

Stokoe Family Update



***First row standing: Brian, Matt and Dean. Second row: Neil, Tom, Diane and Steve.
Third row: Bear, David, Andrew and Alex.***

It's been eight years since Steve's death. I was never able to find a publisher for his book, nor could I bring myself to edit it once again. I apologized to David and Neil for this as I expected to rework the manuscript before posting it to the web page. Both said, "Mom, don't change a thing! It's who we are."

Today Brian is Vice President for Commercial Loans at Wells Fargo. His two children, Alex and Andrew are in junior high school. Both are good students. Matt is a partner in two successful businesses and Dean is working on an model for an invention.

Tom retired from Skyline High School and now teaches at a junior high in another district. I am the library media teacher at Olympus. Bear, the puppy we purchased for Steve after his acid overdose, will be ten years old in September. As he is our connection with Steve, we consider him more than just a pet. Bear is a comfort to us.

We had Steve's photo scanned into the family picture (on my right) above.

His death probably impacted his two younger brothers the most. Three years after Steve died, Dave decided to go on a mission. He served in Leeds, England. Today he volunteers for NAMI Utah, "Utah's Voice on Mental Illness." Dave talks to high school students about teen suicide. He also attends B.Y.U. and works in medical sales.

Neil, only eleven when Steve died, did not resolve his feelings about Steve's death until he after he graduated from high school. Neil finally found closure by getting a tattoo, SAS, Steve's initials. Neil explained that this brought closure and a feeling of peace. Neil now serves in the Toronto West, Canadian Mission.

And what about Steve and Jared? Jared's mother and I had lunch together in January, 2002 and wondered what the boys were doing. Strangely, that very night, my friend Zeliha Ciftci, a medium who lives in New York City, called. Zee and I had met a few years before at a workshop in Montana. I had not told her that I had a son who had committed suicide. She conducts classes, workshops and does readings for many artists, writers and publishers in New York. We talked about 9-11 and how her friends were coping during the first Christmas after the tragedy. I told her I had just returned from a luncheon and shared a little information about Steve and Jared. Zee offered to contact them and began by accurately describing both young men.

As Steve "came in," Zee reported seeing a young man twenty-seven years of age. She described how he was dressed. "His hair is a very unusual color. It's reddish or strawberry blond," she said. "He is tall and very handsome, like a movie star. Now he's showing me a tattoo." (*Steve did not have a tattoo. Neil knew Steve would be stoked about his.*)

Then Zee described some of Steve's experiences and shared other impressions she received from him. She said Steve was back and forth a lot and accurately described the funeral of an elderly relative which he had attended. Steve clowned around a lot and had a hard time breaking the connection. Finally, he appeared in a tuxedo with his shirt out. (We were always after him to keep his shirt tucked in.) He presented me with a bouquet of beautiful and very unusual flowers—bird of paradise, orchids, lilies, and poppies.

"They represent his gifts to you," Zee explained, "the things you have learned as a result of his death." I found this touching and symbolic as I have participated in many workshops, read countless books and learned much since he died. (See *Subtle Energy*) Finally Steve blew me a kiss and left! "He is in a good place." Zee said, "Otherwise I would not have been able to contact him."

Bill Roiden reports in an article entitled "Mediumship," that departed loved ones use Mediums to reassure loved ones that they are well and continue live on in another dimension. John Evans verifies this on his popular television program "Crossing Over." John explains that when the deceased returns it is in the spirit of healing and helping loved ones find closure. I found Zee's information most helpful. It reinforced my belief that nothing that is truly ours is ever lost. Loving relationships continue forever and that the veil between this life and the next is often very thin.

Diane Stokoe, February 12, 2003