

Kellie Ann Carroll

August 19, 1961- February 17, 2019

Kellie Ann Carroll slipped gently from the loving embrace of her family on February 17, 2019. Throughout her life Kellie fought challenges with the fierce determination of a warrior but pancreatic cancer was a swift and cruel opponent. The first child born to Terry and Vera Olson on August 19, 1961 in Helena, Montana, Kellie Ann was the jewel of both her parent's eyes, and from the very beginning she was vibrant and full of life. Instinctively nurturing and maternal, she delighted in showing the ropes to her younger brother Tod. Nine years later when presented with her brother Troy, she joyfully tended him as if he were her own baby.

The Olson family moved to Sheridan, Wyoming in 1978, wrenching Kellie from her senior year of high school, her friends, and the life she had in the Helena valley. Her initial devastation could not have foretold the good life that was opening up before her.

Kellie met the love of her life in 1980 and took his name in 1983. Sean was her best friend, confidant, and true love in every sense of the word, and for 39 incredible years they shared a deep and enduring affection that few of us will be fortunate enough to experience. They kicked off their married life by leasing the Legerski place, Sean running cattle and Kellie pulling shifts at the Dairy Queen, all the while dreaming of a place they could call their own and working tenaciously towards that end. In June 1986, they welcomed their daughter Amanda and in April of 1989, their son Tucker arrived to seemingly complete the family unit. They bought and operated Kelly's Kitchen in Rancheater and in 1993 achieved their dream by buying their own ranch complete with an abandoned Victorian house. During the planning for the restoration of that house, Kellie was confronted with colon cancer but it could not compete with her determination to slide down the banister of her finished home and she beat it. And to their absolute surprise and delight, Kiley Kate was born in August of 1998, an unexpected and joyous addition to Sean and Kellie's family.

As the years unwound, Kellie cooked and catered, maintained a constant presence at her children's sports and activities and helped operate the ranch. In the early 00s she earnestly tackled the remodel of her old Victorian. She had never had a home of her own and through a labor of blood, sweat, and tears she transformed her beloved White House into something special, a feathered nest that has become a home base for family and friends. She lovingly tended her park-like yard and appointed it with fruit trees and glorious displays of zinnias. And during rare idle moments, she would pause at her kitchen table and take in the sight of her gorgeous barn and the million dollar view, never losing the amazed wonderment of what met her eye.

Family and ranch were her prime focuses, but Kellie's life passion was food. Her work with Volunteers of America was more than a job and she invested her life blood into that organization. Her unique and accomplished skill allowed her to accommodate the spectrum from the needs of the homeless to black tie events. Kellie was known far and wide for her fine food and her reputation as a cook is big part of her legacy.

Kellie Carroll embodied the Code of the West. She was honest, forthright, and unflinching and no one ever left her home with an empty belly. She rode for the brand – her family, her community, and her faith. She was quick to shoulder loads and take up causes that others had abandoned. She knew how to fill gaps, mend fences, and provided structure and foundation that enriched our lives. Kellie always found space in her heart for those less fortunate, those who were down on their luck, and she invested her soul into helping anybody who needed a hand up. She was deeply committed to her family and friends and made Herculean efforts to ensure their care and well-being. She was a fully defined person with strong beliefs and she rarely hesitated to express them.

She was witty and thoughtful and kind beyond measure, extending her warm reach to anybody who crossed her path. Kellie had a wing span that encompassed so many of us and we are grateful that we had the opportunity to enjoy the comfort of her enduring love and attention. She was a remarkable woman who left an indelible mark on this world and in our hearts and we will miss her so.

A Celebration of Life



Kellie Ann Carroll

God Made A Rancher's Wife

by Sherrie Shea

And on the ninth day, God looked down on his planned paradise and said, "Oh dear, the rancher is going to need some help." So God made a rancher's wife.

God said, "I need somebody willing to get up before dawn, feed the family, work all day in town, come home to work alongside her rancher, make supper, and then go to town and stay past midnight at a meeting of the school board". So God made a rancher's wife.

"I need somebody with arms strong enough to keep up with the rancher yet gentle enough to cuddle a newborn baby. Somebody to run for parts, mend a fence, pull a calf, and help in the fields. A women who during calving and haying will finish her 40 hour work week and join her family side by side with another six meals and five loads of laundry while looking the rancher in the eyes and tell him 'I love you and the life we've built' and mean it". So God made a rancher's wife.

God had to have someone willing to work in town for the insurance, to warm cold calves in her kitchen, and spend her weekends shuffling cattle to fresh pastures. And keeping working alone when her husband goes off to help a neighbor at the first sign of smoke. So God made a rancher's wife.

God said 'I need someone strong enough to tamp posts and heave bales. To cosign a loan for a half a million dollars with steady hands, yet gentle enough to comfort the rancher when cattle prices are low and corn is high, who will stop her work for an hour to talk to a neighbor who just found out their mother is sick. It had to be someone who would cook and clean and not cut corners.

God had to have somebody willing to cancel appointments and change plans and be ready in a minutes notice and yet will never stop and complain about this way of life. Somebody to wash, dry, iron, seed, weed, feed, brand, wean, cook, clean, stock the cupboards and finish a hard week's work with a five-mile drive to church.

"Somebody who'd sew a family together with the soft strong stitches of sharing, who would laugh and then sigh, and then reply, with smiling eyes, when her daughter says she wants to spend her life 'doing what mom does.'" So God made a rancher's wife.

Greeting – Rachel Hostetler

Opening Prayer – Nick Angeloff

Scripture – Sonya Harnish
John 14:1-3

Reflection – Rachel Hostetler

Time of Remembrance
Jeff Holsinger
Tiffany Oswald
Mandy Carroll-Beil

Kellie Ann through the Lens

Scripture – Sonya Harnish
Psalm 46:1-2

John 16:22

Closing Prayer – Nick Angeloff

Farewell – Rachel Hostetler

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