



Emily Hill Van Lieu

June 28, 1968 - October 30, 2013

A tirelessly vibrant spirit who embraced her friends, family, and the joys of life, Emily Hill Van Lieu, of Fort Collins, passed away October 30, 2013.

Emily Caroline Hill was born June 28, 1968, in Hong Kong, when it was a British Crown Colony. She was adopted by M. Charles and Martha J. Hill in Hong Kong in 1969. Her father was in the U.S. Foreign Service, and during her childhood, she lived at various times in Hong Kong, Massachusetts, Vietnam, Israel, and Washington, D.C., which she considered her primary home. She also reveled in frequent visits to her grandparents in Bridgeton and Ocean City, in southern New Jersey.

While at Woodrow Wilson High School in Washington, she helped found and became the coxswain of the school's first varsity crew team, rowing and racing on the Potomac River. She attended the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia for a year, studying nursing, before transferring to the University of Rochester in upstate New York. While at Rochester, she continued as a coxswain with the crew team, and further studied nursing. It was there that she met and began dating Neil Van Lieu, an optical engineering student, in October of 1989. After earning her Bachelor of Science degree in nursing, and achieving her registered nurse certification in 1991, she spent much of the summer in Zaire and Kenya, Africa, assisting at a remote missionary medical clinic, where among other duties, she inoculated hundreds of native people against the ravages of goiter. In the fall of 1991, she joined Neil in Boulder, Colorado, and earned her Certified Rehabilitation Registered Nurse qualification. She worked as a CRRN at Craig Hospital in Englewood, the Mapleton Center for Rehabilitation in Boulder, and at Spalding Rehabilitation at Longmont United Hospital.

Emily and Neil were married while living in Longmont, and they enjoyed travelling together. After their son Christopher was born, the family moved to Grass Valley, California, for Neil's job, where their daughter Laura was born. Emily's life centered upon raising her children, as she contributed to, and participated in all aspects of their lives. In addition, she also volunteered with the Hospice of the Foothills. After the family returned to Fort Collins in 2002, Emily actively volunteered in her kids' schools and the community, and she loved playing and winning competitive tennis. She also earned a first degree black belt in karate. Emily worked in the Poudre School District with children with

disabilities, and for almost two years, she was a nurse and executive assistant for Occupational Medicine Consultants in Windsor.

Emily fought a sudden, brief, but valiant struggle with cancer. She loved people and was extraordinarily compassionate towards others. She had an irresistible laugh and an energetic personality. Emily was an extremely good listener, who connected with people, and her dynamic presence was enjoyed by many friends. Emily was smart, hard working, loving, and dedicated to her family. She will be deeply missed by her family and friends. Emily is survived by her husband Neil, her son Christopher and daughter Laura, her father Charles Hill and stepmother Norma Thompson of New Haven, Connecticut, and sister Catharine Hill Smith and brother-in-law John Smith of Chatham, Virginia. Emily was preceded in death by her infant daughter, Megan, and by Emily's mother, Martha.

A memorial service celebrating Emily's life will be held Monday, November 11, at 4:00 PM. The service, followed by a reception, will take place at First Presbyterian Church in Fort Collins, at 531 South College Avenue, Fort Collins, CO 80524. In lieu of flowers, Emily's family suggests contributions may be made in Emily Hill Van Lieu's memory to MMS Aviation Missionary Maintenance Services, at 1-888-950-4395, or online at <http://www.mmsaviation.org> ; please indicate recipient preference for Keith and Karen Dodson.

Comments



“ Reading the latest issue of the alumni magazine and was saddened to hear of Emily's death. Please do pass along the sympathies from the whole Doherty family.

Adam Doherty - January 13, 2014 at 12:00 AM



“ Jim joins me in expressing our sadness and condolences to all of Emily's family. We knew Emily at Westmoreland UCC where she was very active in so many areas. She was a good "church friend" of our daughter Kathryn. We loved watching her grow up in church. She was a beautiful child and I see that she grew up to be an accomplished and wonderful adult. The world is a lesser place without her. Claudia Thurber, Washington, DC

Claudia & James Thurber - November 26, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Neil, Christopher, and Laura - we are very sorry for your loss. We all miss Emily. Every single time any of us was with her, she changed our days; her laugh and smile enriched our lives. She made our Silk Oak Drive neighborhood special. We have thought about you guys a lot since moving, and hope your memories of Emily as wife and mother will give you solace in this difficult time. Our sincerest condolences, Tom, Vicki, Kendall, & Michael Moore

Tom, Vicki, Kendall, & Michael Moore - November 19, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ My deepest condolences to Neil, Christopher, Laura, Kate, & the rest of Emily's family. Emily was such a wonderful, positive, caring person who really loved people & life! I have many fond memories from our Westmoreland days. I think I actually shared one or two w/ Christopher & Laura last summer @ Martha's memorial service. It's so hard to believe that Emily is gone too. Knowing her was such a blessing & I will cherish the memories...

Lora Forbes Applegarth - November 16, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ I will never forget Emily and the joy she brought to me - almost daily - seeing her at Werner and Miramont. She would always have a kind word for me and my dog and never failed to make my day. Emily would sneak up behind me and say, "I'm watching you - always watching you" - and we would laugh! I will never forget her smile and sweet spirit. Our love and prayers go to each of you. Please always remember that your wife, mother, sister, daughter, made a difference - even if she didn't mean to. Our Love, Trudy, Kregg, Molly and Zak Listen

Trudy Listen - November 14, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Neil and Family, I am so sorry for your loss. Emily is a vibrant angel and will always be with you. Your heart will always hold her and her spirit will guide you. I considered her a friend and am so sorry I could not attend her memorial service. My sympathies are with you in this difficult time and I will keep you safely tucked in my thoughts. With my deepest sympathy - Julie Marino

Julie Marino - November 13, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Neil and family, Scott and I were so very sad to hear of Emily's death today. I have such wonderful memories of her fun spirit and how much she always cared about doing the right thing for people. I will always miss her competitive but fun spirit on the tennis courts. She was one of those rare gems that you only come across once in a lifetime. Scott and I are praying for your family as you deal with her loss. May God put his loving arms around all of you for the strength you need at this moment in your life. Lorraine and Scott Leon

Lorraine Leon - November 13, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Neil, Chris and Laura, We are so saddened by the loss of Emily, your wife and Mom. I had the pleasure of getting to know Emily as a parent volunteer at Kinard as well as in her parenting role when dropping off and picking up Chris at our house. It seems that she was an extraordinary person in her nursing, volunteerism, athleticism and parenting skills. She will be missed by many. Pat Wilke, Ryan Wilke-Braun, Sean-Wilke-Braun

Pat Wilke - November 12, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Neil, Chris and Laura, We are so saddened by the loss of Emily, your wife and Mom. I had the pleasure of getting to know Emily as a parent volunteer at Kinard as well as in her parenting role when dropping off and picking up Chris at our house. It seems that she was an extraordinary person in her nursing, volunteerism, athleticism and parenting skills. She will be missed by many. Pat Wilke, Ryan Wilke-Braun, Sean-Wilke-Braun

Pat Wilke - November 12, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Neil, Laura and Christopher Our thoughts and prayers are going out to you! Emily was such a special and positive person. We had only known her for a few years through Karate West but we are so glad we met her and got to know her. We are so sad and will miss her. We are grateful for all the laughs and times spent with her. What a great woman she was! We are thinking of you and pray for you.

Monique, Dan, Lydia and Eli Allen - November 11, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ I remember Emily from Werner Elementary and from Miramont. She was a vibrant person, outgoing and fun, whom people wanted to be with. I'm so sorry for your loss. She will be missed by many.

Patricia Frieauf - November 11, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Neil, Christopher, Laura, and family, I am so very sorry for your loss. I always looked forward to seeing and talking with Emily because of her bubbly personality. Her outlook on life made me love life more. I will continue to pray for you and your family.

Katy Yakel - November 11, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear sweet Emily ~ One who shared my love of sweets, one who loved to share her laughter, and one that ALWAYS made me smile...what a mark you left on this world! You're spirit and presence will truly be missed. Looking forward to seeing you again some day!! :

Mindy Gee - November 11, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Emily was a wonder! When she volunteered in second grade at Werner, it was always a favorite day for me! Her laughter and purpose for her children stand out in my mind. She made such a mark on the world!

Janet Kask - November 11, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Van Lieu Family- My sincerest consolation to all of you. Emily was such a kind, loving person. I will always remember her for her bubbly smile and cheerfulness. I cherish my times at Werner Elementary where I saw her often for four years. She was a special lady and will be greatly missed.

Lori Adair - November 10, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ We were so sorry to hear about Emily. She was so lovely and full of fun; and such a good friend to Lisa. We have many fond memories of crew races and happy times. Our thoughts are with you at this difficult time. Fondly,,Edna and Larry

Edna and Larry - November 10, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Neil, Christopher and Laura, Mr. and Mrs.Hill and all dear Emily's family, My deepest condolences to you in the loss of your dear wife, mom, daughter and family member, Emily. My best memories of this gracious lady were the days she spent with my daughter, Shelly, in one of the most remote places in Africa, when they came to work with us in Zaire. Emily's effervescence and compassion for the patients in the goiter research project we were working on was an immense blessing to us all. She touched many lives with her part and as a very good friend to our Shelly. "Thank you Emily. You blessed us too."

Dave Downing - November 09, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ I only knew her for a very short time out of her full & interesting life, but I will remember her warmly for our days volunteering at Werner Elementary and Cub Scout Pack 191. She was always so cheerful and happy to see you. She couldn't help but lift your spirit by her positive attitude. My thoughts and prayers to the Van Lieu family.

Judi Urlocker - November 09, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Neil, Christopher and Laura, We are so sorry for this great loss. I will not be at the funeral since Nov. 11 is the second anniversary of my mother's death and I will be with my father in Wisconsin. We will be offering help and companionship in the coming days and months. May God grant Emily's soul sweet rest. Maureen and Neil

Maureen and Neil McCaffrey - November 09, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ I am deeply saddened for Emily's family upon learning of her passing. I had a small business in Fort Collins, Meals Made Easy, at one time and Emily was a loyal customer. I always enjoyed her bubbly personality. She was always, always, always in a good mood and had an infectious laugh that transformed everyone in her presence. My sincere condolences for your enormous loss. Bless you all.

Lynda Byrnes-Pelichowski - November 09, 2013 at 12:00 AM