



Gordon Ratzlaff

September 27, 1950 - July 1, 2013

Gordon Bruce “Nik” Ratzlaff, 62, passed peacefully into eternal glory on July 1st, 2013 at his home in Kearney, Nebraska. A Celebration of Life service will be 10:30 AM Saturday, at Grace Fellowship Church in Kearney. The Rev. Mitch Ivey will officiate. A private graveside service will be held at the convenience of the family. A time of visiting with family will be 5-7, Friday at O’Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Home in Kearney. A time of sharing will begin at 6 PM. Memorial gifts can be made to The Voice of the Martyrs, an organization dedicated to assisting the persecuted church around the world, and one that Nik faithfully supported. Online condolences may be shared at osrfh.com. O’Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Home in Kearney is in charge of arrangements. Nik was born September 27, 1950 to Bill and Mary (Montoya) Ratzlaff in Aurora, Nebraska. He grew up on the family farm near Stockham, Nebraska. When he was young, Nik was stricken with polio and endured several procedures to repair his affected leg. During his time in the hospital, Nik found solace in drawing and inventing stories. Unfortunately, the polio and the procedures left one leg severely weakened, limiting mobility his entire life. Not to be slowed down, Nik met the love of his life, Melinda Ames, at a Campus Crusade for Christ retreat in 1972. They were married on July 8th of that year. The creative spark ignited during Nik’s time spent in hospitals as a child set a course to a lifetime of creating art in a number of mediums. His work has been exhibited in galleries across the US and Europe. His strong interest in music led to a self-taught knowledge of numerous instruments. His

love of food led to him constantly cooking meals for family and friends. Much to the chagrin of those seeking the secrets of his recipes, he never wrote anything down; each dish was a one-of-a-kind creation. His love of art, music, and food were all passed down to his five children. Nik's love for the Lord is what enabled him to make his largest impact. Over the past decade, Nik led countless Bible studies for both groups and individuals where he shared his knowledge and life experiences to disciple a number of individuals. A thorough study of scripture and God's plan for his life is where he found the most satisfaction and peace. He would always be the first to say he was flawed, but he would never forget that the Lord was always there for him, would never abandon him, and would challenge him daily. Nik is survived by his mother Mary, of Aurora, Nebraska; wife Lindy, of Kearney; sister Mary Ann Ruzicka of Boelus, Nebraska; brother Bryan of rural Missouri; daughters, Amy (Blake) Wilson of Parker, Colorado, Jessica (Nate) Howland of Lincoln, Nebraska; Lisa (Russell) Guill of Lincoln, Nebraska and Stefanie (Mark) Geist of Lincoln, Nebraska; son, Samuel Ratzlaff of Kearney, Nebraska; grandchildren, Taylor, Paige, Caleb, Cassandra, Avery, Thomas, Lorien, and Lorelei; nieces, nephews, and numerous other relatives. Nik was preceded in death by his father, Bill.

Tribute Wall



“ *Gordon Ratzlaff*

January 28, 2023 at 08:01 AM



“ *Amy & Sam & family:*

I'm so sorry to learn of your father's passing away. You are in our daily thoughts and prayers. May God's everlasting love bring you comfort in your grief.

*In deepest sympathy,
Eileen (McDole) Jahn and family*

Eileen (McDole) Jahn - August 21, 2013 at 05:58 AM



“ *2 Timothy 4:7,8 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award me on that day - Bruce was my oldest nephew and always has had a 'special place' in my heart! We are sadden by his passing and extend our love to his mother Mary Bryan, Mary Ann & their families, and to Lindy, Amy, Lisa, Jessie, Sam, Stef and families. He had so-o many talents and was so-o knowledgeable in the Word! We have many precious memories!!*

Aunt Le Goertzen - August 21, 2013 at 05:58 AM

MD

“ To Nik's Family: It saddens me to hear of Nik's death. I knew him only for a short time and there was always a lesson to be learned whether it be in music, art, or God's word. It is very rare to meet a friend that has all these gifts. I am blessed to have known him. He is without pain now but there will be sorrow in my heart for a long time.
Mitzi DeCamp

Mitzi DeCamp - August 21, 2013 at 05:58 AM

CF

“ Gordon was a classmate of mine from Sutton. I'm am very saddened by his passing and realize I didn't know my classmate very well. He has done great things in service to our Lord.

Carol Vauck Friesen - August 21, 2013 at 05:58 AM

EF

“ We wish to express our condolences to the family and especially to our life long neighbor, Mary, Nik's mother. Nik as well as his siblings and parents were our neighbors for almost 40 years prior to our moving to Colorado. We remember Nik as a teenager and as a budding artist! We did not have the opportunity to learn to know Nik's children but do know that they grew up in a good Christian home. Our thoughts and prayers go with the entire family.

Elgie & Karen Friesen - August 21, 2013 at 05:58 AM

JH

“ *Stef, We were very saddened to hear of you father's death. Though the grief and pain you now feel are acute, your confidence in Christ and His work on the cross are what will strengthen you. And be assured He is preparing you for works. In the coming days He will place in your path someone who doesn't yet know Jesus as their Savior and in the strength of the Spirit you will share His good news. May God comfort you and your family at this time. Let us know if we can help in any way. Praying fervently for you. Your friends, Jim and Sheryl*

Jim and Sheryl Hunt - August 21, 2013 at 05:58 AM

CP

“ *A faithful man of God. Praying for all those he left behind.*

Chad P - August 21, 2013 at 05:58 AM

PW

“ This is from a Facebook post today from Pastor Doug Shada...I know he speaks for many--- Doug Shada When I first moved to Kearney, one of the first men I met was Nik Ratzliff. To say that Nik loved the Lord and was a great evangelist and student of the Word is an understatement. Once a month he would write what he titled "Word Wise." Looking at key words of the Christian faith and doctrine. He had an interesting and effective way of writing and communicating love and encouragement to the many of us pastors as well as the many he led to saving faith in Christ. Often he would call and ask a question then we would discuss God's truth and the application of it and then he would close in prayer for God's work to spread throughout the land. It doesn't matter what church Nik and Lyndi went to, many of us pastors in the Kearney area were recipients of his calls, encouragement and prayer for us and the ministries God has called us to. Monday evening Nik went home to be with the Lord and the "very wise words" I believe he heard from his Savior were, "well done good and faithful servant, enter herein to my rest." To his wife Lyndi and their family I extend my deepest sympathies and love. Nik left a lasting legacy to you and each of us who have come in contact with him over the years. I am a better man and we are a better Christian community for having Nik Ratzliff amongst us!

Paul Wice - August 21, 2013 at 05:58 AM

PW

“Lindy and family- What a shock it was to learn yesterday of Nik's passing. But we know he is in a much better place now. Nik was (is) a dear friend and a very creative person-not only with his sculptures (of which we have three) but he also had a very deep and inquiring mind and a strong faith in his and our Lord Jesus Christ. I fondly recall the many times Nik would call the KGFW Talk of the Town program before my retirement five years ago. And I recall the many times Nik and I would spend time together or on the phone discussing political and/or religious issues . He was a very deep thinker and among the most kind and generous people I have ever met....traits that always mark a very creative person.i...with Nik what you saw was what you got! We are saddened at his death but we are also very glad that for him all of life's troubles and ills are now past. And Lindy what a privilege it was to visit with you yesterday. God works in mysterious ways...I had just seen a prayer request from our Holy Cross prayer group and then learned Dee had been thinking of Nik in the past couple of days while neither of us knew at that time what was going on. Lindy you have a strong faith which will see you through this sad time. You were very privileged to have Nik as your husband. We pray that God's peace as well as the love and comfort of friends will surround you and your family! Paul & Dee Wice

Paul & Dee Wice - August 21, 2013 at 05:58 AM

PB

“I knew 'Nik' years ago, and we shared a passion for telling others about Jesus AND making good music. The family is in my prayers, as men like this are rare.

Paul Blanchard - August 21, 2013 at 05:58 AM

TF

“His Lord said to him *Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord*”. Although there is much sorrow, there is great consolation in knowing that we will again worship our Father together again in Paradise. You have been a faithful brother in Christ, and your ministry will continue to build treasure in heaven well beyond today, and well beyond what you could have ever imagined. Lindy and family: We love you, and we are praying for the peace and comfort that only Christ can provide (John 14:27). Jeremiah, Andrea and Rebekah Williamson. - Overland Park, KS.

The Williamson Family - August 21, 2013 at 05:58 AM