



**REMEMBERING**  
**Beth Nickel**

October 22, 1979 - February 2, 2021



Beth Lynette Schaufele Nickel was born Oct. 22, 1979 in Bow Island, Alberta. She was the eldest child of Ron and Leila Schaufele and has one sister and four brothers.

At an early age she demonstrated an aptitude for music and was soon enrolled in violin lessons in Medicine Hat. Other early activities included piano, gymnastics, and highland dancing. She also involved herself in Church clubs and youth groups.

Medicine Hat was the destination for endless trips for lessons, chamber music groups and orchestras. She also volunteered her music at numerous church and community events accompanied by her sister and cousins.

At the age of 4 she started kindergarten, her only year in public school. Beth was homeschooled from grades 1 through 12 and exhibited a steady discipline toward her studies with guidance from her mother, completing high school at age 17.

During her education at home, she was able to develop her music interests, studying with her long-time instructor, Bill van der Sloot in Medicine Hat. It is often said mastering a skill might take 10,000 hours of practice. Having started so young, she may well have reached that by the age 17.

Medicine Hat was the place where she also participated in music festivals and distinguished herself as both a soloist and chamber musician. One of her adjudicators, Gerald Stanick from the University of British Columbia School of Music, observed her musical development over the years and when she completed her grade 12, invited her to audition for UBC School of Music. She was accepted and Mr. Stanick became her viola instructor for her undergrad years.

So, at the age of 17 she left the comforts and confines of Bow Island, moved to Vancouver, and completed her bachelor's degree in music all by the age of 21. She then proceeded to enrol in a masters program under David Harding at UBC and completed her degree in one year with numerous performances and recitals.

UBC was also the place where she met a tall basketball player. Studying to become a teacher, Joel was enrolled in the School of Fine Arts. After 3 years playing for the Thunderbirds, he changed his focus from sports to developing his musical side and joined the UBC Choir. One day, unsure where to go for his choir audition, he met Beth coming down the stairs and she directed him to the appropriate venue.

That brief encounter sparked an interest and he started to pursue this attractive music student. Joel and Beth soon started dating and were married August 5, 2002 in Bow Island.

Joel had started his teaching career in Abbotsford in 2001, so he and Beth settled there after their marriage and she soon launched her professional music career. She often worked closely with Calvin Dyck in Abbotsford and soon became an established viola player locally, as well as in Vancouver and across the Lower Mainland.

Two and one half years after their wedding, Elijah Reuben was born on Jan. 14, 2005. His sister, Katie Elizabeth Ronelle arrived June 29, 2007, followed by Ethan Joel on July 22, 2011.

Once her children were in school, she became a volunteer on the Parent Advisory Committee at South Poplar Elementary School and was, at the time of her death, the PAC president.

Along with family responsibilities, Beth continued to focus on her music career and community involvements. She started teaching students in her home including all 3 of her children who took violin lessons with some outside instruction and expert home encouragement.

Beth headed the Abbotsford Music Festival for many years and was an active member of the Abbotsford Music Association. Along with being a sought-after adjudicator and instructor, she taught at summer music camps in Abbotsford, Orcas Island, Banff Summer Strings and Courtney.

She also became an instructor at Bakerview Music Academy in Abbotsford, a school providing free music instruction to community children who come after school for choral and violin lessons.

Beth will be remembered for her exceptional viola playing. Her reputation in her family was that she was so adept at her sight reading and playing that she didn't need to practice her pieces between rehearsals and performances—a rare gift and the source of many family jokes.

She will also be remembered for her many performances with her music colleagues over the years. Her many private students also fondly remember her gentle encouragement and expert teaching.

Her time at the Bakerview Music Academy has left a lasting legacy as has her involvement in the elementary school PAC.

She is mourned by her loving husband, Joel who adored her. Despite the challenges of her short illness, he had hoped that they would grow old together and share the many milestones ahead for their family.

Beth is also mourned by her loving children who learned so much from her and owe their discipline and many skills to her patient, attentive parenting.

Her siblings will long remember her as their loving, responsible, and multi-talented eldest sibling—a gentle force of nature, but one whom you did not cross.

Her parents will always remember her as the child who changed and enriched their lives forever.

Joel's family and the whole Nickel clan welcomed Beth into their family and will always cherish her enthusiasm and involvement.

Her extended family mourn her loss and will forever hold her in their hearts as one who departed from this earth far too soon.

Beth Nickel will be remembered for her humble spirit as she performed selflessly in so many areas of leadership and music, always with a smile and a kind word, and showing interest in other people's lives. She always exhibited the utmost respect for those around her.

As she faced the challenges of her illness, she consciously chose the theme of Joy in her perspectives.

She had a very strong faith and as she faced the severity of her illness, spoke of it in a matter-of-fact fashion and faced surgery and possible chemo and radiation therapy with an optimistic but realistic spirit. She presented herself to God for His guidance in her life.

In approaching her final admittance to hospital on Jan 30, she said goodbye to each of her children, hoping to soon return but with an attitude of trust in God's will, often reminding them that "What will be, will be."

She slipped into a coma on Jan 31, 2021 and went to meet her Lord on Feb 2, 2021, her husband and mother each holding her hands and releasing her into eternity.

