

Colton Lane Clifford passed away on May 17, 2023. Our much loved and devoted son and brother was only 35 years old. He was born on September 20, 1987 in Rapid City joining his parents Larry and Ellen and older brother Wesley. Colton attended school in New Underwood from kindergarten through high school. During his Junior year, Colton further explored his passion for the Criminal Justice field by completing an 11 week training course and graduated from the (Youth Outreach) YO! Rapid City Police Department Academy in 2005. Colton loved learning and was a very accomplished student and had many achievements. He was selected as a National English Merit Award Winner by the United States Achievement Academy National Awards in 2006. He was a member of the National Honor Society and served as Secretary. He helped raised donations for the Pennies for Patients campaign where the contributions supported cancer patients. He was also Secretary of his senior class and was named to the "A" Honor Roll at school. He was also a member of the Future Farmers of America. His achievements led the local news station KOTA TV to name him as one of the 2006 Best of Class members and appeared on television with his classmates. Colton furthered his education at the college level and had much success but decided that he enjoyed working more than school. Colton was a very hard worker and was employed by the City of New Underwood Public Works Department during the summertime break from high school. He gained valuable work experience including sanitation, road repair, roofing, and truck driving. He also served as concession stand manager at the Sami Jo Memorial Swimming Pool. Following his graduation Colton worked at Walmart as a stocker in the grocery store department. The Rapid City Public Works Department was also lucky to have him as one of their groundskeepers. Colton was a member of the Catholic Church and had very strong faith. He was very devoted to the church and served as an alter boy growing up and attended Catechism classes. Colton was very fond of God's creatures especially animals. He was particularly fond of dogs specifically female yellow labs. At the age of 9, he raised a puppy named Punkin. As an adult he raised Lucy. He took very good care of his dogs and enjoyed taking them for walks and playing with them and giving them belly rubs. Colton had many hobbies and was drawn toward his love of music. He was a self-taught acoustic guitar player and even tried his hand at songwriting. He loved to watch programming on MTV specifically TRL (Total Request Live) where he could watch all the latest music videos. His favorite music genres were oldies and goldies, rap and hip hop, rock, and country. Colton loved to blast his favorite songs on a loudspeaker for us to hear it was one way he liked to tease us. Colton and Wesley went to many concerts together growing up and they got to have the shared experience of seeing their favorite performing artists. One of Colton's favorite annual events was taking the family to the Happy Together Tour concert held in August during Kool Deadwood Nights. It was also an opportunity for him and us to go see the classic cars which were a major passion of his. Colton's favorite car was his own, a 1968 Buick Skylark. He took great care of it and enjoyed taking it on a cruise with his Dad in the passenger seat around town to show it off and make people's heads turn while blowing the cob webs out as they would say. Colton had a very special relationship with his Dad, he followed him everywhere growing up and learned many handyman skills from him which became very valuable as an adult. He was always willing to lend a hand to any family member that needed his help. One of their favorite bonding activities was taking our old Chevy pickup out into the country to go metal detecting and rock hunting. Colton also was the proud owner of an ATV and loved to go on rides. Colton also had a passion for antiques, he loved to learn about them and collect them especially porcelain signs. Many experts within the antiques field told him he "had a good eye" for finding things. He had many friends that he would trade with. He was very good at negotiating and could persuade people out of things they thought they would never get rid of. Colton also was a lifelong collector of sports cards and Pokémon cards. Colton and Wesley enjoyed going to card shows together and making new friends while card hunting. Colton was diagnosed with Cancer in 2010 at age 22 and battled the disease 9 times. He was unable to eat/chew food the last 13 months of his life due to swallowing difficulties and pain from his tumors. He had to learn to cope with only being able to have liquids for all his nutritional needs. He faced challenges that no one can understand and fought the disease like no other, he was truly the toughest man in the world. He was proud to be Mayo Clinic Strong and was admired by his doctors and nurses for his toughness. Colton was a very independent person during his lifetime and lived life to the fullest. He always had us laughing because he was quick witted and had a great sense of humor. There was never anything that he was not willing to do to help his family even while he was sick. Colton will be missed greatly, and he was much loved by them. Colton was preceded in death by his father Larry, Aunt Carol, and Uncle Mickey. He is survived by his mother Ellen, brother Wesley, Uncles: Robert, Lee, Bub, Steve and Wayne, Aunts: Pickle, Daphne, Jeanie, Sandy, Wanda, and Jodi, and numerous other cousins and friends. Much love to our Colton.



*In Loving Memory...*  
*Colton Lane Clifford*

*1987~ 2023*



**In Loving Memory**  
**Colton Lane Clifford**

**Born**

*September 20, 1987  
Rapid City, South Dakota*

**Died**

*May 17, 2023  
New Underwood, South Dakota*

**Christian Funeral Mass**

*Thursday, May 25, 2023 ~ 11:00 a.m.  
St. Isaac Jogues Catholic Church  
Rapid City, South Dakota  
Celebrated By: Father Edward Witt, S.J.*

**Pallbearers**

*Sonny Clifford ~ Lamont Cook  
Brett Price ~ Dale Price  
G.J. Janis ~ Nick Lu*

**Honorary Pallbearers**

*Scott Clifford ~ Caleb Cook  
Dana Peniska ~ Aaron Clifford  
Bryce Clifford ~ Glen Allen Clifford*

**Burial**

*Thursday, May 25, 2023 ~ 12:30 p.m.  
Pine Lawn Memorial Park  
Rapid City, South Dakota*

“I’ll lend you for a little time, a child of mine,” He said, “for you to love the while he lives and mourn for when he’s dead. It may be six or seven years, or twenty-two or three, but will you, ‘til I call him back, take care of him for me?

He’ll bring his charms to gladden you, and shall his stay be brief, you’ll have his lovely memories as solace for your grief.

I cannot promise he will stay, since all from earth return, but there are lessons taught down there, I want this child to learn.

I’ve looked the wide world over in my search for teachers true and from the throngs that crowd life’s lines, I have selected you. Now will you give him all your love, nor think the labor vain, but hate Me when I come to call him back again?”

I fancied that I heard Him say; “Dear Lord, Thy will be done! For all the joy Thy child shall bring, the risk of grief we’ll run. We’ll shelter him with tenderness, we’ll love him while we may, and for the happiness we’ve known forever grateful stay; But shall the angels call him much sooner than we’ve planned, we’ll brave the bitter grave that comes and try to understand.”  
-Edgar A. Guest