

We Remember

Kiernan's eulogy

At her funeral, Shannon's brother Tom read a beautiful eulogy written by her Mother. This poignant remembrance of Shannon reminds us all to live life to the fullest; live life a little more like Shannon did.

A mother never plans to write her child's eulogy... even a fleeting thought of losing a child is just too painful to bear and yet, here I am doing just that and trying to find the words that are in my heart.

Shannon was special from the start. She never did things the usual conventional way. She was reading at 3 and when all the other girls were being mommy's when playing house, she insisted on being a dog or a table. She could never quite understand why others did not share her same passions. Whether it was camping in the middle of the woods or snowboarding in the Rocky Mountains...she just expected you to share her passion. And she did everything with a passion. She had energy about her and a special knack of bringing people together from all corners of her life... high school buddies, college roomies, friends and family. We called her the Pied Piper and when she came home, the house was filled with her energy and she lit up the room with her beautiful smile.

She hated to lose and was competitive by nature. She worked hard and wanted to be the very best in everything she did. As she matured she became more accepting of things in general but had no tolerance for

bigotry and prejudice. She cared nothing for the material things in life and treasured her family and friends above all else.

Shannon was more than just a daughter... she was my soul mate. She knew what I was feeling without words.. I use to say I lived my life vicariously through her. She lived more in her 28 years than many people do in a lifetime and I loved to hear about her adventures.

She was a very strong person in many ways. Although she too grieved the loss of my mother, she was my strength and helped me through those difficult days. She had a deep sense of faith and although attended church regularly, she truly felt connected to God when she was immersed in nature. She loved to hike, fish, horseback ride, and camp and of course snowboard.

Shannon's idea of a perfect day was to be at the top of a snow covered mountain with the sun shining down on her snowboard... and that was how she spent the last day of her life.

Shannon was determined and once her mind was set, there was little you could do to discourage her. It is funny to think that she felt she had to make a real contribution to the world with her life. She had no idea how she already had done that.

Perhaps what everyone will remember most about Shannon was her quick wit. She loved to poke fun at just about everything and everyone. Her sense of humor was contagious.

Even if you were initially offended or annoyed, it wouldn't be long before you were laughing along with her. It was impossible to stay mad at her for very long.

Although an extremely independent woman, her love of her family was the most important aspect of her life. She never missed an important event or holiday no matter where she was. She was a firm believer in family traditions and we can all remember searching for the Great Pumpkin and freezing to death looking for that elusive perfect Christmas tree. But Shannon seemed to be always searching for something. She had a restless energy that pulled her from place to place.. From Colorado to Virginia to New Hampshire and Maine and yet had still not found what she was looking for. She had settled in as a high school physics teacher in New Hampshire but again was ready to move on - but this time she was coming home. I believe she was entering the next phase of her life and yearned to find a special someone in her life and have children of her own some day. She teased us that we had a Grand Dog and that was Chauncey whom she loved with that same passion and intensity she brought to everyone and everything.

We used to say that my mom was waiting for us on a bench in heaven... and I now know there are 2 people sitting on that bench... one sitting patiently and one somewhat restless... busy planning her next adventure and anxious to see all the sights she has never seen. She will wait there for all of us to arrive and when you do, be prepared for Shannon to take you on the greatest journey of all.

Love Forever,
Patti Guido



COURTESY PHOTO / SHANNONKIERNAN.COM

The always-energetic Ms. Kiernan with a bright smile on her face.



COURTESY PHOTO / SHANNONKIERNAN.COM

Ms. Kiernan on her vacation to Las Vegas.

We love
you



COURTESY PHOTO / SHANNONKIERNAN.COM

Ms. Kiernan smiles even with a broken arm.

A celebration of life

By BETH BASSETT
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Staff

Weeks after hearing the news of Ms. Kiernan's accident, students and faculty came together for a celebration of life. The celebration helped provide some closure to the many people that never got a chance to say goodbye. Several students and teachers shared their memories of Ms. Kiernan, both humorous and meaningful. Former colleagues of Ms. Kiernan from Goffstown came to the celebration to share their memories, and the Chamber Singers performed "Seasons of Love" from the musical Rent.

Several students, including Courtney Peters (12), Ashley Mutch (12), and Emily Jefferson (11), shared their memories of Ms. Kiernan. "We were not quite sure what to make of her at first with her large coffee cup and her red hair," Peters said. "I think we spent the entire first week giggling at her heavy New York City accent [rather] than listening to what she was saying. But it didn't take long for us all to become fond of her. She has made such a positive impact on our lives and she will be remembered forever at Winnacunnet," Peters said.

Junior Class President Jefferson shared memories of Ms. Kiernan, who was the junior class advisor and announced for the JV basketball games. "Even though Ms. Kiernan only taught at Winnacunnet for two years, we will never forget how wonderful she was. We love you, Ms. Kiernan." Many students also

reminded about Ms. Kiernan's stories of her dog Chauncey, her goal to set off the "lunk alarm" at the gym, and her uncanny sense of humor. Both Peters and Mutch recalled her random word problems about "Flava-Flav," and other random topics.

Several Winnacunnet staff members also talked about Ms. Kiernan and their two amazing years with her. Fellow science teacher Adam Edgar said, "The one thing that cannot be taught is the art of teaching," Edgar said. "You have to have that certain 'it' and

I along with her students can tell you she had 'it.' Principal Randy Zito said that the science teachers are rated on a scale of 1-10 with bonus points for the teachers who like country music. "Shannon was an 11," Zito said.

Kim Knott (12), who had Ms. Kiernan for physics, said of the ceremony, "I think that it was good closure for us [students], and it was very

nice done. She is truly someone we will never forget." Another one of Ms. Kiernan's students, Laura Tyler (12), who is also a member of the Chamber Singers,

said, "It was really hard for me to get through the song. We all just miss her so much, and it's just hard." The event, all though emotional, was filled with great memories and truly was a celebration of Ms. Kiernan's life. There was one reoccurring topic when it came to Ms. Kiernan, and that was her energy and love of life. The celebration successfully captured that energy and passion she had, and it is safe to say that Ms. Kiernan will never be forgotten.

"One Hundred Years from now it will not matter what kind of car I drove, What kind of house I lived in, how much money was in my bank account nor what my clothes looked like. But the world may be a better place because I was important in the life of a child."

—Forest Witcraft

"It's the heart afraid of breaking, that never learns to dance. It's the dream afraid of waking, that never takes the chance. It's the one who wont be taken, who cannot seem to give, and the soul afraid of dying, that never learns to live."

—The Rose