

To Eric's dear friends in the Bend Chapter of OHA:

As I write this, we have just celebrated Eric's first birthday without him. Our three children and I spent the weekend in Sisters: mountain biking, swimming, partying at a wedding, and scattering ashes. Eric was unfairly taken from us (and the rest of our family and friends, and all of you). His absence still seems surreal, but it is slowly becoming the new normal for our family.

We are so thankful for all of the support we have received - in the form of family dinners, childcare, decision-making, kind words, and donations and celebration of Eric. The initial outreach of support was so much that it was overwhelming – and frankly, my brain is still struggling to work and remember things correctly, so it's largely a daze. When Mike wrote that another Fundraiser was planned by you all for our family, I was amazed to know you were still thinking of us. When I heard the total raised afterward, I was stunned. Thank you, so very much.

Eric was innocently murdered by an angry man who was ready to suicide, and he chose to take Eric with him. Our family witnessed his murder. My sister, Lauren Sprunk, and her three children: Tataum, Taylor, and Elias, were on vacation with us, and not many people realize they also endured that horrific day. I had been holding our youngest, Ethan, sleeping in my arms when Eric was shot; I gave him to Tataum, and I ran to pull Eric from his truck and start CPR. They covered Ethan's eyes, so he did not see much of what the rest of us had to. They took care of Ethan and their brother, Elias, keeping them hunkered down and safe until we knew the threat had passed. Taylor took my other two children and hid in the woods to keep them safe. Afterward, she told me so many times "I'm here for you, Aunt Holly. I love you."

My sister, Lauren, who is a nurse, called 9-1-1, and quickly followed me to help with CPR. After others showed up to take over for me, and other bystanders had led me away to my children, Lauren stayed and helped give chest compressions and start an IV line and intubate Eric. Her knees were cut and bloodied and her ankles rubbed raw from kneeling on hot asphalt for an hour trying to save him.

My sister and her children are the unsung heroes from that day. Along with all of the kind, random campers and law enforcement officers and volunteer medical crew, they got us through those moments and the first few days. They also continue to live with this witnessed trauma and grief, and have not had nearly the support that my children and I have, living apart from us, with this experience being largely unknown to their community.

I have decided to use much of the proceeds from your recent fundraiser to start 529 college accounts for all three of our nieces and nephews who were there, and to provide continued financial support for their family's trauma therapy, family therapy, and other supportive care.

The months since Eric has been gone have been filled with more trying times for us - navigating trauma therapy for our oldest two kids, a kidney cancer scare for me (thankfully, not cancer, but I had half of my kidney removed in November), thyroid cancer and surgery for Lauren, half a

month in hospitals with an airlift to Portland and chest tube for my daughter, Violet. We are enduring, and just now, finally beginning to transition from surviving to thriving. Thank you for continuing to remember us, to support me and Eric's children, and for this gift to Lauren, Tataum, Taylor and Elias. Our hearts are filled by your love.

Holly