



Mark Trela

September 15, 1952 - June 25, 2020

MARK TRELA

NEW HARMONY, INDIANA

Mark Trela, 67, of New Harmony, Indiana passed away peacefully at his home on June 25, 2020 after a nearly four-year-long battle with cancer. He was surrounded by his four sons and close friend Karen Davis Brown.

Mark was born in 1952 to Walter and Marie Trela in East Chicago, Indiana. His strict Catholic upbringing, which often involved family vacations to religious shrines instead of theme parks, helped shape his signature sense of humor and wit. After attending Indiana University, he went on to write comedic radio plays for the Sears Radio Theater in Los Angeles, California, inaugurating a lifelong commitment to writing which, while full of twists and turns that would find him stowing away in Dick Butkus's dressing room one day and publishing poems in a gardening magazine the next, allowed him to express his boundless creativity.

While living in California, Mark discovered biodynamic agriculture, an organic approach to gardening inspired by the writings of Rudolf Steiner that brought into concert his love of nature and deep spiritual tendencies. His mastery of the practice eventually drew him back to Indiana, where he took on the challenge of incorporating a biodynamic approach to landscaping and gardening in the town of New Harmony. With the support of town patron Jane Blaffer Owen, Mark transformed New Harmony into a paradise on the Wabash. His abundant knowledge and deep sensitivity to the natural world brought a wash of color and beauty to the streets of the historic town, and many of his eye-catching landscaping projects remain today. Perhaps his greatest work was the creation of Fragrant Farms, at its heyday home to over 8,000 peony plants and six acres of grape vines, all cultivated biodynamically.

Mark, as friends and family recall, was a uniquely creative and joyous spirit. He loved golf, gardening, Scrabble, Chicago sports, spiritual exploration, ancient runes, silly puns, *The Big Lebowski*, leaving events unexpectedly early, discovering new music and sharing it with his friends, writing his own song lyrics, and spending time with his grandsons, Bryson and Jace. His memory will live on in the many seeds he planted, both literal and spiritual.

Mark is survived by his mother: Marie Trela, of Highland, Indiana; sons: Casey (Lesa) of Evansville, Indiana, Grady of Evansville, Indiana, Riley (Natalie) of Los Angeles, California, and Bailey of Brooklyn, New York. He has two grandsons: Bryson and Jace Trela of Evansville, Indiana; his siblings: Tim Trela (Maryclare) of Chicago, Illinois, Bruce Trela (Leanne) of Lake Forest, Illinois, Brian Trela (Beth) of Memphis, Tennessee, and Maryann Schaefer (Mike) of Ogden Dunes, Indiana, and many nieces and nephews. The family wishes to thank Mark's dear and close friend Karen Davis Brown, whose wonderful, loving, and dedicated care made his last months as smooth and peaceful as anyone could ask for.

A celebration of life event will take place 1-3 p.m. on Friday July 3, 2020 at Holy Angels Catholic Church Park and Community Center, 419 Steam Mill Street, New Harmony, Indiana 47631.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

JUL 3. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Holy Angels Catholic Church
801 Main Street
New Harmony, IN 47631

Tribute Wall



“ *Mark Trela*

October 06, 2023 at 09:05 AM

FR

“ *My heart breaks for Mark's family, especially his beloved sister, Maryann.*

Fran - July 02, 2020 at 11:18 PM

MB

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Mary Bednarek - July 02, 2020 at 08:29 PM

MB

“ *1 file added to the album Memories Album*



Mary Bednarek - July 02, 2020 at 08:12 PM

ER

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Earl R Rohleder - June 30, 2020 at 01:21 PM

RG

“ *Such a wonderful and loving tribute. My sympathies to family. Though I didn't know Mark I appreciate all his talent and the lasting memory he leaves to New Harmony and those who did know him. Being a native in New Harmony - not living there now-it is so great to be able to come back and see his work.*

Ruth Ann Hames Grebe - June 30, 2020 at 12:47 PM

RP

“ *You know how much I love you guys. So sorry your Dad was a great man and a wonderful soul. He will be missed. Every time I see a peony I automatically think of Mark. Love you Ruth*

Ruth Parker - June 30, 2020 at 11:38 AM

BE

“ *Our families went to church together. He was an outstanding person I had much admiration for him. Our Deepest Sympathies go out to everyone who loved him. May you cherish the memories. H*



Bud and Sandra Elpers - June 30, 2020 at 11:22 AM

CS

“ *1 file added to the album Memories Album*



Chuck Stewart - June 29, 2020 at 09:56 PM



“ *Love's Embrace Roses – White was purchased for the family of Mark Trela.*



June 29, 2020 at 07:15 PM