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Hunter Berry – loved and remembered

Bob Weir, The News Connection
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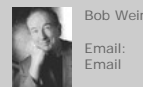
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There is nothing in the world to compare to the grief experienced by a family at the loss of a child. When 9 year-old Hunter Berry of Flower Mound died in a tragic accident while on vacation in Mexico, the world got a little colder and a little lonelier. Those who knew the young man said he was always bringing joy into every encounter. They talked about his smile, his enthusiasm and his capacity for humor. No one could have even imagined that this marvelous child would be taken from us so early in life. According to reports, Hunter was walking back from the boat dock at a resort in Playa del Carmen when he slipped by the hotel pool, hit his head and fell in a hot tub. No parents would expect, or allow themselves to even think about outliving their children; such thinking is the subject of our worst nightmares. Yet, when such a nightmare becomes a reality, we can only keep the love alive by remembering the warmth and affection the child was capable of providing to all he came in contact with. By all accounts, Hunter Berry provided a multitude of poignant experiences that will never be forgotten. The impression he made during his short life will be indelibly impressed into the memories of all who were fortunate enough to know him. Our hearts go out to Hunter's parents, Don and Elma Berry and his family, during this very mournful time. A wake was held for Hunter on Thursday July 19 at Mulkey-Mason Funeral Home and he was interred at Flower Mound Cemetery on Friday. On Tuesday, July 24 at 8:30 pm, a candlelight vigil for Hunter was held at Bluebonnet Elementary School, 2000 Spinks Road in Flower Mound.



Mourners at Bluebonnet Elementary School in Flower Mound attend candlelight vigil for 9 year-old Hunter Berry who lost his life in a tragic accident last week.

Slide Show
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The following day, Don Berry came to The News Connection office to relate the incidents that occurred that tragic day in Mexico. "My daughter was taking scuba-diving lessons and we were at the boat dock," Mr. Berry said. "I asked Hunter if he wanted to go with us and he said he'd rather go to the pool for a swim. We were only a short distance off the beach when I got a call on the boat radio that Hunter was in an accident. I rushed back to find a doctor and a registered nurse administering CPR to my son at poolside. The physician was from Pennsylvania and was staying at the hotel, as was the nurse. They had been relieving each other, trying to revive Hunter for about several minutes when I got there and the doctor told me that sometimes it can take a lot longer before the person begins to breathe on his own again. The doctor's words gave me some hope for my son's life.

"Suddenly, the Mexican police arrived and they told the doctor to stop what he was doing. We were all stunned by this action and the doctor quickly showed the officer his medical credentials. It had no effect on the officers; they ordered the doctor to stop at once. The nurse, who we found out later was an emergency ICU nurse, heard what they said to the doctor and said: 'I'm a registered emergency room nurse and I'm trying to save this little boy's life. Then, the doctor pulled out his identification and said: "I'm a doctor, a cardiologist in the United States." Mr. Berry said it didn't seem to mean anything to them. "Someone interpreted what was said next and it was something like: "I don't care who you are. This is Mexico and you need to step away now. That's when I grabbed my son and tried to continue what the medical people were doing. One of the officers pushed his badge in my face and said something about arresting me. I slapped his badge and I remember him putting his hand on his gun. People were pulling me away and my wife was screaming. Speaking in Spanish, they told one of their medical personnel to look at Hunter. The person turned him over, touched him on the chest and said, "He's dead!""

Editor's note: Mr. Berry broke down several times during this interview. As I consoled him while struggling with my own emotions, I wondered how anyone could survive such a tragedy. Jody Smith, the Mayor of Flower Mound lost her daughter in a tragic accident many years ago. She would have been at this interview had it not been for her appearance at the hospital where the seriously injured FM police officer was taken. Mr. Berry wants people to know that when they are out of the country they should not expect the same type of medical treatment they're used to here. He wants people to know that he loves Mexico and has traveled there many times. Yet, if he had known about their inadequate medical treatment and insensitive behavior at such tragedies, he would never have left his son alone for a minute. Moreover, he feels that the circumstances of this tragedy should be disseminated to as many people as possible in order to make them aware of what they may face in another country. I know I'll be including Hunter Berry and his family in my prayers for a long time.

A scholarship fund and memorial website has been set up for Hunter. Please go to: <http://hunter-berry.memory-of.com>



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Added: August 01, 2007. 03:03 AM CST

Hunter Berry

My heart hurts so bad for this family that words can't even express. It was a year ago May 6th that I did CPR for 20 min. in Cozumel on a 6yr. old and saved his life. Zac was purple and had no pulse. Little Zac and I are friends for life. I email his Mom all the time to keep up with how he is doing. It was with Gods grace that he is ok.

The hospital and doctors in Cozumel are wonderful.They treated them with the best of care. The doctors also let us come in and see Zac.

The hotel people were of NO help but a gentlemen from Oklahoma came over and assisted me. It was a similar situation, Zac was following his mother and little brother and he slipped in the pool and she didn't realize it because of the noise.

The hotel only blames the parents. They take no responsibility that their employees have no training. Even the lady who runs the Kids Club came up and hugged me telling me thank you.

God is with you Hunter and my love and prayers are with you. If there were any words that could take the pain away I wish I could say them.


I don't personally know Hunter's family, yet I love them.

Becky

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