



Bruce A. Eichhorst

October 10, 1956 - September 18, 2024

Bruce A. Eichhorst, age 67, of Kearney, passed away Wednesday, September 18, 2024 at his home. We will be having Bruce's life celebration Saturday, October 12, 2024 at Harmon Park Activity Center (3100 5th Avenue, Kearney, NE) from 10am to 1:00pm. No flowers, please. Memorials may be made to a charity of your choice. Please visit www.hlmkfuneral.com to leave a tribute or message of condolence. Horner Lieske McBride & Kuhl Funeral and Cremation Services in Kearney is assisting the family with arrangements.

Our dad Bruce Alan Eichhorst (Oct. 10, 1956 - Sept. 18, 2024) would have liked to live another 20 years, but cancer had other ideas.

He was born in Oshkosh, WI to Lyle and Millie (Meyer) Eichhorst where he grew up with 2 younger brothers, Bart and Dean, and 1 sister, Barbara. As a kid he did the usual stuff, except for perhaps putting some popcorn up his nose that greatly concerned his first grade teacher who recommended he might not be mature enough to advance to second grade. Dad joined the US Navy after graduating from Oshkosh North High School. Assigned to a carrier out of Key West, FL, he cruised to Cuba, the Mediterranean, and the North Sea. His aversion to alcohol might be attributed to drinking warm beer in Germany and taking an unpleasant Liberty Boat ride back to the carrier where he remained in bed for the next 2 days.

Dad met mom, Jean Marie Patterson, on a University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh combined Biology-Geography Departments field trip. He was concerned she might fall into a bonfire one night during some partying, but mom strongly refutes that assertion. A little more than a year later they were married on June 22, 1985. They lived in Grand Forks, ND for 12 years, where he received a Biology PhD from the University of North Dakota. They had the 3 of us, too, Connor (Lincoln, NE), Phoebe Marr (Jared) (Austin, TX), and Ciara (Seattle, WA).

A passionate field biologist and teacher, he started out studying the American Coot, turned to Western and Clark's grebes, and ultimately became enamored with skinks! He liked the field so much, that his honeymoon with mom was a Minnesota camping trip featuring National Wildlife Refuges. She was a good sport. As a teacher, he wanted his students to call him Bruce and was known to wear topic-coordinated t-shirts of animal poop, SpongeBob SquarePants or a favorite Green Bay Packers or Star Wars one.

Our Kearney neighborhood friends called him Biology Bruce. We had mist nets in the yard to catch and band birds, turtles, snakes, bats, and other types of 'rescued' creatures until they could be returned to a more appropriate environment. We loved it.

One of my favorite memories of dad was watching the Simpson's with him when I was little (mom didn't really approve) and going to a Green Bay Packers game (Connor). I loved that he indulged us anytime we wanted ice cream, was silly, and cheered us on in our interests (Phoebe). Mine is that he always loved to watch TV with me, go to the movies, and taught me about animals especially our turtles Berry, Lemon, and Francine. Plus, he helped me with math even if I would cry and scream (Ciara). We all loved our dad. I treasure his joyful, loving smile when we married and he first saw his beautiful babies (Jean).

Connor, Phoebe, Ciara, and Jean Eichhorst

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

OCT **12**. 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Harmon Park Activity Center
3100 5th Avenue
Kearney, NE 68845

Tribute Wall

YW

“ *Your friends at Jackson Walker purchased the Dreams From the Heart Bouquet for the family of Bruce A. Eichhorst.*



Your friends at Jackson Walker - October 07, 2024 at 03:56 PM

JH

“ *Hi, I'm Jay, and I was one of Bruce's students. I had the pleasure of working with him as my research mentor at the Oak Lake Field Station, and I also got to serve as his teaching assistant for a summer course at the station. I learned a tremendous amount from him through these experiences and through the numerous classes I took with him, and he grew to be one of my favorite people in the department during my time at SDSU. I always went to him for advice about working with non-game species, as he had such an infectious passion for such species, and I always wanted to work in that area of wildlife. He was always very supportive of me and my research/presentations. Was also fun to joke around with him because I'm a Vikings fan haha! Genuinely a wonderful and goofy guy who all the students loved. My most sincere condolences to his entire family.*

Jay Holm - October 05, 2024 at 08:15 PM

RL

“ Jean:
Our hearts ached for you and your kids when we heard of Bruce's passing. We are praying for you as you are grieving and pray that memories being shared and stories being told will bring comfort to you and you kids. We plan on coming back to Kearney for the service to be with you. Rick & Kristen Larsen

Rick Larsen - September 27, 2024 at 04:30 PM

VV

“ *Dear Jean and Children, I was so sorry to hear of Bruce's untimely passing. My deepest condolences to you and your family. Valerie Vierk*

Valerie Vierk - September 25, 2024 at 07:31 PM

RZ

“ *Prayers for you and the family. Another classmate gone too soon.....*

Randy Zentner OWHS Class of '74.

Randy Zentner - September 25, 2024 at 07:28 PM

DK

“ Jean -

I am so sorry to hear of Bruce's passing.

He will live on in your hearts and memories. His legacy will be the sense of curiosity and desire to continue learning he instilled in your children and his students.

My sincere sympathy to you and your family

You are in my thoughts and prayers.

--Diana Keith

Diana Keith - September 25, 2024 at 01:10 PM

PT

“ Dear Jean and family,

I am so saddened to hear that Bruce has passed. I just talked with him in July at our class reunion. I'm so very sorry. My thoughts are with you.

Pat Tiedemann

Patricia Tiedemann - September 23, 2024 at 05:49 PM

BE

“ RIP Big Brother...

See you on the other side and say Hi to everyone there.

Bart Eichhorst - September 21, 2024 at 03:15 PM

MF

“ I texted Uncle Bruce with the intention of sharing a fond memory I had with him. Given the timing, he never saw it as I had unknowingly sent the message only an hour after he had passed. Here is the message with the memory I had sent:

"Hey Uncle Bruce, I'm extremely sorry to hear of your prognosis. I know my condolences probably don't mean much at the moment. However, I did want to reach out and share a very fond memory I have.

In 3rd grade I did a report on some of the various raptors found in North America. My mom told me you would be a great resource to gather information from. I called you on the phone and you spent probably over an hour helping me understand how fast the different predators flew and how impressive their eyesight was. The part that stuck out to me the most though, was you mentioning how bald eagles' migratory patterns went right through Wabasha, MN. At the time we weren't living too far from there and you suggested to me that I should ask my mom to take me there if I was really interested.

Although we never traveled to Wabasha for their migration I still remember our conversation quite well over 20 years ago now. Your patience and ability to help a 9 year old understand some more complicated topics is a gift. And I wanted to let you know that although we didn't live close to each other you had a positive impact on me, especially in that moment.

I hope you can spend some nice time with my mom and the rest of your family in the next couple of days. I know my mom will cherish it. "

Matt Fialkowski - September 20, 2024 at 12:57 PM

 Cindy
Houlden

“ *I will miss you at our annual New Years Eve celebrations. The laughs, the chats, puppy snuggles - the memories.* ”



Cindy Houlden - September 20, 2024 at 09:57 AM

 Cindy
Houlden

“ *2 files added to the tribute wall* ”



Cindy Houlden - September 20, 2024 at 09:54 AM