

Matt Update

February 1, 2013

Hi Everyone

Here we are again, another year without Matt....

February 2 will be eight years since Matt was brutally and senselessly taken from us. I hate that it has been so long since we've talked and laughed together, since he flashed his delightfully infectious smile and shared his quick wit. So long since he gave me a big hug and a kiss, since I heard those words "hi mom", "I love you, mom". While I continue to learn how to go on without him the pain can sometimes be as fresh and debilitating as if it were yesterday. As the anniversary of that tragic day grows closer, I fight the overpowering sadness and depression that tries so hard to overtake my mind, body and soul. It is a constant battle that I consciously, through the grace of God, choose to win everyday.

As we continue to struggle with the reality that Matt is gone from this world forever I can't help but reflect back on his amazing yet short-lived life. Especially this time of year, while each day in January are the last days spent with our sweet, precious and remarkable son. I am still pleasantly astounded at all the lives Matt touched in his relatively short life and how he continues to touch even more so, in death. I know without a doubt if he had not been the amazing person he was he would not be making the difference he continues to make today.

I received a call a couple of months ago by a delightful woman named Hilary, who was doing research on Matt's story as a possible segment of a new show that was going air on the Bio Channel. It did not come to pass but it showed me that Matt is being remembered even eight years later and he continues to make a difference. Just yesterday I received a call from an Associate Producer of the Ricki Lake Show asking about Matt's Story. I am still waiting to hear back if they are going to do his story, if so we will film the segment next week.

People often ask me if it is hard to talk to tell Matt's story, my answer is yes. It is hard because it is painful and inside I must relive that horrible day over and over whenever I speak of it. However, it is necessary because it is so very important that Matt's story be told so that others might be saved the horrible fate that he and others fell and continue to fall prey to. And it keeps Matt's memory alive, which is worth all the pain I must endure. Not only do I tell the tragic way Matt's life ended but whenever possible I also tell the glorious way he lived it and the incredible person he was. These are my most cherished memories and all I have left to give my son. But I ask you, what mother doesn't want to be able to do that?

I had planned to go to Chico this year because it is very important to me that Matt is remembered, there most of all, so he will continue to make a difference and potentially save lives. But I started a new business in health and weight loss where I am able to help a great deal of people and to touch even more people with Matt's story. February 2 we are having a Regional Convention in Southern California originally I was not going to go because that day is always so very difficult for me. But I have people depending on me to help them; I have my beloved customers whom I adore and want to help realize their greatest success in every way I can. And my amazing team whom I love, and for whom I want to be the best mentor and leader I can. In order for me to be that person, I must put them all first and get the

knowledge and training I will receive this weekend to better serve them. My son Travis, Matt's little brother is coming with me, as well as a friend of mine, Andrew one of Matt's best friends is down there, and Matt will be with us as well as he always is.

My hope is that the school will continue to remind the students of what happened to Matt and Adrian Heideman while educating them on the dangers of hazing.

I am sad to say that hazing is running rampant.... I ask of all of you, PLEASE talk about it with your children, your grandchildren, your nieces & nephews, the kids in your neighborhood. Let's stop hazing from being the best kept secret.

And when you see someone being hazed, bullied, or being treated unfairly for whatever reason, stand up for him or her! Make a difference.

So I ask you all to remember Matt this Saturday, light candle in his memory and say a little pray. I will have his life size picture in the front window at home and light a candle before we leave Friday morning to burn through the weekend. If you would like to leave a candle on the porch under his picture please feel free....

God bless you all and as always....

"Hug your children and tell them you love them EVERY DAY!" I'm glad I did, and do....

Love you,
Debbie, MM

www.wemissyou.matt.com