



## Richard C. Nelson

February 26, 1952 - January 21, 2019

Rick Nelson, 66, of Raleigh, North Carolina, passed away on January 21, 2019. He was born in Chicago, Illinois on February 26, 1952 to George and Lois Nelson. He attended college at the University of South Florida and worked as a warden at the Corkscrew Swamp in Florida. He moved to San Diego, CA where he met his wife, Barbara, and started his own painting company, "Off the Wall" Painting.

Rick married Barbara Crow on February 6, 1982. They would have celebrated their 37th anniversary in February. Their children Scott and Kate were born in San Diego before moving to Raleigh, NC in 1990. He worked in construction for most of his career. He spent the last decade working at Home Depot in Knightdale, NC.

Rick was a passionate man in every aspect of his life and quite the renaissance man. Whether it was cheering on his Chicago Bears, building a deck, or decorating intricate cookies, he put his heart and energy into everything he did. Rick was always the loudest one in the room and always the most loved. His stories were extravagant, theatrical, and abundant.

Rick was preceded in death by his parents and brother, Tom. He is survived by his wife, Barbara and their two children, Scott and Kate; sister, Janet Nelson. He is also survived by his niece, nephews, grandniece and grandnephews, in-laws, cousins, and friends.

A memorial service will be held at 12:00 p.m. on Saturday, January 26, 2019 at Renaissance Funeral Home, 7615 Six Forks Road, Raleigh, NC 27615. A burial service will follow directly after at Historic Oakwood Cemetery, 701 Oakwood Avenue, Raleigh, NC 27601.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in memory of Rick to the National Audubon Society, <https://www.audubon.org/>.

# Cemetery

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## Historic Oakwood Cemetery

701 Oakwood Ave

Raleigh, NC, 27601

# Events

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**JAN**

**26**

**Celebration of Life Service**

12:00PM

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Renaissance Funeral Home and Cremation  
7615 Six Forks Rd, Raleigh, NC, US, 27615

# Comments

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“ The Nelson family: George, Lois, Tom, Rick and Janet were an integral part of the Oak Park, IL 100 South Scoville/ South Elmwood avenues (common alley) scene and consequently of my childhood memories. George and Lois hosted the best and probably wildest parties on the block as would be permitted in the sixties.

Rick was my brother Greg's age, I was Janet's age. My sister, Mary Jo and I were often over at 114 So. Scoville. Rick would walk through our yard, by the side door to go over/come back from his friend Tony Lazarus' or to see Greg. At that time, neighborhood kids were in and out of other neighborhood kids houses, all the time. So, in spite of the four year age difference, I was able to get to know Ricky.

He was an exceptional person, full of life and full of love of life. A lot like his mom.

Rick was knock-out good looking, like Ricky Nelson (teenage idol singer of the times) good-looking, like James Bond good-looking... He was smart, very smart, he was incredibly athletic, quick (Varsity Football team at OPRF HS, you have to be good, he was). If that was not enough, he was nice, wasn't caught up in himself; He had no problem speaking to a little ignorant runt like myself (at the time); I remember him explaining how they dissected a pig in his Advanced Biology class, he was so totally enthusiastic, named and explained the organs in detail, pulling them out, not sure what else, but he actually made it sound fascinating. Those Nelsons were/are really smart. In the same way I remember him talking about Marine Biology and Florida, what he was doing at the time. I had never heard of Marine Biology.

A smart, sensitive man, the devotion to his loved ones, family or friends will be missed the most. My heart goes out to you Barb, Scott, Kate and Janet.

God Bless and keep you safe,  
Maureen Kuenster

**Maureen Kuenster** - January 26 at 03:02 PM

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“ Praying for the Nelson family in this time. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all. A donation to the Audubon Society has been made by Kate's WARC family (and their friends). We love you.

**WARC family** - January 26 at 02:08 PM

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“ Forever Beloved was purchased for the family of Richard C. Nelson.



January 26 at 11:27 AM

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“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



**Don McLauchlan** - January 26 at 10:40 AM

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“ So deeply sorry to hear about Ricky's passing. Growing up in Oak Park, I have very fond memories of Ricky's larger than life personality, good natured teasing and many great conversations. He was the big brother I never had. I know his family was very important to him. My sincere condolences go out to Barb, Scott, Kate and his sister, Janet. He will be missed. May he Rest In Peace. A donation to the Audubon Society has been made in his memory.  
Ellyn Gullo

**Ellyn Gullo** - January 25 at 06:07 PM

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“ Al Howell purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Richard C. Nelson.



**Al Howell** - January 25 at 04:40 PM

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“ Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Richard C. Nelson.



January 25 at 12:37 AM

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“ Cousin Pam in San Diego purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Richard C. Nelson.



Cousin Pam in San Diego - January 24 at 09:19 PM

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“ Barbara, we are so sorry to hear about Rick. Please know we will be thinking of you and your family.

Terrie amd Woody Wilson - January 24 at 10:00 AM

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“ We are very sorry for your loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

David, Jennifer, Trey, Ty

David - January 24 at 09:57 AM

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“ So sorry to hear Rick passed, my condolences to his family. I worked with him for a couple years and he was always so nice and helpful and he always had a piece of chocolate in his apron for me.....may he rest in heaven...he will be missed.

Taniesha walker - January 23 at 10:02 PM



“ Sorry to hear of Rick's passing. Got to know Rick and Barb on our trip in Ireland in Sept. He was full of jokes and stories. Very friendly man. I enjoyed his company. My prayers go out to Barb and the kids



“ I knew Ricky in the Oak Park neighborhood back in .....yeah, way back. Yep, he was a great guy, wonderful family, always positive. Condolences to his family.

**Tom Kirchner** - January 23 at 08:54 PM

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“ I met Ricky while traveling in Ireland. He was so much fun, and such a warm and friendly person. My sympathies to Barbara and his family, he really was bigger than life. The good ones really do die young.

**kathleen myers** - January 23 at 06:12 PM

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“ I worked with Rick for about a year at Pro-Home. I agree with everything in his obituary! He was a fire cracker! He loved cooking and building! And he loved his family!!! My deepest sympathy

**LouAnn Brady** - January 23 at 04:02 PM

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“ Loving Grace was purchased for the family of Richard C. Nelson.



January 23 at 01:51 PM

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“ Always enjoyed my conversations with Rick at work and pictures of his endeavors his excitement of his sons engagement and future grand babies which unfortunately they will never know how great of a grandpa they would have had. My heart breaks for his wife and kids and may they find peace and comfort in the days that come through all of the wonderful memories they made with Rick! God bless his family and friends.



**Donna Avery** - January 23 at 01:08 PM



“ Barbara, I am so sorry for you and the kids. Always remember that God needed him to work for him. Family is in my prayers. Jean Stanley

**jean stanley** - January 23 at 07:48 PM

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“ This big Teddy Bear is leaving a big gap in this world. His love for life and family immeasurable. Love to Barb, Scott and Kate  
Kathy Collins



**Kathy Collins** - January 23 at 12:22 PM

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“ Gone way too soon. Very sorry to hear the news. Rick Nelson was a great guy, the life of the party, a fabulous husband and wonderful father. He will be missed. A donation to the Audobon Society has been made by the Storey Famiy in Rick's name.

**Pat** - January 23 at 11:50 AM

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“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



**Kate Nelson** - January 23 at 11:16 AM



“ "The Girls" purchased the A New Sunrise Spray for the family of Richard C. Nelson.



**"The Girls"** - January 23 at 11:12 AM

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“ Carol Pridgen,

No words can express the emptiness in my heart. Auntie loves you big guy. Save some room for me in heaven!



**Carol Pridgen** - January 23 at 10:30 AM

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“ The Ferguson Family Colleen, Bill, and Aunt Ann purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Richard C. Nelson.



**The Ferguson Family Colleen, Bill, and Aunt Ann** - January 23 at 10:02 AM

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“ I will always have the memories of spending summer vacations with my cousins on the beach in Longboat Key with our Granparents

**Colleen Ferguson Huntsberger** - January 23 at 09:40 AM

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“ Magnificent Life Spray was purchased for the family of Richard C. Nelson.



January 23 at 09:32 AM

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“ Oliver has just shared with us this very sad news which we are shocked to hear. I will never forget Rick's tenderness and care for us when our youngest son died as he sat with us at our table on Mapleridge admitting that he could not think of words to say. But he was brave enough to stand at our side along with sweet, caring Barbara. We have always regretted losing touch and have kept you all in our hearts along with Uncle Scott and Kate. I am so sorry for you to lose this loving husband and dad, along with the friend he was to so very many. We have a lot of sweet memories of you all and Oliver has the most of all. Love to each of you.

**Ann Smith** - January 23 at 08:02 AM



“ Rick has been a positive influence in my life. His soulful smile and personality will always put a smile on my face.

**Tom** - January 23 at 01:03 PM

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“ Bill and I have been praying for Rick to recover and for God to give the family strength.

**Elaine Cox** - January 23 at 03:43 AM

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“ Rick sure loved his life: fun, friends...but most of all - his family.



**Jonna Roy** - January 23 at 12:12 AM

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“ So sorry to learn of Rick’s passing. I remember him on the sidelines and on the field when our boys were practicing and playing football from about 6 or 7 years old through high school. He always brought excitement and encouragement with him to the field. It was infectious to say the least! Grace and peace to all of his family. With love, John and Elizabeth  
Murphy

John Murphy - January 22 at 11:15 PM

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“ This guy is one of a kind! You’ve been mixing me some of the best cocktails since I was 17, you’ve been giving me the best advice and you’ve been a second dad to my husband. Thank you for all your kindness, love and laughs! You will always hold such a special place in my heart! The photos below bring me such joy- happy to have had these memories. Much love xo :)



emilie - January 22 at 10:59 PM

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“ I am a very old friend of Rick's. Went to grammar school and High School with him. We played together on Oak Parks State Championship Football team. We also played together in Grammar School at St. Edmund's. Rick was a good friend and a great teammate. I am very sorry for your loss. Rick will be in my prayers.

Patrick Sullivan

Patrick Sullivan - January 22 at 09:50 PM

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“ It didn’t look like my first post was registered. But Rick was a man who loved life at its fullest, and always shared it with his family and friends. A big void has been set. Love you, all Nelsons, and so sorry for your loss.

Amy and Richard Wilson - January 22 at 07:56 PM

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“ Frank, Alex, Tripp and I are totally heartbroken with this loss. Rick was a very large part of our entire family's most cherished memories and we will forever remember the fun times we have all shared. Our sincere thoughts, prayers and love to Barbara, Scott and Kate. May you find peace in the fact that were all so fortunate to have had Rick in our lives. God Bless you all!

Carolyn B. Terry - January 22 at 07:25 PM

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“ Here is a wonderful picture that captures my last day with Mr. Nelson. Full of laughter, stories, shots and of course his new 1,000lb bar! I couldn't have asked for a better time with him spent talking about life and what truly matters. He will be missed greatly but will live on in every joyful part of life! Love you!!



Taylor Wolfe - January 22 at 07:10 PM

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“ My heart is broken. Rick was one in a million and will be greatly missed. Love to all of you.

Linda

Linda Blain - January 22 at 06:51 PM

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“ 4 files added to the tribute wall



Kate Nelson - January 22 at 06:45 PM

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“ 5 files added to the tribute wall



Kate Nelson - January 22 at 06:43 PM

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“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Kate Nelson - January 22 at 06:26 PM



“ We were shocked to hear that Rick has passed. We have so many fond memories seeing your family from time to time at Tom's and were looking forward to your plans here at the lake

One of the best memories we have of Rick and Tom together was when Tom was very sick and Rick brought him to our home for a visit. We sat on the porch, looking out on the lake and Tom, who hadn't had an appetite for several days, devoured an entire platter of ginger cookies. Rick was thrilled that he had this small moment in time of feeling a little better, reminiscing about the past and talking about the future.

It was obvious that Rick enjoyed life and time with friends, but most of all treasured his relationship with you, Barbara and with Kate, Scott and time with you too, Janet. A life well lived with a focus on what really matters.

Love and prayers to each of you.

Bernie and Meg

**Meg** - January 23 at 11:07 AM



“ I am very sad to have lost a good friend this week. As I reminisce the time I spent with Rickie, there are many distinct memories, but meeting Rickie at Corkscrew swamp in 1972 with Tom Collins stands out. Rickie was working with the rangers repairing and building boardwalks for the 10,000 acre Audubon Sanctuary (an hour inland from Naples Florida). It was in hot August. Rickie was in unbelievable good shape and knew everything about the wildlife and vegetation in the swamp. the three of us (Rickie, myself and Tom (and couple of Rangers) drove around the perimeter of the swamp to stay one night in a remote cabin where naturalist would spend time observing nature. While playing cards and drinking beer, we concocted this plan that we would (less one ranger who would drive the jeep back) hike

back through the swamp to camp. One of the rangers did not think any white man had ever done this (only Seminole Indians). He said that he had gone about half way before but never the entire distance (approximately 10 to 15 miles). So with youthful blind optimism, we embarked on this journey the next morning without adequate water (we had beer) and without a compass on a cloudy day. At the beginning of the hike it was amazing to see the beautiful orchids hanging from trees and the amazing birds in their natural habitat far from human intervention. The hiking got rougher though as we progressed with Rickie and the ranger trading front position with a machete blazing the trail. There were times where the water would be chest high and other times the brush was so thick that every foot forward was a major struggle. At one point we realized that we had made a circle coming back across our earlier trail. At that point there was much concern, as we were utterly unprepared to spend a night in the swamp. Rickie and the ranger were then climbing up Bald Cypress trees to try and see the outline of the Great Horseshoe Marsh which the camp bordered. They finally thought they could see it and we directed our course accordingly. It turned out that what they saw was not the horseshoe Marsh but luck what they did see was in the right direction. As the sun was setting (we had been vigorously hiking since 6:30 am) we finally saw camp and Tom who was sure we were going to die, sprint the last 1/2 mile through the swamp. There is something about experiencing adversity with a friend that not only brings you closer but also illuminates their true character. Rickie never panicked and was always confident we would find our way out. He would do anything for a friend and his zest for life was contagious. During our time at Corkscrew swamp, it was Tom who suggested that the three of us travel to Europe that fall. This was another adventure where we would have a couple of brushes with death, but the angels protected us. Later when I first met Barbara in San Diego, I knew Rickie had found his soul mate. They had two wonderful children together (I spent a day with Rickie in Raleigh about 9 years ago where he took me back to the house and I got a sense of the life he and Barbara created there. I know everyone who knew Rickie will sorely miss him. My heart goes out to Janet, Barbara, Scott and Kate.

Love (Mac) Don McLauchlan

**Don McLauchlan** - January 26 at 12:12 PM