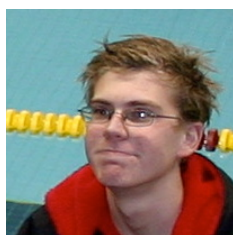


# Robert Joseph Brau

April 8, 1993 - August 14, 2014

Robert was the only son of Terry and Donna Brau. He was born on the Thursday before Easter Sunday, April 8th, 1993. It is easy to believe that there were few births ever more joyfully received by family and friends. We all understood the magnitude of his unexpected development and birth.



From the moment he arrived, we knew that this baby would change everything! We laughed, we cried and wondered so much every day! We showered him with love and affection and eventually learned to channel that love through routines, limitations, and guidance. Robert was our “daily fix” of wonder and joy. He was, and always will be, our miracle baby. It has been immensely joyful in every way to be a part of watching Robert grow. He is just the son we always dreamed of - in every way. Looking at him always showed that he was a young man with so much to share. He was gifted and talented in so many ways, some of which we all knew, some that were yet to bloom. Our love for him was and still is completely unconditional and undeniable. No matter what he did, where he traveled, or how his spirit now surrounds us, we will always be grateful to him, and indebted to him, for helping us know the truest and purest depths of love.

From Robert’s Senior Portfolio: “I don’t really think you know me until you hear at least a little about my birth. I think the circumstances around my coming into the world are significant enough to make an important impact on who I am and how my family works. My parents had been married for fifteen years and had been told they would never have a biological child...Funny how life has a way of changing the best-laid plans isn’t it? So with the news spread to family and friends and career plans put on hold, a new chapter in their lives began. My room was ready and all the necessary supplies were bought. There were baby showers and joyful showers of tears shed. And so, on my birthday my parents’ tiny family of two became a little family of three and, I think, “It is just the family I wanted.”

From his first days, Robert found joy in so many things. He was inquisitive and bright and ready for exploration, excited, soothed and intrigued by music, always happy, always busy, and always hungry. He found his way into the hearts of all who met him quickly and firmly. Robert loved to be busy (“but not too busy”) and he



Piano  
Cello  
Trumpet  
French Horn  
Mellophone  
Guitar

Faith  
Family  
Friends  
Opportunity  
Hard work  
Swimming  
Hiking  
Skiing  
Travel  
Kayaking  
Reading  
Challenges  
Holidays  
Graphic Arts  
The color Blue  
Winter

WHS Jazz  
WHS Pep Band  
WHS Solo &  
Ensemble  
Musical Pits  
WHS Bands  
WHS Choirs  
WHS Vocal  
Ensembles  
WHS Orchestra

The University  
of Minnesota  
Marching Band  
Family

The Larson  
Farms

Loving Arms  
Childcare  
Center

U of M  
Facilities  
Management



loved spending time with friends and family. It was clear that he loved talking, laughing, making movies, playing games, and eating! He genuinely seemed to enjoy hanging out with Mom and Dad, especially when that time included anything musical - listening, playing or recording. Special family times included: sailing,



biking, gardening, ponding, movies, vacations (especially those involving water, particularly times spent in Bayfield, WI), and the sharing of many special holiday traditions.

Robert said that what he liked most about himself was his resilient character - his ability to stand true to his morals and values, to make decisions both large and small and form opinions that spoke to his own solid strengths and beliefs. He was open-minded yet steadfast in his decisions. He believed wholly that his mistakes would be his own and that his learning and success would be a direct result of his own choices. He saw himself, and we agree, as steadfast, confident, and positive. He drew inspiration from his friend Troy ("Blessed be his memory") and wanted to be like him.



Robert was busy in so many activities throughout his time in the Willmar Schools, the majority of courses having to do with music (the list is so broad and so extensive) and swimming. He loved spending time with family and friends, appreciated free-time that came after overly busy times. He was always willing to help out in any way: rock picking, gardening, running errands, mowing lawns, helping family and friends with projects of every description, and often helped out to the extent that he made his own schedule more difficult.

Special times were often centered on practicing or playing his instruments (piano, cello, trumpet, french horn, mellophone, and his love: guitar). That love carried from his involvement in every music opportunity in the Willmar High School and his willingness to help out musically at church to his fierce love of and dedication to the University of Minnesota Marching Band.



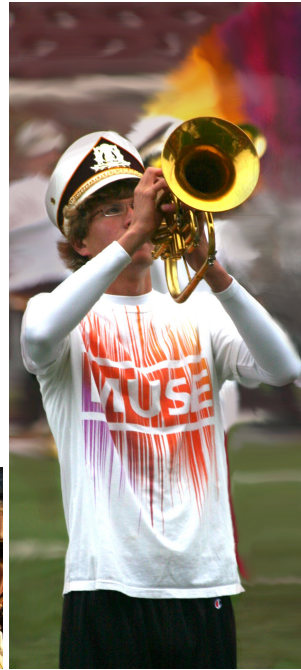
We are grateful for the love he found with Abby. She is an amazing young woman who brought out the best in our son. We welcome her into our lives and thank her - there's joy there that will never fade.



We will all always seek an explanation - answers to what has happened this week. It is human to want to know the reason and the why. Our hearts are broken and and there's an emptiness where he was that will never be filled - not with "keeping busy", not with "finding something meaningful to fill our own days left on earth" and, right now, it feels like no amount of prayer will heal our hurt.

Our thanks to you for lifting our sorrow.

We are so very grateful for faith, family and friends.

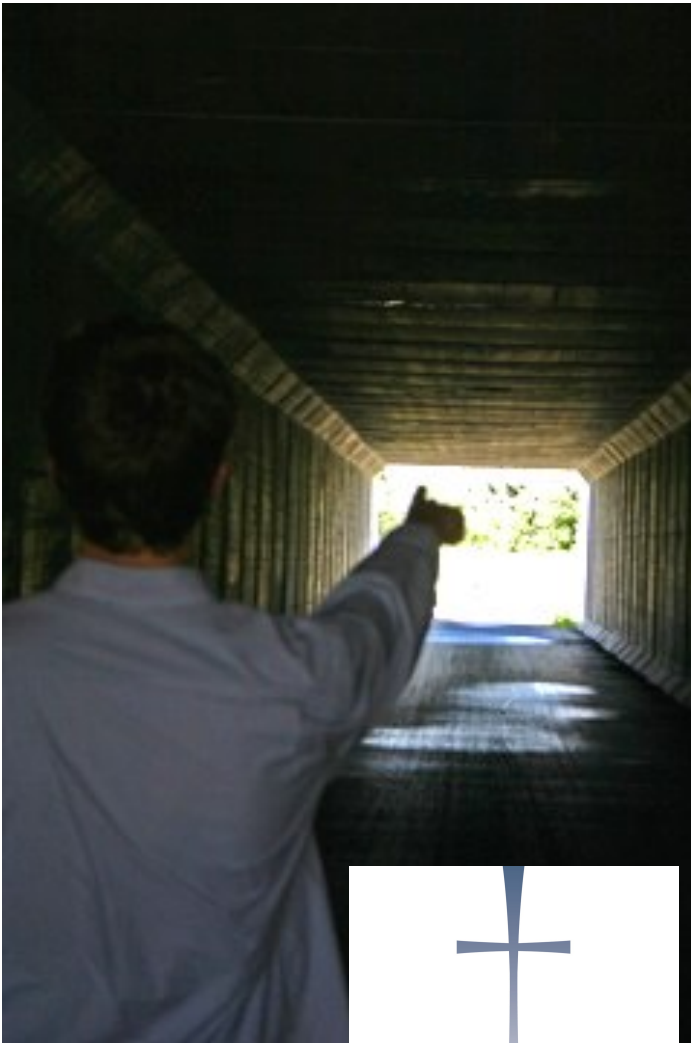


These are the words his friends have used to describe him in the last week:  
Faithful  
Honest  
Intelligent  
Dedicated  
Thoughtful  
Musical  
Methodical  
Random  
Generous  
Creative  
Loyal  
Helpful  
Witty  
Quick  
Funny  
Fun  
Forgiving  
Comfortable  
Enthusiastic  
Long Wish  
List  
Kind  
Exuberant  
Warm  
Easy-going  
"Always  
Freakishly  
Hungry"  
Charming  
Talented  
"The  
Baconator"  
Best Friend  
Passionate  
Inspirational  
Joyful  
Sensitive

"Thou shalt be our Northern Star."

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In his own words Robert said, "I would like to be well liked more than well known," and "I want to be able to look back and have no regrets."



Robert is survived by his Parents Terry and Donna Brau, Grandparents Clem and Betty Brau, Aunts, Uncles and Cousins: Randy Brau, Tim and Kathy (Brau) Verbrugge, Katy and Rachel, Brian and Shary (Brau) Vance, Julia and BJ, Tom Brau, Bruce and Stephanie Berger and family, the Love of his life: Abby Nash, and chosen family: The Marcus', Andersons, Faders, Kratzkes, Laurie Summerland and Ginger Thomsen, Larsons, Bensons and Stulens. He was preceded in death by his Grandparents Robert and Kathleen Berger.

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

# On Children

by Kahlil Gibran

Your children are not your children.  
They are the sons and daughters  
of Life's longing for itself.  
They come through you but not from you,  
And though they are with you  
they belong not to you.

You may give them your love  
but not your thoughts,  
For they have their own thoughts.  
You may house their bodies  
but not their souls,  
For their souls dwell in the house of  
tomorrow,  
which you cannot visit,  
not even in your dreams.

You may strive to be like them,  
but seek not to make them like you.  
For life goes not backward  
nor tarries with yesterday.  
You are the bows from which  
your children as living arrows  
are sent forth.

The archer sees the mark  
upon the path of the infinite,  
and He bends you with His might  
that His arrows may go swift and far.

Let your bending in the archer's hand  
be for gladness;  
For even as He loves the arrow that flies,  
so He loves also the bow that is stable.