



Patrick Gene Gottsch

June 3, 1953 - May 18, 2024

The Gottsch Family is hosting a funeral service for family and close friends. Visitation Thursday, May 23, 2024, 7-8 PM with a Vigil service from 8-8:30 PM at St. Patrick's Catholic Church, 20500 West Maple Road, Elkhorn, NE
Funeral Mass Friday, May 24, 2024 10 AM at St. Patrick's Catholic Church, Elkhorn, followed by burial at Mt. Calvary Cemetery, Elkhorn

IN LIEU OF FLOWERS, the family asks that donations be made in Patrick's name to the National FFA Foundation in his honor. Please visit <https://donate.ffa.org> to donate and put "In Memorial of Patrick Gottsch"

Cards may be sent to the Rural Media Group, Inc., Attn: Patrick Gottsch Memorial, 17445 Arbor Street Suite 101, Omaha, NE 68130, or emails can be sent to patrick@rfdtv.com

A Celebration of Life in Patrick's honor will also be held in the historic Fort Worth Stockyards in the near future. More details will be announced in the coming weeks.

Patrick Gottsch, 70, "a visionary," who dedicated his life to promoting and growing the rural and western way of life, died on Saturday, May 18, 2024, in the Fort Worth Stockyards.

Patrick Gene Gottsch was born on June 3, 1953, to Bernard “Pat” and Gloria (Borowiak) Gottsch in Omaha, Nebraska. He grew up on the family farm in Elkhorn, proud oldest brother to three sisters—Terri, Tammy, and Toni—and youngest brother, Mickey. The siblings formed a tight unit, working together on the farm, playing with their Saint Bernards, and carrying on their father’s more mischievous tendencies. When Patrick wasn’t helping his dad feed cattle or running the John Deere 620 during harvest, he worked at his grandparents’ bowling alley setting pins. He was a great athlete, playing basketball, football, and baseball for Elkhorn High School. Even his competitors, Ray Burgess and Mike Trader, remained lifelong friends. Patrick attended Sam Houston State University on a baseball scholarship, where he allegedly hit a home run at his first at-bat. While home from college, Patrick broke his hand teaching Mickey to drive a snowmobile when his brother crashed it into an apple tree. He didn’t return to Sam Houston State and began farming with his dad. After suffering three of the most devastating drought years in Nebraska history, his dad told him there was “no future in farming” and urged him to get a job in town. In 1977, Patrick moved to Chicago to work as a commodity broker on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange.

His hard work and competitive spirit earned him a seat on the trading floor. A country

boy at heart, Patrick didn't want to live in downtown Chicago and returned to Omaha in

1979. Bad luck struck again when the commodity market experienced a catastrophic fall

during the Grain Embargo in 1980. Like countless others, Patrick lost his savings and

went broke.

In 1983, Patrick married Shirley, and moved to an old farmhouse next to his grandmother, Alice, on her homestead. Their first daughter, Raquel, was born on

December 13, 1984. As Patrick drove home from the hospital, he saw a man assembling a C-band satellite dish on Dodge Street. Interested in buying a home dish

himself, he pulled over to chat. The man asked if Patrick had any tools, and Patrick

ended up helping him install it. It took them six hours. But the moment HBO came on,

Patrick was hooked. Ultimately, the man offered Patrick a job installing satellite dishes.

Patrick soon started his own company, E.T. Installations, and eventually introduced

more than 2,000 satellites across the Midwest. In 1987, Patrick's company was

recognized as the nation's largest privately owned home satellite retailer. The same

year, he welcomed his second daughter, Gatsby (named after his favorite book), to the

world.

A natural-born salesman, Patrick would follow up with his customers a couple of weeks after installing the satellite dish, looking for a referral. He heard time and again that customers loved “having Disney for the kids, ESPN for dad, and TNN for music” but wondered why there wasn’t any programming about agriculture, rodeo, and other rural interests on the networks. This feedback gave Patrick his initial idea for what would soon become his lifelong passion.

On August 31, 1988, Patrick launched RFD-TV from a studio in Omaha, Nebraska.

RFD-TV was named after Rural Free Delivery—a program of the United States Post

Office to deliver mail down every country road. Likewise, Patrick believed rural Americans should get the same access to news and entertainment that city folk

enjoyed. It was vital to “connect city with country,” so that people understood where their

food came from. RFD-TV delivered six full hours of live news, markets, weather, and

agribusiness features. The network was an instant hit with audiences.

However, it was

not picked up by any carriers, leading to Patrick to file for bankruptcy in 1989.

Patrick divorced, and in March 1991, he moved to Fort Worth, Texas, to work in the

historic Ft. Worth Stockyards as the Director of Sales for Superior Livestock Auction. He

was encouraged by Superior’s founder, Jim Odle, that his idea of a 24/7 network

dedicated to rural America was a great one. In 1996, Patrick left Superior to dedicate himself to being a dad and re-launching RFD-TV. Patrick worked relentlessly for the next four years, coaching his girls' softball teams and pitching his idea of a "rural network." During this time, he earned a living installing satellite dishes for Dish Network. His daughters often accompanied him on installs after school, calling out the signal strength while their dad was on the roof tuning the dish to its counterpart in the sky, and handing him a 7/16" wrench to tighten the bolts once they were "in the green." Every investor he pitched the network to said it was a "stupid idea" and that "farmers don't watch TV." Eventually, Charlie Ergen, the Founder of Dish Network, told Patrick the 1992 Cable Act mandates satellite companies to reserve a few channels for educational or informational programming. Since providing rural news and education on agricultural interests was clearly informational, Charlie told Patrick to form a non-profit, and he would give him one channel. Charlie accurately predicted Patrick "wouldn't have any advertising support for years anyhow," and told him if the channel was successful, he could switch to a for-profit business in the future. Seizing this opportunity, within weeks, Patrick put together a hard drive full of rural content, much of which was already

airing in local markets, including Texas Country Reporter, U.S. Farm Report, California

Country, Georgia Farm Monitor, Big Joe Polka Show, Ag PhD, and classic horse shows.

Despite having no studio, no employees (over the age of 16), and no money, Patrick re-

launched RFD-TV on Dish Network on December 15, 2000. The experimental format of

four networks in one—agriculture, equine, music, and rural lifestyle—proved to be a

success.

Patrick built the network backwards—seeking distribution in rural markets first instead of

focusing on New York and LA. His strategy worked, and distribution expanded to

DirecTV in March 2002. That same year, RFD-TV signed its first cable agreement with

Mediacom, becoming a basic cable channel in Des Moines, Iowa. New markets

followed one by one, with distribution reaching more than 30 million homes by September 2006. The network also continued to expand its programming, including live

broadcasts of cattle auctions from Superior Livestock Company. In 2007, RFD-TV

switched to a for-profit network, providing Patrick with new opportunities.

The rest, as they say, is history. Patrick continued to innovate, transforming ideas into

powerful platforms that brought the heart and soul of rural America to screens across

the nation. He opened a theatre in Branson, Missouri (2006), where legends

such as

The Beach Boys, Willie Nelson, and Larry the Cable Guy performed. He secured an

agreement with radio personality Don Imus to simulcast Imus in the Morning (2007). He

“saved” Trigger and Bullet—Roy Rogers’ famous palomino and German shepherd

(2010). He broke the Guinness World Record for Largest Parade of Classic Tractors

(2012). He made the first ever \$1 million donation to the FFA (2012). He launched Rural

Radio on Sirius XM and broke the Guinness World Record for largest Pick-Up Truck

Parade at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway (2013). Along with Randy Bernard, he

crowned the first \$1 million cowboy at The American Rodeo (2014).

In 2017, Patrick launched The Cowboy Channel, which became the Official Network of

ProRodeo. In an instant, he changed the western sports industry forever, and found a

home and community he loved. One of his greatest honors in life was being recognized

as the Resistol 2022 Man of the Year at the National Finals Rodeo.

His passion and vision shaped a company and an industry, but it was his passion for

family that defined him. In 2011, Patrick met Angie Good, who became his wife and his

oasis from the relentless demands of the business world. Together, they shared laughter

and a beautiful daughter, Rose. Like her dad, Rose has a quick wit and playful sense of

humor. She fearlessly tackles challenges with the same determination and is credited as the founder of The Cowgirl Channel, sharing his innovative spirit. Patrick always missed the family farm. At the end of his life, he bought back some of the land from the original family farm, and ran it with his brother, Mickey. He was always most at home in the cab of a tractor. Beyond his remarkable career, Patrick was a loving husband, father, grandfather, brother, and uncle. He is survived by his wife, Angie, and their daughter, Rose; his daughter Raquel, her husband, Sean, and their children, Case and Carson; his daughter, Gatsby, her husband, David, and their children, Eleanor and Sylvan; his sister, Terri, her husband, Dan, and their children, Chuck and Dillon; his sister, Tammy, her husband, Al, and their children, Andrea, Sara, and Nick; his sister, Toni, her husband, Tom, and their children, T.J. and Samantha; his brother, Mickey, his fiancé, Julie, and his children, Devon and Nolan; and countless cousins, friends and colleagues. Patrick was preceded in death by his father, Pat, his mother, Gloria, and his oldest sister, Patricia, who passed away at birth. He will be buried next to them in his hometown of Elkhorn, Nebraska, where he continued to live throughout his long and meaningful life.

Cemetery Details

Mt. Calvary Catholic Cemetery

Elkhorn, NE 68022

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 23. 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

St. Patrick's Catholic Church
20500 W. Maple Road
Elkhorn, NE 68022

Vigil service

MAY 23. 8:00 PM - 8:30 PM (CT)

St. Patrick's Catholic Church
20500 W. Maple Road
Elkhorn, NE 68022

Funeral Service

MAY 24. 10:00 AM (CT)

St. Patrick's Catholic Church
20500 W. Maple Road
Elkhorn, NE 68022

Tribute Wall

AN

“ *This is very belated but my condolences are sincere. I found rfd tv basically during covid. It awoke more of a desire to be educated about farm related issues, which would make my deceased dad who grew up on a farm ecstatic. Thankful for Patrick's vision to reach the masses with a wholesome and educational experience.*

Alabama to NC - September 02, 2024 at 12:28 AM

RD

“ *SO SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS. BUT MANY THANKS FOR A MAN OF ENERGY, VISION, AND SHARED IDEAS THAT HAVE REWARDED MYSELF AND SO MANY OTHERS. RANDY L DICKSON*

RANDY L DICKSON - June 07, 2024 at 02:27 PM

TW

“ *Sorry For Our Loss*



Thomas Widgeon - May 29, 2024 at 09:29 AM

CB

“ *Dear family of Patrick, so sorry to hear of his passing. I am so grateful for his TV channel RFD, one of our favorites. God bless his memory and treasure the time you had him.*

Chuck & Kaye Belzer - May 25, 2024 at 10:34 PM

AD

“ Adm lit a candle in memory of Patrick Gene Gottsch



adm - May 24, 2024 at 04:56 PM

AD

The Cowboy Channel is my husband's favorite channel to watch. Our deepest sympathy to the Patrick Gene Gottsch family and team.

adm - May 24, 2024 at 04:58 PM

JW

*Wish I had sent this message of gratitude to Patrick before. I and my aging friends so appreciated & thoroughly enjoyed the polka, country & Irish music shows on RFD TV. At a time when the joy of these quality shows is being taken away from us older limited folks, Patrick fought to keep them going, FOR US. Thank You Patrick, until we meet again.
Joan Whalen*

Joan Whalen - May 31, 2024 at 08:57 PM

"S

“ So sorry to hear the Passing of Mr Patrick Gottsch. We use to email each other a little over a decade ago. He was real sincere about what viewers were interested in and wanted to see on his RFD Network. I got to see him, and I've visited his Branson Theater, and was in the audience on a taping of an RFD Nashville TV Show. My elderly Dad, like so many others, got so much out of all of Patrick's Shows. I learned a lot myself from the variety of his programming. And the Rose Parade every New Year Day. To Patrick's wife, and daughters, and immediate family, and his TV family, I'm so sorry. May GOD give you all strength to carry on. From -Hillsboro & Eureka, Missouri, the Simpson Family ("Rooster", Jim, & Sharon)

"Rooster" JL Simpson - May 23, 2024 at 05:34 PM

SS

“ *We are so sorry for your loss.*

Steve and Esther Scarpello

Steve Scarpello - May 23, 2024 at 05:31 PM

CG

Sending many prayers. What an amazing and inspiring man....

Candy Goodrich - May 24, 2024 at 05:18 PM



“ *Lily and Rose Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Patrick Gene Gottsch.*



May 23, 2024 at 03:02 PM

AS

“ *May God's enduring love, peace and comfort encircle the Gottsch family in their mourning and grief.*

*Condolences,
Artie Scott*

A Scott - May 23, 2024 at 09:08 AM



“ *Loving Lilies and Roses Bouquet was purchased for the family of Patrick Gene Gottsch.*



May 23, 2024 at 09:06 AM

BD

“ Bruce and karen Dawson planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Patrick Gene Gottsch.

Bruce and karen Dawson - May 23, 2024 at 08:32 AM

BD

“ Bruce and karen Dawson purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Patrick Gene Gottsch.



Bruce and karen Dawson - May 23, 2024 at 08:32 AM

AN

“ I discovered the RFD Network several years back and really have enjoyed the programming. I am sorry for your loss. - Andrea from Alabama

Andrea - May 22, 2024 at 09:25 PM



“ Heavenly Grace Spray was purchased for the family of Patrick Gene Gottsch.



May 22, 2024 at 05:25 PM

TR

“ *Tim McEwen and Team at RBC purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Patrick Gene Gottsch.*



Tim McEwen and Team at RBC - May 22, 2024 at 03:27 PM



“ *Sacred Duty Spray was purchased for the family of Patrick Gene Gottsch.*



May 22, 2024 at 12:27 PM

LF

“ *Love from Terri & Dan Murphy & family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Patrick Gene Gottsch.*

Love from Terri & Dan Murphy & family - May 21, 2024 at 09:51 AM

LF

“ *Love from Terri & Dan Murphy & family purchased the Heavenly Grace Spray for the family of Patrick Gene Gottsch.*



Love from Terri & Dan Murphy & family - May 21, 2024 at 09:51 AM

JR

“ Years ago, I sat at the Circle B lunch counter next to Pat. The Golf Channel was on the TV. After a while of the “riveting” entertainment, I asked the server (Bonnie and Wilbur had recently sold the place) if she would change the channel to the Watching Paint Dry channel.

Pat turned to me and said, dryly, “Watch it!” I then assumed he was also into golf. RIP, sir! 😊

Jim Redelfs - May 20, 2024 at 08:51 PM

GD

I myself didn't know patrick (but wish I could've known him) because he done so much for the people that is interested in western life. I never watched television until the Cowboy channel started airing, and now my tv is on cowboy channel 24/7. Just like to say Thank you patrick! I haven't had the privilege of meeting you, but I know for a fact, you're a great man and loved everyone!

God bless your family!

G.Dodd

Florence, Alabama

Guy Dodd - May 22, 2024 at 08:47 PM



My husband and I wouldn't get a package unless we could get RFD with it we have been happy watchers from long ago prayers for the family love the Cantrells from Kentucky

May 23, 2024 at 07:56 PM

LP

Thanks to RFD& Patrick.Enjoy watching.Lamar& Betty Potts from Doerun Ga.

Lamar Potts - May 24, 2024 at 02:54 PM