Mark E. Nelson.*



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January 19 at 11:35 AM

KE

“ *Kelly Ellis purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Mark E. Nelson.*



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**Kelly Ellis** - January 19 at 10:44 AM

KB

“ *Mark was a friendly and kind man. I enjoyed having him as a student. Karen Isom Burns*

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**Karen Burns** - January 18 at 06:46 PM

TF

“ TIM - LINDSAY - ROBIN - LANAI FAMILIES purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Mark E. Nelson.



TIM - LINDSAY - ROBIN - LANAI FAMILIES - January 18 at 05:35 PM

TS

“ Taryn DuPuy & Dustin Strasburg purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Mark E. Nelson.



Taryn DuPuy & Dustin Strasburg - January 18 at 01:46 PM

WF

“ Wagner and Hansen Families planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mark E. Nelson.

Wagner and Hansen Families - January 18 at 01:12 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mark E. Nelson.



January 18 at 01:12 PM

LL

“ Laura LOCKHART-LUTZOW purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Mark E. Nelson.



Laura LOCKHART-LUTZOW - January 17 at 07:48 PM

LL

“ Laura LOCKHART-LUTZOW planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mark E. Nelson.

Laura LOCKHART-LUTZOW - January 17 at 07:48 PM