



## Randy L. Nathan

March 26, 1957 - July 4, 2018

PIERCE — Memorial services for Randy L. Nathan, 61, Farmington, N.M., will be at 7 p.m. Saturday, July 21, at Stonacek Memorial Chapel in Pierce. The Rev. Lucas Miller will officiate. Graveside services will be at 10:30 a.m. Monday, July 23, at Prospect View Cemetery in Pierce. Visitation will be from 6 p.m. until service time Saturday at the funeral home in Pierce. He died Wednesday, July 4, 2018, at his home in Farmington.

1957-2018

Randy Nathan, son of Delbert and Elsie (Koehlmoos) Nathan was born March 26, 1957, in Norfolk. He was baptized and confirmed at St. John's Lutheran Church in Pierce. He attended School District 39 at Pierce and graduated from Pierce High School in 1975. He was a member of St. John's Lutheran Church in Pierce.

In 1980, he graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a bachelor of arts in anthropology. After graduating, he followed archaeological work, which took him to states in the Midwest, Texas, Washington and eventually to the Southwest. He moved to Farmington in 1989, after working for the Zuni Tribe. He was employed by many companies in Farmington, including Moore Anthropological Research and the division of contract archaeology at Salmon Ruins. He was also employed by Powderhorn Research in Durango, Colo. He was offered the opportunity to be partners in both Powderhorn Research and Moore Anthropological Research but turned both down. He loved his role as field archaeologist and wanted it to stay that way.

He mentored many a young archaeologist throughout his years in Farmington and Durango. Many will remember Randy best from his days with the Fort Lewis College archaeological field school and in his role as crew chief for many archaeological projects at Fort Carson and Pinon Canyon. He had an enormous impact on the archaeological community at large and on the students at Fort Lewis College, specifically. Randy leaves behind a community of friends and family gained through his career.

Survivors include his brother, Terry "Tex" and spouse Kerry Nathan of Pierce; a niece and three nephews, Cory Mattson, Heather Kesting, Adam Nathan and Greg Nathan.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Delbert and Elsie, and a sister, Cindy Nathan.

Recorded hymns will be "Amazing Grace," "Old Rugged Cross" and "Heaven is My Home."

Online condolences may be sent to [www.stonacekfuneralchapel.com](http://www.stonacekfuneralchapel.com).

# Tribute Wall



“ *Randy L. Nathan*

---

October 05, 2023 at 03:46 AM



“ *1 file added to the album 1987*



---

**Tom Brown** - August 16, 2020 at 12:21 PM



“ *I worked with Randy at the Lake Ray Roberts project where he was known as "The Shoe" for the K-Mart shoes he finally threw to rest on the last day of a particular site on the banks of the Isle Du Bois crik in mid-summer 1987. Had a picture of that solemn occasion, but can't seem to find it now. Great character, Randy. Couldn't forget him if I wanted to. Humor is needed at 99 degrees in the Texas humidity, with all the bugs and plants waiting to bite. He was hilarious. Oh, and he also did archaeology well!*

---

**Thomas Brown** - August 04, 2020 at 03:15 PM

CB

“ I was incredibly fortunate to learn about excavation and survey from Randy at Fort Lewis field school and to have worked with him at DCA, but was most fortunate of all to develop a great friendship with this guy who always made me laugh. Through his enthusiasm and passion for archaeology and most aspects of life, and for sharing his knowledge and many, many jokes and stories, Randy quickly became a mentor and a long lost big brother to me. So many great memories...

*He always had a way to make fieldwork fun, even during the heat of the summer at a gnat-infested, treeless desert project area where moods could quickly deteriorate. He would come up with his own names for survey techniques like “walking the dog” and other outrageous names to keep things exciting. He sure made those long days when conditions weren’t optimal seem short yet memorable because we laughed all day long.*

*During one long winter working on reports in the basement at DCA, Randy initiated a mid-afternoon break called “2:30 charades.” He always went first and on the spot came up with something crazy to act out that always had us rolling. Others would sometimes take a turn, but Randy always went a few rounds until we were all red in the face with laughter.*

*So many other memories, some not as appropriate to share in detail, but some will remember the kitty litter box incident and the problems that occurred when Randy read a site map upside down. I will miss you dearly big brother!*

*Clive Briggs*

---

**Clive Briggs** - August 18, 2018 at 05:28 PM

MM

“ Randy you were a great friend ! No matter where I was in San Juan County you always seemed to show up with that grand smile . We drank many beers together and always laughed . Thank you Randy, knowing you has made my life better , Rock On Love You  
Michelle

---

**Michelle L McLaughlin** - July 31, 2018 at 10:33 PM

RM

“ I was very sorry to hear about Randy’s passing. I’ve known Randy since 1977 when we were students at UN-L and he was a good friend over the years. I always thought of Randy as being a thoughtful and curious person and someone who always had empathy for people. He loved what he did and liked talking about his work. I haven’t spoken to him since late last year and it was my understanding his archeological work funding was discontinued along with the work he was doing in New Mexico. My sincere condolences to all of Randy’s family and friends. He will be greatly missed by all of us.

-Randy McCright Omaha, NE

---

**Randy McCright** - July 30, 2018 at 08:22 AM

DW

“ Randy was such a good-hearted and good-natured person. We had the pleasure of "inheriting" him when we bought the property where he rented his little cabin. Randy was always one to share a laugh and lend a helping hand. He was our go-to guy when we needed someone we could trust to take care of our pets and livestock. He wasn't very fond of taking care of rabbits in the winter, but he didn't tell us that until after we didn't have rabbits any longer! Whenever Dave disappeared, the place to look for him was down at Randy's place sharing a beer. Dave would often take a dinner down to Randy and stay for a beer. Randy's favorite was Dave's cabbage stew. We sure wish we could share more bowls of cabbage stew with him.

Randy stopped being a tenant many, many years ago. He was our good friend and we miss him very much.

---

**Dave & Michelle Williams** - July 25, 2018 at 10:49 PM

MC

“ Mona, Ken, Richard and Caroline Charles purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of Randy L. Nathan.



---

**Mona, Ken, Richard and Caroline Charles** - July 19, 2018 at 10:05 PM

JE

“ I had the privilege of working with Randy on several projects in the Four Corners region. We worked long days out in the sun with the bugs and snakes and sweat and I cannot remember a single moment when Randy wasn't in the best of spirits. Whenever he was working on a project you could sense his tremendous pride in working as a field archeologist. He was the kindest man and just so genuine. Randy will be missed by us all. He was one of a kind for sure.

---

**Jason Edwards** - July 19, 2018 at 10:03 AM

SY

“ Lots of great memories with Randy, and I'm terribly saddened to hear of his passing. I had the privilege to work with Randy and Mona (and many of you here) at Booth Mountain FC in 1995 and again at Field School in 98 or 99. I can't think of anything I would rather be doing right now than spending a day surveying Booth Mountain with Randy and an evening drinking a Coor's or two or maybe a few more. I miss you Randy, and am grateful to have known you.



---

**Steve Yeaton** - July 17, 2018 at 08:24 PM

CA

*I'd like to note the brown FBI car in the background with the hood up, described below. Great photo Steve!*

---

**Cody Anderson** - July 26, 2018 at 11:08 PM

GC

“ 4 files added to the album geoffs\_photos



---

geoffrey cunnar - July 14, 2018 at 10:28 PM

KC

“Randy Nathan entered my life through his good friend and colleague, my wife Mona Charles, soon after we moved to Durango from Lake City, CO. She was excavating along the La Plata Highway, NM and so was Randy. They quickly became good friends and so I was soon introduced and Randy was welcomed into our family. Mona asked Randy if he was interested in working with the Fort Lewis College, CO archaeology field school and then the subsequent trips to Fort Carson and others. They did this for many years. Together they helped mentor a generation of Southwest archaeologists. With Randy assisting Mona on these endeavors, I felt a sense of security for her on these extended jobs. Randy was serious about this role.

My friendship with Randy spanned the last 27-28 years. Randy was usually at our family Christmas and Thanksgiving day celebrations and meals. I will never forget those moments. Randy enjoyed the holidays with us and our two children Caroline and Richard's holiday memories will forever be connected with Randy. He has a perpetual seat at our table. Randy also typically showed for the Charles Fourth of July celebrations when we played full contact croque followed by a barbecue and cherry pie and he was in charge of overseeing the cranking of the homemade ice cream machine.

All of the Charleses lives were enriched because of Randy. As I try to address my own grief for my loss, I find comfort in the memories and good times we shared. I will miss you Randy Nathan.

Ken Charles

---

ken Charles - July 14, 2018 at 08:54 PM

CH

“ Randy, or Randy Panda, as I grew to love him was a great mentor and friend to me in college and for many years after college. He helped to shape my life and career and I'm going to miss him dearly. He made work fun, but always instilled a work ethic beyond compare to the students he taught. I'll never forget the field work opportunities I had with him and his kind and gentle manner in teaching all of us to be the best that we could be. I will miss his friendship so much.

*There are too many memories to share...*

*Randy Panda, You were "Out Standing in your field"... and I'll always remember your smile, chuckle, and clap when I continue to say that through life as you did through yours.*

*Love and miss you much.*

*Christine*

---

**Christine** - July 14, 2018 at 07:06 PM

CH

“ 1 file added to the album Randy Panda



---

**Christine** - July 14, 2018 at 06:44 PM

CH

“ 1 file added to the album Randy Panda



---

**Christine** - July 14, 2018 at 06:39 PM

MC

“ 2 files added to the album Mona's photos



---

**Mona Charles** - July 14, 2018 at 05:02 PM

JH

“ *Randy, you are one of the most wonderful, kind souls I have ever known. You were so patient with me when I was a naïve, headstrong 20-year old, and you taught me so much. I owe you a great debt for your wisdom. I will miss you so much!*



---

**John Hall** - July 14, 2018 at 01:52 PM

CE

“ What do you say about Randy? Or "Chucky", as we knew him in the late 70s and 80s. My wife and he shared the same Birth Date. They were in the maternity ward together in Nebraska, and were lifelong friends. I had the pleasure of having him as a roommate in Texas for a few months in our younger years. It was always a treat to see him at a graduation or wedding or holiday every few years. For someone of small stature, he was a legendary teller of tall tales. One of my favorites was his story of dressing up as a Tick for Halloween and going to a redneck bar. Bruce Springsteen's "Terry's Song" sums up how we will miss him. "When they built you, brother, they broke the mold"



---

**Chuck and Ellen Echnernacht** - July 14, 2018 at 11:23 AM

TS

“ I am deeply saddened to hear of our loss of Randy. He was a great mentor, friend, and all around wonderful person. I will never forget you Randy, you made a difference in all of our lives.

*I have many great memories of Randy. I will never forget when we were working at Pinon Canyon and staying at the ranch house. I was told that Randy had slightly injured his foot and then he came walking in. He seemed to be getting around okay and didn't appear to be in any pain. Then he showed me his foot and I said, "Holy crap, Randy! You nearly tore your entire heel off." The padding of the heel of his foot was only hanging there by a little bit of skin. With my meager EMT skills I tried to patch it up. I am pretty sure Randy didn't miss any time in the field because of it and he acted like it was no big deal. He was definitely tough as nails.*

*There was another time, when we were excavating a site within the thick forest of Booth Mountain on Fort Carson. We were a long way from the vehicle, so Thann and I ran some floatation samples back since we had accumulated so many. Well, we overshot the site on the way back and needed a little help finding the crew. Randy called us the "Lost Boys" the rest of the summer and never let us live it down. I have not gotten lost getting to a site since; I pay attention and remember Randy's words.*

*I will miss you greatly Randy.*

---

**Thad Swan** - July 13, 2018 at 11:19 AM

BB

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



---

**Ben Bellorado** - July 12, 2018 at 03:59 PM

“ There are so many great things about Rando, I don’t even know where to begin. My first memory of Randy is driving past a small isolated house on the outskirts of Fort Lewis College. It was the archaeology lab but didn’t know it at the time. There was this short stout man that would be periodically smoking a cigarette on the doorway. He was always wearing a worn out plaid shirt with holes throughout it and a sweat stained baseball cap on his head. I remember thinking to myself, if I could give that guy a shield, Viking helmet, and warriors axe he would make the greatest dwarf. Short, stocky, and tough as nails. That is Randy Nathan.

Anyone who worked with Randy would recognize him driving up to work in the morning or his camping spot in the evening with his brown car. This thing was something reminiscent of an early 1980s FBI car that looked like it had been rode hard and put away wet. At the beginning of every field season, Rando would hop out of that thing with a new box undertow. He would smile with that big grin, showing slightly beaver-bucked-teeth under his mustache, and exclaim “I got my new boots!” He’d explain in an excited voice that he’d get the same kind of boots at an outstanding price and use them throughout the season. Always true to his word, by the end of the field season those things were worn out! I mean, holes in the soles and his toes poking out of the sides. He thought it was a great deal. I thought he was crazy!

Like most archaeologists in field camps, Randy would live out of that brown car throughout the field season. He’d sit at the picnic table coolly smoking a cigarette in one hand and editing my field maps with a beer beside him. The back hood would be up and there would be cooking polish sausages on the skillet. He’d grab me as I walked by and point out common mistakes that only a rookie field tech could make. Never making anyone feel dumb, he’d politely point things out and make it feel like a learning experience, which it was. Everyone who knew anything about archaeology respected Randy’s insight and attention to detail.

*Without debate, I'm sure most Archaeologists remember Randy in the field. He'd survey with a USGS quadrangle map in hand and obnoxiously large and heavy military pack that must have dated to the 1950s. He'd skip over the terrain of sandstone boulders and make it look like a poetic dance. Until the afternoon thunderstorms would catch us off guard, then shouting at the field crew with wide-eyes he'd exclaim "EXPADITE!", "EXPADITE!". We'd scatter through the pinyon and juniper tree forest with rain pouring down and lightning bearing down on us, only to find each other after the storm. Wet as a drowned rat, Randy would always have a big smile on his face that helped us all throughout the traumatic daily event.*

*I have so many great memories of Randy. He extremely influenced my career and motivated me to do the best work as an archaeologist that could be done. His experience and attitude toward work and life outshined us all. I'm so glad that he was a part of our lives and what he shared with everyone will continue. I'll miss you Randy, but you are not forgotten.*

---

**Cody Anderson** - July 12, 2018 at 10:29 AM

SL

“ One of the last times I saw you was after house and dog sitting for me. You got your truck stuck in my driveway, spilled a beer on the carpet, and had the dogs get loose. But man I wouldn't have wanted that to go any other way. We were your little brothers and you looked out for us, counseled, and mentored. There was no better dirt archaeologist. I wouldn't know how to draw a map or profile and certainly wouldn't have straight walls. I couldn't have asked for a better big brother. I will miss you dearly.

Sean Larmore



---

Sean Larmore - July 11, 2018 at 04:58 PM

GC

“ Randy I miss you. You were everything a friend should be. You were aces.

---

Geoff Cunnar - July 10, 2018 at 10:05 PM

HG

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



---

Heather Gregory - July 10, 2018 at 04:32 PM

HG

“ I’m deeply saddend to hear that Randy has passed. Just yesterday I was going through my box of field school notes and pictures remembering what a wonderful, fun, loving person he was. He had a smile and a twinkle in his eye that made you want to be his friend and to have a beer with! I worked with Randy on several different projects (It has been almost 19 years now) I’ll never forget that day he made us survey up that godforsaken hill at Fort Carson. He asked me when we got to the top and had a map in his hand “Heather, do you want to know where we at?” All I can remember saying is “Randy... I don’t give a rats ass where we are!” Lol, I would not have said that to anyone else, but it was Randy! So many good times and memories I and other students had with him during our college days. I’m bummed that after I left Durango I didn’t keep in touch with him. My thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends during this time.



---

**Heather Gregory** - July 10, 2018 at 04:30 PM

CA

*What a great memory!*

---

**Cody Anderson** - July 12, 2018 at 10:30 AM

KF

“ Oh, Randy. My husband knew you longer than I, so I first met you at our wedding reception 21 years ago. You had brought a potato salad and on top you put bell pepper letters that you had carved to spell "Carl and Kathy". I thought it was one of the cutest things I'd ever seen. You gave me a big bear hug, and it felt like I'd known you forever. I'll miss those times when we would run into each other at the grocery store and you would give me one of those bear hugs. You were a beautiful soul with a big heart. You loved everyone, and everyone loved you. I don't think I've ever met a kinder, sweeter, more easy going man. Our community has suffered a big loss, but you've left us with so many good memories. Rest well, my friend.

Kathy Freuden - July 10, 2018 at 10:25 AM

CM

“ We met Randy through our daughter Christine when she was in Colorado and met him at Scholz Beer Garten in Austin a number of years ago. Have fond memories of him and we send our prayers out to the family. Carol and Claus Markussen

carol Markussen - July 10, 2018 at 08:02 AM



“ I will always remember Randy's kindness and humor, and am thankful for the summers I got to spend in the field with him. There was no one else quite like him, that's for sure. 💙



Cerisa Renee - July 09, 2018 at 09:52 PM

LR

“ *Lori Stephens Reed -- I just heard today that my friend Randy has passed away. I am deeply saddened to hear this news. Randy had a heart of gold and was a dear sweet soul. He was an excellent field archaeologist who loved his work. I will miss his stories, his laughter, and his big bear hugs. He always made me laugh and was an fun uncle to my kids who are now college age. You will be missed Randy. Love you!!!*



---

**Lori Stephens Reed** - July 09, 2018 at 09:02 PM

JC

“ *Randy, my dear friend, we came into the business of archaeology at the same time, we did great things in our time. But now you have gone on to better things. I will miss you intelligence, humor, and kind heart. You will always be a like-minded heretic and archaeology pirate in my book. So glad we got to do one last project together! See you down the road my friend!*

---

**John Cater** - July 09, 2018 at 08:44 PM

MC

“ *Mona Charles lit a candle in memory of Randy L. Nathan*



---

**Mona Charles** - July 09, 2018 at 08:37 PM

MC

“ 3 files added to the album Mona's photos



---

**Mona Charles** - July 09, 2018 at 08:35 PM

PR

“ How sad to hear of the passing of my friend and archaeological colleague Randy Nathan. Randy was a truly gentle soul and will be missed.

*Paul Reed*

---

**Paul Reed** - July 09, 2018 at 06:47 PM

MC

“ Randy was my closest friend for the past 28 years. He not only worked for me but worked with me and is lovingly known as Uncle Rambo or Uncle Buck by my kids. He spent most of the last 15 years with his Durango family on all major holidays, including the 4th of July. There are no words that can describe the loss that I feel. I would not be the person and the archaeologists that I am today without Randy always looking after my back.

*Mona Charles  
Durango, Colorado*

---

**Mona Charles** - July 09, 2018 at 06:04 PM

TM

“Randy was one of the most kind, generous, unjudgemental people I have ever had the good fortune to meet. He was always supportive, always willing to help out, no matter who you were or what you needed. If things were bad, he would make you laugh. Randy, you were a great friend and I love you dearly! --Tori Myers



---

**Tori Myers** - July 09, 2018 at 04:58 PM