



Curt Nielsen

November 15, 1962 - December 18, 2023

*** The service will be viewable via this link: <https://boxcast.tv/view/curt-nielsen-funeral-crncqvgfwfnhpf1boj> ***

Dr. Curtis Paul Nielsen, 61, of Cedar Falls, IA, died of cancer on Monday, December 18, 2023, at home surrounded by his family.

Curtis P. Nielsen was born to Adolph “Ted” and Elva (Runestad) Nielsen on November 15, 1962, in Cedar Falls, IA. He was the youngest of six children. Being several years younger than his two brothers and three sisters, he received plenty of care as an infant and throughout his life. He attended Malcolm Price Laboratory School on the campus of the University of Northern Iowa from preschool through 12th grade. Much of his character was developed through his family and experiences at Price Lab School. In May 1981 he graduated from the high school and embarked on a challenge to figure out what he wanted to do with his life. Curt practiced what he preached about being a life-long learner, receiving four degrees from the University of Northern Iowa – BA in 1986, BA in 1989, MAE in 1997, and EdD in 2012.

Curt married the love of his life, Janet Gibbs, on August 15, 1986, in Cedar Falls. To this union two sons were born, David in 1990 and Terrence “Terry” in 1993. Curt was faithfully involved in their lives growing up, and coaching them in athletics, academics, and life. He continued to play a dedicated role in their

adult lives.

Curt was a UNI Panther through and through. He is proud that both sons, like himself, received their education at Price Laboratory School/Northern University High School and both furthered their education at UNI, receiving teaching degrees. Both daughters-in-law are UNI graduates as well.

Curt began his teaching career with the Cedar Falls Community School District at Lincoln Elementary in 1989, serving in several capacities until 2000. He then taught at Price Laboratory School from 2000 until the closing of the school in 2012. He remained with the University of Northern Iowa's Department of Teaching within the College of Education. He was currently serving as Department Head and Associate Professor in the Department of Teaching. Curt received the Gold Star Teaching of Excellence Award in 1999. He thoroughly enjoyed serving on many committees locally, state-wide, and nationally as well as presenting at educational conferences throughout the country.

Being an avid golfer, one item on Curt's bucket list was to attend The Masters Golf Tournament. This dream was realized in 2022 due to the extreme generosity of his former UNI golf coach and genuine friend, Ken Green.

Curt was baptized and confirmed at Nazareth Lutheran Church in Cedar Falls. He was currently a member of Orchard Hill Church in Cedar Falls.

Curt is survived by his wife of 37 years, Janet (Gibbs) Nielsen; son, David (Tara) Nielsen of Cedar Falls, IA; son, Terrence (Hannah) Nielsen of West Des Moines, IA; grandchildren: Hudson, Mallory, Sloane, and a baby due in May 2024; brother, Jerel (Yvonne) Nielsen of Fountain, MN; sister, Marlys (Simeon) Austin of Chester, VA; sister, Maren Nielsen of Fountain, MN; brother-in-law, David Voorhis of Longmont, CO; sister-in-law, Mary Nielsen of Cedar Falls, IA;

mother-in-law, Shirley Gibbs of Hawkeye, IA; sister & brother-in-law, Carol (Gibbs) and Randy Winkey of Aplington, IA; sister & brother-in-law, Jean (Gibbs) and Bruce Pape of Maynard, IA; numerous cousins, as well as many nieces and nephews.

Curt was preceded in death by his parents, Adolph and Elva Nielsen, brother Lynn Nielsen, sister Marilyn (Nielsen) Voorhis, and his father-in-law Wayne Gibbs.

Services will be 10:30 a.m. Saturday, December 23, 2023, in the Community Center at Orchard Hill Church, Cedar Falls, IA. Visitation will be 3:00-6:00 p.m. Friday, December 22nd at Richardson Funeral Service in Cedar Falls.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be directed to the family for a scholarship fund in his name.

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC **22**. 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

Richardson Funeral Service
615 Main Street
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
(319) 266-3525
richardsonfuneralservice@gmail.com
<http://richardson.funeralplan2.com>

Memorial Service

DEC **23**. 10:30 AM (CT)

Orchard Hill Church
3900 Orchard Hill Drive
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Tribute Wall

EM

“ Hi there,
My name is Emily and I was also one of the many students who Dr. Nielsen had an impact on at UNI. I just randomly came across a document he wrote in 2020 (to show I completed a requirement) and it has reminded me of how kind and great of a person he was. His personality was just awesome. I wanted to take the time to remind you his impact still lives on everyday. I am now a Teacher of the Deaf in New York and he was one of the many building blocks that got me to my dream job. I am who I am because I crossed paths with him, and for that I am so grateful. I am still sending so much love to your family! Hugs!
Sincerely,
Emily Paul

emily - August 16, 2024 at 11:34 AM

CP

“ My family let me know of Curt's death when we were together over Christmas. I knew he had grown into a special man, husband, dad, and educator. We were part of a group of friends spanning over many years at Malcolm Price Laboratory School/Northern University High School. So many memories of our friendship, to include after supper basketball games at school on the outdoor courts on the playground. I can still hear his laugh and see his smile as I consider these memories of an amazing childhood with friends I loved to be with.
Peace be with you Nielsen family, knowing that he is with our Lord and Savior in Heaven.

Carrie (Dillon) Penix - January 11, 2024 at 11:06 PM

PH

Love & condolences to my Nielsen Family. Our family's have been together, it seems forever! With love, Peggy & family!

peggy nelson leeds hoover. - March 10, 2024 at 07:49 AM

PH

Thinking of you, & never will forget our special times & memories together! WTH love always, Peggy Nelson Leeds Hoover

peggy hoover - July 05, 2024 at 02:08 PM

PE

*Hope you recievex my msgs.
Sending Love! Peggy*

peggy - August 07, 2024 at 02:42 PM

PE

*These Are my msgs!!
Peggy*

peggy - August 07, 2024 at 02:44 PM

PE

Hope you can see the messageS &. Comments!

peggy - August 07, 2024 at 03:30 PM

DM

“ *DIANE MCCARTY lit a candle in memory of Curt Nielsen*



DIANE MCCARTY - January 10, 2024 at 04:13 PM

DM

We were so sorry to learn recently of Curt's fight with cancer and then his death. I knew Curt through his brother, Lynn, as I taught under Lynn's leadership when he was the elementary principal at PLS. Curt always had a smile/smurk on his face so it made you think he had something up his sleeve. (He probably did!) How sad to lose another good man in the Nielsen family. Our condolences to the Nielsen family.
Diane McCarty

DIANE MCCARTY - January 10, 2024 at 04:25 PM

JF

“ *To Janet and Family. I was deeply saddened when I heard of Curt's passing although I knew his health situation. I am sorry to say that I was unable to attend the visitation or the funeral as I am with my wife most of the time as she is at Martin Health Center. Judy is with Dementia and also extremely feeble. Curt was a teacher at Lincoln School when I subbed for Deb Beving when she was at home with Haley. I knew him previously but got to know him much better during that time. He was an outstanding teacher and also a 'spark plug' for the students and staff.. His skills helped me so much during my time there. I loved his joyous spirit and his sense of humor, He was indeed..the consummate educator. His life was taken too soon and want you all to know that I thought the world of him. My heart goes out to you all and extend to you my deepest sympathy.*
Sincerely, John Focht

John Focht - December 28, 2023 at 03:44 PM

AM

“ *Cross country and baseball games. Love hearing is Kind words during games and runs..*

Andrew mallon - December 22, 2023 at 05:28 PM

RV

“ I had the privilege of working with Curt at PLS for many years. He was a great teacher, leader and beloved colleague. His smile and great sense of humor lightened any room he was in. We will be deeply missed.

Rick Vanderwall - December 22, 2023 at 09:38 AM

TH

“ Thurman H. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Curt Nielsen.

Thurman H. - December 22, 2023 at 08:58 AM



“ Curt was a wonderful role model for both Dylan and Tad as they attended PLS. His humility demonstrated clearly that he had no idea just what a huge impact he was having on everyone he met. Rest now in God's love, Curt. You will be greatly missed by so many.
- The Klenske Family

Lisa Klenske - December 21, 2023 at 07:35 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Curt Nielsen.



December 21, 2023 at 03:51 PM

RA

“ Radhi had the distinct honor of serving as Curt's doctoral advisor and his dissertation chair. I hooded him on his graduation day. He will be remembered for his integrity, good sense of humor love of family, and loyalty to friends.

Radhi Al-mabuk - December 21, 2023 at 01:54 PM

BB

“ I will never forget the time in 4th/5th grade when he stood on top of a desk and proclaimed as loud as he could "a lot is two words!" This of course was just one of his many cadence quips grounded in a deep empathy and academic understanding to carry others forward. I remember another time I got docked a significant amount of credit on an assignment for having significant amounts of rubber cement residue all over the place! I thought to myself "you have to be kidding me..I can't lose that many points for just glue?!" Looking back now I understand it was only out of kindness that he wanted to teach me that presentation and the way you present yourself and your work matters. Basically don't obsess over the small stuff, but the small stuff does matter. It was a give and take relationship as I remember another time I was actually able to prove to him that my puppy at home in fact did eat my homework! Rest easy you will be missed.

Brandon Brown - December 21, 2023 at 12:15 AM

SH

“ So sorry for your loss Marlys and family. Prayers, love to you and yours. Sherri 🙏❤️

Sherri Howard - December 20, 2023 at 07:55 PM

JN

“ Dear Janet, David, Terry, and Curt's extended family, I am so very sorry to hear of Curt's passing. I have fond memories of playing and getting into mischief with Curt when we were young kids - we always had fun together. He will be missed for sure. My deepest sympathy to you all, Joel Nielsen (cousin)

Joel Nielsen - December 20, 2023 at 06:29 PM

BB

“ I was fortunate to attend Price Lab School with Curt from nursery school to 12th grade.
Curt was a natural leader, honest to all, respectful to others and just a great human being.
Condolences and prayers to the family

Brian Bowman - December 20, 2023 at 06:15 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Curt Nielsen.



December 20, 2023 at 06:14 PM

JJ

“ I was fortunate to meet Curt in the first month I moved to Cedar Falls - as a colleague at Lincoln Elementary...he was younger than me by a few years but I immediately recognized him as one of, "The Quality" as my grandmother would have said. Curt was a steady and calming presence with a great sense about kids, a masterful teacher with a warm sense of humor...RIP Curt, the many, many lives you impacted in a positive way live on...



Jack Darland Jr - December 20, 2023 at 05:12 PM

KM

“ This is how I will remember Curt. He remained a strong faithful man full of gratitude. We will miss him greatly... Kim Miller



Kim Miller - December 20, 2023 at 03:45 PM

LC

Yes! I agree!

Lyn Countryman - December 21, 2023 at 11:20 AM

Profile icon

“ Fairest of All was purchased for the family of Curt Nielsen.



December 20, 2023 at 10:33 AM

LG

“ Love, Katie, Dan, kids and Andrew & Greg planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Curt Nielsen.

Love, Katie, Dan, kids and Andrew & Greg - December 20, 2023 at 10:33 AM

RD

“ My sympathy to the family.

Robin Darland - December 20, 2023 at 10:17 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Curt Nielsen.



December 20, 2023 at 07:49 AM

RD

“ Robin Dada purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Curt Nielsen.



Robin Dada - December 20, 2023 at 06:41 AM

DJ

“ I’m really sorry Janet, David, and Terry and your whole family. Curt interviewed me when I applied for the PLS band job and has been a friend ever since. His wit helped me with the loss of my wife. I’m so sorry. Bad stuff happens to good people. God loves and supports us through sorrow and joy. Curt was such a kind man.

Dusty Johnson - December 19, 2023 at 11:33 PM

JR

“ Dr. Nielsen was one of the best I’ve ever met. He was always ready to greet me with a friendly smile and a joke he’s had up his sleeve. He’s made such an impact on me throughout my years at UNI, and it hurts my heart that others won’t get the same experience. Sending all my love

Jami Rodriguez - December 19, 2023 at 10:53 PM

MW

“ He was one of the greatest. I had just brought his name up in conversation about my favorite Teachers, even 16 years after my Social Studies class. To this day, someone who I was thankful to have learned from. He was one of the people who made MPLS such a great place to be. My deepest condolences.

Mason R. Walsh - December 19, 2023 at 09:10 PM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Curt Nielsen.



December 19, 2023 at 07:57 PM

JF

“ Jeff Doidge & Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Curt Nielsen.

Jeff Doidge & Family - December 19, 2023 at 07:57 PM