

From Peter's Sister

While serving as a Naval aviator aboard the Bonne Homme Richard, my father wrote to his fiancée, my mother, that he had decided that they should aim for having a dozen or so “house monkeys”. He returned physically unscathed, they were married, and the following May 8, 1954, the first of these desired “house monkeys”, my brother Peter, was born in Corpus Christie, Texas. Peter’s early life is well-documented in photos and 8mm film.

In the summer of 1955, my father received orders to go to jet school on his way to be stationed at Moffet Field in Mtn. View, CA. My mother, 7 months pregnant with me, the second and final “house monkey” traveled by train with Peter and our English bulldog, Mike, to CA.

During those early Navy years, Peter was able to tour aircraft carriers, and watch the Navy jets flying above our house, maybe even catching a glimpse of Daddy overhead. He and my father were both gifted in their love for math and engineering and I remember long dinner time discussions about resistors and capacitors.

I loved flitting about the neighborhood, but Peter, even as a toddler, preferred to stay close to home and engage in solitary play. However, he and I were passionate about our special project in the corner of the yard, digging a hole to China. At six years old, I woke up one morning to discover snow in the yard. I rushed to get confirmation from my brother, who wisely said, “Yes Debby, that is snow!” His favorite color had been red, but it switched to blue when he found out that his eyes were blue.

When my mother realized that Peter’s academic needs were under-served at our local grammar school, she enrolled us at St. Matthew’s Episcopal Day School, a half hour train ride from Mtn. View. Peter’s entrance exam result at age 10 were the highest on record for the schools and his entrance was assured. I rode in on his coattails, and we, together with the other St. Matthew’s commuter students, engaged in hi-jinx aboard the twice daily train rides. He and I both began our French studies, and in college, he was able to spend a semester studying in Tours, France. Peter flourished in the serious academic and Christian environment of St. Matthew’s.

He was active in Scouts, and discovered Ham radio, building a radio tower, and filling his room with mysterious equipment.

Peter focused on trying to be the perfect son, excelled at school, followed my father’s academic path to Stanford, graduated Phi Beta Kappa in electrical engineering, and also received his Master’s in EE two years later, a few months before being accepted to Harvard Business School. Henceforth, he returned to our paternal roots in New England.

After receiving his MBA, he went to work in Boston, and except for a brief period of time in Phoenix remained on the east coast.

He inherited my parents love of sailing and the sea, and has delighted in sailing his Tartan sailboat, “The Wind of Freedom” for many years. He was elected the president of the Tartan Club recently, but had to resign.

His passion was for justice. This was our heritage, dating from our ancestors’ fight for freedom and their part in the founding of our country. He believed that the high purpose of the law was to protect individuals from tyranny, petty or otherwise, and this was manifested in his tenacious defense when

those who wielded a supposed authority attempted to disregard the legal rights of those less powerful. He pursued many small and large law suits, and gave a fair imitation of being an accomplished attorney. You can't fight City Hall, but in the words of one judge, "Mr. Crawford fights City Hall, and wins!".

After Peter bought his first house in Rye, NH nine years ago, he became an articulate champion of the Rye Civic League. His many friends in Rye mourn his unexpected loss.

The past few months Peter and I have been able to share our deep and abiding faith in Jesus Christ. His intimate knowledge of scripture brought him comfort, and he was profoundly grateful for the prayers and love of friends, strangers, and especially family.

We in the family are still in a bit of shock. Christmas was his favorite day, and he was with us every Christmas, and organized the Christmas day distribution of gifts. He loved playing Monopoly, and most recently, Settlers of Catan. He taught my granddaughter, Katya to play checkers and gave her no quarter. She is motivated to become the best checkers player ever, and is sad that she will never have the chance to beat him. He had the ability to enjoy life in a child-like way.