



Dean Kenneth McWilliams

March 23, 1948 - February 1, 2025

In the dash between the dates that marked the beginning and end of his earthly journey, Dean McWilliams lived a life rich with love, adventure, and purpose. A master craftsman of both relationships and woodworking, Dean's gentle strength, unwavering integrity, and quiet wisdom touched countless lives in Northern Colorado and beyond.

Born into an Air Force family, Dean's early years were shaped by adventures across Colorado, Texas and Germany, where he developed a lifelong love of the outdoors. Alongside his big brother Slim and twin sisters Betty and Ann, Dean embraced every new experience – from cliff diving in Spain to hunting in the European countryside and Colorado. As a kid, Dean loved coming home after school to fresh baked cookies his mom, Helen, had waiting for him. She recognized Dean's special spark and ornery spirit, rarely scolding him for his mischief. Instead, Helen nurtured in Dean a quiet confidence and adaptability that would define his character.

Dean found one of his true callings in law enforcement, serving 26 distinguished years with the Fort Collins Police Department, including commanding the SWAT team. His career was marked by enduring friendships with fellow officers who became like family, always standing in each other's corner through life's challenges and triumphs. His dedication to public service was matched by his passion for rodeo, where he fearlessly rode bulls and

bareback horses in his younger years. During his rodeo days, Dean's favorite place to compete was Cody, Wyoming, because Slim was there. Dean and Slim formed unshakeable bonds with fellow riders who always "had each other's backs." After Dean retired from the Fort Collins Police Department, he became a full-time master craftsman. In his shop and in other people's homes, Dean created custom cabinets, built kitchens where families gathered, and crafted trim work that brought warmth and character. Every project he touched, like everything he did, was guided by an unwavering commitment to quality and integrity.

On May 20, 1995, Dean married Pam, beginning what would become a legendary love story. Their partnership exemplified that rare and beautiful truth: each considered themselves the lucky one. Together they created a peaceful haven in a home that Dean built, where his gifted hands and carpentry skills transformed their home into a warm, welcoming space. Dean found joy in the simple pleasures of life with Pam – working in their garden, eating sun-ripened tomatoes straight from the vine, and sharing countless adventures from Mexico to the Colorado mountains.

As a father, Dean took immense pride in his children, Toby and Marti. His playful spirit shone through in sweet moments, like convincing Toby and Marti that he had to eat the point of any triangular dessert "so it wouldn't poke a hole in their stomachs" – a routine that lasted until their aunt finally spilled the truth when they were 12 and 9. His children's spirited nature and mischievous streaks came naturally. He cherished memories of teaching Marti to ride horses, quietly holding her hand on walks to go fishing, and being on duty as a police officer seeing his little girl all dressed up for prom – these moments held sacred space in his heart. With Toby, he shared countless hours building and tinkering with anything metal, wood, or engines, their bond strengthened through both work and play. His children's spirited nature – even when it occasionally led to mischief – brought him joy and pride. "A boy and a girl – what else could a guy ask for?" he'd say with his room-brightening smile.

For over 40 years, Dean's annual elk hunting trips with close friends were sacred traditions, where lasting memories were made in their beloved cook shack in the wilderness. These expeditions reflected his love for both the outdoors and the deep friendships he cherished throughout his life. This group of men set up a special place where generations of sons learned not just about hunting, but about friendship, tradition, and living life with a touch of adventure.

Dean approached his final days as he lived – with grace, dignity, and quiet strength. His love for Pam grew even deeper as they faced this chapter together, their bond a testament to the power of devoted partnership.

He is survived by his beloved wife Pam, his children, Toby and Marti, his sisters, Betty, and Ann, his niece Chelsea, and a community of friends who became family. Dean's legacy lives on in the countless lives he touched, the beautiful pieces he crafted, and the example he set of how to live with integrity, work with pride, and love without reservation.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to the National Ataxia Foundation. <https://www.ataxia.org/donate>

Tribute Wall

TC

“ I have great memories of Dean at our family reunions in Wyoming! He was always having fun, teasing and playing jokes on everyone. He was always ready to help with anything. He loved life, his family and was a wonderful person. We will miss him. Terry Cook

Terry Cook - March 24, 2025 at 12:42 PM

AH

“ Love and laughter whenever they came to Wyoming. Sunday dinners at Dean and Pam's with the kids when I lived in Fort Collins. I cherish those memories?

Amy (Dye) Hernandez - March 23, 2025 at 08:08 PM

AW

“ Summers on Boysen Lake water skying with the Cousins, Ardelle and Ruth. I can see it yet.

Ardelle K Wachter - March 23, 2025 at 07:26 PM

AC

“ Whenever he would visit us it was usually always full of laughter.

Amber Carnes - March 23, 2025 at 01:47 PM

PM

“ Phoebe McWilliams lit a candle in memory of Dean Kenneth McWilliams



Phoebe McWilliams - February 16, 2025 at 04:41 PM

PM

20 years spent with a smart, intelligent, compassionate man and father of our children. He was a great father as he has passed along many abilities and skills to our kids so they will succeed in whatever life has in store for them. He loves Toby and Marti so very much.

Phoebe McWilliams - February 16, 2025 at 04:46 PM

KB

*I offer my condolences. I am so sorry. Prayers and peace to all.
Katherine Bridwell*

Katherine Bridwell - February 17, 2025 at 01:34 PM

DB

“ Dennis&Ellen Bjorhus lit a candle in memory of Dean Kenneth McWilliams



Dennis&Ellen Bjorhus - February 14, 2025 at 05:46 PM



“ Kathy Lucas lit a candle in memory of Dean Kenneth McWilliams



Kathy Lucas - February 10, 2025 at 10:51 AM

PP

“ Phil Pringle lit a candle in memory of Dean Kenneth McWilliams



Phil Pringle - February 09, 2025 at 05:43 PM

GW

“ *Dean was my mentor at the Fort Collins Police Department. I would not be the person I am today without his guidance and challenges to be the best I could be. Our condolences to Pam, Marti and Toby.*
Greg With & Sally Knauer

Greg With - February 09, 2025 at 02:09 PM

AD

“ *Our thoughts & prayers, Toby & Marti & the McWilliams family, a lot of memories , Don & Toni Valdez*

Andrew D.Valdez - February 09, 2025 at 01:32 PM