



Linda Kay Sullivan

June 17, 1954 - August 28, 2020

Linda (June 17, 1954 - August 28, 2020) was the youngest of the Wildensteiner sisters, each two years apart, born to Loretta and Conrad Wildensteiner in Washington D.C.

Mary Loretta, Carol Ann (deceased 2019), and Linda Kay were living out their own novel of Little Women. There were many secret hiding spots in their little home on Bellwood St. and outside they buried trinkets; some they dug up, some waiting to be found. The scribbled wishes they dropped in a hole behind the medicine cabinet always seemed to come true. Linda was notorious for finding the best hiding spots (especially when it was her turn to do the dishes). For Carol's fiftieth birthday she brought their hiding tradition back when she jumped out of a refrigerator box, surprising everyone that she had traveled to be there for the celebration. Traditions were savored - every halloween the sisters stored candy under their pillows for late night snacking and they could always count on a chocolate milkshake made by their dad every Saturday night after their baths. The famous Rheddi Whip incident had everyone in stitches each year it was reminisced. They were little, The Reddi Whip can came out for pumpkin pie, but Carol had a different idea. They took turns shaking the can, spraying the ceiling and walls...

Linda's bubbly, effervescent spirit, made up for her height in spades. Hardly seeing over the wheel of her convertible, a big rust colored cougar with a white top, she ran it into their neighbor's fence, a project for her and dad to fix in the days following. She always managed to leave her mark, though usually it was just her smile and sweet personality.

In college, Linda and her dear friend joined their department's coed softball team, "Linda was like a virtual jock compared to me - with her tiny little strike zone the guys all kidded her about. The opposing pitchers were drop-jawed when she took to the plate - it was so funny!" Linda earned a bachelor's degree in Consumer Economics from the University of Maryland, College Park, graduating with Honors (Cum Laude). She completed her Master of Science in 1982 from the same institution. The last line of her acknowledgments from her thesis states, "I am especially grateful to Kevin Sullivan for his love, neverending support, and encouraging words, as they always gave me the "lift" I needed to "hang in there." Her love for Kevin was beyond measure.

When Kevin picked her up for their first date she was laying under her car changing the oil. She was a spitfire. He loved guitar and they both loved singing to the Beatles, the Beach Boys, and Motown music. Her favorite song was "Downtown" by Petula Clark, "The lights are much brighter there, you can forget all your troubles, forget all your cares, when you go downtown. Waiting for you tonight, downtown." And when "Twist and Shout" came on at weddings (or just the radio) the two of them were the first to boogie.

Kevin had three young sons from a previous marriage, Kevin Jr, Shawn (deceased 2010), and Brendan, and she loved taking them camping and on

trips to the ocean. Kevin and Linda were married at St. Matthews Lutheran Church in Washington D.C. on July 9, 1983. They made lifelong friends with wonderful members of the church, whom their families are still in touch with today.

Immediately upon graduating with her masters, Linda worked as an economist for the U.S. Department of Labor for eight years. Their daughter Kimberly Ann was born in 1987. When Kimberly turned five they traded the city for mountains and maple syrup and relocated to Hanover, NH for her husband's career and a life in autumn leaves and snow. Their son Paul Douglas was born in 1993 and Linda was delighted to be a stay at home mom with Paul until he began school. Then she worked as a Project Assistant and a Clinical Research Coordinator in cancer research at Dartmouth College. She finished her career working as a Legal Administrative Assistant for Vermont Law School.

She was creative as ever. A talented seamstress, she'd start planning for Halloween months before. Together they'd shuffle through the magazines picking out patterns at the fabric store. Many times she'd have to put together two or three patterns or make one up entirely to make their dream Halloween costumes: a butterfly princess, a penguin, Peter Pan, Glinda, a horse with a purple mane. In the months leading up to halloween the dining room table would be covered with fabric and ribbon, with the floor speckled in glitter and sequins. She would make costumes for their cousins and friend's kids too. Her "swamp monster" costume that she made for her dear friend's son was a huge hit and won first prize at the Trumbull House's annual costume parade. Her creativity didn't end with Halloween. Birthday party planning was her specialty. She'd pick a theme and she'd make her own decorations, always bake and

decorate the cake herself, and make up her own games. She transformed the camper into a pirate ship one year, strung donuts from the ceiling for a bit of breakfast silliness, and when the middle school dance was canceled due to a snowstorm on Kimberly's 16th birthday, she hung a disco ball in the living room and turned the music up high. She made everyone feel so special and so loved.

She supported her kids in the many activities and passions they explored. For Kimberly it was shuffling her back and forth from school to the theater for rehearsals and performances and becoming a Girl Scout troop leader. And when even Kevin was anxious to let eleven-year-old Paul start racing (it was all Paul dreamed of) she was ready to make it happen. She supported the garage being taken over by car parts and tools and she'd try to help any way she could. She cheered the loudest for that little teal number 99 race car. She would have loved to see Paul now, working full time restoring antique cars.

Linda loved adventures, especially skiing in the mountains with Paul. "I used to get so embarrassed at the fact that she would get off her skis and walk sections she thought were too hard. I'd give anything to watch that now." She loved snow. She'd bundle up the kids and take them snowshoeing, cross country skiing, and build snowmen for hours. She'd walk down the icy hill to her beloved chickens and care for them in negative degree weather and drop off the eggs to friends. She'd make delicious snow drawings, drizzling maple syrup and chocolate sauce for the kids to lick up. On New Years Eve she'd dig out all the pots and pans and insist on running outside in the snow at midnight (just in pajamas), banging the pots and pans in celebration. And when the old Aerostar van (which she had to sit on a pillow to drive) reached 200,000 miles she rushed everyone out of the car for a quick dance around the van at the red light. She was so full of life; vibrant and bone deep happy, with a laugh

that colored the room in sunshine.

Linda was a devoted member of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Hanover, NH. She loved leading Vacation Bible School camps, teaching Sunday school, cooking meals for The Haven, baking communion bread, quilting for causes, and she always looked forward to decorating a table for the church's Easter breakfast. She loved helping organize a group to walk in the Crop Walk for Hunger and a clean up crew to work together on Green Up Day in town. She felt truly at home with her loving church congregation and she was always grateful to be part of such a loving community.

Kevin and Linda were married for 29 years when Kevin passed away on Christmas, 2012. It was his last wish to make it to their 30th wedding anniversary but they savored their 29th. To their surprise they came home to cake and flowers in the front yard, complete with his tie and her wedding veil, and with Kimberly and Paul playing photographer and MC, they danced to their wedding song. "He was my favorite," she'd say years after he passed, even when her Frontotemporal Dementia had progressed to the late stages. She would carry his photo around saying, "Kevin, I love you. We were so good, Kevin."

Linda was diagnosed in the mid-stages of Frontotemporal Degeneration (FTD) at the age of 56. She lived with Kimberly, her husband Shu-nan, and her grandson Henry (2yrs) until she passed away peacefully at home. She was wrapped in love, surrounded by her son Paul and his wife Carrie, her daughter Kimberly and her husband Shu-nan, and one of their extraordinary caregivers, Gina. Their dog Tracker (whom she called "Tractor"- which actually is quite fitting) was even snuggled at her feet. In the few days before she passed she

had beautiful moments of connectedness. She was radiant at times, smiling and reaching out to her family. She seemed more at peace than she had been in years. It was as if she was already experiencing freedom from her disease. The family wishes to express tremendous gratitude for the love and support of family, friends, the prayer group at Our Savior Lutheran church, the Providence Care Hospice team, and her dedicated caregivers throughout many years: Ana, Marabel, Eva, Jodie, and Gina.

Linda's brain was donated to the Mayo Clinic with the help of the Brain Support Network to further neurological research. FTD has no known cause or cure. There are no current treatments. FTD is a neurological disorder that affects parts of the brain - the frontal and temporal lobes - that control language and cognition. Personality, behavior, judgement and memory are also affected. Even later walking, balance, and swallowing can become impaired. Her family knew she would have wanted to help others on this journey and by donating her brain she will hopefully help to pave a brighter future for FTD, with steps towards treatment and ultimately a cure.

In memory of Linda, remembrances may be made to Our Savior Lutheran Church in Hanover, NH <https://oslchanover.org> , The Association for Frontotemporal Degeneration <https://www.classy.org/fundraiser/2605838> , and The Brain Support Network <https://www.brainsupportnetwork.org/>

Cemetery Details

Private

Events

Details are pending.

Tribute Wall

BT

“ Dear Kim,

My thoughts go to you each morning when I am in prayer. I know how hard it is too miss your mother, even though you know she is a peace and in a bright light with Jesus. I think of Linda quite often, and remember every time I picked her up for our session at Curves. She was always so happy to go there and she was very good at working those machines, much better than I was. She is missed by all of us at OSLC, who had some close connection with her. I also think back to the times before she got this terrible Pic's decease and of her wonderful smile and sweet disposition. So nice to read the obituary of her life, much of which I did not know. What an amazing person and mother she was! You have lots of wonderful memories, Kim, and for that I am so thankful.

Much love to you, Shunan and Henrik.

Barbro

Barbro M. Thuren - September 25, 2020 at 11:07 AM

JM

“ *Paul and Carrie, We are so sorry for your loss. Sending thoughts, prayers and hugs during this difficult time.*

Mike and Jess

Jess Morey - September 20, 2020 at 07:37 AM