



Douglas Eugene Nelson

January 20, 1950 - January 1, 2019

Doug Nelson was born in Iowa and died in Florida, but he lived most of his 68 years in Lawrence Kansas. He died on January 1, 2019 of pulmonary fibrosis.

Doug grew up in Glen Ellyn IL. He was a member of the Boy Scouts and earned the rank of Eagle Scout by building benches along an area pathway. He was proud to follow his late father, Eugene K. Nelson, who also earned the rank of Eagle. Doug's grandniece, Clara, is carrying on the family tradition by recently becoming a Scout.

He would have been a BMOB at Glenbard West High School if only he had a 1967 GTO. Instead, he worked as a dishwasher in a local restaurant and bagged groceries to earn money toward that dream. His dad and late mom, Mary Madge Nelson, kept their four children busy with chores and projects that included a large backyard vegetable garden.

Doug arrived at the University of Kansas as a freshman in 1968 and lived in Lawrence until 2018. The last fourteen years were split between Lawrence and Bonita Springs FL.

His biggest accomplishment as a student was extending his senior year from 1972 to 1977 to secure football seats in the senior section for five years. (Hey, look at the years 1968 through 1977 - John Riggins, Bobby Douglass, John

Zook, David Jaynes, Nolan Cromwell).

Doug attended three significant KU sporting events: the infamous “12th man” 1968 Orange Bowl where KU lost to Penn State by one point, the ill-fated “crimson uniform comeback” and Danny Manning’s first Final Four in 1986 where KU lost to Duke in the first round. And, finally, the gloriously redemptive win over Virginia Tech at the 2008 Orange Bowl.

Doug’s professional life was law enforcement. He was often amused by the public in Lawrence. On patrol, he received a call of “possible UFO in front yard”. He arrived at the residence, examined the “UFO” and asked the homeowner, did you recently order a pizza? The silver delivery pouch had been accidentally left in the yard.

On a noise disturbance call, he entered a college apartment filled with people and loud music. He approached the ad hoc DJ who was cross-legged on the floor rifling through CDs and loading an early 1990s CD player. Doug yelled, it’s the police – twice. The DJ continued to flip through the CDs and said, I know I’ve got them here somewhere. Doug tapped the young man on the shoulder and said, no, it’s the police!

Doug was proud of a number of things in his life: earning the rank of Eagle Scout, graduating from KU, completing an unblemished law enforcement career of 42 years (25 as a LKPD Patrol Officer and 17 years as a Municipal Court Security Officer), maintaining a 42 year marriage, and the fact he owned and drove only three cars in his life: a beige 1969 VW Beetle, a green 1991 Jeep Cherokee, and a purple 2007 Dodge Charger (Limited Edition Plum Crazy 728/1,400 manufactured, currently with 10,010 miles, HEMI 3.5 L 250 HP V 6 – sadly less of a chick magnet than anticipated in 1967).

He will be missed by his wife Elaine (otherwise known as his Florida wife), his

best friend Polly, sisters Mala Barnes in Kansas City, Marla Smith (Randy) in Ft. Myers FL, his brother David Nelson (Lynn) in Venice FL, his many colleagues, friends and acquaintances in every coffee shop ever to exist in Lawrence from the Village Inn to the Bourgeois Pig, Zip Lock Glad Bags (manufacturer of wallets) and the aforementioned 2007 Dodge Charger.

A family service will be held in the Gulf of Mexico. No flowers needed, we live in Florida. Instead, if you would like to make a memorial gift please consider Boy Scout Troop 41, c/o First Congregational Church, 535 Forest Ave, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137 (www.t42glenellyn.org) or FOP Lodge #2, PO Box 272, Lawrence, KS 66044 (www.LawrenceFOP.org).

Most importantly, please share your memories of Doug at www.shikanyfuneralhome.com.

Arrangements are being handled by Shikany's Bonita Funeral Home.

Tribute Wall



“ *Douglas Eugene Nelson*

October 09, 2023 at 03:40 AM



“ *We all knew Doug as our own caring watchful neighbor, community police officer, and good friend. This photo represents just a few of our memories. Doug loved to watch all the critters in our neighborhood: the foxes, owls, and the ever present pesky squirrels. In tribute to our area animals, Doug and Elaine had these animals carved into an old tree on their land. This totem will always be a reminder of the Nelsons.*

R.I.P Doug



Pat and Tom Weiss - January 07, 2019 at 05:35 PM

GA

“ I knew Doug for a quarter of a century. We have many memories both in Kansas and Florida, plus a snorkel trip to the British Virgin Islands. What I will treasure most of all is our bicycle rides from the home in Spring Run down to Dolly's restaurant on Bonita Beach Road. We shared long talks over breakfast and coffee. We solved most of the world's problems. Doug was a kind, considerate man that will be missed by all who knew him. Elaine, I am so sorry for your loss.

Guy Almeling, Fort Myers FL

Guy Almeling - January 07, 2019 at 04:40 PM

LC

“ I first met Doug when I worked as a waitress at JB Big Boy! And when I started working at SLMA years later, it was a pleasant surprise to find he was married to Elaine. Doug was always so sweet and kind. He will be missed. My condolences. I'm sorry for your loss.

Lisa Carlsten

Lisa Carlsten - January 07, 2019 at 02:44 PM

JF

“ I am very sorry to hear of the passing of Doug and send my heartfelt condolences to all his family and friends. I never knew Doug well but over the years ran into him many times at the courthouses and we always exchanged pleasantries. Not too long ago I saw Doug working as a bailiff at the city courthouse. I knew of his plans to retire soon and move to Florida. I own a parrot and Doug was wearing a gorgeous tie adorned with a very colorful parrot. I jokingly told Doug that since he was retiring he may no longer need the tie and that I knew someone who would love to own it. He inquired who that would be and I informed him that I was that person. A few minutes later Doug came back into the courtroom wearing a different tie and handed me a paper bag with the parrot tie inside. A few days later I ran into Doug at the county courthouse and he commented that he really liked the tie I was wearing that day. I, not being as kind and considerate as Doug, did not take off the tie I was wearing and give it to him. With Doug's passing I will treasure his tie even more as it is a symbol of, and will continually remind me of, Doug's kindness, warmth, and generosity.

John Frydman

John Frydman - January 07, 2019 at 12:38 PM

CW

“ I remember meeting Doug during my senior year at KU and thinking, even then, that you were perfect for each other. The few times I saw him in subsequent years I was always impressed by his calm manner, warmth, kindness and special sense of humor. He brought smiles to our faces at McNally family gatherings with the funniest and most appropriate comments. I'm so sorry for your loss. He was one of the great ones.
Love,
Cindy

Cindy (McNally) Wideman - January 06, 2019 at 06:51 PM

DM

“ Elaine I am so sorry for your loss. You are in my thoughts and prayers. Doug protected our community for several years. People that serve in law enforcement are very special people. Darin

Darin McDaniel - January 06, 2019 at 05:34 PM

GS

“ Elaine, Sherlyn and I are so sorry to hear of Doug's passing. I can't say enough about how great a guy he was. To this day I consider him one of my closest friends--he will be missed.

Gary Sampson

Gary Sampson - January 06, 2019 at 04:07 PM

SD

“ Elaine - Frank and I were saddened to hear of Doug's passing. It was a privilege to have worked with him when I was in the Douglas County District Attorney's Office. Doug was always a stand up guy. So sorry for your loss.

Shelley Diehl

Shelley Diehl - January 06, 2019 at 12:28 PM

TR

“ Doug was a great mentor and friend to many of us at LPD. I thoroughly enjoyed working with him and our long conversations about so many different things. A wonderful person and great cop! He will be missed. -Tyson, L-94

Tyson Randall - January 06, 2019 at 11:39 AM

MT

“ Elaine, I only met him a couple of times briefly, he was a very nice man. I am very sorry for your loss



Minnie Thomas - January 06, 2019 at 10:28 AM

SW

“ Elaine,
I am so sorry to hear about Doug. I can still see him running across the bridge in Lawrence on my way to work back in the day. My thoughts are with you.
Sandy Wiehe

sandy wiehe - January 06, 2019 at 09:10 AM

BL

“ Doug and I met at a coffee house in Lawrence and being the same age had a memory of things past. We sat outside on the nice days and talked about the health of the world in general. I miss him and his warm personality. He was working at the court as security but didn't talk much about it, instead he was more interested in my life and what was new with me. I admired him for his care of others. I am so very sorry he has passed but have sure knowledge I will see him again as the Lord wills.

Bob Leffler - January 06, 2019 at 08:30 AM

LN

“ My cousin Doug was just a year younger than me and that made him a perfect playmate on Grandpa and Grandma Nelson's farm near Westphalia, KS. When our family visits overlapped, chaos must have been the normal state of affairs though it seemed perfectly normal for us as little boys to chase chickens, throw dirt clods at cows, and harass the pigs. Our mission was to have as much fun as possible and we were definitely "mission focused"! I distinctly remember convincing Doug to climb into a pen with a sow and her piglets and to just pass me a little one over the fence so we could play with it. The sow was out of sight when he started the pignapping, but the excited squeals of the baby brought momma hog running. Doug dropped the piglet and immediately VAULTED the fence just escaping the snapping jaws of momma hog! Good times with a great guy who just a few years ago travelled to Tulsa for my parents' services. He'll be missed, but never forgotten. Larry Nelson

Larry Nelson - January 06, 2019 at 07:33 AM

SW

“ Prayers to the family - I knew Doug from working at Jennings Daylight Donuts in downtown Lawrence. Back in the day - Doug would pull up in his VW bug and order two chocolate iced donuts and a cup of coffee - same order every day- in later years he would give me a hard time when I would show up to try to get out of a ticket in Municipal Court! A kind man and a great asset to Lawrence and the community who will be greatly missed.

Sheila Ward - January 05, 2019 at 06:11 PM

IU

“ Dear Elaine, my heart goes out to you with the hope that you will be able to handle the loss of a partner such as Doug. Del and I and the girls, Romanda, Julia and Emily have very fond memories from when you lived across the street in Lawrence. We all felt safe when Doug was there. Please accept our love and sympathies at this time and always. Lone Unruh

Lone Unruh - January 05, 2019 at 02:23 PM



“ I am so sorry for your loss. Doug was my first field training officer of three in 1991. Loved his dry wit and sense of humor which was perfectly illustrated in the first fifteen minutes of my first shift as an officer. I made the bold statement prior to making it to the street I would never go to a doughnut shop in uniform.

Fired up and ready to go at 4pm for my first shift. Doug gave me directions to our first assignment and self assigned radio call. "10-10 (Break) at Daylight doughnuts." He was grinning as I reluctantly called it out. We sat with me almost vibrating in my seat ready to go. He told me i would have plenty of time for the craziness of the job, but you have to also know how take a break when you get a chance because you might not be able to take one when the pace speeds up (Something I forgot toward the end of my career).

You will be missed.

Warren Burket - January 05, 2019 at 01:34 PM

C#

“ Doug's brothers and sisters of Lawrence Lodge #2, Fraternal Order of Police send our heartfelt condolences to the family of our friend and colleague Doug Nelson. Many of us have fond memories of working with Doug over the years and grieve for the loss of the family. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Chaplain
FOP #2
Lawrence, KS 66044

Chaplain FOP #2 - January 05, 2019 at 01:15 PM

“ I remember my Uncle Doug as a fun-loving, kind-hearted, unassuming person with a wonderful sense of humor. He dove headfirst into life, and he was always a great sport! My memories are unfortunately incomplete and mostly childhood, as it's been close to 25 years since I've had the opportunity to see Doug. However, when I think of him, I picture laughter and celebration as he, my Dad, my soon-to-be husband, Hubert and I made our way in rafts through a series of wild rapids on the Santa Fe River. I think I remember eating artichokes for the first time and loving them at Doug and Elaine's wedding, when I was five. As a young teenager, there was a trip to Jamaica with Doug, Elaine, and my parents. Doug snorkeled with me, swam with me in the pool and tried out some reggae dancing with me when no one else would. Sometime during my childhood, I believe Doug made a sensational drug bust concerning hallucinogenic mushrooms that made us all laugh; I think there was an article in the local paper about this? Walks along the Caney River at Thanksgiving also stand out in my mind. As a young kid, I would grow very restless in the house, so for me, these outings were one of the highlights of our trips to Bartlesville, Oklahoma, and I remember Doug going with us when he and Elaine were there. He made these walks especially fun, as he allowed me to swing on the heavy vines that grew along the pathway.

The other highlight was the darling Corgi Doug and Elaine would bring with them. The three of us share a heartbreakingly sincere love of dogs, which I see as a true bond. The home I share with Hubert and our precious girls, Annie (17) and Emmy (14) would not be complete without our three dogs, Lucy (goldendoodle, 11), Skippy (chihuahua, 6) and Tillie (rat terrier, 4). Doug and Elaine's little dog, Polly, is no doubt as much a member of the family as any human. The last time Hubert and I spoke to Doug was several years ago when Elaine was hospitalized. We were so incredibly touched that he called. Doug was extremely choked up out of concern for Elaine and reached out to us as her family (and his). He told us of Polly's heroic role in alerting him that something was very wrong in the night, and it was clear to him that Polly saved her life. Polly was

a great comfort to him during that time, just as she certainly is for Elaine during this time of sorrow.

Elaine, please know that I loved Doug. We are here for you should you need us. We will be praying for you, for strength, for comfort, and that the fragrance of wonderful memories will soon take the place of your sadness. Please give Polly a big pet from us and consider the next lick or tail wag you receive from her a reciprocal expression of our love for you.

Beth (McNally) Zajicek

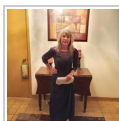
Beth Zajicek - January 05, 2019 at 12:13 PM

EL

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Elaine - January 04, 2019 at 12:54 PM



Loved Doug. He was a great guy across the board. Worked out with him, and knew him as a compassionate officer as well. So sorry to hear of his passing.

Dayle Hodges - January 06, 2019 at 05:39 AM

JW

Elaine - please accept my condolences on Doug's passing. We were fraternity brothers, and Doug's love of life and sense of humor must have been carried with him after his school years.

May he Rest In Peace.

John Walstad - January 07, 2019 at 08:30 PM