



Stephen T. Kalisz

November 17, 1950 - February 7, 2025

Stephen T. Kalisz of Cadillac was killed by a drunk driver on February 7 2025 in Cadillac.

Born in Detroit on November 17, 1950 to Stefan and Isabelle Kalisz, Steve graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Forestry from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He spent his career as a forestry management specialist with the Department of Natural Resources, providing sustainable forestry practices to landowners thereby helping to retain much private forest land in Northern Michigan. After 30 years with the State of Michigan in retirement he started Old School Forestry LLC, providing private consulting forestry services until his death.

Steve met the love of his life one fall day in 1973, when he was asked to be the witness at his friend's elopement. It happened that Bev was asked to be the witness for the bride. After spending a few hours together that day Bev and Steve finally went on their first date on February 9th, 1974, a special day they celebrated each year. They married in Lincoln Park, Michigan on June 20, 1975, and spent the next 50 years as each other's confidant, soul mate, lover and best friend. They relished quiet evenings at home and at their cabin, listening to music, dancing...for the last time Tuesday night, in their dining room, before heading to bed.

Steve spent many years coaching sports teams his kids played on, including CASA softball and baseball, basketball, travel teams, American Legion, as well as assistant coaching on varsity teams. He loved seeing and interacting with former players when a chance meeting happened in town.

Most recently he was on the board of the local chapter of Trout Unlimited, and had been an active participant in the Cadillac Conservation Conservancy.

Steve loved spending his days cutting firewood and traversing his own 120 acre woods in Hoxeyville. He planned to build a home there so he and Bev could live out their lives in the peaceful Hoxeyville forest. He will finally be able to rest in peaceful waiting for his beloved wife in his most favorite forest home.

Steve's passion was his children and grandchildren. He was extremely proud of their accomplishments: his first daughter a college English Professor and poet, his middle daughter a health resources project manager, his son an emergency medicine MD. But he was most proud of how they lived their lives: with kindness, morality, integrity, ethics and compassion. He was extremely proud of his grandchildren who brought enormous joy and laughter to his life. He often wondered how he got so lucky in life, to have the love of family and the joy that comes from interacting with the next generation. He especially loved to plan and take his grandsons hunting, watching them and his granddaughter excel in sports, FaceTiming on happy birthdays and cheek grinds, especially from Hudson. But by far Steve's favorite time of year was fall, when he and his beloved son met in North Dakota to hunt ducks and pheasants.

Steve loved music of any kind, listened to classic rewind, and had many Alexa playlists. He could name any song or artist and tie it to some special moment in his life. He was an avid birder, small game hunter; U of M sports fanatic and loved dogs and cats. He was tender-hearted to his core and had so much to live and look forward to before his life was taken. He was the patriarch of his

loving family and will always remain in our hearts.

Steve leaves behind his beloved wife of almost 50 years Beverly, his oldest daughter Katie Kalisz (Mike Schuler), his middle daughter Melanie Kalisz (Brian Rohde), and his son Matthew Kalisz (Ahna Van Gaest), six grandchildren: Maeve, Huck, Hudson, Hazel, Quinn and Oskar, his step-mother, Norma Kalisz, his faithful lab Axl and shy cat Panda.

Visitation with Steve's family will be Thursday, February 13, 2025 at Peterson Funeral & Cremation Services in Cadillac from 4:00 - 6:30 PM and a prayer service will follow at 6:30 PM led by Reverend Fr. Michael Janowski. The family will gather for a memorial mass and private burial in the spring.

To honor Steve's memory please consider planting a tree in the spring, remembering a great man who lived by the saying "The true meaning of life is to plant trees under whose shade you do not expect to sit." An online guestbook is available at www.petersonfh.com.

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 13. 4:00 PM - 6:30 PM (ET)

Peterson Funeral Home
205 E. Cass St.
Cadillac, MI 49601
(231) 775-3411
info@petersonfh.com
<http://www.petersonfh.com>

Prayer Service

FEB 13. 6:30 PM.

Peterson Funeral & Cremation Services

Tribute Wall



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Stephen T. Kalisz.

February 24, 2025 at 10:33 AM



“ I remember meeting Steve when his father passed. I'd really enjoyed acquaintance with the senior Mr. Kalisz, and I continued to enjoy acquaintance with Steve. He was always upbeat and cheerful, always a happy person. Our world has lost a great example.

Sally Gamble - February 18, 2025 at 11:51 AM



My deepest sympathy over the loss of your husband, father, grandfather, Mr. Kalisz. I'm a stranger, born and raised in Michigan. I'm heartbroken over the discovery of this tragic crash. We lost my uncle in a traffic collision many decades ago. I know how devastating it is. I pray for peace for the family. You will all see him again. My deepest condolences.

Susan Hall - November 15, 2025 at 03:33 AM



“ Linda and Bill Joseph purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Stephen T. Kalisz.



Linda and Bill Joseph - February 14, 2025 at 02:41 PM



“ Linda and Bill Joseph planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Stephen T. Kalisz.

Linda and Bill Joseph - February 14, 2025 at 02:41 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Stephen T. Kalisz.

February 13, 2025 at 03:20 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Stephen T. Kalisz.

February 13, 2025 at 02:31 PM



“ Holtrop L. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Stephen T. Kalisz.

Holtrop L. - February 12, 2025 at 01:42 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Stephen T. Kalisz.



February 11, 2025 at 11:42 PM

AB

“ I was one of the lucky ones who had the opportunity to coach with Steve. He suggested we coach a traveling softball team for his daughter Katie and her friends. It was during that summer I was led to get my counseling degree.

Steve was so knowledgeable and patient. He was an amazing role model for people of all ages. He believed in young people and brought out the best in them. Anyone who knew Steve was a better person for being part of his world.

Bev and family - He definitely loved you and his memory will live on in all of you!

Heaven gained one of the finest people I know. My condolences,
Ann Bush

Ann M Bush - February 11, 2025 at 10:14 PM

“ Steve and I were neighbors for 30 years, and it was, in the fullest meaning of the words, a true privilege for me to have known him. Good fortune had come my way to have a friend who shared the same reverence and love for the trees, waters and forests of Northern Michigan, and all the creatures within these habitats.

Indeed, he was a man who never sought attention or accolades for himself. Yet he glowed when telling of the achievements of his children and the outstanding adults they'd become.

I have seldom encountered a man whose humility was so integral to his character, who could quietly hold to his own moral compass without fail.

And who gave so fully and freely of himself. And he did so not because he had to, but because he found joy supporting others in learning self respect, respect for others, and just plain how to play and have fun. And he stood with those who sought to preserve the world's most sacred treasure, nature.

And yes, he was nothing if not truly a most 'gentle man'.

Many were the times we'd enjoy a cold drink sitting the dock, porch or around the campfire. He enjoyed our talks, as did I, for it celebrated the stuff of camaraderie. We'd talk sometimes on sensitive issues, or by turns reminiscing about the past, our families, unraveling the secrets of the universe, or simply sitting in silence while the breeze, birds and waves did the talking. It's worth noting that Steve could really enjoy a good joke or funny anecdote. His laughter was always a welcome perk to those talks.

If we were lucky, Bev would sometimes grace us with her company especially around the evening's fire.

And that invariably always had Steve glowing and mellowing simultaneously.

I've seldom seen two people who were such wonderful touchstones for one another.

Steve knew he was the luckiest fellow in the world to have her to share the 'journey' with.

Many memories.

I loved my friend, and will miss him.

Yet I know that he's still very much alive in my heart.

Always will be

W.W.Woodard

W.W. WOODARD - February 11, 2025 at 02:54 PM

EV

“*Steve will be missed and remembered often. His love and his goodness shines through his family and his family of friends. His children, grandchildren, and of course, Bev, are in our hearts as you learn how to go forward together. We are grateful for his many kindnesses and join in mourning this immeasurable loss.*
Elizabeth Chapelle and Joe Verschaeve

Elizabeth Chapelle and Joe Verschaeve - February 11, 2025 at 01:50 PM

SW

“ Words fail when we use them to convey the true meaning of a person's life and the deep, deep emptiness and sorrow we feel when they are forever gone. The magic of a person, such as your father, cannot truly be held in words. He was too remarkable! Katie and family, you were so very fortunate and blessed each day to have had your amazing father in your life where he will forever remain now in your hearts. God will be with you all at your time of loss. Peace.

*your colleague and friend
Sharon Wynkoop*

Sharon Wynkoop - February 11, 2025 at 12:18 PM

JL

“ Joe and Lynnanne purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Stephen T. Kalisz.



Joe and Lynnanne - February 11, 2025 at 11:01 AM

JL

“ Joe and Lynnanne planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Stephen T. Kalisz.

Joe and Lynnanne - February 11, 2025 at 11:01 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Stephen T. Kalisz.



February 11, 2025 at 10:34 AM

LH

“ We have looked forward to each fall knowing that our special guests, Steve and Matt would be driving down our driveway to stay in our little stone house here in western North Dakota to once again hunt upland game on the open prairies. Our friendship has grown over many years and included Bev, Ahna, Hazel, and Quinn as they came to stay as well. The special bond between Steve and his family was so visible and heartwarming. We will miss our dear friend and his respect for God’s creation in nature...birds and trees. Our friendly conversations, his hunting stories, humor, and wisdom will be as sweetly remembered as the Michigan Pure Maple Syrup he annually surprised us with. God bless Steve’s legacy and love given to each of you in his family. Scripture promises that “The Lord is near the broken hearted”. Our deepest sympathy is passed on to you all, Les & Joy Heller

Les & Joy Heller - February 10, 2025 at 10:45 PM

MB

“ Steve was a terrific guy that made a difference and led a good life, was a great father and husband. I worked with Steve for a time at the Cadillac District Office. So sad to hear of his passing - my sincere condolences to his family and friends. Mickey Burns

Mickey Burns - February 10, 2025 at 10:30 PM

AC

“ Alice C. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Stephen T. Kalisz.

Alice C. - February 10, 2025 at 06:06 PM

LS

“ Love Lida, Heather, Murray and Sam purchased the A Full Life for the family of Stephen T. Kalisz.



Love Lida, Heather, Murray and Sam - February 10, 2025 at 05:52 PM

DP

“ My heart goes out to all of Steve’s family. I worked with Steve at the Cadillac District Office in different programs. He was a great help to me regarding all things forestry but my fondest memories are of the times we partnered on a golf league. We had lots of laughs complaining about our golf games. Steve was a great guy and will be sorely missed.

Dan Pearson - February 10, 2025 at 05:31 PM

TP

“ Katie and family, Many hugs to you all. I too I'm a Nov 1950 baby and love trees. Wish I could have met your Father. My heart aches for you. Love Theresa Pawloski

Theresa Louise Pawloski - February 10, 2025 at 05:12 PM

GA

“ I worked with Steve in the DNR, although in different program areas. I had the opportunity to talk with Steve on several occasions and I remember very good conversations. For a period, Steve and I were both on the Cadillac Land Conservancy, he as a member and I as a volunteer. Steve impressed me with his dedication to conservation. Several years ago, I had a timber sale on my property and Steve came and marked and measured trees. That helped quite a bit. I don't how to say it, but the only way to say it that Steve was a good guy. Garth Aslakson

garth aslakson - February 10, 2025 at 04:44 PM

RS

“ I've known Steve for over 40 years as a fellow forester with numerous contacts over the years. He will be remembered as a caring person, and my sincere sympathy is given to his family after his tragic loss. Prayers are sent with sadness.

Ron Scott - February 10, 2025 at 03:45 PM

MS

“ Monique S. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Stephen T. Kalisz.

Monique S. - February 10, 2025 at 03:17 PM

BS

“ My heart goes out to you and your family Steve. You were a helping hand when one was needed and a sympathetic ear. May peace come soon to those who hold you so dear. I will see you in the forest and hear you in the wind.

Bill Sterrett - February 10, 2025 at 02:34 PM

JG

“ A fellow DNR Forester, I worked with Steve for many years. Sorry to hear he passed. Jerry Grieve

Jerry Grieve - February 10, 2025 at 01:36 PM

JF

“ Sending all our love and prayers to Bev and family. Jen & Ernie Flamont (Alice & Bob's daughter and son in law)

We're so sorry for your loss.



Jennifer Flamont - February 10, 2025 at 01:15 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Stephen T. Kalisz.

February 10, 2025 at 01:08 PM



“ Basket Full of Wishes was purchased for the family of Stephen T. Kalisz.



February 10, 2025 at 01:08 PM

BH

“ I met Steve in Benzie county through my since passed brother Harry, another forester. A few years later we became a colleagues when I came to work for DNR Forest Management. He had a smile and cheer from the first time I saw him to the last and every time in between. Although it’s been years since we’ve seen each other, living near Hartwick Pines I would see his life- size photo at the front of the forestry exhibit smile and say hi. Peace.

Brian Hutchins - February 10, 2025 at 12:36 PM

SI

“ We are so saddened by the untimely loss of such a wonderful man. A person's time on this Earth is short. A measure of that time is how well a person spends it. Steve did exceptionally well. He will be missed by many. Our hearts go out to Bev and family. We are thinking of you. Steve Cross and Brenda Irish

Steve Cross and Brenda Irish - February 10, 2025 at 12:06 PM



“ A grove of 5 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Stephen T. Kalisz.

February 10, 2025 at 11:57 AM

MJ

“ I served with Steve as a board member of the Pine River Trout Unlimited Chapter. Steve's love of the outdoors and of his favorite trout stream were obvious to anyone who knew him. Rest in Peace, you will be missed.

Mark Johnson - February 10, 2025 at 11:38 AM

TH

“ Tony Furlich, Lead Forester, Hydrolake purchased the Blue Caribbean Bouquet for the family of Stephen T. Kalisz.



Tony Furlich, Lead Forester, Hydrolake - February 10, 2025 at 11:30 AM

TH

“ Tony Furlich, Lead Forester, Hydrolake planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Stephen T. Kalisz.

Tony Furlich, Lead Forester, Hydrolake - February 10, 2025 at 11:30 AM

JB

“ This is very sad news. I knew Steve for many years working natural resources for the Forest Service and Consumers Energy. We worked together on a number of Society of American Foresters project, including the National SAF convention we hosted in Traverse City in 1998. Later I would often see Steve at Pine Grove AC and always enjoyed chatting with him. My sympathy to his wife and family - - we've lost a very fine man.

Jim Bernier - February 10, 2025 at 10:12 AM

KF

“ Our hearts are broken to learn that your husband, father and grandfather is now gone. The suddenness of your loss makes his absence even more unbearable. Please know that we are keeping all of you in our thoughts and prayers. May the grace and peace of Christ, which surpasses all understanding, guide and comfort you, and may that grace, along with the passage of time, help to soften the sharp edges of your grief. Sending much love to all of you!

Kathleen Feeney - February 10, 2025 at 12:03 AM

LM

“ Lmh planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Stephen T. Kalisz.

Lmh - February 09, 2025 at 09:53 PM

LM

“ Lmh purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Stephen T. Kalisz.



Lmh - February 09, 2025 at 09:53 PM

LM

“ Linda M. planted a grove of 5 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Stephen T. Kalisz.

Linda M. - February 09, 2025 at 09:45 PM

LT

“Katie, so sorry to hear about your dad. You and your family are in my thoughts.

Liz Timmer - February 09, 2025 at 09:11 PM

JS

“My heartfelt condolences to the Family. Beloved Steve. Only a month ago today Steve shared his loving kindness and friendship with my brother, Peter and joined us at the celebration of life and memorial for our own father. Steve shared with us and spoke about the love and pure joy he had for his beautiful family. With sympathy and Love. ... I took a walk in the woods and came out taller than the trees .

Jackie Swanson - February 09, 2025 at 07:11 PM

PA

“I am so sad to hear abt your husband , I will pray for you and the family 🙏

pam - February 09, 2025 at 07:07 PM

KG

“Holly and I send our deepest condolences to your family. I will miss sitting down with Steve talking about dogs and swapping bird hunting stories. And who's going to cut up all this wood? We are thinking of you all. K

Kevin & Holly Green - February 09, 2025 at 07:03 PM

JS

“Jackie S. planted a grove of 5 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Stephen T. Kalisz.

Jackie S. - February 09, 2025 at 06:54 PM

E(

“ Steve will ALWAYS have a place in my heart with all the wonderful memories of Loon Lake and especially when he introduced me to the love of my life Jim💙 we are keeping all of you in our thoughts and prayers. May you rest in peace Steve🙏

Elizabeth Sivak (sister-in-law) - February 09, 2025 at 06:11 PM

SB

“ Our families have been neighbors/friends almost 40 years. Our children played together. Steve was a wonderful person. Great father and husband. So kind. Would help anyone that needed it. Steve will be missed. Thoughts and prayers to the family🙏❤️

Sandra Bengelink - February 09, 2025 at 05:45 PM

DC

“ Katie, Mike, and your whole extended family, I send condolences to all of you for the loss of your father. I only met him once--he was outdoors chopping wood at your place, quiet but very observant of the surroundings and those nearby--my kind of guy in the woods. I will certainly keep you in my prayers in the time to come, but do share the memories among those who knew him best. These will help in the days of deep mourning, and will sustain you in the years that follow. You are among my deepest friends, and as one who lost both his parents within a month of each other, I share the struggle to fully accept the loss. Peace to you all. David Cope

David Cope - February 09, 2025 at 05:31 PM

BB

“ *Brea Box purchased the Beautiful Dreams for the family of Stephen T. Kalisz.*



Brea Box - February 09, 2025 at 04:40 PM

ML

“ *Mandy (Elya) Lovelady planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Stephen T. Kalisz.*

Mandy (Elya) Lovelady - February 09, 2025 at 03:26 PM

ML

“ *Mandy (Elya) Lovelady purchased the Beautiful i
n Blue for the family of Stephen T. Kalisz.*



Mandy (Elya) Lovelady - February 09, 2025 at 03:26 PM