**MEMORIAL SPEECH**

**FOR**

**RICK LANGFORD**

Hello everyone.... Today we mark ten years that our beautiful daughter, Kim, and our two precious granddaughters, Lilly and Ada, left us, and while the wounds never fully heal, it is thanks to the love and support of family and friends.... all of **YOU**... that show us that, somehow, life **does** goes on. Not a day goes by that (**Name your wife and Kim’s siblings**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ don’t think about Kim and the twins, and somehow we sustain ourselves by finding our strength in those thoughts and memories. I’ve heard it said, “That which is remembered lives.” If that’s the case, then thanks to all of you and the vibrant joyfulness that infused every step of Kim’s brief, bright life, she lives on... she’s with us, and she and her angels are smiling down on us and guiding us to continue, in her honor and memory, to find our purpose as we commemorate her time with us.

In Romans 8:28 we learn, “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” God **DOES** work in strange, mysterious ways, and though we will never know what instigated the strange and tragic timing ten years ago today, we have gained some perspective and we have ten years of mourning, wondering, searching, struggling, and reconciling to find the meaning and the mission to honor the lives we lost. We’ve had ten years of acknowledging the hole that Kim’s loss has left us, and we have ten years of searching for the ways to make sure that Kim’s beautiful spirit and joy for life continues to inspire all of us and those she would never know, to live more aware, inclusive, joyful, compassionate, and respectful lives.

Kim’s life was brief but brighter and more beautiful than many, much longer lives. Those who were blessed to know her were instantly inspired by her personality, her charisma, her thousand watt smile, and the way she truly **CARED** about everyone and everything in her life. Her laughter was contagious. Her spirit was and **IS** so strong that it continues to break free from the invisible bonds of infinity. We, her parents and close friends really feel that presence every day and I **KNOW** that will not fade. While Kim may technically be invisible... her legacy is **INDIVISIBLE** and inseparable from all of us left behind**.** She is with us forever.

Kim’s young life... just twenty four years here on earth, was way too short, but every aspect showed us the true meaning of exemplary potential. She was a wonderful daughter, a cherished granddaughter, a devoted sister, a loving wife to her childhood sweetheart, James... she was a terrific student and an even better friend to **ALL**.. She packed **A LOT** of life into less than two and a half decades, and that is the first lesson she taught us. Our time here, on this way too mortal plane, is brief. It’s tenuous. It’s unpredictable. Cherish every moment.

Life is fragile. Life is precious. I once read that in Japan, when a delicate object breaks, instead of discarding it, they repair it with gold as a way to show that nothing in its original form lasts forever. Things break. Tragedy is unavoidable, but if we work hard enough, we somehow find the way to put the pieces back together and go on. Those bits of gold are reminders of lives once lived. They give us guidance to go on. Those gold cracks provide the road map for us to follow as we try to reassemble our lives, carefully and lovingly taking the pieces and reconstructing a tribute to what once was. This annual vigil is one of those pieces of gold. We come together to remember the meaning of Kim’s time here on earth, to mourn the loss of three irreplaceable souls, and to renew and recommit to honoring their memory. Those strands of gold also show us how to take action... to make commitments and take a stand to honor the good work of such a young and vital person. Kim was really just beginning her life, yet in the ten years since her passing, her spirit has continued to guide us in making a difference in the community and to those that need the fruits of her inspiration. We’ve adopted highways and we continue to march for babies because we know Kim would have done that.... because she really **CARED** about people, especially those she loved. (**I did some research and found this part. If there is any other charity work or outreach you’ve done in Kim’s memory, please mention that as well**).

Leo Buscaglia has said, “I know for certain that we never lose people that we love, even to death. They continue to participate in every act, thought, and decision we make. Their love leaves an indelible imprint in our memories. We find comfort in knowing that our lives have been enriched by having shared their love.” Yes. Ten years have passed. Do we still go through the stages of mourning? Absolutely. Have we, her family and loved ones, been fully able to reconcile this insurmountable loss? Definitely not, but it’s the blessings of indomitable human spirit, the ever present faith we share, and the love and support of our family, friends, and community that provide the bits of gold that serve to hold us together. Certain times are clearly harder than others, but then we see the new life that surrounds us and we look for signs of Kim’s sprit and humor in them and we see that our only route is to go on and teach those who weren’t lucky enough to know her that once there was a young woman named Kim who made sure this world and the people in it were better off for having known her.

I don’t know who said this, but I believe it....

“The darker the night,

The brighter the stars.

The deeper the grief,

The closer to God.”

Kim’s light and the light of Lilly and Ada will always prevail. They will guide us and will continue to bring us memories, love, thoughtfulness, respect, and caring for others. Today is Christmas Eve, a time to observe, be with family, celebrate, acknowledge, commune. All of that changed for the Langford and Farrar families ten years ago. We have no choice but to rise to a different kind of holiday. Kim’s time here was way too limited but oh... how she lived and loved us all and that’s what we cherish. May she and her angels continue to inspire all of us and may she always Rest In Peace and love. Amen. Thank you all.