



Kellie S. John

February 8, 1955 - February 21, 2026

Kellie S. John, age 71, of Kearney, passed away Saturday, February 21, 2026, at her home. Mass of Christian Burial will be 10:30 a.m., Tuesday, March 3rd, 2026, at St. James Catholic Church in Kearney with Archbishop – Designate James R. Golka as Celebrant. Interment will follow at the Kearney Cemetery. Visitation will be 5:00 p.m. with a Christian Wake following at 6:00 p.m., on Monday, March 2nd, 2026, at St. James Catholic Church. Memorials are suggested to St. James Catholic Church. Please visit www.hlmkfuneral.com to leave a tribute or message of condolence. Horner Lieske McBride & Kuhl Funeral and Cremation Services is in charge of arrangements.

Kellie Sue John was born on February 8, 1955 in Kearney, NE to Melvin and Beulah John. She grew up in the Sumner/Miller area and enjoyed her youth with her brother, Dan on the John Angus Farms. She graduated from SEM High School in 1973.

Kellie dedicated 52 years of service to Buffalo County. Her career began in the surveyors office in November 1973 until September 5, 1978. She then started working in the Register of Deeds office where she worked as an Abstract Clerk through 1984. In January of 1985 she was appointed as Deputy Register of Deeds. In January of 1999 she took oath and became the Register of Deeds of Buffalo County and held that office until the time of her passing. She fulfilled this roll with pride, demonstrating an extraordinary work ethic and strong belief in the importance of the oath that she took. If Kellie did something for you, you could relax knowing it was done to perfection!

Kellie lived a life defined by dedication to her faith, family, and friends. She was an active member of the St James Catholic Church and served as a volunteer in the ministries and committees of the church. She was creative, loved the color blue, enjoyed collecting angels, doing calligraphy projects for others and decorating her home with art pieces of faith. She enjoyed life's simple pleasures...sharing a good glass of wine with her loved ones, traveling, music, and especially watching her nieces and nephews activities, and caring for her parents and family. She had a remarkable gift of making others feel special, important, and loved. Receiving a gift from Kellie was like getting two gifts...one was the beautiful way it was wrapped and the second was that you knew the meaningful gift inside was chosen specifically for you. Kellie was a strong presence in Buffalo County and the community, serving in a multitude of organizations and touching countless lives. She was a member of the Nebraska Association of County Clerks, Register of Deeds and Election Commissioners (NACREC); NIRMA; and NACO where she held many various positions, too numerous to list. One of Kellie's greatest accomplishments was being instrumental in the implementation of the learning management system for the Register of Deeds. Kellie was active in the community serving in the following organizations; United Way, Buffalo County Legal Secretaries, Chamber Of Commerce, Kearney Catholic High School, MONA, Trails and Rails Museum , Crane Theater, Habitat for Humanity, Buffalo County Community Partners and P.E.O.- EG.

She is lovingly remembered by her mother, Beulah of Kearney; brother, Dan (Pam) John of Miller, NE; nephews & nieces, Eric (Stacy) John of Miller, NE.; Stacia Tallon of Hill City, SD, Lexie John of Rapid City, SD.; Clinton John of Miller, NE.; great-nephews and nieces, Deric and Isaac John of Miller, NE., and Grace John of Laramie, Wyoming.; Taylor, Brody, and Maddy Tallon of Hill City, SD. and many extended family members and friends. She was preceded in death by her father, Melvin in 2022.

Although we grieve the loss of Kellie, we know she is now at peace in the presence of the Lord and more than likely having some ice cream with her

dad while they play a game of cards. As she told many before her passing, “ I am not afraid to die, but I sure do hate to leave all those that I love behind. In heaven there will be no more pain, no more suffering, no more tears, it is going to be glorious!”

You will be forever missed Kellie!

“Love you to the ends of the earth.”

Cemetery Details

Kearney Cemetery

4400 Avenue I
Kearney, NE 68847

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 2. 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

St. James Catholic Church
3801 Avenue A
Kearney, NE 68847

Christian Wake Service

MAR 2. 6:00 PM (CT)

St. James Catholic Church
3801 Avenue A
Kearney, NE 68847

Mass of Christian Burial

MAR 3. 10:30 AM (CT)

St. James Catholic Church
3801 Avenue A
Kearney, NE 68847

Tribute Wall

JB

“Continued Condolences to the John family! Kellie and I go back a long way, over sixty years ago when we first met in elementary school in Miller as we were in the same grade. Over the years we have remained good friends, although I would not say that was always the relationship. Kellie was always much more mature than I, and dare, I say all the boys in my class while attending school. Often I would do something silly and Kelly could be seen rolling her eyes, which I am sure was appropriate. However, there were times when Kellie would let down her guard and come down to my level. One of those times was after play practice during our senior year when I, Connie Shelden, and Kellie were in Kellie's brother, Dan's car (I do not know why Dan allowed her his car), and we found ourselves in a local Sumner hayfield and more precisely Kellie found a haystack in that Hayfield. I will not go into anymore details, but we laughed about that incident throughout many years. I, along with our SEM classmates will never forget the all-night graduation party at Kellie's house, hosted by her parents, Melvin and Beulah John. After graduation we both ended up in Kearney and both played softball. Kellie was a great softball player as a catcher and played for many years garnering many accolades. In the 1984-86 era I attended UNO in Omaha and was researching and writing a paper on the settlement of Buffalo County, Nebraska. Kellie had earlier started working at the Register of Deeds office and when back in the Kearney area I did quite a lot of original deed searches. I always contacted Kellie and she always had everything prepared for me in my searches. I continued to do occasional local historic searches like that over the past 40 years and Kellie always had the deed books ready for me upon my arrival. After moving to Virginia, when I visited family and friends in Nebraska, I usually always stopped by to see Kellie as I always knew where she would be during the working week days, in the Register of Deeds office. From there she would aid me in planning reunion dinner dates with our classmates and other things. She was always professional and I always treasured our friendship. I also want to recognize and Thank a longtime friend and school classmate, Rhonda Richards, who was Kellie's best friend coming out of our school days and remained so.

Rhonda stayed with Kellie in Kearney after learning of her medical condition and remained by Kellie's side through to her passing. It is rare to find such a friend to be there in that most important time of need. Thanks Rhonda for aiding Kellie during that difficult time and also thanks to Kellie's neighbor Gay Warner for helping with Kellie as you did. Kellie, your passing creates a vacancy which can not be replaced but it also serves recognize the importance of friends in our life and to cherish every moment. Rest in Peace Kellie as you will be always cherished and remembered.

Jim Bish - March 06 at 10:22 AM



“ *My husband David and I both went to high school at Sumner with Kellie. And in later years, I would see her at Mass at St James. It's sad that she has already passed away. May she Rest In Peace. And may her family be comforted by the love and good memories that they shared with her. You are all in our thoughts and prayers.*

Maris Bentley - March 03 at 07:29 PM

LF

“ *Layne & Amy Schnacker & family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Kellie S. John.*

Layne & Amy Schnacker & family - March 02 at 01:43 PM

LF

“ *Layne & Amy Schnacker & family purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Kellie S. John.*



Layne & Amy Schnacker & family - March 02 at 01:43 PM

PT

“ Pam K. and your Black Hills Energy team purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Kellie S. John.



Pam K. and your Black Hills Energy team - March 02 at 12:01 PM

DT

“ Debbie Fagel and family, RoJeanna Thomas planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Kellie S. John.

Debbie Fagel and family, RoJeanna Thomas - March 01 at 01:28 PM

DT

“ Debbie Fagel and family, RoJeanna Thomas purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Kellie S. John.



Debbie Fagel and family, RoJeanna Thomas - March 01 at 01:28 PM

1C

“ 1973 SEM Classmates purchased the Forever Our Angel Bouquet for the family of Kellie S. John.



1973 SEM Classmates - February 26 at 11:42 AM

1C

“ 1973 SEM Classmates planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Kellie S. John.

1973 SEM Classmates - February 26 at 11:42 AM

D(

“ So sorry to hear about Kellie’s passing. May she rest in God’s kingdom. Condolences to her family.

Donna Harrop (Bentley) - February 25 at 09:02 PM

AO

“ Adams County Register of Deeds Office purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Kellie S. John.



Adams County Register of Deeds Office - February 25 at 01:43 PM

AO

“ Adams County Register of Deeds Office planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Kellie S. John.

Adams County Register of Deeds Office - February 25 at 01:43 PM

BR

“ Kelli you will be missed. Thank you for helping me in my time of need. You will be missed.

Barb Rasmussen - February 24 at 11:54 PM

LZ

“ I'm so very sorry to hear about Kellie. She was a staple in the Courthouse back when I worked there many many years ago. Then I had a chance to see her at many 4-H beef shows in recent years. Always had a smile and a wave. May God welcome her with open arms.

Luann Zastrow - February 24 at 05:43 PM

JB

“ Jenny Brown lit a candle in memory of Kellie John



Jenny Brown - February 24 at 03:41 PM

DN

“ My deepest condolences to Kellie's family and friends. I had the privilege of working with Kellie occasionally for the last several years. I will miss her kind and caring energy, and her true passion for doing what is in the best interest of others. What a gem. Derrick Niederklein

Derrick Niederklein - February 24 at 03:08 PM

BM

“ Kellie was a great mentor; without her, I don't know if I would have survived my first year in office. She was always available for a phone call or email and always a welcoming face at meetings. She will be greatly missed.

Byron Morrow - February 24 at 02:46 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Kellie S. John.*



February 24 at 01:58 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Kellie S. John.

February 24 at 01:58 PM



“ *Tammey lit a candle in memory of Kellie John*



Tammey - February 24 at 01:16 PM



“ *I have worked close to Kelly back in the St James square days, and present days at St James church.
She was always a pleasant lady that always took time to say hello.
Lee Ward*



Lee Ward - February 24 at 10:47 AM

PF

“ Pam wempen Janet Furry purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Kellie S. John.



Pam wempen Janet Furry - February 24 at 10:33 AM

SM

“ My past real estate profession often took me to the Register of Deeds office. Kellie always had a big smile and an offer to help. Her knowledge and cheerful smile will be missed.

steve mccormick - February 23 at 08:46 PM



“ Kellie was my Godmother, and although we didn't speak often, she was always thoughtful and I know she cared for me. I always thought of her as a constant and positive person in my life and I will miss having her. I am glad she is no longer suffering and I am sure she'll keep an eye on my still.

Roxanna Carrizales - February 23 at 05:06 PM

LH

“ I first met Kellie when I was learning how to do title searches. She was always willing to help you understand her records. Then when I became an elected official, she was the first person to reach out and offer her support and guidance. She was always willing to offer advice and support. She was a wonderful person and I was lucky enough to call her my friend. She will be missed!

Linz Hendricks - February 23 at 05:04 PM

JB

“ *Kellie and I first met when we both were elected to office. Throughout the years, Kellie has been a valued friend. She was a very kind, caring, and thoughtful person. She will be greatly missed, both personally and professionally.*

Jean Bauer - February 23 at 01:44 PM

DB

Kellie was a consummate professional and a great public servant. She had passion for her elected position as Registrar of Deeds and served in that position for many years. Rarely did the public come in contact with her office but the title company employees and the local attorney all sing her praise. After retiring, I became involved in Genealogy and I visited the basement of the Courthouse, where all of the old records from Buffalo County were stored and Kellie and her staff bent over backwards to assist me. She treated those precious documents like she would a newborn child, with gentle touch, pride, and love of history. Getting to know Kellie over the years, that is how she lived her life. Gentle, proud and professional. She will be missed. RIP, Kellie. I was proud to call you my friend.

Dr Steve Bennett - February 23 at 08:18 PM

TA

So sorry to hear about Kellie. Such a beautiful soul and servant for Buffalo County and our Lord. Fly high Kellie! You will be missed!

Tammey - February 24 at 01:14 PM

LB

Kellie was always there for me when I had questions about recording documents. She was the first one I called.

LOIS BLOCK - February 25 at 01:41 PM

JW

Kellie was a true servant, always willing to dig deeper to find what you were looking for. She valued history and the preservation of records. I appreciated her patience with all my research inquiries, especially when she picked up on a comment I made about wishing I could find a picture of an old cemetery. She knew just where to look for the plat of that cemetery which has not existed for 100 years. What a thrill to complete the story. Kellie was a blessing to so many and will truly be missed.

Jean Widdowson

Jean Widdowson - February 26 at 12:50 PM

DB

What I appreciated about Kellie was her attention to detail and always having the document right before it would be recorded. As a lawyer looking for ownership of property for clients, I could always depend upon the last recorded deed being accurate. Kellie had a great teacher in Margaret Swanson and she continued to provide excellent in the work she did at the Register of Deeds Office. She truly exemplified Matthew 25:23, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Dan Bahensky - March 02 at 08:20 AM

DB

I met and worked with Kellie since I was first elected Douglas County Register of Deeds in 2004. She was not only VERY knowledgeable in her work, but she was also VERY kindhearted. If you knew Kellie, you loved Kellie - we were all very blessed to have had her in our lives. Rest in peace, my dear

Diane Battiato - March 16 at 01:21 PM