

## Ken's Words at Trevor's Memorial

I loved Trevor. So did my wife, our children, our sons-in-law, our grandkids. This is how we knew him and why we loved him.

When Judy recently picked up Trevor's sister Ali to take her to the airport to be with the family after his disappearance, her first memory of Trevor came back to her. It was when he and our son Stephen were in the yard, flying a kite. Trevor was 8. For her, something of the bright boy with the big smile will be forever 8.

Stephen came into his life when Darnell asked him to befriend Trevor and be kind of a big brother to him. Stephen took him to the movies, hung out with him, brought him over our house, and that is how the rest of our family got to know him.

Our oldest daughter Gretchen was living with us during some of that time, and she remembers how *excited* her kids would get when they learned that Trevor was coming over, either for dinner or for a weekend.

He played video games with Samantha and played lots of things with Caleb and Logan. It didn't really matter what they were doing, he always joined in, whether coloring with crayons or keeping the Empire safe from Darth Vader and his storm troopers.

He had this wonderful, Peter-Pan quality about him. He went with the grandkids and me to animated films, and what was so great about this was that he loved it. He didn't feel the least bit awkward about being a teenager and hanging out with younger kids and an older guy in his 50's.

Caleb remembers how Trevor talked with him when they played together, asking him about his life, how he was doing. They talked a lot, and Caleb considered him a close friend.

When I asked him what he loved most about Trevor, he said, "*Everything* about him." And it was the way he said "everything" that told me everything I needed to know about how much Trevor had meant to him.

Adolescence was a painful transition for Trevor. A part of him knew he had to grow up, but a part of him resisted it with every fiber of his being.

I got to know Trevor well during his last year of high school, a time when he no longer wanted to go to church. I no longer wanted to go to church either, and his dad told him that if he spent Sunday mornings with me, he could skip church.

There was no agenda, other than breakfast. He was having a hard time trudging through "King Lear," so we decided to trudge through it together. He introduced me to a favorite writer of his, and we read him, too. We shared books, movies, and our lives. Before he

left, we would often kneel at the couch in our living room. He would pray for me, and I would pray for him.

Sometimes we hiked the Palmer Lake Reservoir. He loved being there, sitting on a boulder that sloped into the lake, where he took off his tennis shoes and dangled his feet in the cool water, resting and quietly taking in the beauty of the place.

I didn't see him much after he went off to college, and so for me . . . a part of him will be forever 18.

When I heard of his disappearance, I feared the worst, and my worst fears were confirmed. This past week I saw the headline in *The Tribune* that read: "Body I'D as Monument Man." The word took me totally off guard. "Man?" I almost felt offended, felt the reporter had gotten the facts wrong. Everything inside me wanted to shout. "He was a boy. He was just 20. Now, for all of us, he will be forever 20.

We are all heartbroken at the loss of Trevor's life. It is a loss to each and every one of us. It is a loss to the world. Who knows what he would have done with his life, who he would have loved, what gifts he would have given, what kind of man he would have grown up to become in the fullness of that word.

One of the movies we shared was *Finding Neverland*, about the life of J.M. Barrie who wrote the play about Peter Pan. Had Trevor grown up to live a full compliment of years, I think he would have grown up to be someone a lot like J.M. Barrie, who loved the stage and the stories that were told there, who loved being there for a friend, especially a friend in need, and who felt totally comfortable with playing make-believe games with children.

I received an email from him dated October 30<sup>th</sup>. It ended with the words: "In a few weeks I'll be home for Thanksgiving. Will I see you then?"

I'm sorry I didn't get to see you, Trevor. We are all sorry. We will see you again someday when, one by one, we will all come home for Thanksgiving.

Until then . . . we are sad you are gone, but we are glad you are home. Glad you're safe. Glad you're at peace. Sitting in the lap of the one who once told us that whoever enters there must enter as a child.

Please know that whether we remember you as forever 8 or forever 18 or forever 20 . . . that we will remember you forever in our hearts . . . as the bright boy with the big smile and the tender heart.