

Burke's Life Remembrance

I want to share some poignant memories of our son who was a blessing to us all. He had ear problems early on and he had to have tubes put in his ears at 3. The doctors said for the operation he could bring a stuffed animal with him for comfort. So, Burke picked out a blue hard plastic shark, about 12" in length to bring with him. It certainly wasn't the cuddliest of things, but that's what he wanted. He had played with it in the bathtub and on the way to the hospital water came draining out of it.

The tubes were supposed to be temporary and fall out, but they didn't. So, at 6 or 7 he was still wearing a bathing cap in the pool when no one else was. It didn't seem to bother him at all; he just played full bore. In hindsight I honor him for his self-confidence. Of course, in H.S. he was on the water polo team wearing a bathing cap!

In the slide show that you'll see in a little bit, you'll see a photo with Burke playing in the pool with his cousin Ryan Reynolds - Burke with his cap on. The next photo is also Burke & Ryan, this time with each of them having their arm in a sling - Burke broke his arm by falling out of a tree. Ryan was riding his BMX Bike in a field, went over the handlebars and broke his collar bone. Ryan, Mary and Uncle Rob are here today.

Burke was always athletic - Little league baseball he was a pitcher and catcher. He surfed and hit a hole on one in golf at 12 years old.

When Burke was about 3 or 4, we called him "bam-bam- Burke because he would hit anything with a stick. So, it wasn't surprising in 6th grade he changed from trumpet to drums quickly. With the Helix band he went to Europe including Paris. He was a drummer for the Dirty Modelo Band and still within the last month, had his drum set out and

playing. Are there any of those band members here today? Are any of his friends from High School here?

He learned his electrician craft when he was 15 and started working parttime with his uncle, Dave Kunkle, along with Dave & Jo's sons, Jared and Daylen. I remember him getting his journeyman's status at 19 which blew his co-workers away - "How could he get that done so young?"

Burke was always wise and I thought he would make a good counselor. When he was still young, I told him he should go back to school and take classes to be a counselor because he was so naturally good at it. He told me, "Why would I want to sit around all day in a room listening to people's problems?!" Yes, he was even wise in knowing that's NOT what he wanted to do!

I know he was an integral and major contributor and employee of Southland Electric for many years. Who is here from Southland? How long did he work there? I listened to him on the phone while I was there watching Adilyn M-F from 7:30 - 2 during 2020. He would be coaching his co-workers with ease and grace - always with a fast and easy laugh. Many times, it was while he was in the backyard practicing his golf swing! I know he is terribly missed by his co-workers.

Burke and I had a lot in common. I love to cook. Burke started watching the only cooking show on TV when he was 10 which was a Chinese guy. At one point a few years ago when I was at his house, he came over to me and hugged me and said: "I'm living in the house I grew up in." He meant that even though I worked fulltime, I always cooked dinner for the family every night. So did Burke. When I would be at their house watching Adilyn, the kitchen was inundated with pots and pans and the refrigerator filled with food he'd cooked.

When Adilyn was born I wanted to help anyway I could, so I told Burke what if I cooked dinners and brought them over for them? Burke said, "Fine but I can give you some recipes of mine you can make." So, when you leave today, I've photocopied his recipes, written in his own handwriting, as a keepsake. And you know what? They are really good and easy to make!

I am a gardener and Burke was a gardener. I told Lindsey I'd like to keep his garden going with Adilyn's help. She was always Burke's helper and has her own set of garden gloves.

On the night of his passing, Lindsey texted me to come down to the hospital. I knew she had performed CPR on him and that the paramedics had used the paddles on him a number of times and he had been non-responsive. So I pretty much knew before I arrived that he didn't make it. Lindsey and I were in that ER room crying and telling him how much we loved him. I was on one side of him and Lindsey on the other. About 2 feet behind her was a sink. She was telling him she knew he wanted to be cremated and she was thinking that we should spread some ashes in the water, perhaps at the beach as they liked to go there all the time. As she said the word "water", the faucet behind her that operated by a motion sensor came on full force. Linz looked around at it and then back at him, saying, "I guess that's a good idea!". She continued to talk and the water kept flowing. Then she said, "But about those chickens (they had gotten 3 chickens in April - Burke had it all set up with automatic feeders and water, cameras and you name it) Linz then said she wasn't sure if she could continue to keep the chickens. The faucet abruptly shut off as fast as it came on. I think she's supposed to keep the chickens!

Burke was a gem - a real blessing to know and be in our lives. I know he continues to be with us - especially with Lindsey and Adilyn. We've told Adilyn that Daddy is in heaven with the angels, but that he's also right

on her shoulder all the time (he can be in two places at once) and she can talk to him and he will talk to her whenever she wants.

We will miss his physical presence - but are so blessed by having him in our lives then and now. Thank you, Burke, for being in my life - in all of our lives. You will be missed, yet we know you are fine and are on to a wonderful new game of life. We love you and we know you love us.

Thank you all for being here and sharing your loving energy.

Now we get to see a slide show of photos we've gathered of Burke's life with us. Enjoy.