



Sarah Beth Tilford

February 19, 1976 - March 26, 2011

Sarah is not suffering any longer. She is with Jesus.

Sarah Beth Tilford, 35, of Bloomington passed away on March 26, 2011. She was born to Polly Ann and John Willard Tilford on 19 February, 1976 in the Bloomington Hospital. Bright and cheerful — but definitely opinionated — her childhood was filled with joy. She often attempted to correct her older brother Aaron's behavior, earning the nickname "Sister Saint." She loved animals, especially cats. She ran hurdles for fun, played lawn soccer, and "built" houses in the woods. She dearly loved her grandparents, Rex A. and Norma J. Bruce of Bloomington.

As mental and physical disorders began to drag her down, she commented that she was glad she had "already done everything." At five, she learned functional Spanish at her temporary Columbus, Georgia, kindergarten — in two months. At twelve, she participated in a Girl Scout Wider Opportunity horsemanship camp in Wyoming for a week, later earning the Girl Scout Gold Award for patriotic projects including teaching United States flag etiquette and placing a flagpole in the Oard Road Cemetery. She held first chair, clarinet in her middle school orchestra. At fifteen, she had seen Paris from the top of the Eiffel Tower, looked out over the Swiss Alps from a 10,000 foot mountain, ridden a London double-decker bus to Madame Tussauds, walked in Paul's steps in Rome and toured the Coliseum, covertly photographed the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Saint Peter's in the Vatican with her little plastic 35mm camera (producing a better image than that being sold by the street vendors),

seen Michelangelo's David in Florence, visited the Leaning Tower in Pisa, seen the canals in Venice and Juliet's balcony in Verona, been paged in a Telford, England shopping mall, and had been an overnight guest in the home of Lord Elgin's secretary in Limekiln, Scotland. In her twenties and without training, Sarah snow skied near Nashville, Indiana, and paraglided in Jamaica. She was a beautiful young woman, which no doubt contributed to Sarah's making small talk with Christian Slater in New York while visiting her brother Aaron — resulting in one of her favorite photographs.

Sarah worked a variety of jobs when she was able, from landscape laborer to waitress to precision medical apparatus fabrication. She wrote poetry in the form of song lyrics in her notebooks. Sarah had an unusually pure tenor singing voice and spoke of performing, but never did. She graduated from Bloomington North High School and had attended both Indiana University and Ivy Tech Community College. Sarah hoped to assist with the AWANA (Bible verses) children's' program at New Unionville Baptist Church. She was looking forward to aquatics therapy at Rebound.

Sarah was baptized into Christ at twelve, and felt the need and was re-baptized at thirty-two. She often stated she wanted to do volunteer work, to help people with similar problems, but she was not physically able to do so. She regularly visited the grave of a friend, each time laying a flower on his marker. Sarah's new mind and body are strong and whole and pain-free. She can run as with the wings of eagles and not grow tired. Sarah is not hurting any longer.

The family asks that, in lieu of flowers, memorial contributions be made to Hoosier Honor Flight at American Legion Post 18, 1800 West 3rd Street, Bloomington, IN 47404; or to the Bloomington Animal Shelter, 3410 South Walnut Street, Bloomington, IN 47403.

Sarah is survived by her parents John W. and Polly A. (Bruce) Tilford of Bloomington, brother Aaron James Tilford of New York City, grandparents Rex A. and Norma J. Bruce of Bloomington, an aunt Pamela Saulter and her husband Steve of Bloomington, cousins Bruce Charles Saulter of Florida and

Rebecca Jill Saulter of Bloomington, and her cat, Amoré Jean. She was preceded in death by grandparents Willard L. and Elizabeth F. Tilford, and step-grandmother Amanda (Jackson, Price) Tilford.

Due to administrative error, this obituary is being published too late for readers to attend Sarah's memorial service which was held at 11 a.m. on Thursday, March 31, 2011, at the Allen Funeral Home, Bloomington, IN. The family met with friends immediately following the memorial service.

Friends can still send condolences to www.allenfuneralhome.org.

Tribute Wall

SC

“ John, Polly and family...
I just read Sarah's obituary in the Greene County Daily World. She was a beautiful girl and I pray that you find peace and comfort knowing that she is pain free. May God bless you all.
Scarlett Barker

Scarlett Barker - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM

CL

“ Col John and Mrs. Polly, Our prayers are that your fond memories of beautiful Sarah, and your faith that she is now an angel, will sustain you, knowing your family will be reunited with her in Heaven some day.
2010 Hoosier Honor Flight

Cliff Trowbridge - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM

EL

“ Family and friends of Sarah Tilford,
I am greatly saddened by the passing of my friend Sarah. I worked with Sarah at he Encore cafe a few years ago in Bloomington. We were good friends, and I loved her irreverent spirit. I had talked with her a few times after moving to Los Angles, sadly I had lost touch with her and i am truly sorry. She was always honest and up front about her life. I was unaware of any problems that she was having and regret not being able to help her in her time of need. Your loss is a great one, and it is a loss to all those she knew. You have my deepest sympathies. May she rest in peace.

Eloid Ruiz - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM

MV

“ I went to school with Sarah and I remember her sweet smile!!! My church and I will be sending up prayers for you and your family during this difficult time!! She will truly be missed !! God Bless...

Minnie (Polley) Vaught - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM

AB

“ I went to middle and high school with Sarah. I remember her as a super sweet and friendly girl who was like a ray of sunshine when she walked into a room, all smiles and cheerfulness. She will be missed. My thoughts and prayers are with her family.

Amanda Smith Biela - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM

J(

“ Dear Polly and Family,

I am so sorry to hear of Sarah's passing. As a mother I can not imagine losing a child. I hope time and your good memories will help and bring you some comfort.

I'm sorry I was not able to make arrangements to get away from school for Sarah's memorial, but please know you are all in my thoughts and prayers.

I spoke with my mother yesterday and she wants you all to know how sorry she is. She said she will get with you when she gets back to Bloomington.

*God bless,
Julie*

Julie Dukes (Mullis) - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM

MB

“ I met sweet Sarah at the age of 10 or so at bible school and then did not see her again until we started middle school together at Tri North but we picked up where we left off immediately laughing and cutting up. Sarah definitely was a presence, one that I will never forget. I treasure the memories I have with her(one being when she got her blue talon(a stick shift) and was learning to drive it)and will remember her friendship always. God Bless her family

Michelle J. B - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM

CA

“ Dear Col. and Mrs. Tilford,

Please accept my condolences on the loss of your daughter. She certainly accomplished a lot in her short life. I regret not knowing her.

Sincerely,

Carmela

Carmela Nohe - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM

TE

“ My dearest John and Polly, what a great loss you are experiencing. My heart goes out to you more than you could ever know. Sarah's obit was beautiful, it told the story of her precious life. She did experience the world and did many things in her short life that others will never do. I am so proud of her for you and we know she is with Jesus now and suffers no more. I know I have no words to make this any easier on you but know that my prayers and thoughts are with you.

Terri Languell

Terri Languell - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM

MI

“ I met Sarah at Bloomington North, when I was a new student, her SMILE stood out in the crowd of new students to me. She was a very sweet girl. I regret not seeing her more after I went to college, and moved on from Bloomington. I know her memories will live on forever, but knowing that she is in HEAVEN with our Lord and Savior, makes me know I will see her again. My prayers go out o her family, in this time of sadness.
~~~~Sarah will never be forgotten in our Hearts~~~~

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**Michelle Thomas** - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM

JM

“ Polly and John, our hearts go out to you at this sad time. We send our thoughts and prayers.

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**Johnny and Mary Popp** - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM

GD

“ John & Polly,  
Our deepest sympathy in the loss of your daughter Sarah. May the strength that only God can provide be with you at this time. We will keep you and your family in our prayers.

*Gerald & Debbie Cousins*

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**Gerald & Debbie Cousins** - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM

UN

“ My thoughts and prayers are with Sarah's family. May she rest in peace.

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**Unknown** - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM

AN

“ Sarah had such a good heart. Blessings to her family. The last time I saw Sarah was at Lotus Festival a couple of years ago. She sat with me and a friend in the park and joined in the dancing, laughing and smiling the whole time. She'll live on in so many hearts.

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**Anna** - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM

LB

“ Our sympathy is extended to the family in the loss of your loved one. Thinking of you.

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**Lou & Brenda Massette** - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM

SE

“ John and Polly,  
I'm very sorry to hear about the loss of your daughter. I can't even imagine your pain, my heart and thoughts are with you.  
All the best,  
Yours Aye  
Seth A. Bruce

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**Seth Bruce** - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM

RE

“ John, Polly and Aaron-

*My heart and prayers go out to you for your loss. Sarah will be greatly missed and will be forever alive in everyone's hearts and memories.*

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**Renee Henderson** - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM

ME

“ I believe Sarah was a sweet and gentle spirit. Although I didnt know her personally -I had the pleasure of meeting her a few times where I work. She sounded like a beautiful,talented ,smart ,giving and loving person. Somehow I think I knew this when she would talk to me...I felt that she was in some sorts of pain and I have often thought of her because I hadnt seen her for a long while-I was shocked when I heard of her passing-she is with Jesus is exactly what I thought and that she has no more pain or sadness. God bless her-she is one of God's many angels now. Peace be with her beloved family.

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**Melissa Burton** - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM

CO

“ Jon and Polly, I am so sorry. I don't know what to say. My thoughts and prayers are with you. She was a very sweet and kind young woman. I will see you on Thursday. If you need anything, please let me know.

*Connie Stewart*

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**Constance Stewart** - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM

JG

“ John & Polly,  
I was greatly saddened to hear of your loss of such a wonderful daughter. The world may be less from her passing, but heaven has received a blessing with her presence there. My thoughts and prayers are with you at this time.

*John Mc Gee  
Clan MacKay*

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**John Mc Gee** - October 26, 2015 at 04:26 PM