



Dena Kristen Nichols

February 14, 1967 - May 14, 2025

Dena Kristen Nichols, beloved wife, mother, grandmother, and trailblazing public servant, passed away on May 14, 2025, in Dallas, Texas, at the age of 58. She was born on February 14, 1967, in Clearfield, Utah.

A proud member of the small but mighty 3% of female firefighters in the country, Dena served her community with courage and compassion. She made history as the first female Lieutenant at the Hutchins Fire Department, rising through the ranks to lead with skill and grace. As a licensed paramedic, firefighter, and EMS Supervisor, she took on roles that few women dared to pursue. Her dedication to emergency service was matched only by her love for people and her unwavering faith.

Dena was a graduate of Hutchins Baptist School and went on to further her education at Cedar Valley College. She studied nursing at El Centro College and completed her firefighter training at the DeSoto Fire Academy. She was also a cherished member of the library staff at Hutchins Baptist Church, where her love of books and learning enriched the lives of many.

An avid reader, talented scrapbooker, and craft expert, Dena found joy in creativity and expression. She loved taking road trips and making memories with her family. She was a devoted Christian whose faith anchored every aspect of her life. Her greatest joys were her grandchildren, whom she adored

and cherished deeply.

Dena embodied strength and grace. She was fiercely loyal, fearlessly calm under pressure, and endlessly generous. Her presence was a guiding light to those around her, and her legacy will live on in the lives she touched.

She was preceded in death by her father, David Carl Eckenfels and her brother, David Carl Eckenfels II.

Dena is survived by her loving husband, Steve Nichols; her children, Stephen Nichols, Brandon Nichols, Austin Nichols, and Kristen Nichols. She is also survived by her grandchildren, Isabella, Finley, Adeline, Jaimee, and Dylan; her mother, Karen Eckenfels; her siblings, Elizabeth, Jay (and wife Michelle), and Kathryn; along with five nephews, three nieces, and eleven great-nieces and nephews.

A celebration of Dena's life will be held on 2:00pm Monday May 19, 2025 at First Baptist Hutchins with a visitation starting an hour before the service at 1:00pm. The family invites all who knew and loved her to attend and honor her memory.

Dena will be deeply missed and fondly remembered by all who had the privilege of knowing her.

Cemetery Details

Edgewood Cemetery

Nokomis Road @ Belt Line Road
Lancaster, TX

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 19. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (cst)

First Baptist Church
204 W Athens St
Hutchins, TX 75141
(469) 363-0463

Celebration of Life

MAY 19. 2:00 PM (CT)

First Baptist Church
204 W Athens St
Hutchins, TX 75141
(469) 363-0463

Tribute Wall

JF

“ JANELL FEATHERSTON lit a candle in memory of Dena Nichols



JANELL FEATHERSTON - January 25 at 10:55 PM

BT

“ Mr. Steve, my brother Aaron and I grew up in that church with you and Mrs Dena and I will always remember her and you for the rest of my life. Y'all all of yall at the church changed my life forever and was always there for my brother and I my prayers are with you always love Brettney and Aaron Travis ☐

Brettney Travis - May 19, 2025 at 07:53 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Dena Kristen Nichols.



May 19, 2025 at 11:43 AM

TS

“ Todd and April Schieberl purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Dena Kristen Nichols.



Todd and April Schieberl - May 19, 2025 at 09:38 AM

HF

“ Hernandez, Piccion, Riano, Miller families purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Dena Kristen Nichols.



Hernandez, Piccion, Riano, Miller families - May 18, 2025 at 02:03 PM

DS

“ Deanna S. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dena Kristen Nichols.

Deanna S. - May 17, 2025 at 11:25 PM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Dena Kristen Nichols.



May 17, 2025 at 11:08 PM

BP

“ Billy Ray Purdy purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Dena Kristen Nichols.



Billy Ray Purdy - May 17, 2025 at 04:11 PM

DR

“ So sorry Dena was so precious and loved by many. I babysit Dena and brothers and sister ,there like my children. Love sweet Dena always in my heart. To the family I'm so sorry.



Deborah Ryan - May 17, 2025 at 04:11 PM

YF

“ Your SRT Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dena Kristen Nichols.

Your SRT Family - May 17, 2025 at 01:33 PM

YF

“ Your SRT Family purchased the Beautiful Dreams for the family of Dena Kristen Nichols.



Your SRT Family - May 17, 2025 at 01:33 PM

JF

“ Jose torres, and family purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Dena Kristen Nichols.



Jose torres, and family - May 17, 2025 at 11:32 AM

JF

“ Jose torres, and family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dena Kristen Nichols.

Jose torres, and family - May 17, 2025 at 11:32 AM

BS

“ Beau, Candace, and Elliott Smith purchased the Lavender Reflections Spray for the family of Dena Kristen Nichols.



Beau, Candace, and Elliott Smith - May 17, 2025 at 10:31 AM

TC

“ Teresa, Nicholas, Amanda, Noah, Cacey planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dena Kristen Nichols.

Teresa, Nicholas, Amanda, Noah, Cacey - May 16, 2025 at 10:04 PM

TC

“ Teresa, Nicholas, Amanda, Noah, Cacey purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Dena Kristen Nichols.



Teresa, Nicholas, Amanda, Noah, Cacey - May 16, 2025 at 10:04 PM

BF

“ *Blount and Baggett family purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Dena Kristen Nichols.*



Blount and Baggett family - May 16, 2025 at 08:31 PM

KG

“ *Karen G. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dena Kristen Nichols.*

Karen G. - May 16, 2025 at 07:23 PM

WT

“ *What a deep chasm I feel! I miss my sidekick, neighbor , library team member and card making buddy. Steve, I'm here for you*

Wanda Tuley - May 16, 2025 at 07:02 PM

DS

“ *DeAnna & Ernie Sistrunk planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dena Kristen Nichols.*

DeAnna & Ernie Sistrunk - May 16, 2025 at 06:54 PM

DS

“ *DeAnna & Ernie Sistrunk purchased the Pretty Pleasure for the family of Dena Kristen Nichols.*



DeAnna & Ernie Sistrunk - May 16, 2025 at 06:54 PM



“ *Lavender Reflections Spray was purchased for the family of Dena Kristen Nichols.*



May 16, 2025 at 06:06 PM



“ *Stacey and Christina Hickson planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dena Kristen Nichols.*

Stacey and Christina Hickson - May 16, 2025 at 05:09 PM



“ *Stacey and Christina Hickson purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of Dena Kristen Nichols.*



Stacey and Christina Hickson - May 16, 2025 at 05:09 PM



“ 222 files added to the album LifeTributes



Byrum Funeral Home - May 16, 2025 at 03:58 PM



“ Darrell & Lacey Baker purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Dena Kristen Nichols.



Darrell & Lacey Baker - May 16, 2025 at 03:37 PM



“ Garden of Sweet Memories Casket Spray was purchased for the family of Dena Kristen Nichols.



May 16, 2025 at 02:43 PM