



William Bruce Burrell

October 21, 1958 - March 11, 2024

BURRELL, W BRUCE October 21, 1958 - March 11, 2024

It is with profound sadness that we share with you the death, at age 65, of an extraordinary man and well-respected leader in the fire service and emergency management. Bruce was above all, a much-loved father to Shaun (Kristen Tapson) Dartmouth; Jessica (Jordan Price) Bedford; and, a truly adored Papa to Addison and Charlotte.

For the past twenty years, Bruce shared his journey, complete with significant challenges and incredible accomplishments, with his loving wife, Jennifer, by his side. Their strong partnership, founded in love, friendship and deep mutual respect, was evident to all. Bruce always said they made each other better and they were stronger together.

That was never more evident than in 2017, when Bruce was given a terminal diagnosis of Pulmonary Fibrosis. There is no cure for this disease but Bruce immediately went into fight mode, did everything the doctors asked of him, and made a determined decision to fight to become transplant-ready. That meant sick enough to be placed near the top of the transplant list, yet strong enough to endure and survive the 10 to 12 hour bilateral lung transplant surgery.

Bruce's energy was directed where it was needed most, managing his medications, his symptoms, getting in his daily walk, and lots of rest. Jennifer became his advocate, keeping records, managing the multiple medical tests and appointments, and making the team aware if Bruce's symptoms worsened or new ones presented. The transplant surgery happened in 2021 but did not go as predicted. From that moment until Bruce's final breath, he continued to fight, not ready to say goodbye to his family and friends. Jen went into full advocate and caregiver mode and continued through Bruce's final two weeks, spent at Hospice Halifax.

Bruce grew up in Rockingham with his loving parents and siblings. He was predeceased by both parents, James (Jim) Burrell and Margaret (Patterson); as well as his grandparents, Hugh Patterson and Doris (Smith). Bruce will be missed by his siblings Debbie and Allan Davis, New Glasgow, NS; Kevin and Donna (MacLeod), Airdrie, AB; Patti Burrell, Bedford; and, Gary and Mariko (Yamamoto), Ho Ho Kus, New Jersey. Remembering Bruce with love are special aunts, nieces, nephews and cousins throughout Canada and the United States. Also remembered by his first wife, Lynne Burrell, Bedford, proud mother of Shaun and Jessica.

Left to treasure their special memories are Jennifer's NL family including her Mom, Sheila Comeau, Bedford/St. John's; and sister, Bernadette Doyle-Follett (Wayne Follett); Erin Follett; and, nephew/godson Eric Duffett, StFX, Uncle Bruce's self-proclaimed #1 fan.

Bruce was very proud to have quickly risen through the ranks at Halifax Regional Fire to move from firefighter to Training Manager to Safety Manager to Deputy Chief. In 2005, he was asked to enter the competition for Chief, Calgary Fire Department. His true legacy was his remarkably successful management of the 2013 Calgary Floods. His approach to simultaneously focus on re-opening Calgary and getting the City back to business, won him

awards and has become the gold standard in emergency response.

While the recognition meant a great deal, what really mattered to Bruce were the true friendships and special relationships he had formed throughout his life, many going back decades. Bruce had two very close friends in particular, who have been incredibly supportive and important to him. Larry Williams, Herring Cove and Bill Holbrow, Calgary, your friendships, including the many laughs over the years, meant everything to Bruce.

Bruce was a great listener, a loyal confidante and a mentor to many. He was a tough but fair leader. To his executive leadership team and countless others he would encourage them to work effectively, but put family first. Bruce was a man of great intelligence, who was widely trusted and valued for his integrity.

Jennifer, Shaun and Jessica wish to send their sincerest appreciation and thanks to the entire staff of Hospice Halifax. You supported and sustained us as a family over Bruce's final two weeks. We appreciate you so much.

Cremation has already occurred under the care of Harbourside Regional Crematorium. Funeral service will take place 1 PM Tuesday April 2. Cathedral Church of All Saints 1340 Cathedral Lane, Halifax, NS. Private committal ceremony to take place at a later date .

In lieu of flowers, kindly consider a donation, in Bruce's memory, to Hospice Halifax www.hospicehalifax.ca; CPFF, Canadian Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation www.cpff.ca; or a charitable organization of your choosing.

Please send condolences to the family to www.harboursidecremation.ca

Tribute Wall

CB

“ Jennifer, our thoughts are with you, especially today as you honour and celebrate Bruce's life and the love you shared. Your love and devotion helped immeasurably to sustain Bruce throughout his difficult journey. You drew strength and courage from each other and that will be one of the lasting legacies of your very special partnership. May God sustain and bless you in the days ahead. Much love,
Gerry and Carolyn

Carolyn Bradbury - April 02, 2024 at 01:29 PM

MS

“ MUFG Investor Services planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of William Bruce Burrell.

MUFG Investor Services - March 26, 2024 at 01:16 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of William Bruce Burrell.



March 26, 2024 at 01:16 PM



“ Jennifer, I'm so sorry to hear of Bruce's passing. Our condolences. He was a great person and will be sadly missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family at this time. Geoff and Mona

Mona Brinston - March 24, 2024 at 10:48 PM

PR

“ Jennifer

Myself, like everyone who knew Bruce, have lost an amazing man. Educated in every field of topic's, a born leader but most importantly continually enforcing the values of “family first”. As Chief he was always ready to listen, offer advise or opinion when asked, but most importantly to me, took an interest in myself and who I was. I will be forever grateful to the Chief for extending my time in a career that I loved.

*Thinking of you and your family;
Paul Gough ADC CFD retired*

Paul Gough ADC CFD retired - March 22, 2024 at 01:22 PM

CF

“ *My condolences to the Burrell Family. I had the pleasure of working and getting to know Bruce at meetings between the Halifax Police and Halifax Fire Service. We also were members of the Halifax Regional Municipality Special Events Task Force, he represented the Fire Service and I represented the Police Service. I gained great respect for Bruce and his knowledge of his profession was outstanding. I learned a lot from him and he was a gentleman and had a good sense of humour. He will be missed. May he resr in peace.*

Cliff Falkenham - March 21, 2024 at 08:08 PM

ST

“ *Our deepest condolences to the entire Burrell Family. May your happy memories together with Bruce bring you comfort at this difficult time.*

Sava & Scott Tapson

Scott Tapson - March 21, 2024 at 10:51 AM

GK

“ *When we lose someone we love, we must learn, not to live without them, but to live with the love they left behind. Hold on to your cherished memories and let them guide you during this time of sadness. My SINCERE CONDOLENCES . Bruce put up a good fight and certainly will be missed . [Cousin } Glenda Newson Kent*

Glenda Karen Kent - March 21, 2024 at 07:14 AM



“ *Jennifer,
we met only once at hospice when I came by with my therapy dog, Cookie, but I've thought of you and Bruce ever since. You spoke so lovingly and proudly of Bruce and I can only imagine the love you shared. It was very touching to be amidst it, if only for a brief time.
My condolences,
Maureen*

Maureen Mc Vicar - March 21, 2024 at 05:26 AM

VF

When I worked in the Halifax area I crossed paths with Bruce many times related to emergency management situations. Bruce was always a professional but could still share a laugh or a chat about mutual family connections. As I followed his career advancements over the years I was not surprised that his management abilities were being recognized. I was in Calgary at the time of the major flooding and knowing that Bruce was at the helm I was confident that the situation would be well handled, and it was. My sincere condolences to the Burrell family as well as his fire fighter family. Bruce will be missed by all who knew him.

Vern Fraser - March 23, 2024 at 07:28 AM