

OBITUARIES

Laurel Marie Kuehl



Laurel Marie Kuehl died at home on Monday, February 5, after a battle with cancer. She was born on July 15, 1964 in Tübingen, Germany and was raised in Salt Lake City, Utah.

After graduating from Whitman College in Walla Walla, WA, Laurel volunteered to serve in the Peace Corps as a Health Educator, starting down a path she would follow the rest of her life. She learned to speak Hausa, and for the next two years lived in a small village in Niger, Africa, where she coordinated a health education program and monitored the nutritional status of infants and pregnant women. She developed friendships with the villagers as well as lasting relationships with fellow volunteers. On returning to the States, Laurel's path led her to medical school at the University of Washington in Seattle, where she received her M.D. in Family Practice in 1996. Laurel was a deeply caring and compassionate physician, dedicated to social justice, community healthcare, women's health issues and family planning.

Laurel met John Martinak in Seattle, and the two were married on August 18, 2001. Laurel was now Lead Medical Provider at Kent Community Health Clinic and had learned Spanish in order to better care for her patients. Laurel accepted a position at Vashon Health Center shortly after the birth of her son, Peter, and the family moved to the island in 2003. A second son, Andrew, was born in 2004.

Laurel found her practice at the Health Center rewarding in many ways, from providing urgent care to developing valued physician/patient connections. She also cherished the relationships forged with colleagues at the Health Center and at Vashon Care Center where she served as Medical Director.

In recent years, Laurel was very fulfilled in her position as Medical Director of Washington State for Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest and Hawaiian Islands. Under her leadership the affiliate conducted numerous research studies to advance reproductive health and was awarded the 2014 Planned Parenthood Affiliate Clinical and Social Science Research Award. Laurel's strategic vision, innovative spirit and thoughtful consideration will serve the people of Washington State for decades to come.

Maury Island was home to Laurel. She loved her neighbors and the greater community, volunteering her time to a number of causes and organizations. When she fell ill, the favor was returned in kind. Friends and neighbors provided an abundance of kindness and support, enabling the family to get through this difficult time.

Above all, Laurel loved her family. She was most proud of her sons, Peter and Andrew. She had said that her greatest regret is leaving early and her greatest pride is having left behind two such stellar and wonderful sons.

Laurel's life was marked by kindness, altruism, and an irresistible optimism. She will be dearly missed by all fortunate enough to have known her.

Laurel is survived by her husband, John Martinak, two sons, Peter and Andrew Martinak, her parents, LeRoy and Barbara Kuehl, two brothers, Eric (Janet Bogus) and Brian (Michelle Sullivan) Kuehl and five nieces and nephews: Alex, Laurel, Patrick, Maggie, and Catie Kuehl.

A celebration of life service will be held at Bethel Church (14736 Bethel Lane SW, Vashon), March 3rd at 1:30 PM.

In lieu of flowers Laurel suggested donations to the Vashon Schools Foundation, Vashon-Maury Island Land Trust, Health Point Community Health Clinics, Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest and Hawaiian Islands or the Vashon-Maury Island Community Food Bank.

Delores J. (Edwards) Barrentine

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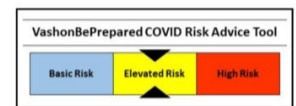
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