



Donovan Thomas Walsh

January 28, 1961 - March 17, 2025

Donovan Thomas Walsh, whose loving heart strengthened and steadied those around him, died March 17, 2025, surrounded by his family. He was 64. A celebration of life will be held on Saturday, September 20th from noon-2:30 pm, at the Gail & Mike Yanney Pavilion. A short program will be followed by time to socialize and enjoy light refreshments. A private family burial is planned. In lieu of flowers memorials are suggested to the University of Wyoming Foundation – Ann Pickard & Dan Smith President’s Endowed Scholarship or the American Heart Association.

No one had more affection for animals or more patience with daughters.

Donovan was born Jan. 28, 1961, to cattle ranchers Gayle J. Hazelwood Walsh (d. 1988) and Walter Thomas Walsh (d. 2013). He was the oldest of four siblings and was frequently joined by several cousins as they grew up on a ranch outside Ft. Laramie, Wyoming.

Donovan grew up attending mass at St. Rose of Lima, reading pulp sci-fi novels on horseback and catching “Dr. Who” on PBS when the signal was good. In 1977, when he was 16 years old, he nearly crashed his car driving past an outdoor screening of “Star Wars.” He had never seen anything like it.

His own adventure was leaving the ranch to study computer science at the

University of Wyoming. He became the first in his family to earn a college degree, then ventured further into the world to help realize the future promised by Asimov, Clarke, and the rest. He remained an avid technologist throughout his life and became a mentor to many during his 40-year career in IT.

He married Christine Ann Halvorson Walsh, now the assistant director of the Kearney Public Library, in a snowstorm on Dec. 27, 1987. They began married life in Denver before moving to Kearney where their daughters, Sarah and Maire grew up.

Donovan bought Sarah her first “Star Wars” action figures and taught Maire to shoot. He encouraged Sarah to pursue a career in journalism, and he logged thousands of cross-country miles taking Maire and the sheep to 4H events. He encouraged their many interests – soccer, 4-H, drama, dance, speech, music, taekwondo and more.

Music was another love in his life ranging from Black Sabbath and Dire Straits to guitar, banjo, ukulele and the bagpipes. He played in a Denver pipe band and enjoyed the World Pipe Band championships in Glasgow, Scotland including a visit with the maker of his pipes.

He insisted he would never love a small dog, but he allowed Sarah to adopt a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel named Teddy — and then became Teddy’s devoted caretaker when Sarah left for college. Five more pampered Cavaliers followed: Cherry, Libby, Daisy and Danny Boy.

Survived by his wife, daughters, and siblings Rodney (Gwen) Walsh, Justina (Todd) Malm and Karen Walsh as well as many relatives and several sweet dogs.

He is greatly missed.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life Service

SEP **20**. 12:00 PM - 2:30 PM (CT)

Gail & Michael Yanney Pavilion
2020 West 11th Street
Kearney, NE 68845

Tribute Wall

DH

“ Thinking of all of you and sending all of you huge hugs and lots of love! ❤️❤️

Donovan, was such a wonderful man with a great personality! So many fond memories when we had neighborhood gatherings.

Diane Hagihara/Greg Hill and Jim Hagihara

Diane Hagihara - September 19, 2025 at 01:16 PM

JW

“ We love you and miss you so much, Donovan. We will celebrate your life and continue to take care of your family--always. Thanks for your wisdom, your humor and bringing strength to our family.

Love, Judy



Judy Whitman - September 11, 2025 at 12:06 AM