



Nicholas M. Kollasch

October 10, 1985 - May 21, 2020

CEDAR FALLS – Nicholas “Nick” Kollasch, 34, of Cedar Falls died Thursday, May 21, 2020 at his home.

He was born October 10, 1985 in Cedar Falls, the son of Matthew and Patricia “Colleen” (Degen) Kollasch.

Nick graduated from Northern University High School in 2004. At NU he made lifelong friends, including his French instructor, mentor, and friend, Lowell Hoeft, who was a strong influence in his interest and fluency in the French language. Nick enjoyed speaking the language with his stepmother, Beatrice, and her family. Nick had a natural inclination for the French language, and this influenced his decision to attend the Iowa Culinary Institute in Ankeny. There he represented the ICI in the Best Buddies Chef Challenge fundraiser for mentoring individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In competition with prestigious chefs in the Des Moines area, he was proud to be awarded second place.

Nick had many interests and passions, and he went into each one with fearless enthusiasm. He loved to try fresh new recipes and proudly plate them into works of delectable art. He began his cooking interest as a toddler, always beside his mother in the kitchen, wanting to help with everything. He even wanted to try to fry a robin egg that he found on the sidewalk to see if it

would fry-up. As he grew, his culinary talents were also greatly influenced by Papa Don, Nana Ann, Grandma Betty, his stepfather Bruce, and brother-in-law Curt. His last days and many before were spent creating at the stove, grill, or smoker with Bruce; everyone else could just stand back and watch these “kitchen magicians.”

Nick also loved the adventure of travel. In 2011 and 2013, he visited his father in Warsaw, Poland. In 2011, he interviewed with Alex Baron, the chef at the innovative restaurant, Solec, in Warsaw. Impressed by Nick and the fact that he had travelled with his chef knives and his “whites” (chef coat), he invited Nick to work alongside him. Noting Nick’s skills, enthusiasm, and prowess, Chef Alec offered him a job, but he had to return to Iowa.

With his father’s influence, Nick became a voracious reader, fierce Scrabble player, and an eloquent writer. His wit, humor, and elaborate descriptions were expressed in frequent correspondences to family and friends. He often adorned letters to his beloved nieces, Lydia and Lila, with detailed drawings of his surroundings or himself. He loved music and movies and sharing titles with friends and family.

Nick's passion for cooking was equally matched by his love for the outdoors. Biking was his “medicine” and he loved breezing along the trails in the Cedar Falls and Waterloo and was preparing for a summer biking/camping adventure. He had an eye for noticing the beauty in each day: a catbird, silly squirrel, tiny violet, or the magnificent double rainbow that shown over him a few weeks before his passing. He especially loved relaxing along the water at Black Hawk Park and Big Woods Lake after racing through the dirt trails or playing disc golf with friends.

Nick had many friends and a huge extended family. He enjoyed greeting people he knew on the trails and at HyVee. He loved time with friends and family. But nothing brought a very special smile to his face than being with his

sister Hannah, brother-in-law Curt, and nieces Lydia and Lila. Playing and joking around with the girls was equally soul-warming for Nick and them. Despite Nick's loving torment of Hannah and her friends when they were young, he adored his sister. Throughout his life, he looked up to her for friendship, strength, and resilience.

Nick was employed at various establishments throughout the Cedar Valley including: Mulligans, Western Home Communities, UNI Dining Services & Catering, Toads Bar & Grill, Sunnyside Country Club, Rudy's Tacos and My Verona. While attending the Iowa Culinary Institute, he was employed at the Flying Mango and Django in Des Moines, and The Owl's Nest in Panora. Currently, he managed the bakery at the Cedar Falls Hy-Vee.

He is survived by his mother, Colleen (Bruce) Rieks of Cedar Falls, IA; his father, Matt (Beatrice Spahr) Kollasch of Berlin, Germany; a sister, Hannah (Curt) Saland of North Liberty, IA; step sister, Shelby (Michael) Logan of Austin, TX; step brother, Garrett Rieks of North Liberty; nieces, Lydia and Lila Saland; maternal grandmother, Ann Degen of Bancroft, IA; paternal grandmother, Betty Kollasch of Bancroft; numerous aunts, uncles, cousins and friends. He was preceded in death by infant half brothers, Charles and Sidney; maternal grandfather, Donald H. Degen; and paternal grandparents, Maurice and Elizabeth Kollasch.

Nick's family extends heartfelt gratitude to dear friends, family, and Hy-Vee for all that you shared in his life. Words cannot adequately describe how uplifting you were for him.

One of Nick's favorite quotes is from Leif Enger's novel *Virgil Wander*:
But all I can say is our future is airborne. I never saw a winter so blue. We all dream of finding, but what's wrong with looking? When the sun rises we'll

know what to do.

Nick's friend Alex ended his tribute to him with...

"You will be greatly missed. All I can think is that must have been one helluva dream not to wake up."

Dream on, beautiful dreamer.

A local family directed memorial services will be held at a later date, with inurnment in the St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery in Bancroft. Richardson Funeral Service is assisting the family.

Memorials may be sent to the family for donation to the Cedar Valley Hospitality House in Waterloo and the Northeast Iowa Food Bank.

Cemetery Details

St. John's Cemetery

Bancroft, IA 50517

Tribute Wall



“ I remember nick when we went kim Hennys groups...we would always be talking to each otheryou will be greatly missed....hope we meet up again sometime..

Gayla Ross - July 02, 2020 at 08:37 PM



“ Amatsuka Masatsugu lit a candle in memory of Nicholas M. Kollasch



Amatsuka Masatsugu - June 07, 2020 at 12:24 PM



Nick was a valued member of our Hy-Vee family, and he will be missed.

Sincerely
Paul Schmellik

Amatsuka Masatsugu - June 07, 2020 at 12:32 PM

DW

“ Nick was the most adventurous and energetic people I have ever met. I have so many memories of him that are still in my thoughts as some of the greatest moments of my life. He was truly on of a kind and I'm proud to have called him my friend. I have certainly felt his lose and my condolences to his family members and friends.

Dan White - June 06, 2020 at 07:03 PM

SB

“ Nick was my best friend. We had hard times together but more than that we had some of the greatest times together. He was one of the best people I've ever met. My heart aches with the news of his passing. My thoughts and prayers to Colleen and Matt and to all who got to know Nick as well as I did. He will be forever missed. Love you buddy.

Sam Bozylinsky - May 31, 2020 at 04:59 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Nicholas M. Kollasch.



May 28, 2020 at 08:17 PM

BM

“ Nick was an amazing cook. He made us stuff pork chops one time. It was the best I ever had. He also loved riding the bike trails. Keep smiling Nick and I will see you again. God Bless You

Bradley W McConnell

Bradley McConnell - May 28, 2020 at 07:46 PM



Catherine
Rohlf

“ I met Nick only a little over a year ago at Colleen and Bruce's house when Bruce and I would practice for our trio. Nick listened a few times - even offered his critique - I remember seeing him in the kitchen, creating something that looked amazing and smelled even better! He had such a presence - and though we only had a few short conversations - I will remember him as a bright and loving young man. So sorry for his loss - for all of us - but especially for his family who I know will miss him the most.
~ Cathy Henry Rohlf

Catherine Rohlf - May 28, 2020 at 07:24 PM



“ He made a hard road for himself and then forged a good path. I'm sad he didn't get nearly long enough to enjoy the fruits of his own evolution. ~~Denny Feltz

Dennis Feltz - May 28, 2020 at 04:36 PM

MT

“ Colleen, I'm so sorry for your loss. My heart goes out to you and your family.

Millisa Tierney - May 28, 2020 at 11:29 AM

AJ

“ Colleen, I'm so sorry. Nick came by to visit me about two weeks ago and I'll cherish that memory. Take care and remember my door is always open to you. My sympathy to you and your family in these rough days.

Anne Johnson - May 28, 2020 at 08:33 AM

JA

“ Oh, Colleen, such a sad thing. My heart aches for you. I send my deepest condolences.

Jane Allen - May 27, 2020 at 11:38 PM

DE

“ Colleen our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. Find peace in the happy memories.
Debi and Tim Schmidt

Debi - May 27, 2020 at 05:56 PM



“ I am so sorry for your loss Colleen. To lose a child is the worst grief. My prayers are with you and yours. Jane Peck

Jane Peck - May 27, 2020 at 01:26 PM

BL

“ Nick was a great young man. He was always a hard worker and very positive. It is so sad to lose such a young life. I just reconnected with him about a month ago when he checked my wife and I out at HyVee. We chatted for about 5 minutes. Hard to believe he's gone.

Heartfelt sympathy to his family, especially Hannah.

Coach Bob Lee

Bob Lee - May 27, 2020 at 10:32 AM

PG

“ Matt and family, My heart goes out to you at this loss of a bright light for you and for so many others. Nothing can fill the hole this leaves. I hold you all in prayer that you might come to peace and and find grace in the love and memories that live on in you. Pat Geadelmann

Pat Geadelmann - May 27, 2020 at 09:33 AM

MK

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Matt Kollasch - May 27, 2020 at 02:50 AM

JF

“ My thoughts and prayers are with you. Matt, Colleen, Hannah and families. My memories of Nick are brightened by the thought of his smile. I hope your meaningful memories support you in the days ahead and the love of friends and family bring you comfort. God's speed sweet Nick, God's speed...

Janet Fisher - May 26, 2020 at 11:58 PM

DT

“ Such sad news.
I got the privilege to know and hang out with nick for a few years.
Bright, funny and always seemed to have a smile on his face.
Our thoughts go out to all the family and friend!
He will be greatly missed

Daniel Trower - May 26, 2020 at 10:09 PM

HM

“ I’m sending so much love to you all. I’ve been thinking of Nick, always grinning. It’s such a shock he’s gone, but you’ve shown how brightly his memory will live on. He will be deeply missed. We’re holding you all close! ❤️

Haley Moehlis - May 26, 2020 at 10:08 PM

WC

“ Nick and I were getting to know each other, first at a concert and after-party, second last New Year's Eve. He was an engaging, imaginative, and warm young man. We enjoyed each other's company and planned a games night (which never came off because of the quarantine). What a smart, funny, delightful young man--I was looking forward to our friendship. I am so saddened by his loss. My deepest sympathy to his family at his untimely, heart-breaking loss.

Bill Clohesy

William W. Clohesy - May 26, 2020 at 08:55 PM

NK

*I worked with Nick when he was employed by U.N. Dining Service. I remember Nick as a nice and friendly guy who went out of his way to help others
His upbeat personality and warm smile was Nick who I enjoyed with with.
My thoughts and prayers to his family and friends.*

Nancy Klodt - May 26, 2020 at 09:29 PM

MK

Nick told me how much he liked being among all the "cool" people at Stephanie and Bill's." I am so happy he was able be part of your lives. He liked that so much.

Matt Kollasch - May 27, 2020 at 02:41 AM

JO

“ I will miss you everyday, your friendly smile and greeting at Hy-Vee.
Rest In Peace Jon O’Neill, Hy-Vee

Jon O’Neill - May 26, 2020 at 08:30 PM

CT

“ I am so sorry Colleen. Cindy Tabb

Cindy Tabb - May 26, 2020 at 08:17 PM

CG

“ Nick, it was truly great meeting you when we worked at The Flying Mango many moons ago. You were a good friend throughout the years and my condolences to the families. Rest In Peace my friend.

Carlos Garza - May 26, 2020 at 07:44 PM

DT

“ Nick, I enjoyed being part of your life at the different phases of your life. I wish you had more. My condolences to the Kollasch, Degan, and Rieks families.

David Towle - May 26, 2020 at 01:54 PM

DT

And the Saland family.

David Towle - May 26, 2020 at 01:59 PM

DT

I had the extreme pleasure of being Nick's first grade teacher at Price Lab School. He was sweet, imaginative and full of fun. I always looked forward to hearing his creative ideas. I recently ran into Nick on the bike bath along 12th St. Our eyes lit up when we saw each other and he told me about being the manager at Hyvee Bakery. He seemed so proud. My deepest sympathy to Colleen, Matt, Hannah and the rest of Nick's family.

Denise Tallakson - May 26, 2020 at 10:29 PM

DT

bike path

Denise Tallakson - May 26, 2020 at 10:31 PM

GV

Colleen and Matt, our deepest condolences. I can't fully imagine your loss. I could tell that Nick was a special person from the few times I met him, and it was always a pleasure seeing and speaking to him.

Grant Veeder - May 28, 2020 at 12:07 PM



I just met Nick a couple weeks ago at work, Hy-Vee. He was a very friendly guy and easy to talk to. He always had a big smile for me and a greeting. I am so sorry for his family. May you feel the peace only God can give. Barb Chapman

Barbara Chapman - May 28, 2020 at 06:58 PM

MS

I was blessed to be Nick's first and second grade teacher. His impish smile lit up our classroom and his creativity and "shenanigans" made every day fun. I remember how proud he was to show off his uncle who had the same bright red hair! In the past months I have enjoyed reuniting with Nick. We shared the same love for cooking and baking and I was always hoping our paths would cross when I was in HyVee. My heart goes out to all of you and I can not even begin to imagine your loss. Know that you are all in my thoughts and prayers. Every time I run the bike paths, kneed a loaf of bread or gaze into a campfire I'll be saying a prayer.

Mary Stichter - May 28, 2020 at 10:33 PM

RO

My deepest sympathy to all of you.

Robin - June 01, 2020 at 12:19 PM