



Brian Russell Carlson

April 11, 1940 - October 4, 2025

Brian Russell Carlson, 85, of Fort Collins, Colorado peacefully passed away on October 4, 2025, one day after his wife of 61 years passed away at his side. Born on April 11, 1940 in Minneapolis MN, he was a devoted husband, a loving father, grandfather, great grandfather and a faithful follower of Christ.

Born to parents Cliff and Ellen Carlson, Brian grew up in a loving home with his brother Layton and his sisters Marlene and Karen. Brian learned the value of a servant's life from his parents. Throughout his years at home, he helped with the more than 350 foster babies that his parents cared for. Feedings, changing (cloth!) diapers, doing the laundry, and providing love and care for these babies made a profound impact on him and would give him a huge heart for his own eventual family. Brian would often recall that as a senior in high school, he took a girl out on a date in his red '49 Ford convertible, going to a diner drive-in with a baby and car seat between them.

After graduating from Richfield High School, Brian followed in the footsteps of his older brother Layton and joined the United States military. Stationed in California and Okinawa Japan, Brian received medical training and served as a Navy Hospital Corpsman. After his military service, Brian returned to Minnesota and set out looking for further medical training as a next step in his career. He attended a lab and x-ray school in downtown Minneapolis, where, on the first day of registration, he caught the eye of a beautiful young girl also

in the program, Mary Ellen Minnihan. They ended up being lab partners, and Brian would later say that God was clearly at work guiding them as he got to hold hands with her, take her pulse, draw her blood, and practice various procedures on one another. Brian's love was exceptional on another level as he fully embraced Mary's young son Paul, whose father was lost shortly after Paul's birth in 1962. After a short three-month courtship, Brian and Mary became engaged and started their 61 years of marriage on June 27, 1964, and Brian adopted Paul making him his first of four children.

Brian and Mary moved to Red Oak, IA where Brian worked at the local hospital as an x-ray technician. He would eventually take on more administrative duties and then become hospital administrator for a larger hospital in Clarion, IA. The couple later moved back to Minneapolis where Brian planned to go into dentistry. At this point, Brian and Mary had four children; and through another serendipitous moment, the next phase of his career would be born. He went to "correct" his misbehaving, rambunctious children with a little swat on their behinds, but as he bent over to do so he ended up throwing his back out. He received treatment from a local Chiropractor and saw tremendous results; and after seeing an advertisement that Chiropractors were in demand, he pivoted away from dentistry and ultimately received his Doctor of Chiropractic degree from Northwestern College of Chiropractic.

Brian and Mary moved from MN to Fort Collins, CO in 1979 where Brian began his 20+ year career as a Chiropractor. His mild manner and engaging personality enabled him to meet and treat many patients over his career, and he cared greatly for each one. After retirement, Brian and Mary were able to enjoy many wonderful years together alongside their friends and family; they've always had a special place in their hearts for every family member including their four children, seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. Together Brian and Mary would explore the world both near

and far. They dearly loved the mountains and enjoyed living near Red Feather Lakes for several years. They also shared a love for traveling to Ireland, building homes through Habitat for Humanity, and extended RV resort camping in Texas.

Brian made a meaningful impact on countless people throughout his life, and he lived a life of servanthood in many ways: through his patient care, as a board member of a local skilled nursing facility, as a Lion's Club member, a Habitat home builder, a member of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic church, and perhaps most importantly as a dedicated husband and father. His big heart, quick wit, and love of God and family defines his legacy; he will be sorely missed.

Brian is predeceased by his wife Mary; and survived by his children Paul Carlson (Sherry) of Chanhassen, MN; Cathy Harms (George) of Fort Collins; Kara Carlson-Hill (Bill Hill) of Severance; and Steve Carlson (Renee) of Loveland; by his sisters Marlene and Karen of Bloomington, MN; and by his many adoring grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Habitat for Humanity (<https://www.habitat.org>).

Mass of Christian Burial will begin at 10:30 a.m. October 14, 2025 at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Parish. Guests are asked to come dressed in color or white.

Previous Events

Mass of Christian Burial

OCT **14**. 10:30 AM (MT)

Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Parish Church
5450 S Lemay Avenue
Fort Collins , CO 80525

Tribute Wall

JA

“ I work where Brian and Mary were and I'm so blessed to have met these two and their family. Thanks again for the love and caring these two gave to everyone they raised some awesome kids and I'm glad I got to meet them all!

janetbuckendorf - October 09, 2025 at 10:57 PM

KC

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Kelly E Custer - October 07, 2025 at 05:03 PM

RT

“ It was such an honor and privilege to know Mary and Brian and to be loved on by them for the 30 plus years we knew them. We love them and will miss them until we meet them again in heaven. Much love, Robyn, Dave, and Rebekah Tinkle

Robyn Rene Tinkle - October 06, 2025 at 06:12 PM

RT

“ 7 files added to the tribute wall



Robyn Rene Tinkle - October 06, 2025 at 06:11 PM

DM

“ I met Brian at Christmas parties of the plant where I worked with Mary. Such a gentleman. Enjoyed many years of friendship with both Brian and Mary. My thoughts and prayers for the family.

debi Metheny - October 06, 2025 at 05:52 PM

EJ

I went to USNavy corpsman school in San Diego with Brian . I knew him as a man of high moral character. If any family member wants to contact me E. C. Schmid New Prague Mn. He and Mary stopped at my office years ago.

Eugene Schmid jr - April 19 at 10:14 PM