

Holton, KS



Star Trek aficionado Michiel Nelson Ford, 69, of Holton, KS, was “beamed up” to heaven on September 18, 2023. He was born July 20, 1954 in Shreveport, Louisiana, the son of Fred and Rosemary (Schmidt) Ford. They preceded him in death.

Mike graduated from Seaman High School in 1972 and from Washburn University in 1979 with a BA in communication arts. He worked for Stormont Vail School of Nursing as a Media Coordinator before taking additional classes to become a teacher. Mike received his MA in Earth and Space Science from Mississippi State University. He taught various subjects at Holton Middle School, earth and space science and astronomy at Holton High School, and courses in astronomy for Highland Community College. He also taught and served as a substitute teacher at Sabetha, Kickapoo Indian Nation School, Jackson Heights and Horton. Mike had a wonderful sense of humor that everyone enjoyed. He loved people, animals, the stars and of course love sci-fi movies of all kinds. He always wore sci-fi graphic t-shirts and was a long time Chiefs fan. Last, he had a strong unconditional love for his family.

As a teacher Mike earned several accolades and awards, among them a Toyota Tapestry grant, a Christa McAuliffe grant, a US Department of Education grant, Topeka Capital Journal Distinguished Kansan in Education (2001) and a Milken Award (2001). He was an education ambassador for NASA. Mike was responsible for establishing the Elk Creek Observatory in 2000 and later helped establish the Banner Creek Science Center in 2004, where he served as observatory director. His love of astronomy was contagious and he enjoyed teaching children and adults of all ages. Mike also served on the Holton USD 336 Board of Education since 2008 and the Jackson County Tourism Council. He was inducted into the Jackson County Hall of Fame in 2014.

Mike was a Captain in the Kansas Army National Guard 105th Public Affairs Detachment. He was a member of the First United Methodist Church of Holton.

Mike married Karen Warner Kline on August 16, 1980. She survives of the home. Survivors include a son, Michiel Clayton Ford of Jefferson City, Missouri; a brother Tom (Shiela) Ford of San Diego, California; a sister Patty Beaver of Oskaloosa, KS; a sister Kim Ford March of Palestine, Texas; a brother Mark Ford of Dallas, Texas; and a stepmother Jackie Ford of

Palestine, Texas. Several nieces and nephews also survive. A sister, Robin Kidney, preceded him in death.

The funeral service, with Military Honors, will be held at 10:30 a.m., Monday, September 25, 2023 at the Mercer Funeral Home in Holton. Visitation will be held Sunday, September 24, 2023 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the funeral home. A private family graveside service will be held at Holton Cemetery at a later date. In lieu of flowers, the memorial may be given to the Banner Creek Science Center c/o Mercer Funeral Home, P.O. Box 270, Holton, KS 66436. To leave a special message for the family, please visit www.mercerfuneralhomes.com.