



Stephen Brian Barkel

June 11, 1947 - July 31, 2015

Traverse City – Stephen Brian Barkel, 68, of Traverse City passed away on July 31, 2015.

Steve was born June 11, 1947, in Coopersville, MI to Henry and Doris Barkel.

Steve attended Western Michigan University and Wayne State University receiving degrees in biology, chemistry and nursing. He worked at Munson Medical Center for 35 years as a registered nurse in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). He loved his job and his coworkers. Steve touched the lives of many families and comforted them through challenging times.

He married Renee (St. John) Barkel in Coopersville, MI on August 26, 1972. They later moved to Traverse City where they raised their two children.

Steve cherished his friends and family. He loved spending time at the family cottage on Sand Lake near Wellston, MI. Time at the cottage was filled with fun and laughter. He found joy in watching the bald eagles soaring above the lake and listening to the call of the loons.

Steve had a life-long love of the outdoors. He was an avid birdwatcher, fisherman and hunter. No matter the weather, he could be found on a lake with a fishing rod in his hand and a friend or family member by his side.

Steve was preceded in death by his father, Henry Barkel.

He is survived by his wife, Renee, children Danielle (Doug) Galla of Allendale, MI, Neil (Lacy) Barkel of Anchorage, AK, grandchildren Samantha Galla and Nate Galla, his mother Doris Barkel of Grand Rapids, brothers Barry (Audrey) Barkel of Saline, MI, Joel (Dawn) Barkel of Coopersville, MI, Greg (Relinda) Barkel of Wyoming, MI and many nieces and nephews.

A celebration of Steve's life will take place at the Presbyterian Church, 701 Westminster Road, Traverse City, MI on Saturday, August 8, 2015 at 5:00 pm, with visitation one hour prior. Pastor Jose Lopez will officiate. It was Steve's wish for those attending to wear casual, bright colored clothing to celebrate his life.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial contributions be directed to the Region Foundation for Munson Medical Center NICU in memory of Stephen Barkel.

Events

AUG **Visitation** 04:00PM - 05:00PM

8

The Presbyterian Church

701 Westminster, Traverse City, MI, US, 49686

AUG **Memorial Service** 05:00PM

8

The Presbyterian Church

701 Westminster, Traverse City, MI, US, 49686

Comments



“ Renee and Family, our thoughts & prayers are with you. We are saddened by your loss. I have many fond memories from our high school football & basketball days. Steve's dedication to his career was a tribute to his character.
Our Deepest Sympathy
Bob & Sandy Willard

Bob Willard - August 21, 2015 at 07:40 AM



“ Renee and family. I am so sorry for your loss. You have a lot of wonderful memories that will live on in your hearts. Always remember those we love don't go away; they walk beside us every day. Unseen, unheard, but always near. Still loved; still missed; and very dear.

My deepest condolences,
Kelli Acha

Kelli Acha - August 09, 2015 at 07:09 AM



“ Steve had taken care of our daughter in the NICU for 12 days. There were many ups and downs throughout our stay and Steve was always positive and supportive. I was there all day, everyday. He encouraged me to sleep while reassuring me that she was in great hands. She was indeed. Steve is an angel. The world lost a truly precious man. God bless!

Carter Williams - August 08, 2015 at 10:30 PM



“ Steve took care of our son Kevin when he was born 2 months early and was in the unit in Traverse City 30 years ago this month. Steve was a very kind and caring man. Our prayers are with your family in the loss of such a great man.

Duane and Janet Molhoek
Falmouth, MI

Janet Molhoek - August 08, 2015 at 05:26 PM



“ Our deepest sympathy to Renee and family. May your soul rest peacefully in a better place, where there is no sunset and there is no dawning. We will miss you dear Friend. Love! Richard,Laura, Andrew and Olive Probst.

Richard Probst - August 08, 2015 at 12:09 AM



“ Renee and Family,
I am so sorry to hear of your loss. I always admired the two of you when I saw you having lunch together. You truly seemed like the perfect match. I am happy that you had so many great years together. My thoughts and prayers are with you. I wanted to come to the service, but will be out of town. I will be there in spirit. Hugs. Lisa Vidor

Lisa Vidor - August 07, 2015 at 03:16 PM



“ So sorry to hear about Steve. He was the NICU nurse 17 1/2 years ago when my twins were born. He took care of my daughter McKenzie and always joked about how sweet she was and he could just take her home since I had two anyway!! But, I ran into him at the hospital four years ago when she was 13 and asked if he wanted to still take her and help out with the teenage years - I believe his comment was "yeah good luck with that".

Steve took such great care of so many babies and their families. It was such a pleasure to know him and I will be forever grateful my babies started out in this world with such a wonderful, funny, dedicated caregiver.

Sorry for your loss.

Love,

A very grateful Ankerson Family

Pam Ankerson - August 07, 2015 at 02:05 PM



“ What a warm and generous man Steve was! Renee, my thoughts and prayers are wrapped around you and your entire family. My memories of Steve are never ending and full of smiles, laughter, great fishing and kid stories, and most of all, of his compassion for people and love of life.

Julie (Ostrander) LaVigne - August 07, 2015 at 09:26 AM



“ Renee..... I'm so sorry. Prayers and thoughts are with you and the family.



Lisa McCormick - August 06, 2015 at 10:24 AM



“ Steve was kind and compassionate to co-workers, his tiny patients and their families. When I was pulled to NICU he would welcome me with his warm smile and generous support. We often shared stories about our kids, and he would undoubtedly have a funny tale to tell. Feeling very sad for your loss and praying for comfort.
Donna DeBoer

Donna DeBoer - August 06, 2015 at 12:16 AM



“ I remember how happy and excited he was when Dani was in labor . Steve ALWAYS asked me about Brian, my kids and grandkids. I loved his sense of humor, and I marveled at all the NICU "grads" who would stop by to see him . He taught me a lot. I am a better person having known him. As his female coworkers, we had our purses w/ makeup and "do dads" . Steve had a drawer... With a hammer, screw driver, Tylenol, and Big Red gum.

maywood - August 05, 2015 at 07:10 PM



“ Steve will be missed by so many. He was a wonderful teacher to so many new parents. He was always so caring and had an encouraging word for me every time I went to the tube Deborah Vezina-Pesamoska

Deborah Vezina - August 05, 2015 at 05:45 PM



“ I remember when I first started in x-Ray and had to go to the NICU. Steve was wonderful. He helped me with the babies and helped me be comfortable in an environment that was new to me. He was a great man.

Laura Larys Neumann - August 05, 2015 at 05:43 PM



“ I am thinking of you Renee and your family. Steve was a great guy. Very giving and always friendly. I worked with him in the Munson NICU and enjoyed his jokes and stories. He was a caring and loving person and you could see it in his work. He will be missed by all. Jill Neubert NNP

Jill Neubert - August 05, 2015 at 04:39 PM



“ Steve was everyone's friend.... I enjoyed hearing his fishing stories and loved to work with him when my patient had a baby who went to NICU (I work in Maternity). You couldn't ask for a nicer man, nurse, or friend. My thoughts and prayers go out to his family. We will all miss your friendly smile and kind ways. Kim Anderson RNC, Maternity

Kim Anderson - August 05, 2015 at 06:31 PM



“ Renee, my prayers are with you. Steve took such great care of Ethan while in the NICU. I was very lucky to have him looking after my son. God bless all of you. Much love. Sandy Ertman

Sandra - August 05, 2015 at 09:40 PM



“ So sorry to hear about Steve . You all have my deepest sympathy . Lots of hugs and prayers. Marilyn Staal

Marilyn Staal - August 05, 2015 at 03:21 PM



“ Renee.... an angel has entered heaven. May God bless you and your family and friends.

Becky Van Dine - August 05, 2015 at 03:09 PM



“ In my mind i STILL SEE HIM jogging across the basketball court, 50 years ago being a good looking Jock!! You will be missed Steve,!! Rog and Donna Grasman Brown, classmates

donna brown - August 05, 2015 at 11:51 AM



“ My heart is so heavy today and filled with sadness to learn of the loss of Steve. I have never met a more compassionate nurse. My sister and I both were blessed to have the opportunity to work with Steve at Munson in the NICU. Deepest sympathy to Renee and family. May you find comfort and love from your family. Thinking and praying for you all and sending my love. Laura McKinley Kailing



Laura McKinley Kailing - August 05, 2015 at 11:28 AM



“ My deepest sympathy for your lose of Steve. I knew Steve back during his time in the NICU in Petoskey where I worked for 30 years. I considered Steve a friend in Neonatal Nursing and many times over the years called Steve for consul and advice. I have always believed that a claim and caring attitude during those difficult times for parents made Steve stand out and loved by all. I will remember him for that and celebrate what he brought to the world.

Richard L. Bouter, RN
Boyne City

Richard L. Bouters - August 05, 2015 at 11:01 AM



“ Steve was a great nurse and a good man! He was so welcoming when I joined the NICU in 2010. He always started the morning bright and early with a smile and a great attitude! He will be missed! My condolences to his wife and wife and family. The world has definitely lost one of the good guys!

Cheryl Vorpapel - August 05, 2015 at 10:28 AM



“ I worked with Steve back in the 1980's when I was in the lab. I was very impressed with the love and compassion he had for his patients and co-workers. I learned yesterday of his passing and am shocked and saddened by his loss. I pray for peace and comfort for his family. God bless you. Dean Matthews.

Dean Matthews - August 05, 2015 at 09:53 AM



“ I will forever be grateful for Steve's love and support during one of the most challenging journeys of my life. His words guided myself, husband and parents in so many ways. I am comforted in knowing he has been welcomed by many babies he cared for, including my son.
Sending as much love and light possible in attempt to hold up his family, as he did for mine.
Heavenly Father, please wrap your arms around this family. Amen.

Sarah Bordeaux - August 05, 2015 at 09:20 AM



“ Sad to hear about Steve he was taken way to soon

Gregg Wickstrom - August 05, 2015 at 07:25 AM



“ My thoughts go out to you and your family, so sorry you have lost a partner and loved one. Steve was a caring thoughtful man and will be missed. Cindy Wickstrom

Gregg Wickstrom - August 05, 2015 at 07:13 AM



“ Hey buddy, you were right--it's my turn to buy pizza and a pepsi! I grew up watching you and my sister, Cheryl, "manhandling" babies and showing them off to me and my dad! Thank you for your friendship and gentle teasing; and especially for always making me feel welcome at the unit! Oh and for taking care of my boy, and my little Miana when they were patients in the unit! Renee and family, thank you for sharing him with so many families who needed him; he will be missed by many! Love that smile and will miss it so much! Love to you and yours, and my heartfelt condolences.



Cathy John-Crowley - August 04, 2015 at 11:01 PM



“ Steve was a friendly nice guy and a wonderful nurse. He always got a smile out of me. A very caring person. He will be missed dearly. Sending prayers for your family.
shelly brown



Shelly Brown - August 04, 2015 at 09:36 PM



“ Renae and family, words can not express the sorrow for your loss. I wish I were going to be in town for the service. Just know you are in my prayers and sending you hugs! I pray God ease your suffering and pain. Laura Murphy

Laura Murphy - August 04, 2015 at 08:15 PM



“ So sorry for his passing. Always enjoyed his bright and cheery smile in the mornings... RIP Steve...

Lisa Birgy - August 04, 2015 at 05:30 PM



“ Praying for your family at this loss of Steve-husband, father, friend. I went to Coopersville with him class of 1965. He was a very kind student.

Wilma Vander Zwaag{Van Wiene}

Wilma VanderZwaag - August 04, 2015 at 04:57 PM



“ Dear Renee and family,
Words truly cannot express my heartfelt sympathy. Steve had a heart of gold and a wonderful smile that would light up the room. Genuine, kind, with a great sense of humor. I have fond memories of Steves kind and compassionate care that our babies (triplets) received over 32 years ago. My thoughts and prayers reach out to you and embrace you with comfort.

Diane Glowicki

Diane Glowicki - August 04, 2015 at 04:31 PM



“ Steve was always kind and warmhearted to welcome you in his presence. His smile radiated in the gentle way he brought joy to the room. He and Renee were definitely a part of several childhood memories that became life lessons. Thanks Steve for the memories - God bless and keep your family!

Randy Roys - August 04, 2015 at 04:25 PM



“ Renee, Neil, Dani and Family
I have no words that will take away pain from this terrible loss. All I can do is pray for all of you. Steve will be missed by many. Heaven gained an angel for sure. I send you lots of hugs and love.

Debbie Rector - August 04, 2015 at 03:18 PM



“ Steve always welcomed me to the NICU and made me feel like one of the crew. He was the gentlest with those wee babes and handled any crisis skillfully, talked with families in a caring, professional manner. He obviously loved his job and had a great outlook on life. He was a joy to be around. God bless our family, Rick & Peggy Egelus

Peggy Egelus - August 04, 2015 at 01:59 PM



“ I remember when Steve first started working in the all women staffed NICU. We wondered how that was going to work out. We soon found him to be one of the gang and a true asset. I would run in to Steve many years after leaving the unit and he would always be the same, so warm and good hearted. I will miss you gentle man. Marcia Leggett

Marcia Leggett - August 04, 2015 at 01:20 PM



“ you never had to worry about being "pulled" to nicu when steve was working....he was always there to guide and help you you...he welcomed you with an everlasting smile and shared many laughs throughout the shift....r.i.p my friend!!!

gail beeman - August 04, 2015 at 12:29 PM



“ Renee, Neil, and Danielle, Steve was such a genuinely kind man. He always had such a thoughtful thing to say whenever our paths would cross. I am so sorry for your loss and wish you comfort and peace.

Theresa Orlikowski - August 04, 2015 at 11:07 AM



“ Renee, please know you are in our prayers. Steve was a friend and always had a contagious smile. Our hearts are saddened by his passing. May God be at your side, now and always. Love you Carl and Rosalie Gaertner

Rosalie Gaertner - August 04, 2015 at 10:04 AM



“ What a wonderful man and human being. Everytime I look or use a sandwich baggie that is the fold not zip type I think of Steve. He always brought us cookies at the store in them. Said:" no reason to pay more for something that does the same thing." I agree.

He will be sadly missed.

Love to him and the whole family.

Mick & Char Durocher.

Char Durocher - August 04, 2015 at 09:33 AM



“ Renee, you are in our thoughts and we hope you are doing well. We were so sorry to hear the sad news. Bill and I remember you both well from the old WMU days....we have some great memories!

Sandy Segadi Baker - August 04, 2015 at 09:08 AM



“ My heart breaks for Renee and his family. He loved them compassionately. Steve always looked at the glass as being half-full and portrayed this positive energy in his job. I could always count on him for his expertise, and he was always there to lend a helpful hand. He was a natural at consoling parents in their time of need. Having worked with Steve since 1975, we shared many memories and experiences. I will miss you, my Friend!

Pat Dawson - August 04, 2015 at 09:03 AM



“ Renee you are in my thoughts and prayers. I will always remember Steve as such a kind and gentle person. He always remembered your name and always was interested in how you were doing. He will be missed. Marcia Barrette-Rushton and Dennis Rushton

Marcia Barrette-Rushton - August 04, 2015 at 05:11 AM



“ Steve was a co worker for over 30 years. He wrote me a wonderful letter of recommendation, when I left Munson. He gave me wonderful recommendations when, employers called to ask him about me. He will be missed by many

Liz Moore - August 03, 2015 at 05:42 PM