



David Lee Nelson

July 29, 1978 - September 24, 2020

David Lee Nelson II, 42, of Greenville passed away on September 24, 2020, from complications from cancer. He was born in Charleston, SC on July 29, 1978, the first child of David Lee Nelson (“Lee”) and Ann Troublefield Nelson. David is survived by his wife Jaimie Malphrus – they married in March at a ceremony at Bon Secours St. Francis Downtown. He is also survived by his parents; three sisters, Anneclaire Nelson, Valerie Strawhorn (Michael), and Rachel Troublefield Nelson; his nephew Patrick Strawhorn; and many extended family and friends.

At the time of his death, David was a theatre instructor at the Fine Arts Center of Greenville and adjunct professor of theatre at Furman University. He received his B.A. in theatre from the College of Charleston (where he was later a visiting faculty member) and his M.F.A. from the Alabama Shakespeare Festival (where he would return as a writer and performer). A member of the Screen Actors Guild and Actors’ Equity Association, David was an award-winning playwright and standup comedian whose solo plays toured the country and to Edinburgh. His play “Stages” and book “Hope in the Time of Chemo” chronicled his diagnosis at age 38 with stage four colon cancer and his journey through treatment alongside his family and beloved wife Jaimie. These works, as well as his blog www.davidleenelson.com, became an inspiration to many and will remain a part of his creative legacy.

A visitation will be held on Friday, October 2 at from 12:30 to 1:50pm, with a ceremony immediately following at 2:00pm, at the Howze Mortuary, 6714 State Park Rd., Travelers Rest SC. Attendees are asked to wear masks and keep socially distant. The 2:00pm ceremony will also be streamed for online attendance. A celebration of David’s life and art is being planned for a later date.

The family would like to thank the excellent doctors and nurses at Emory Hospital and Bon Secours St. Francis for their caring support. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made via www.gofundme.com/davidleenelson which will go towards outstanding medical bills and funeral costs as well as two organizations close to David's heart: Camp Mak-a-Dream in Montana and Riverside Theatre in Iowa City.

Cemetery Details

Mountain View Memorial Park formerly Grand View Memorial Gardens

7 Duncan Rd.
Travelers Rest, SC

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT 2. 12:30 PM - 1:50 PM (ET)

The Howze Mortuary
6714 State Park Rd./P.O. Box 369
Travelers Rest, SC

Service

OCT 2. 2:00 PM - 2:45 PM (ET)

The Howze Mortuary Chapel
6714 State Park Rd./P.O. Box 369
Travelers Rest, SC

Tribute Wall

AK

“ I’m so sorry for the loss of your son, brother, husband, and friend. It sucks to lose someone you love. Especially one that leaves a void as large as David’s. I don’t have many personal memories of him but in our interactions he was generous with his attention and smile and gracious with his time and talent. I had the pleasure of seeing him perform his show about coming out to his dad as a Democrat. It was delightful to see how his craft came together and a wonder to marvel at the clever creativity, writing, poise and humor he was able to communicate on stage. He seemed to devote his time to making the most of his God-given gifts and spending it with the friends and family who dearly loved him. His was truly a life well spent. My heart and prayers are sincerely with your family.

Ann (Kennedy) Kirkwood - October 21, 2020 at 01:55 AM

SS

“ I met Dave when he signed up to take guitar lesson when he was a teenager. It was always a pleasure to see him each week. He loved music and was always ready for a challenge to learn new styles to play. He was a joy to be around and always came in the room with a smile. To the Nelson family, you will be in my thoughts and prayers at this difficult time.

Susan Snyder

Susan Snyder - October 02, 2020 at 11:35 PM

JS

“ Jeanne Sagna lit a candle in memory of David Lee Nelson



Jeanne Sagna - October 02, 2020 at 06:04 PM

MW

“ Had a very close group of friends in high school who have kept in touch over the years and Davey was one of that group, We used to ride around Pebble Creek area together in my little 2 seater car being invincible teenagers with a loud stereo! I'll miss my friend Davey for as long as I live.



Molly Warren - October 02, 2020 at 01:24 PM

TS

“ David, you were an amazing teacher, and by teacher I mean one of those wonderful human beings that inspires, listens to, connects with, understands, relates with, and motivates your students. It is a gift you have, a quality you shared and a blessing to me and my girls. It means the world to me as a parent that Isabella and Grace had such an incredible mentor in their lives. Thank you, David for what you did and how you did it.

Mother Teresa, Isabella and Grace Gardner

Teresa Stewart - October 02, 2020 at 11:33 AM

EP

“ Years ago, I was one of David's teachers. Later, he and I became friends, good friends with many shared interests. Then he was my colleague, an exceptional teacher who has touched the hearts and minds of so many students. As it turns out David has taught me far, far more than I could ever have taught him. It's become a platitude to say that someone is in a better place, but I believe it's true in this case. I have every bit of belief that David is in heaven, probably wearing that same Cubs cap and chatting with another of his mentors, Robert Ivey. I grieve for his loss. While I don't cry easily, David's new stage of a life's journey has made me cry a lot. To all of the Nelson family, including our former students Rachel and Jaimie, my heart breaks for you, despite knowing that David is not in physical pain at this moment. The entire College of Charleston family, especially those of us who have known him and loved him so much, grieves for and with you. We also celebrate a man who was the best of giving, caring, loving people.

*Best,
Evan Parry*

Evan Parry - October 02, 2020 at 10:56 AM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Nick Cobb - October 02, 2020 at 01:05 AM



“ David was amazing. He was the sharpest and funniest teacher and friend. He had a huge impact on my life and the lives of so many others. ❤️



keanuthompson@gmail.com - October 01, 2020 at 11:15 PM



“ I had the honor of being one of Dr. Nelson's students and I enjoyed every second of his acting class. He was truly a joy; his jokes never ceased and his love for theater was evident in the way he taught us. I alongside my classmates will miss him dearly. My thoughts go out to his family and friends.

Nicole - October 01, 2020 at 08:49 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of David Lee Nelson.



October 01, 2020 at 08:00 PM



“ Tami Moon lit a candle in memory of David Lee Nelson



Tami Moon - October 01, 2020 at 04:51 PM



“ Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of David Lee Nelson.



October 01, 2020 at 03:07 PM

CN

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



chrisie nelson - October 01, 2020 at 11:59 AM

CN

“ 11 files added to the tribute wall



chrisie nelson - October 01, 2020 at 11:58 AM

LS

“ *Dave you wrote your own story and yes, it was truly your story. You lived life with zest, humility, humor, love, compassion and so many other valiant traits. I think the world of you and all of your family. I hope to someday meet Jaimie. I will not be here for the services and will live stream if my phone is up to it. The world needs so many more people like you. Those left behind will face a void that is bigger than life itself. YOU and your talent will be sorely missed. You wrote so eloquently, lived a life that while you thought you needed more many are envious of your travels and certainly your adventures. You were the best babysitter ever (Christopher, Matthew, and Jeffrey always loved it when you were coming to our house and recall your time with them fondly). We totally enjoyed your comedy shows; it takes guts to poke fun at your own life in front of strangers let alone friends and relatives. You may be gone but you left footprints on so many hearts and will never be forgotten. Your story ended far too soon. I hope that you know how much you meant to us.*

Lydia Scharlau - October 01, 2020 at 11:18 AM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of David Lee Nelson.*



September 30, 2020 at 08:38 PM

LD

“ *4 files added to the album Edinburgh Festival, 2011*



Lauren Duffie - September 30, 2020 at 05:39 PM

BT

“ *David was such a special guy! We loved him dearly. Prayers of comfort and peace with you all during this difficult time.*

Ben & Emily Troublefield - September 30, 2020 at 03:27 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of David Lee Nelson.*



September 30, 2020 at 09:30 AM

TA

“ *David, thank you for sharing your talent. Thank you for showing us the meaning of perseverance. Rest In Peace friend.*

To your family, may you accept these prayers and my condolences during your time of bereavement.



Táhlia Audri - September 30, 2020 at 07:36 AM

SC

“ *Scott, J & CJ lit a candle in memory of David Lee Nelson*



Scott, J & CJ - September 29, 2020 at 11:37 PM

JC

“ *Janine, Scott & Charlie lit a candle in memory of David Lee Nelson*



Janine, Scott & Charlie - September 29, 2020 at 11:35 PM



“ *Davey's light will burn bright forever in all of our hearts. Such an eccentric and vibrant soul. I'm thankful to call him my cousin, but he was so much more. He electrified those who knew him... inspired so many people through his comedic nature... he used comedy tip express realness. Thank God for you.*



Sarah Nelson - September 29, 2020 at 11:22 PM

LS

“ *Ann, Lee and family. I am so sorry for your loss. It seems like yesterday that we were neighbors and our kids played together. Davy was a success and a joy to all! You must be very proud of him. Celie, Larry, Jeff and Greg Schilz*

Larry Schilz - September 29, 2020 at 07:38 PM

PC

“ *Dear Jaimie, we are so sorry for your loss. You and David's family are In our thoughts. He was a wonderful talent and will be missed. The Downey Family*

Palma Collins - September 29, 2020 at 06:30 PM

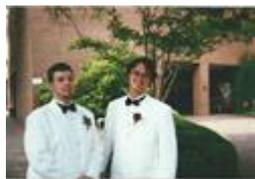
JS

“ *I never actually met David. I was a professor, though, of a number of artists with whom he worked, and a close friend of mine was one of his professors at CoC, and so we ended up connecting virtually. I loved following his career and his amazing art. When my sister was diagnosed with colon cancer around the same time he was, I reached out and he was so comforting and encouraging — always thinking of others even in the face of his own challenges. I bought my sister, now cancer free, a copy of Hope in the Time of Chemo. His light will continue to shine in this world.*

Judy Sebesta - September 29, 2020 at 05:00 PM



“ *5 files added to the tribute wall*



Steve Lange - September 29, 2020 at 04:54 PM

LD

“ I was one of Davey's high school Theatre teachers at WHHS. I'm so incredibly sad...I'm sad for his family and his wife. I'm sad for the theatre community. Davey was such a shining light. To the Nelson family, I am so so sorry for your loss. I think you know how much I adore your whole family. Rest in peace Davey. I will never forget you ❤️

Leslie Gravett Dellinger - September 29, 2020 at 03:48 PM

JH

“ Dear family:

We were sad to learn of David's death. We will keep all of you in our prayers.

John & Bea Heberger

John Heberger - September 29, 2020 at 03:27 PM

BA

“ For days now I haven't been able to put into words what he has meant to me. I haven't been able to put that hurt into words. I can imagine what he would say to me, if I told him that. He would say "it doesn't matter if you can't put it into words, just write. Write about how you feel. It doesn't have to make sense, just write" That was the advice he gave me when I was in his Acting 2 Class and I told him I'm not really sure what to write in my acting journal. He told me to write about my experiences, my legs or the fact that I don't have a spleen. That right there was comedy. Write about what makes you mad or sad. Just let yourself go... of course in years passing some of that is paraphrased. But his words had so much meaning behind them, especially to me. He really helped me open myself up and helped me learn more about myself. I have fond memories about going to his office and talking to him about doing stand up comedy and about his solo shows. I actually saw a good bit of his work as well. He had so much talent and I really looked up to him for that. As soon as he told me that he was doing a solo show class, I knew I had to take it, no matter what. It wasn't easy, but that class was so fulfilling. I remember him telling me that mine was one of the best solo show performances in the class with the way I can just let a joke sit in the room and wait for a reaction was very telling sign I had a stand up comedy background. The biggest compliment was when he told me I knew how to work an audience.

Davy, I will never forget working with you in my first play or the troubles I had after the show ended. You really helped me come to terms with a lot of things. If there was one other thing that I wish I could have told you that I never did is that I wrote in my Acting 2 journal that I felt like you could see potential in me that I haven't seen yet.

I really feel for your wife. I can tell how much you meant to each other by what each of you would post on your Facebook about one another. I can only hope that my memories of you can put a smile on her face.

Braeden arrants - September 29, 2020 at 03:19 PM

BB

“ I'm so sorry for your loss. David was a very sweet guy. I knew him from High school.



Bianca Brazel - September 29, 2020 at 02:11 PM

JU

“ *With his positive attitude, he will be missed..
Judy and Fred Volkman*



judy - September 29, 2020 at 02:08 PM

JA

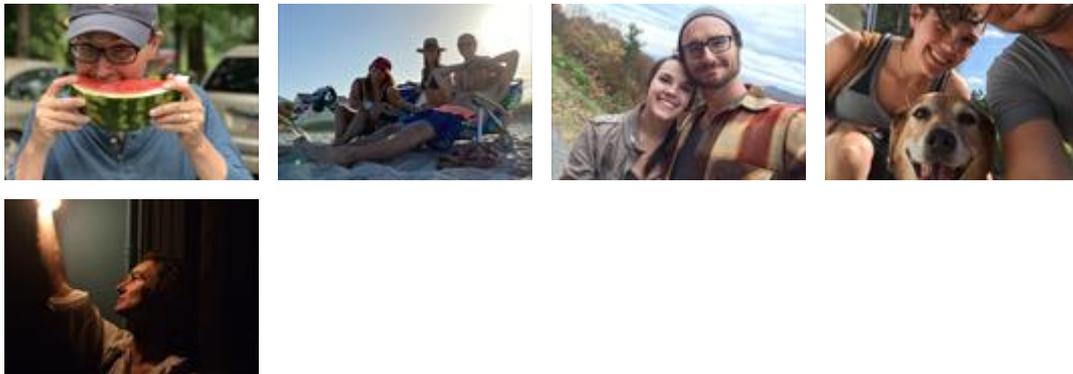
“ *7 files added to the tribute wall*



Jaimie - September 29, 2020 at 01:57 PM

JA

“ *5 files added to the tribute wall*



Jaimie - September 29, 2020 at 01:51 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of David Lee Nelson.*



September 29, 2020 at 01:42 PM

MK

“ *Matthew Kennedy lit a candle in memory of David Lee Nelson*



Matthew Kennedy - September 29, 2020 at 12:12 PM

KW

“ *Sending our sincere sympathy to David's family. Members of our Adolescent and Young Adult Cancer Program had the honor of attending David's beautiful show at the Riverside Theater in Iowa City in March . David generously shared his talent by leading a Writer's Workshop for us, even in the midst of his incredible bone pain. He then led another virtual workshop in June. David touched our group, helped us understand the value of humor while facing a cancer diagnosis and also the importance of telling our stories.*

Sincere gratitude to this incredible human being whose impact will live on.

*Kathy Whiteside, Patient and Family Life Specialist
Adolescent and Young Adult Cancer Program, UIHC*

Kathy Whiteside - September 29, 2020 at 10:39 AM

JN

“ *J-L Cauvin, fellow comedian and friend from NYC purchased the Serenity Wreath for the family of David Lee Nelson.*



J-L Cauvin, fellow comedian and friend from NYC - September 29, 2020 at 10:10 AM



“ *Days of Sunshine Bouquet was purchased for the family of David Lee Nelson.*



September 29, 2020 at 08:10 AM

LS

“ David was truly an inspiration for me and always will be. He was my teacher for multiple years at the Fine Arts Center and I have learned so much from him both about theatre and life. My love goes out to his family and close friends.

Lauren Sermersheim - September 29, 2020 at 02:04 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of David Lee Nelson.



September 28, 2020 at 07:45 PM

JS

“ I'll miss him so much. He was the most sweetest guy and he cared about others. My prayers for the family.

joyce stine - September 28, 2020 at 03:27 PM

SH

“ The world won't be the same without his talent, his quick wit and that wry sense of humor. We'll miss him terribly.

Sarah Edick & Alan Holmes - September 28, 2020 at 12:32 PM

TG

“ The 5th Tradition Group purchased the Large Basket Garden for the family of David Lee Nelson.



The 5th Tradition Group - September 28, 2020 at 12:27 PM



“ Magnificent Life Spray was purchased for the family of David Lee Nelson.



September 28, 2020 at 12:13 PM

SG

“ Sandra Garner lit a candle in memory of David Lee Nelson



Sandra Garner - September 28, 2020 at 10:46 AM



“ Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of David Lee Nelson.



September 28, 2020 at 09:13 AM

KK

“ Ann, Lee, Anneclaire, Valerie and Rachel,
You are the most together family I have ever seen. Now there's a giant hole.
Davey was larger than life, he leaves a legacy. I hope all the love from his friends
and fans will give you some peace.

Karen Koon - September 28, 2020 at 09:09 AM



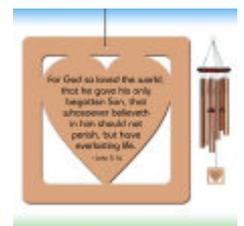
“ Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of David Lee Nelson.



September 28, 2020 at 12:01 AM



“ Heart Wind Chime - Bronze was purchased for the family of David Lee Nelson.



September 27, 2020 at 09:57 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of David Lee Nelson.*



September 27, 2020 at 03:29 PM



“ *I met David shortly after moving to SC 3 years ago. We got to know each other over late Saturday morning coffees. He was the kindest and most genuine person I've met and will miss him and his wonderful loving nature.*

Mike Moss - September 27, 2020 at 11:44 AM