



## Gretchen Gotthart Skeldon

August 24, 1962 - February 17, 2010

Genuine and kind, brilliant and beautiful, Gretchen Gotthart Skeldon touched the hearts of countless individuals with her generous service to others, devotion to family, loyal friendships and dedication to her work. She went to be with the Lord on February 17, 2010.

She was born August 24, 1962, the third of Bill & Martha Gotthart's four children and lived in the Blessed Sacrament neighborhood of West Toledo.

A graduate of The University of Toledo College of Business, she was a member of Delta Delta Delta Sorority and Blue Key Honor Society.

Gretchen met her husband Phil Skeldon at a bible study class. Their faith in God and service to others became a bond that led to their marriage November 25, 2000. They were blessed with a daughter, Lilian Dean in 2004. Gretchen and Phil were happiest when they were at home with their little family. They both had lovely singing voices and they were a favorite choice locally for wedding masses as well as Toledo Rep and community theatre performances.

A valued executive at Libbey Inc. for over 22 years, Gretchen served as Retail National Sales Manager, since 2007, with direct sales responsibility for key accounts, and leading a team of Retail Territory Managers in portions of the U.S. and Canada. She viewed her work purpose as achieving high performance, developing her sales associates, leading by example, and bringing Christ into the workplace. Gretchen strived to be an example of how faith and hope are keys to success, known for her passion for life, and performing her work with excellence.

Gretchen was named a "Sales Leader" six times in her career, and is a member of the distinguished Edward Drummond Libbey Sales Award Club. Nicknamed by her peers as the "Princess of Glassware" Gretchen was well respected in the tableware glassware industry, developed outstanding customer relationships, and was a respected "ambassador" for Libbey Glass. Under her leadership, Libbey was recognized by many retailers with Supplier of The Year Awards.

Gretchen was generous with her time and was an active volunteer with the Make A Wish Foundation where she cherished the smiles of her many "wish kids." She was a strong activist for Susan G. Komen for the Cure and the 2003 Northwest Ohio Race for the Cure was named in her honor. A devout Catholic, Gretchen was a member of the Blessed Sacrament Liturgy committee as well as a choir member for over 25 years.

Her hobbies included shopping, scrap booking, time with friends and family and relaxing at the family cottage. She was an excellent cook and baker. Her chocolate chip cookies were amazing.

Gretchen was preceded in death by her parents Bill & Martha Gotthart and in-laws Philip & Bernadine Skeldon and her cousin Dan Zebarah.

She is survived by her beloved husband Phil Skeldon, daughter Lilian Dean, sister Missy (John) Holden and their children Jack & Mackenzie, sister Casey (John) Schreiner, brother, Bill Gotthart, and special friend JoAnn McKelvey.

She was loved as a sister-in-law & aunt to countless nieces and nephews and many, many friends.

As a last act of selflessness and generosity Gretchen donated her remains to the UT Medical Center for research purposes. In lieu of flowers, please make donations in Gretchen's name to Susan G. Komen for the Cure, Make-A- Wish Foundation or the Blessed Sacrament School building fund.

Special thanks to St. John's Jesuit High School and Libbey, Inc. for their love and support.

Also thanks to all medical staff that cared for Gretchen at St. Luke's Hospital,

Kingston of Sylvania, UTMC and Hospice of NW Ohio.

Friends and family may visit on Saturday February 20, from 4-8 p.m. and Sunday February 21, from 2-8 p.m. at Coyle Funeral Home, 1770 S. Reynolds Rd. with a rosary service to begin at 7 p.m. A Memorial Mass will take place on Monday, February 22, 11 a.m. at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church.

# Tribute Wall



“ Three weeks ago, I asked you to pray for my friend Gretchen Skeldon, a 4-time cancer survivor who was hospitalized with some serious health problems. I received so many emails and comments about Gretchen that I wanted to let you know our prayers have been answered, although not the way we hoped they would be.

Gretchen died peacefully at Hospice Wednesday morning. The fact that this was Ash Wednesday was not lost on the people who knew Gretchen as a devout and faithful Catholic. Gretchen's belief in God, and her unwavering faith that He has a plan for all of us helped her get through some very trying times and I hope it helped take some of the fear away in these final days. But the selfless way Gretchen lived her life every day has always inspired me and so many others.

*She sang the national anthem at the 2009 Rockets for the Cure game*

*Because she was so young when she was diagnosed with breast cancer, and because she battled it with such grace, I asked her many times to talk to other young women who were newly diagnosed. She always made the time to offer her support and share her experiences with them. She also volunteered countless hours to raise money and awareness for breast cancer through NW Ohio Komen. She never shied away from an opportunity to help and truly believed a cure would be found in her lifetime.*

*Something I find so amazing about my friend Gretchen is her ability to reach and teach people even in her last vulnerable days.*

*This is the picture Gretchen wanted the doctors and nurses to see As her health started to deteriorate, Gretchen shared with me that she was concerned her nurses and doctors would not know “the real me. They only see a bald, sick-looking invalid lying in this bed. They don't know that two months ago I was a normal person!” I promised her they would know the real Gretchen and in her last few*

*days when groups of doctors and nurses would come into her room at UTMC and she couldn't talk for herself, I would point to a beautiful picture of Gretchen on the wall and say "Before you start your exam, let me properly introduce you to my friend, Gretchen. She is a vivacious, incredible person—beautiful inside and out. She is a mom, and a wife and a friend and she wanted to make sure you knew she was a normal person before she ended up in that hospital bed."*

*They would all take a good long look at Gretchen's beautiful face and and nearly every one of them thanked me for reminding them of that important lesson. I kept thinking to myself "Gretchen can't even talk and she's still teaching people and inspiring people to be better."*

*Her last selfless act: to donate her body to the scientists at UTMC. It was her hope that by studying her body, doctors will discover something that will help the next woman with breast cancer survive.*

*Breast cancer brought Gretchen to me in 2003, the year the NW Ohio/Komen Race for the Cure was run "In Celebration of Gretchen Skeldon." Today, breast cancer took my dear friend away. But Gretchen leaves behind a legacy of giving and love that most of us can only aspire to. Our world will forever be a better place because she was here. Goodbye, dear Gretchen###imported-begin##Reprint Chrys Peterson's Blog###imported-end##*

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Gretchen, family and friends, my heart goes out to all of you. Over the years I was blessed enough to get to know the Skeldon and Holden family. Words can not even describe how to feel right now about all of this but, Gretchen, I can honestly say you were one of my biggest heros and I looked up to you. You were such a strong woman. I know I didn't get to see you before you went to be with God but I know that you are looking down on all of us now smiling and telling us in our minds that everything will be alright. I just wanted to thank you, your family and everybody else for the friendship, kindness and help you have brought to my family personally. You all will never really know how much it means to us. To Phil and Lily, you know we will always be here for you no matter what time of day, or miles away. God bless all of you and thank you. I love you Gretchen. Take care.##imported-begin##Cody Champagne CodyJayYo@aim.com##imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ My thoughts and prayers go out to you at this difficult time. Peace be with you. Deepest sympathy.  
Barbara##imported-begin##Barbara Barkan##imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Missy and Casey,

*Just a short note to express my deepest sympathy on the loss of your dear sister, Gretchen.*

*I have thought of both of you so often, as a friend from Libbey has kept me apprised of Gretchen's declining health.*

*Please know that I am keeping you and your family in my prayers at this most difficult time.*

*With love,*

*Lauren###imported-begin##Lauren Boyles-Brewitt###imported-end##*

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ *Like so many people Gretchen came in contact with she had way of making me laugh, smile, sing and be joyful. This usually happened during times that I was not prone to bouts of joy. She was determined not to let me mope.*

*I worked with Gretchen at National Record Mart in the early 1980's.*

*With sincerest sympathy,*

*Gordon Richard###imported-begin##Gordon & Jeni Richard gerichard61@yahoo.com###imported-end##*

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Phil, Lily, and all of those that Gretchen touched with her Spirit, Courage, Grace and Faith - She will always be an inspiration to all that knew her and continue to carry her in our hearts. She lived each day as the gift that it is. Thank you, Gretchen, for showing us all how to live, love, and keep our faith under enormous challenges.##imported-begin##Tom Fratantuono fratatl@libbey.com##imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ I was privileged to have met Gretchen through the Blessed Sacrament Choir. She was truly a beautiful, sensitive, intelligent and gifted woman. My thoughts and prayers go out to her family.##imported-begin##Mary Anne Borer##imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Mr. Skeldon,  
It is with heavy hearts that we learn that you have lost your beautiful wife to breast cancer. We will hold you, your daughter and the rest of your family in our prayers. With heartfelt sympathy,  
Tim, Carol, Mark (08), Luke (09) and Ellen##imported-begin##The Stansfield Family##imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ To Phil and Gretchen's family, we are all so saddened by your loss. Gretchen was truly a unique spirit with so much character and charisma. She had such a presence, it was often like she was the only one in the room. She was so brave in her fight the last few years, and an inspiration to so many people. It was a privilege in many ways to be associated with her. Phil, we'll always have many memories of Gretchen's time with us, and so many of them bring a smile to my face. Good luck to you and your family with everything coming up. Brad Busby###imported-begin##Brad Busby brad.busby@libbey.com###imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Our deepest sympathies to Phil, Lilly, Casey, Missy, Billy and their families. We loved Gretchen so much, she was a beautiful person, inside and out. She will be deeply missed. We send our love to you all. Denise and girls.###imported-begin##Denise Hillebrandt-McArthur deedh0802@aol.com###imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ We were flying home from Florida 3 weeks ago and next to us was Gretchen's brother in law, coming home to be with his brother and Gretchen. He talked all the way home. Great praise for Gretchen and family and how sick she was. What we didn't know at that time, what Gretchen's maiden name was. Now seeing her obituary, we now know that we knew Gretchen's mother very well, thru Local 50. I remember visiting Martha at Local 50 - sitting there and listening to her talk about - Gretchen. We never met Gretchen, but her mother was a beautiful woman as Gretchen's obituary states she was too. Way too young to leave our world but gave so much to so many. Blessings...##imported-begin##Robyn & Guy Seymour##imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ It was a pleasure to have known such a wonderful person. When I first met Gretchen at the Blessed Sacrament choir 10 years ago she welcomed me with open arms into the Soprano section. She was a strong, beautiful, compassionate, and faithful person. I doubt I will ever meet a more amazing person and I am blessed to have done so. Although I won't be able to make it for the ceremony I send my prayers and condolences. Much love to Phil and Lilly.##imported-begin##Stephanie Martinez (McQueary)##imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Mr. Skeldon,

*My deepest condolences are with you and your family at this time. I have been checking the Facebook group daily and it is amazing, all of the support and love there is in the world. You have been in our prayers and conversations down here at Miami University. Corey, Tom, and I have been talking about you and we wish you all the best. You work at a great institution and your co-workers, students, and alumni are with you at this time. You are truly a wonderful person and it seems your wife was just as amazing. I wish you all the best during this difficult time and know she beyond doubt is in a better place. I wish you all the best.*

*Sincerely,*

*Nick Strause*

*Miami University*

*strasun@muohio.edu##imported-begin##Nick Strause and Family s  
trausnd@muohio.edu##imported-end##*

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Phil, Lilly, Missy and Family  
This is Deb's Mom Joanne. I was so sorry to hear you had lost your precious Angel.  
Also very sorry I never got to meet her.  
She was very special to Deb and was so thoughtful and good to her.  
She is now at peace, which should ease your pain. I don't think anyone will ever forget that beautiful smile, or that she was also so beautiful inside as well.  
She indeed was a special Angel

Joanne and son Mike###imported-begin##Joanne Bauman sterlinggir11@aol.com###imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Phil and beautiful daughter Lilian,

Our prayers are with you during this time.

Love,

Charlotte & Dave Mariasy  
Stephen, Kris and Ian - SJJ Titans###imported-begin##Charlotte Mariasy churchladycm@sbcglobal.net###imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ *So much there is that went before, and none of it forgotten. Years and time come and go; I remember you.*

*All thoughts and prayers in my heart tonight belong to all who Love you.##imported-begin##Gary Slavin (Slivinski) slavingaryslavin@gmail.com##imported-end##*

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ *Phil and Lily- my heart goes out to you both. Your loss is so great. I can't be with you Monday but I will be there in spirt. I hope i can see you both in early May when I come to Toledo.*

*Phil you and Gretchen shared a special love and your miracle chld Lily will always remind you of that love.*

*My prayers go out to you both.##imported-begin##Martha Williams willimj@libbey.com##imported-end##*

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Phil, my deepest sympathies to you and your family. I have so many wonderful memories of Gretchen when I was at The University of Toledo. Hands down: She was one of the most naturally gifted student leaders I have ever come across. She always brought so much energy to the table and she did it effortlessly with the grace and sincerity that was truly rare. In fact, whenever administrators looked for student representatives on committees, Gretchen’s name was always at the top of the list. But it was her personality that shone out consistently – her infectious laugh, a true sense of friendship, a willingness to look at every challenge with optimism, and her simple joy of life. The memories of her tremendous spirit are still crystal clear to me even twenty years after the fact.##imported-begin##Les Roka les.roka@gmail.com##imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Gretchen was a special angel in all our lives, she will be dearly missed, she always brought joy wherever she went.##imported-begin##Alice Armstrong##imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Phil and Lily, I will truly miss Gretchen. She was a very special person in my life. I learned so much from her. It was a pleasure to work with her for so many years. My prayers continue to be with you both. Carol Wells##imported-begin##Carol Wells wellsca@Libbey.com##imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ TO THE SKELDON FAMILY, I SEND MY DEEPEST SYMPATHIES IN YOUR TIME OF NEED. YOU ARE IN MY PRAYERS. PLEASE LET ME KNOW IF THERE IS ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU OR YOUR FAMILY.

MY CONDOLENCES

MICHAEL GRANATA##imported-begin##MICHAEL GRANATA MT GARL@BEX.NET##imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ We are deeply saddened to say goodbye to a brave and beautiful human being and former colleague of Bill's. She indeed will soar "on angel's wings" and her incredible singing voice will echo in Heaven! Diane and I truly believe God has a special new assignment for Gretchen...to guide others in the place where peace and love prevail...Gretchen...we will see you again and may God bless your family...Bill & Diane Green##imported-begin##bill & diane green wvu1956@yahoo.com##imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Mr. Skeldon,

Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your daughter. Deepest Sympathy

Mark, Joanne, Matt (02) and Holly Shiple##imported-begin##Shiple Family mjshiple@yahoo.com##imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ *There are many people we meet in our lives and not as many that truly touch our hearts and that we remember and care about..I knew Gretchen for only a few years, but she was truly special. Always kind and helpful and smiling. I am so glad I had the opportunity to know her..My thoughts are with her family...at this very difficult time..but you were so lucky to have had her in your lives..as we all were...and I know for that, you will always be grateful.##imported-begin##Nancy Borchers##imported-end##*

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ *Phil,*

*my deepest condolences to you and Lilian. You are in my thoughts and prayers.*

*Sincerely,*

*Jim Jaro##imported-begin##Jim Jaros  
jjjaros@yahoo.com##imported-end##*

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Phil,

*We are so sorry to hear of your loss. Even though I only met Gretchen a few times, it was very clear that she was a shining star in a lot of peoples lives. You and Lilian will surely share many happy memories of your time with Gretchen.*

*You’ve come along way from the little guy in long-johns singing “Ravioli”.*

*Gretchen enriched your life in many ways. Through Lilian this will never end.*

*I know that you have a “very large” support group but it can always be bigger.*

*God Bless You and Yours*

*Peace be With You*

*Love*

*Kevin & Chris Smith##imported-begin##Kevin Smith bigdolfan39@h  
otmail.com##imported-end##*

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Phil,

*Our deepest sympathy to you and your family. Our prayers and thoughts are with you at this time.##imported-begin##Jane and Marty Hunter##imported-end##*

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ *Dear Phil and Lily,*

*Well what can I say but I didn't know you but I knew your wife and mother. She was one of the most most amazing individual's I have ever met and wok with in my life. So full of love and zest for life. She reminds me of my Mom who passed away from breast cancer. She is a saint in my mind and I hope I meet her in heaven one day because she is most defintely there.*

*Here's to Gretchen. I will miss her as I know you will.*

*All my prayers and love*

*Dan###imported-begin##Daniel Toy  
dctoy2001@yahoo.com###imported-end##*

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ *Phil and family*

*We want you to know you our in thoughts and prayers. You have our deepest smypathy.###imported-begin##Kay & Fred Flack Janet & Joe Rychnovsky###imported-end##*

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Missy and family. Although it has been many, many years I was still so saddened to read about the passing of your sister. It sounds like she was a very special person.

*I have very fond memories of you and your family from the "old days".*

*I am so sorry for your loss, you have my deepest sympathy.*

*Terese Meredith (Bassett)###imported-begin##Terese Meredith (Bassett) teecee4815@aol.com###imported-end##*

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Phil and Lily - we send our love to you and our deepest condolences for the loss of dear Gretchen. We feel blessed to have had her in our lives. We carry you in our hearts and prayers. Love Moira and Dan Lucier and family.###imported-begin##Moira and Dan Lucier danlucier@comcast.net###imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ To Gretchen's family: My sincerest and heartfelt condolences to you all. It is a pleasure to be counted amongst her many friends and to know her for so long. I do believe she is at peace and at "home" now. We here on earth will miss our angel. BMLG (be more like Gretchen) is how I will try to live my life in her honor and to pass this along to to others. Love, Susie###imported-begin##Susie Gerken LeBlevec ripken44@telus.net###imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Phil - you and your family are in our thoughts and prayers. Gretchen was such a wonderful person and loved by so many. Laurie and I have so many fond memories of all of the things you all have done. Love and peace be with you,  
Laurie and Rick St. John###imported-begin###Dr. and Mrs. Richard St. John rstjohn@bex.net###imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Phil,  
I am sorry that I did not make it to the Funeral Home, since I got released from an Extended Care Facility on Friday. My deepest sympathies to you and your family.  
Tim###imported-begin###Tim "Doctari" Hatch  
thatch69@bex.net###imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ I am saddened to hear of Gretchen's passing. I worked with her at Libbey on and off and she was a very nice person to know. I knew her husband Phil because he sang a solo in several performances of the Messiah that I sang in the chorus for Tony Zsigray. My prayers are with you Phil and your daughter. Sincerely, Elaine Schwind###imported-begin###Elaine Schwind schwie\_0924@hotmail.com###imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Phil and Lilly,  
As everyone who has ever met your beautiful family, I was so sad to hear of your loss. I only learned about Gretchen's history with cancer when my own mom was diagnosed with breast cancer and I saw Gretchen's picture on a brochure at the cancer center. Her selfless determination to support other women and to help find a cure for this terrible disease will live on forever. Your family is in my thoughts and prayers.##imported-begin##Allison Schlagheck##imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Phil and our little Lily,  
My deepest sympathies are given during this most difficult time in your lives. Working with Lily and your family was a joy for me at Ottawa River. I was always amazed with your family's love and total acceptance of Lily, striving for more, but aware of the road ahead. Gretchen's love and devotion to Lily was evident in everything she did and said. From Lily's most adorable outfits and hairstyles, to the way Gretchen would "beem" when she came to pick up Lily from school. Gretchen was always eager for any suggestions that might be of help to Lily at home. Gretchen's warm spirit toward all of us, made us want to do our best for your family. Gretchen's fight with cancer is a living testament for others who follow in her path. Her strength, dignity and grace will live on. It was my pleasure to share just a little part of your lives. If there is ever anything I can do for you or your family please do not hesitate to contact me.  
With deepest love and sympathy  
Cecilia Dunn  
Speech/language pathologist  
Ottawa River Preschool##imported-begin##Cecilia Dunn doneplace@aol.comm##imported-end##

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ *Phil: I don't know you... However; I would like to make a comment and pass on my condolences on your wife's passing.*

*I met Gretchen only once... She was in Virginia Beach / Chesapeake for business between Dollar Tree & Libby Glass about four months ago. My friends here in the neighborhood had free tickets to the Brian Adams concert. At any rate we went to the concert had one great evening with Gretchen!!*

*I am so sorry for your loss... I lost my spouse about 9 years ago... I still struggle with it all.*

*I wish you all the best!!*

*Good Luck & God Bless*

*Dan,*

*Virginia Beach, Va.##imported-begin##Dan Kane  
okane@cox.net##imported-end##*

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Phil,

*I just went on-line to view a co-workers obituary and I saw your last name and viewed your wife's Memorial Video wondering if she was a relation to you and she looked familiar to me as well. God works in mysterious ways... I am so sorry for the loss of your beloved wife. It appears that you had not only a lovely wife but, a wife full of Faith in God and who obviously loved her family. My heart aches for you and your daughter and you will be in my thoughts and prayers. May the God of ALL comfort lift strengthen and guide you.*

*Love , prayers and heartfelt sympathy*

*Janell (Mortemore) LaCourse*

*(To refresh your memory; I was in a few plays with you years ago)###imported-begin##Janell LaCourse###imported-end##*

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Gretchen was truly one of a kind. Her bright spirit and infectious laugh is something I will always remember. What a strong woman, I'm proud to have called her my friend.

*I hope the happy memories of Gretchen in our lives will those of missing her comfort in the days to come.*

*Our thoughts and prayers are with you.###imported-begin##Anne Sillery-Tincher Tincher199@msn.com###imported-end##*

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ *Phil...while you and I have never met, we did share a love of Gretchen!! Gretchen came into my life during the fall of 1984 and my life has been richer ever since. As I type this, I'm listening to my very favorite song....palm of his hand. With grateful tears I say to you that I was blessed to know Gretchen and will always remember her with fondness. I will continue to pray for you and your entire family! May God bless us all!##imported-begin##Lisa Diskin lisadisk in@cox.net##imported-end##*

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February 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM