

A TRIBUTE TO *Matt Key*

This past summer the editorial team of Today's Pentecostal Evangel was busy conceptualizing this special edition on enduring loss. We chose to address this theme at this time of year because we know many of our readers have endured the loss of loved ones and are facing the holidays without them. Our goal in producing such an edition was to give readers a sense of hope and comfort during their difficult time.

Moving into the editing phase of this issue, we could not have expected that Matt Key, 49, art director for the magazine, would die in a tragic boating accident. As we contemplated how best to honor Matt's life, it was decided that staff members would be given opportunity to write a public tribute to him. The following excerpts from our tributes are representative of how we feel about Matt. They also offer insight into how we are enduring the loss of an esteemed colleague and good friend. To read each tribute in its entirety, visit tpe.ag.org.



When my wife, Peggy, lost her dad two years ago, Matt sent her this e-mail:

I wanted to let you know I'm thinking about you. Losing a father is tough, no matter his age. While you can find comfort in his release from the pain of this life, the thought of a daughter without a father is hard. I lost my dad a couple of months after I turned 30 ... I remember the first time it really hit me. I didn't have a dad anymore. I wasn't sure how to function without him. But I also remember how kind God was to comfort me and fill my mind with memories and thoughts of him. Be sure that He will do the same for you. I came to realize that dad will always be just that ... no matter where he is. And that means I will always be his son as you will always be a cherished daughter. It's been over 18 years now and I still find great joy in that. I trust you will do the same.

All my best, Matt

Peggy passed Matt's message on to his four daughters and son, Lucas, who is the production coordinator for TPE.

We are thankful that God allowed us to minister alongside one of His choice servants.
— Ken Horn, editor

Matt left this world doing all the most important things. He was a man who sincerely loved Jesus, made the most of every moment and gave so much to others. On the day of his tragic accident, he was spending time with the family he so cherished. He truly left a legacy of a life well lived.

— Christina Quick, staff writer

Matt, you will be so missed. When you would say, "Robin and I will be praying with you about that," I knew you really would be praying for me. Thank you for giving of your life to others.

— Danette McCabe, permissions-information

Matt played a special role in my life. The vacuum his loss so suddenly created has shaken my world. At this time, comfort only comes from knowing without a doubt he's at home in the Lord's dwelling place.

— Jennifer McClure, assistant editor

When I felt stressed, I went to Matt's office and shot a few hoops, putted some golf balls or tossed his baseball-sized ball of aluminum foil. Talking with Matt always helped. He had a lot of wisdom, but only offered advice when asked.

— Jodi Harmon, advertising coordinator

Matt was a great art director. He created an illustration for a September 2002 cover story on alcohol in America by showing the Statue of Liberty holding a beer stein. Some readers were offended, but what a concept to get across the cost of unbridled liberties.

— John W. Kennedy, news editor

Matt had a deep love for God and his family. His office was full of photographs that enveloped him and surrounded him constantly with what was truly important in life — family. He lit up whenever he talked about his wife, five children and three grandchildren.

I will miss Matt. He leaves a hole in our hearts and at the TPE.

— Kim Hellmer, assistant to the editor

Sharing an office with Matt for five years opened my eyes to his unbelievable life of giving to others. One minute he was giving a co-worker spiritual advice, the next he was praising a family member for some achievement. He poured his life into everyone around him with a tireless effort.

— Marc McBride, art director

Matt Key didn't wear or flaunt his Christian convictions; he lived them. In contrast to his physical strength and abilities, Matt maintained a gentle demeanor. He was a man at peace with his environment and, most of all, his Lord.

— Ron Kopczick, promotions coordinator

Matt would solicit donations of aluminum foil and mold and press them around a growing, solid sphere. Anyone looking for some character weakness, something to call into question Matt's unwavering love and service to Christ, would have had about as much chance as finding a cavity in that carefully formed hunk of metal.

— Scott Harrup, senior associate editor

Whenever my son Nikolas visited, he begged to go into Matt's office. I always agreed, figuring Nikolas was more destructive than the rubber bands, paper grenades and Nerf darts Matt pelted me with over the years. Matt never minded the intrusion, and Nikolas always left with a huge smile.

Matt had that effect on a lot of people — including me.

— Kirk Noonan, managing editor

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