

Liz Houston has passed away

Contributed by James A. Gagliano
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To all my '87 friends & classmates ---

I am deeply saddened to inform you that Liz Houston, wife of our classmate Kevin Houston, passed from this earth just after 4:00PM, today, January 3, 2009. Liz had been receiving treatment at St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital since Tuesday night; the result of complications stemming from a bout of pneumonia she bravely and heroically battled until she succumbed to it's cumulative effect late this afternoon. Many of you are aware that she was stricken with the insidious scourge of the affliction, scleroderma; a debilitating connective tissue disease that attacks the organs of the body. She gamely fought its effects since being diagnosed in May of 2004, and managed to inspire all of us with a positive outlook, an infectious enthusiasm for the "battle" to beat the disease, and unconditional love for family and friends blessed enough to have been in her life.

Kevin, though dealing with the most difficult of circumstances, has rallied around their three children, and along with an ever burgeoning support network of family and friends, has begun the arduous process of pressing forward without his soulmate, his partner for some thirty years, and the beautiful girl who he began seeing while they were both sophomores at Pearl River High School in 1979. Their abundant love and respect for each other was truly inspirational to those of us lucky enough to catch some of its powerful reflection.

The family has been deeply appreciative of all the love, support, and assistance provided by not only the c/o of '87, but from many other members of the Long Gray Line, as well. Our collective efforts as an extended "family" are another of the myriad of qualities that make West Pointers a unique brand of lifetime comrades; there for each other during conflict, as well as in times of peace and prosperity.

I will forward official details of the Wake and Funeral Mass sometime tomorrow after they are finalized. The tentative plans are for the Wake to be held on Tuesday and Wednesday in Pearl River, New York, with the Funeral Mass conducted on Thursday AM at St. Margaret's R.C. Church, in Pearl River.

Please keep the Houston Family in your thoughts and prayers.

With heavy heart,

James A. Gagliano