



ST. GERMAIN, Richard John
February 12, 1993 - Calgary, AB
July 15, 2014 - Norman Wells, NT

Our son, Richard, arrived in Norman Wells on June 20, 2014 full of anticipation and excitement as he embarked on his first steps in the adventurous life of a bush pilot at North-Wright Airways. Only 25 days later on a breezy warm arctic summer evening, our outdoor adventure loving boy, accompanied by a friend, went for a brief paddle on the Mackenzie River. Tragically, that most Canadian, most northern, most innocent activity went horribly wrong and the mighty, majestic and unforgiving Mackenzie took him. We are so deeply grateful for the fact that only due to the extraordinary efforts and heroic actions of Stuart Pope and others, Richard's friend was pulled from the water and survived.

Richard was a free-spirited, fun-loving, huge-hearted young man who pestered yet cared fiercely for his younger sister Andréa and little brother Eric. Richard embraced challenge and adventure not to escape life, but to prevent life escaping him.

Richard was ridiculously talented at music. He was a piano teacher, amateur recording artist/producer who somehow, without us recognizing, slowly turned our basement into a veritable recording studio complete with high volume music from a dizzying assortment of musical instruments, that seemed to reach its crescendo minutes after we fell asleep most nights. These musical 'assaults' would be followed by us either texting from our bed or yelling down the stairs - "Richard, turn it down!" Followed by "Sorry Dad! Sorry Mom! Love you!"

He was a talented, daring skier (he was a ski coach) with a passion for inverted aerials off jumps; once waking up in a Montana hospital with a concussion after that love of being inverted continued to landing. Richard was a BMX bike rider of immense skill. Once again, aerials, spins and other stunts he was kind enough to film and share with us (as we shook our heads in disbelief at his skill), prompted us to always be prepared for a trip to the Children's Hospital.

A gifted aviator, he held his Commercial Pilot license and Float Rating. His Flying Instructor described him as "...skilled and very cautious...but spends a little too much time doing spins and other aerobatics in the practice area." (We were not surprised).

Our boy was a world traveller; from rock climbing in Namibia, surfing in Costa Rica and Mexico, jumping in jungle rivers sprinkled with piranhas, caimans and electric eels deep in the remote frontier rain forests of Guyana, and travels throughout Europe.

Richard's travels in our beautiful country and the arctic were some of his fondest. He rock climbed and scrambled in the Rockies any chance he could, sea kayaked through Gwaii Haanas National Park, had multi-day family canoe trips down Alberta's Red Deer, North Saskatchewan and Milk Rivers and sometimes even hitchhiking back together to where we put in. He rode his bicycle the entire length of the Dempster Highway from Dawson City, YK, to Inuvik, NT, at just 13 years old, char fished in Cambridge Bay, NU, with skills he learned from his Grandpa John, camped and fished on a remote lake north of Yellowknife. Richard never complained and was ALWAYS up to an adventure. We take some solace knowing that a part of our family will now forever be in the north, a place Richard and our family love so much.

The death of our son or of any child is indescribably horrific, but we are deeply grateful to have had 21 years with our boy. What we wouldn't do to be awoken again by his late night music and to hear his - "Sorry Mom! Love you!"

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the - Richard St. Germain River Rescue Fund - Scotiabank, Mount Royal Branch, 1401-17th Ave SW, Calgary, AB, T2T 0C6 established in Richard's name to supply the community of Norman Wells with wilderness and river rescue equipment and training.

Friends, family, skiers, BMX bikers, pilots, explorers, paddlers, mountain lovers, musicians and Bon Vivants, please join us on **Tuesday, July 29, 1900h at Westside King's 3939-69th St SW, Calgary**, to laugh, cry and in an 'Open Mic' setting, regale each other with "Richard" stories. Please wear Richard's favourite: dark-coloured clothes.