



## Michael McNelly

February 11, 1947 - September 24, 2009

Michael Francis McNelly, of Fort Collins, CO, was born in Boulder, CO, on February 11, 1947 and lost his battle with cancer on September 24, 2009 on an air ambulance flight. He had just spent a dream vacation cruise in Alaska with his wife Barb when he became acutely ill. Mike grew up in San Diego, CA excelling at the clarinet in high school and traveled to Europe performing in concerts. He graduated from the University of Colorado, majoring in physics and music. At CU he joined the orchestra and the marching band. During his senior year he enrolled in the ROTC program where he became a pilot in the Air Force from 1969-76, flying C-5 and C-130 cargo planes in Vietnam. He received numerous medals as a pilot and was honorably discharged as an Air Force Captain. Afterwards, he pursued his master degree at Colorado State University in computer science. Mike was a software engineer at Hewlett Packard for 24 years and retired from the USDA. Mike loved to be outdoors; fishing, rafting a wild river (including 8 trips on the Grand Canyon), camping, skiing, reading, and spending time in the mountains. He was an active member of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church. Mike sponsored a Cambodian family and currently sponsors a child through the Catholic Near East Welfare Association. He will always be remembered for his sense of humor, being a true friend to everyone he met, and dedicated to his family. Mike is survived by his wife Barb McNelly; daughter Anne (Rick) Baldwin; mother Jean McNelly; brother Robert McNelly; step-children, Brittany (Derek) Blaha, Kristi Ferguson (Rueben Ramos), Joel (Steffanie) Ferguson, and Aaron

Ferguson (Megan Gifford); niece and nephew, Mary and J.C. McNelly; grandkids, Dakota Baldwin, Jordyn and Dylan Blaha, Lorenzo Colcas, Kayci Smith, and Maxwell Ferguson. Mike is preceded in death by his father, John McNelly, and best friend and river buddy, Sandy Charney. Mass of the Resurrection will be held at 11:00 am, Tuesday, September 29, at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish. A private interment will be held at Fort Logan National Cemetery on Wednesday, September 30. Mike's family requests that any memorial donations please be made, in lieu of flowers to the Michael McNelly Memorial Fund in care of Goes Funeral Care, 3665 Canal Dr., Ft. Collins, CO 80524.

# Tribute Wall

DO

“ At some point in Michael McNelly's lifetime he bought the book *Steppenwolf* by Herman Hesse. I know this because he wrote his name inside the front cover. At some point in this books lifetime it ended up in the Book Haven book store in Loveland Colorado. At some point in my life I must have bought the book that Michael McNelly once owned and read. I don't remember buying this book and know that I never read it. Now in 2023 I am retired and have more time to read. I picked the book out of my book case and am reading it now. In this way I have a small connection with Michael McNelly. We are all connected, we all live on thru our connections. Thank you for the book Michael.

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**Dan O'Brien** - November 30, 2023 at 11:30 AM



“ *Michael McNelly*

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October 25, 2022 at 06:14 PM

AS

“ I am a childhood friend of Anne's, and I remember the day the McNelly's moved into the neighborhood (even though I was only six)! I remember spending many days at their house playing in their backyard playhouse or making forts in their backyard between the bushes! They even had the perfect tree to jump out of into a huge pile of leaves! Mike came to my brother's funeral back in February, and it was so good to see him after not seeing him for many years. I am really sorry for your lose. You are in my thoughts and prayers.

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**Amy (Benzel) Smith** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

KB

“ *Our thoughts are with you today. We have very happy memories of those nickels games.*

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**Kay Moore and Phil Baum** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

SM

“ *Barb-  
Just want you to know that we are thinking about you and your family. Mike was an amazing man, and we feel so privileged to have known him. Please know that our hearts and prayers are with you during this difficult time. Let us know if we can do anything. Love to you and your amazing family.*

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**Spencer and Lana Moser** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

PP

“ *We are so sorry for your loss of Mike. Our deepest condolences to Barb and the family.*

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**Pat and Vicki Phillips** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MC

“ *Dear Barb & Family,  
Our condolences to you all. We'll miss Mike in the neighborhood. He was always there to lend a hand and share a laugh. He lived life well and fought to the end. A lesson for us all. As a fellow vet, I have always appreciated his service to our country. Mike, thank you shipmate and Godspeed on your final flight. With heartfelt sympathy,  
Lee & Cecilia*

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**Mike Connor** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ As a neighbor of Michael's parents, here in San Diego, I am aware of the devotion that Michael had for his parents -- in spite of the distance separating them. It is with much sadness that I learned of the illness which lead to his death.

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**John Sandy** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

JM

“ Mike was an honorable & kind man, quiet & complex, who loved Barb deeply. His courage w/ illness & sense of humor about life's challenges was remarkable. He put up with my husband Sandy's silly shenanigans for years on end. Practical jokes volleyed back and forth between Mike, Barb, & Sandy bringing much laughter. The deep friendship between Sandy & Mike helped Sandy feel not so alone as they both battled lung cancer; at times Sandy felt no one really understood what he was going through but Mike. I miss them both knowing their spirits are still with us. Barb's friendship is a gift I cherish. I wish I could be with you today. I send all my love, Joanie

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**Joan Marie Maley** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MH

“ I spent many summers with Mike and Barbara either on the houseboat or rafting. I have been out of touch with them for years but my wonderful memories are still in my mind often. I was so surprised to hear about Mike and Sandy and I am so glad to have been a part of their lives. I am forever grateful for the fabulous times we had. They were a big part of my life. Thank you Mike and Sandy. Love, Marcia

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**marcia Hodgson** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

FF

“ Although I only met Mike once or twice, I remember him being really warm and easy to be around, and had a great sense of humor. I know he will be missed very much by all of you. You are all in our hearts and on our minds during this difficult time. I only wish we could be there to offer comfort in person.

Take care,  
Jim & Frances Fenner

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**Frances and Jim Fenner** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MJ

“ Growing up next door the McNelly's I remember hiking up to Horsetooth rock with Mike and Annie. I didn't believe you could do that so they took me. I always used to think "Mr McNelly has the most muscular legs I've ever seen!" He was always the kind of person who spoke volumes without ever having to say anything.

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**Molly Benzel Jones** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

RC

“ I can only say that the physical world has suffered a great loss. My thoughts and prayers are with you, Barb, and all of Mike's family as you go through many phases of grief. Mike will never be forgotten--memories of him will live in so many people's lives--singles events, rafting, volleyball, dances and so many more. Words cannot make a worthy tribute to Mike--you had to know him!

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**Ruth Calkin** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

S(

“ Anne, my condolences go out to you and your family. Your father was a good man. I remember him fondly. My thoughts and prayers are with you.

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**Sarah Esparza (Michoski)** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

JL

“ *It was always a pleasure to be in Mikes company. Mike, we will miss you. Barb, you are in our hearts and minds.*

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**John & Melody Liddell** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

BR

“ *My condolences are with the family, I am sorry for your loss. Mike was a good man, surrounded by good friends and family.*

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**Bud & Marsha Reed** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

AR

“ *Mike was one of my first mentors at Hewlett-Packard over 25 years ago, and I still think of him with great affection. I was so sorry to hear of his passing, and will always appreciate his influence in my life.*

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**Anny Randel** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

KE

“ *My wife Jacalyn and I were saddened to see Mike's obituary in the paper. Mike stayed with my family in Boulder while he was going to CU and he was a fellow Physics Major with me and an ROTC comrade. We got separated after he got out of the Air Force. I retired from the Air Force and worked at CSU for 16 years not knowing he was still in Fort Collins. We were also old fly fishing and snow shoeing buddies. Like ships in the night we missed reconnecting. I will always remember him fondly.*

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**Kenneth Eis** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

AL

“ I just wanted to say that Mike was like my adopted dad- I used to call him "my Colorado dad"- He was sweet and funny with a hint of dorkiness(which was always appreciated)..He was my movie date on quite a few occasions, helped me through a couple of rough moments during my job hunt and even hung up my Christmas lights for my first winter here in Colorado. He will always be cherished and in my heart.

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**Alyssa** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

SG

“ Barb -

*We are so sorry to hear of your loss. We love you. You are in our thoughts and prayers.*

*Love you,*

*Shanna, Mark and Anthony Giorgio*

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**Shanna Giorgio** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

HW

“ Barb,

*My condolences to you and Mike's entire family. His passing is a great loss to all.*

*One small story, I helped Mike buy a home in 1976 on Stanford Road. There was this old chest freezer in the basement that came with the home. Mike wanted it gone. I bought it from him for \$50. It was all the two of us could do just getting it out of the basement. I still have that freezer and it is still running!*

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**Hepburn Wilkins** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM



“ *It was nice to know you* ”

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**George F Horvath** - September 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM