

Heidi Stevenson

Reg #45161

Years of Service: 1996 - 2020

Postings: Depot, "N" Division (Musical Ride) & "H" Division

It is with immeasurable sadness that we announce the sudden and tragic loss of our cherished mom, wife and daughter, Heidi Stevenson (nee Burkholder). Heidi died in the line of duty as a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) on April 19, 2020.

Born on July 11, 1971, Heidi grew up in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. Known to be a smart, independent girl who always stood up for herself, Heidi was an active member of the local 4-H club and an avid reader and baker in her youth. Her parents, Avon Brophy and David Burkholder, taught her from a very young age to embrace her creativity, be open-minded and to always be herself. She carried these traits with her through life and because of them was always up for a challenge or to try something new.

Heidi graduated from Acadia University with a Bachelor of Science in 1993. Her time at Acadia was the start of many lifelong friendships and the beginning of a new interest in rugby (a sport she would later coach as part of her dedication to inspiring young girls and giving back to her community). It was also during her time at Acadia that she started a part time job with Campus Safety and Security and her passion for policing was born.

Heidi loved her chosen career. There was no doubt in her mind when she graduated from Acadia that her next step was going to be the RCMP. Reaching that goal wasn't always easy but her incredibly strong work ethic, driven personality and resilient nature got her to exactly where she wanted

to be. She held many different roles throughout her 23 years as an active member – most notably her time spent representing the RCMP across the continent as part of the Musical Ride (a job she took without even knowing how to ride a horse). She loved her time working at headquarters as a Drug Recognition expert and was especially proud of her expertise in that area and the respect the judges had for her professionalism in court. Whether it was general duty, community policing, communications or training, Heidi dedicated herself to her role, turned her colleagues into friends and was a role model for many in the communities she served.

It was “the most beautiful smile I’d ever seen” that first attracted Dean to Heidi when she worked as a High School Liaison Officer at Cole Harbour District High in 1997. Their connection was strong from the start and eventually led them to pause their careers and take a one-year leave of absence to focus on each other and teach English in Japan. Their life together has truly been filled with love, laughter and adventure. Heidi and Dean cherished their family ski trips, beach walks in Stanhope, PEI and one-hour kid-free interludes for a glass of red wine. The feel of her hand holding his, the way she called him “Hon” and the gentle pecks on the cheek she’d give as she snuck off to work in the morning will be held in Dean’s heart forever.

Even with her extensive list of accomplishments in both career and life, Heidi found her one true calling when she became a Mom. She cherished Connor and Ava and they cherished her. From birthday parties to special occasions to holidays, Heidi had a way of making everything special and fun (even if it meant cooking and decorating in the middle of the night). When she spoke of Connor and Ava her eyes lit up. When she stood next to them, she had her arms around them. When she cheered them on at hockey games, she cheered the loudest. And when she tucked them into bed at night, she always took the time to cuddle and review their day. One thing Connor and Ava always knew was just how much their mom loved them. Heidi’s grit and determination live on in Connor and her beautiful smile in Ava.

Heidi was the neighbor who waved at everyone. She was the busy parent who volunteered at the school. She was the friend who delivered cinnamon buns and homemade bread. She was the second mom to many kids who came over to play. She was the gentle smile when you needed it most. Heidi made an impact on this world and words can't begin to express how much she will be missed.

In addition to Dean, Connor, Ava and her parents, Heidi leaves behind her father's partner Merle Bryant, parents-in-law Doug and Margaret Stevenson, aunts Mary (Ken) Willsie, Waterloo ON, Ruth (Tom) Witte, Liberty Center, Ohio, and cousins Jeffrey, Susan, Lara and Marissa and a large extended family. She was predeceased by her stepfather Joe Brophy, her grandparents Clayton and Helen Burkholder and Owen and Margaret Bechtel.

A private family service will be held in the days to come. A proper celebration of Heidi's life will be planned at a later date. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Foundation.

If you would like to leave a special memory of Heidi or a condolence message to her family please do so by visiting www.atlanticfuneralhomes.com (Dartmouth Chapel)

"You are more powerful than you know; you are beautiful just as you are."
-Melissa Etheridge

Our thoughts and prayers go out to all those victims of this senseless tragedy.