



John Stephen Wehrle

AUG 19, 1946 - MAY 25, 2023



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John Stephen Wehrle

AUG 19, 1946 - MAY 25, 2023

John Stephen "Steve" Wehrle died on May 25, 2023 at his home in St. Louis Park, Minnesota, surrounded by family after a battle with pancreatic cancer. He was 76. Steve was born August 19, 1946, in Centerville, Iowa, to Everett and Maxine (Miller) Wehrle, the third of five children.

After graduating from Centerville High School in 1964, Steve attended Iowa Wesleyan University in Mount Pleasant, Iowa. He was drafted into the U.S. Army in October 1968, and would serve in Vietnam as part of the First Infantry Division until May 1970. Upon his discharge he completed his bachelors of science in psychology at IWU, and then a received mortuary diploma from the Worsham College of Mortuary Science in suburban Chicago, Illinois.

Steve would return to Centerville to help run the family business, the Miller-Wehrle Funeral Home, and marry Melissa Anderson in June 1973. Though devoted to the business he found the schedule incompatible with a growing family, and in 1979 switched careers, becoming a rural carrier for the U.S. Postal Service.

The move gave him greater freedom to enjoy his other passions like raising cattle and spending time out on the family farm near Plano, Iowa. A faithful member of the First United Methodist Church in Centerville, Steve served in roles including finance and stewardship committee chair, lead for Methodist Men, and was beloved as a Sunday School instructor and youth group leader.

His dedication to the church knew few bounds, and he could often be found vacuuming the halls, mowing the lawn or even acting in a church play. Steve loved sports. Playing neighborhood sports with friends was a formative part of his childhood, and Steve was a member of Big Red golf, basketball and track teams; he briefly held the CHS shot put record.

He was a dedicated Iowa Hawkeyes fan and had a special enthusiasm for track and field. Appropriately, he contributed his time for many seasons as an official for CHS Big Red and



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Howar Junior High meet events, earning an honorary accolade for years of service. Among all his interests, golf held a special place in his heart.

Steve loved simply being around the game, whether he was playing a round himself, watching the pro tour, or just walking a course collecting stray golf balls. He learned to play at the Appanoose County Country Club, where he'd later be a long-time member, set a course record and win the men's club championship in 1984.

In retirement, Steve's focus turned toward even closer to his family, whom he cherished spending time with. He and Melissa moved to St. Louis Park, Minnesota, in 2011 to be closer to new grandchildren. Life in a bigger city afforded him new passions like attending theater, exploring area lakes and parks, and dining out at new restaurants.

He enjoyed spending winters in Palm Desert, California, and summers on East Lake Okoboji, Iowa, where entertaining family outdoors might have been his ultimate past-time. Above all else, Steve truly enjoyed people. Wherever he went, his gentle smile and warm affability would earn new friends near and far.

Regardless of who you were, he was eager hear your story; when he spoke to others about you, he was proud to know you. Steve died just one month shy of celebrating 50 years of marriage to the love of his life, Melissa.

Steve is survived by his wife Melissa (Anderson), brother James Mark Wehrle and sister Susan Sanders, son Drew (Baomy) of Chicago, Illinois, daughter Elizabeth Deacon (Nick) of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and four grandchildren, Graham, Frederick, Della and Everett. He will be missed immeasurably.

Memorials may be directed to First United Methodist Church of Centerville, Iowa, or the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), the humanitarian and development arm of The United Methodist Church. Per wishes, cremation has been accorded. A Celebration of Life will be held Saturday, June 3, 2023 at 10:00 AM at the First United Methodist Church.

Memorials may be directed to First United Methodist Church of Centerville, Iowa, or the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), the humanitarian and development arm of The United Methodist Church and may be mailed to Thomas Funeral Home, ATTN: Wehrle Family,



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501 North 18th Street, Centerville, Iowa 52544. Condolences may be shared online at www.thomasfh.com or on our funeral home Facebook page.



Tribute Wall

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DG

Dan Gleason posted:

I can't believe I didn't post on Steve's memory wall. I had so many memories of him from the time we were kids. All the golf we played during those summers. Steve crashing a golf cart into a tree at the Ottumwa municipal and we had to hide at Centerville country club when the pro came down to try to get us to pay for the cart.... Living in the same house in the summer of 1967 in Oak Park Illinois and Steve convincing some local little kids who had called him a hippie that he was a member of the Beach boys – and they came by for autographs the next day. Taking off for St. Louis to see the 1964 U.S. Open at Belerieve country club. he was as good as they come, and fun as they come, and is caring as they come. He lived a great life and I miss him and will till I'm gone.

March 17 at 12:56 AM

MP

Michael Phillips posted:

sorry to hear that. He was a good postal carrier in Centerville and made himself fashionable. Too bad the streets of Centerville were harder to deliver to than most cities in Iowa. We'll miss him.

August 8 at 7:00 PM

DE

Deb Egeland posted:

Just saw in the Centerville School newsletter that Steve had died in May. I enjoyed having Steve as our mail carrier most of the years we loved N of Centerville. I never knew Drew well; but imagine the illness and death was hard on him, Melissa's & Elizabeth. Just wanted you to know that I DID appreciate Steve's smile and affability whenever I happened to meet him at the mailbox! 😊

July 19 at 7:00 PM



Anonymous posted:

Melissa. So sorry to hear of Steves passing. So thankful that you have family nearby. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. Jack and Bobbie White

June 20 at 7:00 PM



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TS

Tom Sager posted:

Steve and I were classmates in Centerville schools. He was eight days younger than I. In thinking about what I could say about Steve for this memorial, I decided that a single story would suffice to illustrate the kind of person Steve was. This story is not well-known even among our classmates and friends. It is a small-world story: In the mid-1970s, long after our school days together, I had started dating my future wife Robin, then a doctoral student at Stanford University, where I was teaching. My future mother-in-law Ruthie was piquedly curious about my background. In due course, she discovered that I am from Centerville, Iowa. "Oh, I know someone from Centerville, Iowa!" Ruthie exclaimed. ("Uh-oh!" I thought.) "My good friend Eleanor is married to Fred Wehrle, who is from Centerville, Iowa." (Fred was Steve's uncle.) Steve heard about this development and leaped into action. Perhaps anticipating the natural skepticism of mothers-in-law everywhere toward potential future sons-in-law, Steve unsolicitedly and without my knowledge composed a two-page, single-spaced letter of recommendation attesting to my suitability as a mate for Robin and delivered it to Ruthie! Steve never told me directly that he had written the letter, but when I asked him later, he confessed somewhat abashedly. I really cannot judge the extent to which Steve's letter may have smoothed the way for me with my mother-in-law. But I was touched by the generous and kindly spirit that his writing of the letter represents. And I did marry Robin (thanks, Steve!). Steve, if you were Jewish, you would be a mensch. And by the way, Steve, if you would like to have a letter of recommendation for the next leg of your journey, I would be happy to oblige. -Tom Sager

June 5 at 7:00 PM

JP

Jerry Power posted:

Legend describes him to the tee (no pun intended). Steve was a great athlete and just a great human being. He had some great basketball moves too! If Centerville would have had wrestling back then, he would have been a State Champ, he was very stong! Drew thanks for answering, I'm sorry I didn't get to meet you in person. We had a graduation party in Des Moines for a dear family friend(s). I attended your Mom and Dad's wedding in 1973! AND YOU ARE WELCOME, your Dad was very easy to talk about!

June 4 at 7:00 PM

DW

Drew Wehrle posted:

Thank you so much for this, Jerry. I had no idea you were on the mound! Was so happy I could find the original clip - was always a legend in my mind. Many thanks for the kind words. I greatly appreciate it!

June 4 at 7:00 PM



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JP

Jerry Power posted:

Drew, Your Eulogy was perfect! I just wanted you to know that I threw that pitch to Wingy Wehrle, he was on the Rotary team and I played for Oehler Brothers. Richard Clark, father of Ronnie Clark wrote articles for the lowegian. Again, you couldn't have done a better eulogy on your Great Father! May he Rest in Peace!!

June 3 at 7:00 PM

LD

Liz (Horstman) Davis posted:

I loved Steve's smile. He really knew how to light up a room. He was my Mom's (Miriam Horstman) mail carrier for many years. She adored him and always talked about what a great "kid" he was. This world has lost another great one! RIP Steve.

June 2 at 7:00 PM

LH

Linda Roof Harlan posted:

Sending prayers to the family

June 2 at 7:00 PM

PD

Patsy Dudenhoeffer posted:

Sorry for your loss RIP

June 1 at 7:00 PM

RB

Robert D Broshar posted:

Condolences to the family. Steve was a great person.

June 1 at 7:00 PM

TC

Tommy Carson posted:

Very sorry for the families loss !

June 1 at 7:00 PM



Tribute Wall

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ST

Sara Tait lit a candle in honor of John.

May 31 at 7:00 PM



DL

Dennis & Beverly Sisul Laurson lit a candle in honor of John.

Dear Melissa & Family, we are so sorry to hear about Steve. He was such a kind and endearing person, always seemed to have a smile to share. May your loving memories bring you peace.

May 31 at 7:00 PM



Anonymous posted:

Dear Wehrle Family, Steve was such a kind and gentle man. We are happy to have known him. You are in our thoughts and prayers during this time.

May 31 at 7:00 PM



Anonymous posted:

Wishing you and the entire family peace and comfort during this time.

May 31 at 7:00 PM

LR

Liz, Greg And Rowen posted:

We love you Drew, Baomy and Evy. Your Dad seemed like an amazing man, Drew. Sending all our love from Chicago during this difficult time.

May 31 at 7:00 PM

PC

Phoebe, Eileen, & Chris posted:

Steve was one-of-a-kind, a warm and generous soul to all those fortunate enough to know him. He is greatly missed. We send much love, today & always.

May 31 at 7:00 PM



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TF

The Wood Family posted:

Sending love to Wehrle family from the Wood family - Lauren, Matt and Carter. Please share hugs all around from us!

May 31 at 7:00 PM

SC

Skip And Linda Campbell posted:

Condolences to whole family. New him as Mail Carrier and from Church. Always friendly both him and wife. R.I.P. Steve.

May 31 at 7:00 PM

PS

Paige Seddon posted:

So sorry for your loss. Thoughts and prayers to you all

May 31 at 7:00 PM

EW

Elizabeth (Bauman) Weinberg posted:

There are very few memories I have of growing up in the Methodist Church that don't involve Steve. I absolutely adored him when I was younger, and it was great to reconnect with him a couple of years ago while I was working at Thomas Funeral Home - he called one day regarding business, but the two of us chatted for quite awhile and caught up on life. Steve had such an obvious love for life and the people around him - I don't ever remember seeing him without a smile on his face. Steve will forever be one of the sweetest and greatest men I have ever had the privilege of knowing. His life was such a testament to Jesus's love and he will be so greatly missed. My condolences to Melissa and his family.

May 31 at 7:00 PM

DS

Derek Schultz posted:

Steve was such a great man. He loved golf and loved to play with new people. Appreciated him wanting to join up with me as a kid.

May 31 at 7:00 PM



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JB

Jenn Buban posted:

So sorry! Strength an prayers for the family! 🙏❤️🙏

May 31 at 7:00 PM

ST

Sandy Thomas posted:

Sorry for the families loss 🙏

May 31 at 7:00 PM

PP

Peggy Van Pelt posted:

Such a nice man. 🙏☐☐

May 31 at 7:00 PM

HO

Henry Ortmann posted:

Steve was a really nice guy.

May 31 at 7:00 PM

NH

Norm Houser posted:

Always a smile and a uplift greeting. Rest in Peace my friend.

May 31 at 7:00 PM

MM

Mary McClure posted:

Steve was always a kind, caring, gentle man. So sorry for your family's loss, he was one in a million.

May 31 at 7:00 PM

NT

Nellie Thomas lit a candle in honor of John.



May 30 at 7:00 PM



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SH

Susan Cooper Harshman posted:

Steve was truly one of the nicest people I have ever meet. He made me feel so welcome when I moved here. I know your family is heart broken but hopefully his beautiful memory will live on within you forever and always. Prayers for this difficult time.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

MG

Mike Gill posted:

Steve and I worked the long jump event together for many years!! RIP my friend.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

TH

Tiffany Havard posted:

I'm so sorry! Steve was such a wonderful person! We knew him as a mailman and a leader at church, and he always had a smile and kind words. Thinking of your family!

May 30 at 7:00 PM

JT

Jamiejaren Tubaugh posted:

Steve was a wonderful, kind, gentle man that took time for his family, friends, community and church. He taught our kids Sunday school and was the best role model for young and old. He had a special gift and so many got to experience his gift. He had a heart of gold that made all of us richer for being around him. He has a beautiful wife and children. His wife was a great elementary teacher in our district. Sending love, sympathy and prayers to all.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

JH

Jane Doran Hayes posted:

Sorry for your loss. Prayers & sympathy to Steve's family.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

CP

Carolyn Padavich posted:

So very sorry to hear this!☐

May 30 at 7:00 PM



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Anonymous posted:

We are thinking of you all.

May 30 at 7:00 PM



Jack Maletta posted:

I was very sorry to hear of Steve's passing. I haven't seen him for several years. I remember Steve during high school years in Centerville. A gentle person with a ready smile and an infective laugh. I recall stories about Steve having a habit of playing golf barefoot at the Country Club. Rest in Peace my friend.

May 30 at 7:00 PM



Marcy Lyons Thamke posted:

Sorry for your loss, thoughts and prayers to the family

May 30 at 7:00 PM



Dan Gleason posted:

How truly blessed I have been to have a lifelong friend like Steve. He was witty, he was truly caring and compassionate, he was the epitome of "a good man." So many memories of things we did growing up, during our college days, and our continuing friendship come flooding over me. Rest in Peace, Steve. A prime example of a life well lived.

May 30 at 7:00 PM



Michele Bratz Busch posted:

Such a nice guy! So sorry for your loss. You are in our thoughts and prayers!

May 30 at 7:00 PM



Kayla Young Montgomery posted:

Steve and his family were wonderful people. So very sorry for your loss. Prayers for all.

May 30 at 7:00 PM



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SC

Susan Barker Cole posted:

Melissa and family, I was so sad to hear this at church Sunday. Steve was such a fun and kind man-I loved the spark in his eyes when he would grin. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

JD

Joy A. Davis posted:

Such a great person and classmate. My sympathy to the family

May 30 at 7:00 PM

AR

Andy Robinson posted:

Very sorry to hear this. Prayers for the family

May 30 at 7:00 PM

CH

Connie Hermon posted:

Prayers for the family

May 30 at 7:00 PM

LB

Lona Bratz posted:

So sorry to hear, prayers for family.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

BJ

Brandi Jo posted:

Thinking of all of you.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

MP

Misty Powers posted:

Super nice guy my mailman since I was a child prayers to the family sorry for your loss!

May 30 at 7:00 PM



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JA

Judy Barker Austin posted:

Prayers 🙏🙏 and hugs ❤️ for you, Melissa Anderson Wehrle, and the rest of your family. Steve was a blessing to you, and you to him. Continue to cherish all your lovely memories, especially those of the trips you made. Steve will be missed by all who knew him.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

LS

Lori Snider posted:

Sorry to hear this! Dad really liked Steve and loved being his sub.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

GE

Greg Evans posted:

Steve was my grandmother's mail delivery man. He knew that she was crippled and would deliver the mail to her door! She always talked about him as if he were one of her grandchildren. He greatly blessed my grandmother and because of that he gave her a little independence in her later years. May God greatly bless him and his family!

May 30 at 7:00 PM

HS

Helen Seddon posted:

Sorry for your loss prayers for the family

May 30 at 7:00 PM

JM

Janice Houser Mcelvain posted:

Prayers for the family. Steve was a wonderful person and always had a gentle smile.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

SN

Sandy Nab posted:

Sending prayers

May 30 at 7:00 PM



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SA

Stephanie Anderson posted:

What an amazing obituary for an amazing man. He was so kind and easy to talk to. He was my mailman when I was a little girl and I kept in touch with him as I got into adulthood. He never forgot who I was. He lived a full life. He is an inspiration to us all. My condolences to his family.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

CM

Cindy Mckay posted:

My deepest sympathy to Steve's family and close friends

May 30 at 7:00 PM

CK

Carolyn Kruzich posted:

Steve was an awesome man always a smile on his face. Prayers do the family

May 30 at 7:00 PM

GM

Gary Masters posted:

Very sorry for the loss Steve was one of the nicest guys around

May 30 at 7:00 PM

JC

Jane Craver posted:

Such a nice, friendly guy. Prayers for his family.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

PT

Patty Tresemer posted:

Always a pleasant & happy guy! Hugs to his family.

May 30 at 7:00 PM



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SS

Susan Sacco posted:

So very sorry 🙏. Steve was one of the best and he will be truly missed. Hugs and prayers for the family 🙏❤️🙏

May 30 at 7:00 PM

JP

Jerry Power posted:

Our condolences to the entire Wehrle Family! I could write a lot of memories of Steve, from Wingy Wehrle the One Armed Wonder, to digging graves by hand, to sawing off the tops of batteries in a rail car in Corydon, to eating lunch at Dawkins and then going home to eat at the funeral home on State St, to gaining 50 pounds over the Summer of 1963! We shared a lot of laughs over the years and the picture above makes me believe he was ready to bust out with a laugh! I can hear his laugh right now! If there was anyone I could pick to go into a battle, Steve would be my pick, the reason being he was always willing to help! May he Rest in Peace, a beautiful soul winged away!

May 30 at 7:00 PM

TT

Tracy Thomas posted:

Always a smile on his face. Such a nice guy.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

LC

Lynn Connelly posted:

So sorry to hear this. Sending prayers to all during this time.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

DP

Deb Peterson posted:

So very sorry, Steve was one of the first guys we met when we came to Centerville. He was the kindest man. Prayers to his family

May 30 at 7:00 PM



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DL

Debbie Bitner-Lafoy posted:

My Dad thought so much of Steve and Melissa. He will be missed by many. Condolences to his family.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

CM

Claudia Mccarthy posted:

Steve was one of the good guys. He will be truly missed. Prayers for his family

May 30 at 7:00 PM

DB

Debbie Brewer posted:

Thoughts and prayers

May 30 at 7:00 PM

VB

Vicki Bride posted:

Steve was one of nicest people I ever met. Prayers for his family.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

CH

Carol Shott Harshman posted:

Steve is one of the kindest men I have had the privilege to know. He was our mail carrier and many days I would be outside playing with my boys. Steve always waved or visited. Truly a remarkable man with a remarkable family. His smile and kindness will live forever. Sending love and prayers.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

SV

Sueand Wayne Veach posted:

Such a nice man

May 30 at 7:00 PM



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DD

Deb Drew posted:

Prayers go out to the family.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

MW

Maisi Watts posted:

Steve always had a kind heart and a big smile. I am so sorry for the families loss. Please know I am thinking of you during this difficult time.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

GB

Greg Baker posted:

Great man prayers for his family

May 30 at 7:00 PM

JW

Judy White posted:

So sorry for the Families loss !!Steve was the nicest man We ever knew n always so friendly always had a big smile. RIP Steve 🙏

May 30 at 7:00 PM

DB

Diana Brinegar posted:

So sorry to hear this. Went to school with Steve. He was such a nice man. Sympathy to his family.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

LC

Lynn Connelly posted:

So sorry to hear this. Sending prayers to all during this time.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

JF

Jolene Susin Fadiga posted:

Always in a good mood and polite.

May 30 at 7:00 PM



Tribute Wall

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PC

Pamela Young Curtis posted:

So sorry for the families loss, such a nice man.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

NF

Nina Finch posted:

Didn't know him well, but I never saw him without a big smile on his face! He will be remembered by many for his kindness. Peace to you.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

DB

Diana Brinegar posted:

So sorry to hear this. Went to school with Steve. He was such a nice man. Sympathy to his family.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

CW

Cindee Paas White posted:

Such a gentle man. He will be missed. Prayers for peace and comfort for his family.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

DA

Deanna Allen posted:

Steve was a special person. Always a smile and friendly greeting. Wonderful classmate and friend

May 30 at 7:00 PM

JF

Jolene Susin Fadiga posted:

Always in a good mood and polite.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

DR

Deanna Russell posted:

Steve was a very kind and caring man. He will be missed by his family and many friends. Sorry for your loss! ❤️🙏

May 30 at 7:00 PM



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JZ

Jill Pefley Zintz posted:

A great person in every dimension of the term. Strong Christian values, kind, and positive. He always greeted everyone at church with a softness and kindness.

May 30 at 7:00 PM

MC

Mike O'connor posted:

Such a wonderful person. Everything about Steve made you want to be a friend. So thankful I got to know him. Thoughts and Prayers for his family and many long time friends 🙏

May 30 at 7:00 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring John by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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