

8/17/2019

First Presbyterian Church, Morristown, TN

15 years ago this month I met Ashley while we were both going to school and this coming December we would have been married for 8 years and I miss her deeply. Ashley accomplished so much in her short time on earth with us, she started out life in LaFollette, Tennessee just an hour away, her father Brian passed away shortly after she was born but then Ashley planted roots in Morristown, Tennessee and grew up in this church. As Ashley was breezing through college in the honors program at UAH, I was just hoping to get some help on my calculus work, math just never agreed with me. Since Ashley had a car and I did not I kept spending more and more time with her as she drove me all around Huntsville.

Ashley continued on with school well after I graduated finally earning her doctorate in 2014. A large part of Ashley's life during and after graduating from school was her sorority Delta Zeta, she was so deeply devoted to her sorority without reservation nor how horrible the cancer afflicted her she poured her heart and soul into Delta Zeta and was hoping she made a difference in some other women's life. While Ashley was receiving her end of life treatment with the incredible team at UAB she was able to learn that she was being recognized as one of 35 women under 35 for 2019 that have demonstrated leadership, initiative, and dedication to their careers, are motivated by challenges, serve as volunteers in their communities, and are role models for their peers all of which Ashley exceeded at.

Ashley and I weren't interested in having children, she was happy with our little family including our long haired dapple dachshund Cooper. Cooper came into our life's just over 5 years ago through some dear friends, and we would have been lost without him. Cooper always sparked joy and comfort in Ashley and provided a much needed distraction from the tumor growing within her. Cooper still greets me at the drivers side door then quickly hurries to Ashley's side, looking for her and hoping she will appear.

Ashley's grandparents devoted their lives to Ashley becoming her guardian when she was 17. Ashley and her grandmother have a bond that few people will ever come to experience and it was a bond that Ashley wanted to share with her own mother. Her grandfather educated her on common old man things to include

model trains, planes, tree identification and star gazing. My dysfunctional family has taken a liking to Ashley, she has given us memories we'll never forget including trying to locate her scarf that is in "safe keeping" with my father, enjoying an entire shrimp tail and all at a seven fishes dinner, crisscrossing the country to visit my mother and supporting my sister when she became a Delta Zeta.

My best memories with Ashley revolve around traveling, she loved it the world over, no flight was ever long enough and she loved the food on airplanes. Ashley and I were able to visit so many places in the past 10 years racking up over half a million miles traveled. We enjoyed poking flowing lava in Hawaii, had breakfast with monkeys in Singapore, jet-boating in New Zealand, riding the tube in London and wandering in circles in Macau. Ashley was also infatuated with photography which is great as I have so many photos to remind me of all the activities we enjoyed.

I am proud and grateful of all my family and friends that have come to support Ashley throughout this process. Dr. Ashley, I was never the best husband and you deserved better but I will always remember you, I hope you will be able to remember me.