



Nicky "Nick" L. Adams

November 3, 1963 - May 18, 2026

Nicky L. Adams

“Nick”

Age 62, of Braidwood, Illinois, passed away peacefully on May 18, 2026 surrounded by his loved ones after a long battle with cancer. Born in Joliet, Illinois on November 3, 1963, Nick was the son of Harry “Budd” and Phyllis Ann (Lewis) Adams. He grew up with a strong sense of loyalty, grit, and service—qualities that would define his entire life.

After graduating high school, Nick went on to play football for the Tennessee Volunteers as a kicker. A foot injury ended his time on the field, but it opened the door to the path he was truly meant for. He enlisted in the United States Marine Corps, serving from 1985 to 1991 with the 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment (1/1), 1st Marine Regiment. A Reconnaissance Man and Marine Raider, Nick was highly trained, disciplined, and deeply committed to his brothers in arms. He spoke both Somali and Swahili and was honorably discharged at the rank of Corporal. Though he was immensely proud of his service, he rarely spoke of it—his humility as steady as his courage.

Following his military career, Nick continued serving his country through work with the Department of Defense and the CIA. Before beginning his long career in law enforcement, he held a variety of roles including coaching football at Joliet Junior College, graduating mortuary school, and serving as a police officer in both Harvey and Rockdale.

Nick ultimately found his professional home with the Village of Elwood Police Department. As Elwood's first full time police officer, he dedicated 25 years to the community with integrity, steadiness, and a quiet sense of duty. During his time at Elwood he served not only as a patrol officer, but also in the evidence section and overweight truck enforcement.

On May 17, 2003, Nick married Cynthia "Cindy" (Hayes), the love of his life. Together, they shared a deep bond built on devotion, humor, and adventure. Nick and Cindy loved traveling to Cedar Point and Dollywood, always chasing the next thrill. Nick's adventurous, adrenaline seeking spirit led them to skydive, bungee jump, and zipline. And in true Nick fashion, he even jumped off the top of the Stratosphere in Las Vegas—with Cindy and Karen by his side.

Nick is survived by his wife Cindy; his faithful canine companion, Smokey; and his special friend, Karen Smietanski; his daughter, Vittoria Wurl and granddaughter, Phiona; his brother, Harry "Jim" Adams; mother-in-law, Shirley; sister-in-law Dana (Jeff) Blatti; and one niece and three nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Budd and Phyllis, his sister, Crystal; father-in-law Bob "the barber" Hayes.

Services will be held at R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory in Braidwood, Wednesday, May 27, 2026. Visitation will be from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Services at 11:00 a.m. followed by inurnment at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery at 1:00 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorials in Nick's name may be directed to Mission K9 Rescue or Project Headspace and Timing, two organizations that honor and support veterans, service members, and the loyal canine companions who serve alongside them.

Nick will be remembered for his unwavering loyalty, his quiet strength, and his lifelong commitment to service—whether to his country, his community, or the people he loved.

For more information and to visit Nick's online guestbook, please log on to www.rwpattersonfuneralhome.com or find us on Facebook.

R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory
401 E. Main St., Braidwood, 815-458-2336
www.rwpattersonfuneralhome.com

Cemetery Details

Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery

20953 W. Hoff Rd.
Elwood, IL 60421

Previous Events

Memorial Visitation

MAY 27. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

R.W. Patterson Funeral Home
401 East Main St.
Braidwood, IL 60408
(815) 458-2336
info@rwpattersonfuneralhome.com
<https://www.rwpattersonfuneralhomes.com>

Memorial Service

MAY 27. 11:00 AM (CT)

R.W. Patterson Funeral Home
401 East Main St.
Braidwood, IL 60408
(815) 458-2336
info@rwpattersonfuneralhome.com
<https://www.rwpattersonfuneralhomes.com>

Inurnment with Military Funeral Honors

MAY 27. 1:00 PM (CT)

Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery
20953 W. Hoff Rd.
Elwood, IL 60421

Tribute Wall

RL

“ *Integrity, true grit, and a high degree of determination day in and day out. This was Nick. We fought many wars together, and often were spiritually elevated as a result of this human growth. Going to miss you brother. Remain the "hardchager" you've always been friend.*

Randy Lightfoot, retired L.E.O.

Randall Lightfoot - June 13 at 04:57 PM

FH

“ *Officer Nick Adams dedicated 25 years of faithful service to the Elwood Police Department, leaving behind a legacy defined by unwavering commitment, professionalism, and quiet strength. Over the course of my career, I’ve had the privilege of working alongside many officers, but none more dedicated or dependable than Nick.*

He was the kind of officer every community hopes for and every department relies on. Nick approached each day with humility and purpose, never seeking recognition, yet earning the respect of everyone around him. He came to work with a smile on his face and a genuine eagerness to protect and serve, embodying the very essence of what it means to wear the badge. He was the Officer every Chief of Police wished he had working for him.

More than his service, it was his character that set him apart. He was steady, compassionate, and deeply committed to doing what was right. His presence made a difference, not only in the safety of this community but in the lives of those who had the honor of working beside him.

Officer Nick Adams will be remembered not just for his years of service, but for the example he set every single day. His legacy will live on in the department he helped strengthen and in the hearts of those who knew him. I know I've learned so much from him, that I will never forget him.

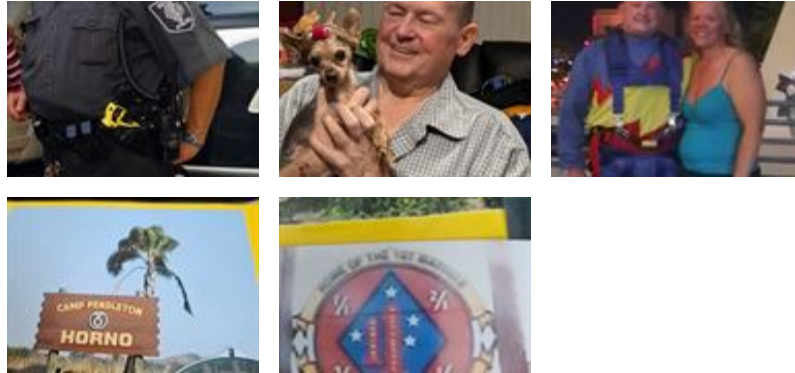
Rest easy, Nick—you’ve more than earned it. Chief Fred W. Hayes (Ret.)



Fred Hayes - May 27 at 09:30 AM



“ 118 files added to the album Life Tributes



R W Patterson Funeral Homes, Ltd. - May 26 at 07:22 PM

AH

“ We are sending our heartfelt condolences and we made a donation in Nick's name to Headspace and Timing. Thinking of you, Norine Thompson and Amber Hess

Amber R HESS - May 23 at 02:28 PM



“ On behalf of Mission K9 Rescue, we honor Nick's memory and give thanks for his life of service. We need more great men like him. May he rest in peace. Semper Fi! - Bob Bryant, Co Founder, Mission K9

Bob Bryant - May 23 at 01:02 AM