

Mary M. Dennis

January 4, 1961 - December 4, 2014

Mary M. Dennis, 53 of Wilcox, died Thursday, Dec. 4, 2014 at her residence. Funeral services will be 2:00 PM, Tuesday, Dec. 9, 2014 at First United Methodist Church in Kearney. The Rev. Gary Main will officiate. Interment will be in the Kearney Cemetery. Visitation will be 5-7 PM, Monday at O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Home in Kearney and continue one hour prior to service time at the church. Memorials are suggested to the family for future designation. On-line condolences may be shared at osrfh.com. O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Home in Kearney is in charge of arrangements. Mary Margaret (Straka) Dennis was born January 4, 1961 to Donald and Catherine (Meuret) Straka in Atkinson, NE. She graduated from West Holt High School in 1979. Mary then attended Kearney State College where she earned a degree in early childhood education in the spring of 1983. Her first teaching job was with the Ansley Public Schools teaching first grade. It was there she met her future husband, Steve Dennis. Mary and Steve were united in marriage on August 4, 1984. They were blessed with three sons: Benjamin, Andrew, and Derek. Mary was a caring, loving, and devoted mother and put her teaching career on hold to stay home with her boys during their preschool years. After two years in Creighton, NE, the family made their new home in Ord, NE. When her youngest, Derek, was ready to start school she restarted her teaching career as the kindergarten teacher at Ord St. Mary's. Derek was one of her students that year. She taught at St. Mary's for 18 years. In 2012, Mary and Steve moved to Wilcox, NE where she worked at the Phelps County

Assessor's Office in Holdrege, NE. Mary will be fondly remembered and greatly missed.

She is survived by her husband Steve Dennis, her son Benjamin and his wife Jennifer Dennis of York, Andrew Dennis and his fiancé Nicole Lubberstedt of Norfolk, and Derek Dennis of Lincoln. Also surviving Mary are her parents Donald and Catherine Straka of Kearney, brothers Steve (Anne) Straka of Buda, TX, Gerard (Nicole) Straka of Kearney, Joe (Heidi) Straka of Kearney, and sister Maureen (Dan) Bird of Burwell, mother-in-law Ellen Dennis of Arnold, brother-in-laws Tom and Dave (Robbin) Dennis of Lexington, and Lucinda Dennis of Funk. A large number of aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends also survived Mary.

Tribute Wall



“ *Mary M. Dennis*

January 28, 2023 at 08:01 AM



“ *Steve, we are so glad that you called us to let us know about Mary's unexpected death. Please know that we, and our church family at Harrison Bible Church are "...lifting you up to the throne of grace that you may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 4:16 Of course now I wish that our correspondence hadn't diminished to Christmas letters! Your call prompted many fond memories of Mary and I in our first years of teaching together at Ansley! She became "Mary 1" and I was "Mary 2" since we were both single, first-year teachers, with her in first grade and I in second. What wonderful memories I have of the time we spent together! Please know you're not alone in your sorrow. Matt and Mary (Fricke) Parker*

Mary Parker - December 11, 2014 at 09:22 AM



“ *I am so sorry to hear of Mary's passing. I have known Mary since the 1st grade at St Joseph's. She was always so nice, always had a smile and loved to laugh. My sympathies go to her husband, children, parents and family. RIP Mary and forever be in Peace~*

Jean Vinzenz - December 10, 2014 at 10:00 AM

MF

“ Steve and family. So shocked and sorry to hear about Mary's passing. Even though I only knew Mary for a short time, she was one that made me feel like we've been friends for years. So friendly and fun to be with. Isaiah 54:10
Melinda Ferree

Melinda Ferree - December 10, 2014 at 09:36 AM

RE

“ Steve, Ben, Andrew and Derek, We are so sorry to hear about Mary. We have many happy memories of visiting with her at school events and during her faithful visits to the fitness center. We can't imagine she is leaving you behind with good memories, but such heavy hearts. You boys were her pride and joy. Please know you are being thought of with deepest sympathies. Renata, Jim, Cameron and Alec

Renata - December 09, 2014 at 08:24 PM

LM

“ Leanne Meuret lit a candle in memory of Mary M. Dennis



Leanne Meuret - December 09, 2014 at 06:57 PM

BH

“ Dear Steve, Benjamin, Andrew and Derek, We were so terribly sorry to hear about Mary! She was so perky and fun to be around. Have fond memories of her with the boys when they were little. We may be in Lincoln but our hearts and prayers are with you today and into the future. May the Lord give you strength for each day, Ray and Becky

Becky Hartley - December 09, 2014 at 10:14 AM

GG

“ Steve and Family. Very sorry to hear of your loss. We will be thinking of you, especially during this holiday time. I have always enjoyed my friendship with you and even though I didn't have the honor of knowing Mary, reading comments from others tell us she was a very special wife and mother. Our hearts go out to you. Greg and Tammy Geiser



Greg Geiser - December 08, 2014 at 10:46 PM

AH

“ Ann Heil lit a candle in memory of Mary M. Dennis



Ann Heil - December 08, 2014 at 03:57 PM

AH

Thinking of you... my friend -my "big sister"

Ann Heil - December 08, 2014 at 03:58 PM

KC

Don and Kathy, our sympathy goes out to you for your loss, Ken and Doris

Ken Counts - December 08, 2014 at 06:12 PM

WC

Don and Kathy my sympathy to you and your family in your time of loss

Walter Counts - December 08, 2014 at 10:51 PM

KR

We are sending sympathy to all of you during this sad and difficult time and will keep you in prayers for comfort. Old College friends, Randy and Kathy Richard

Kathy Richard - December 09, 2014 at 04:11 PM



“ *Let It Snow was purchased for the family of Mary M. Dennis.*



December 08, 2014 at 01:13 PM

LW

“ *Steve, my deepest sympathy goes out to you and your boys on the loss of Mary. May all the special celebrations & memories you each shared in the past help all of you through this time of loss.*

Larry Wiederspan

Larry Wiederspan - December 08, 2014 at 12:51 PM

KS

“ Steve (MR Dennis) and boys, I am so sorry for your loss. I haven't forgot what a great person Mary was. Enjoyed your family when growing up in Ansley. Will never forget how friendly and fun you were to be around. My thoughts and prayers go out to you! Kris Shoemaker

Kris Shoemaker - December 08, 2014 at 11:32 AM

SM

“ Dear ones,

I have known Mary since college. We were in many classes together. When we moved to Ansley and moved into the big Macke house on Edmunds street, I became aware once again that "Mary Straka" was the one who had lived there before. Later, through my teacher consulting with GEON, I became "re-acquainted" with Mary and got to know her better.

Mary was kind and genuine and will be missed greatly. Many prayers for you and yours.

Shari (Marshall) Frost McClure

Shari McClure - December 08, 2014 at 11:22 AM

H~

“ Hugs of Faith and Strength ~ purchased the Cup of Roses Bouquet for the family of Mary M. Dennis.



Hugs of Faith and Strength ~ - December 08, 2014 at 09:12 AM

LH

“ Dear Steve, Ben, Mighty Andrew and Derek, God gained a beautiful angel in Mary! She was such a gift for our little school and all the children she met for their first day of school each year! Our hearts ache for all of you as you journey through this loss. Please know you are prayed for and thought of by so many who knew Mary and cherished her friendship. We wish you peace. Clark and Laurie Hervert, Ami, Adam and Mitchell and their families.

Laurie Hervert - December 07, 2014 at 08:37 PM

AH

“ To the best teacher my children had. You taught them so much-building that foundation in Kindergarten. We will treasure all the memories.

Holly, Hanna, Ann, & Roger Heil

Ann Heil - December 07, 2014 at 08:23 PM

CS

“ Steve, Ben, Andrew & Derek,
I am so sorry to hear about the loss of such a special person to all of you. Mary was always so kind. Back in Ord after the birth of our first child, Mary came to our door with a delicious dinner she had made for us. She was so thoughtful and giving. Wishing all of you peace at this time.

Rick & Cori Sonnenfeld

Cori Sonnenfeld - December 07, 2014 at 04:31 PM

JS

“ We are so very sorry to hear of Mary's passing..The memories you have in your hearts will help sustain you through this painful time

Jack and Julie Schmidt - December 07, 2014 at 01:19 PM

MW

“ Steve and family -
We knew you guys in Ansley and have lost touch through the years, but I learned about Mary's passing through my facebook newsfeed. We are so sorry for you loss. Our hearts hurt for you and our prayers our with you. I don't know if you remember us our not. Matt was the minister at Ansley Church of Christ and we got to babysit Benjamin when he was a baby.
Matt and Kathy Wentz

Matt and Kathy Wentz - December 06, 2014 at 10:21 PM

KL

“ We are so very sorry for the loss of Mary. She was such a beautiful person. You are all in our thoughts and prayers.
Jim, Kris and Sam Lech
Kassidy, Craig, and Braxton Wachter

Kris Lech - December 06, 2014 at 09:53 PM

MK

“ Mary and I were born about three weeks apart in Atkinson and knew each other the entire time we were growing up. We even attended the same college, Kearney State. At an early age, I think we knew we'd be friends for life. She was one of the kindest, most positive, and most caring people any of us would ever know. Our lives were so much better for knowing her. My deepest sympathy to Steve, the boys, and the entire family. I'm so sorry for your loss.

Mike Krysl
Sioux City, IA

Mike Krysl - December 06, 2014 at 08:57 PM

CD

“*Mary raised exceptional children whom we're sure she was unbelievably proud of. They are a perfect example of everything wonderful she brought to this world.*

candace dick - December 06, 2014 at 01:22 PM



“*Let It Snow was purchased for the family of Mary M. Dennis.*



December 06, 2014 at 12:01 PM

JW

“*Jennifer Wescott lit a candle in memory of Mary M. Dennis*



Jennifer Wescott - December 06, 2014 at 10:06 AM

NL

“*I only knew Mary for a short time at Wilcox but so glad that I had the fortune to meet her. She was always so kind, friendly, down to earth, funny, and gracious. She will be greatly missed!!!! She loved her family so much!! Thoughts and prayers to everyone who knew Mary because she was that a ray of sunshine that made your day so much more special. Her laugh and smile just lifted you up and you like to be around her because it was contagious.*

Nurita B. Lambert - December 06, 2014 at 09:34 AM


SB

“ *Dear Steve and family,*

Jana and I were shocked to hear about Mary. She was such a sweet soul, and an excellent teacher and friend. We are praying for you all, and we will miss Mary. Such a loss.

With sympathy, Sharon Blaha and Jana Edghill, Kristin, Austin, and Katy.

Sharon Blaha - December 06, 2014 at 08:48 AM

 Rod
Turnquist

“ *Rod Turnquist lit a candle in memory of Mary M. Dennis*



Rod Turnquist - December 06, 2014 at 06:10 AM

 Denise
Lee

“ *I am so sorry for your loss. Words cannot express the sorrow I feel for all that knew and loved Mary. She was a special friend. I will miss her laugh and her easy going nature. The world was a better place having Mary in it.*



Denise Lee - December 05, 2014 at 11:18 PM

KT

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



Kathleen Turnquist - December 05, 2014 at 10:19 PM

KT

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Kathleen Turnquist - December 05, 2014 at 10:13 PM

KT

“ *Steve and Ben, Andrew and Derek. We were so sorry and sad to hear about Mary's passing. I didn't remember that she is just a few months older than Rod and Greg. Definitely too young to have left us. Our prayers are with you. May God bless you all in this time of sorrow and help you through the days to come. She was a very sweet and special niece to us. Uncle Don just doesn't try to travel much anymore and hasn't been feeling the best so we won't be able to come but will think of you on Tuesday.*

*Love you all,
Aunt Kathy & Uncle Don*

Kathleen Turnquist - December 05, 2014 at 09:48 PM

KT

“ Kathleen Turnquist lit a candle in memory of Mary M. Dennis



Kathleen Turnquist - December 05, 2014 at 09:43 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Mary M. Dennis.



December 05, 2014 at 05:45 PM

MJ

“ I worked with Mary in the Assessor's office in Holdrege. I am in shock as I know you are. She was such a nice person and I loved working with her. She loved you all so much. Praying for you. So sad. --Mary Jones

Mary Jones - December 05, 2014 at 05:25 PM



“ Let It Snow was purchased for the family of Mary M. Dennis.



December 05, 2014 at 03:35 PM



“ *Sweet Tenderness was purchased for the family of Mary M. Dennis.*



December 05, 2014 at 03:21 PM