



Sheila Kay Ruple

December 12, 1970 - February 12, 2024

Sheila Kay Ruple, age 53, passed away unexpectedly on February 12, 2024. She was born in Adrian, MI on December 12, 1970. At just five weeks old, Sheila was lovingly accepted into the arms of her foster mom, Joan Robinson. She lived with the Robinson family until 1978 when they moved out of state. Sheila still remained under the watchful eyes of Joan, who ensured that she continued to receive the best possible care. Joan became Sheila's legal guardian, insightfully aware that she was on loan from God. Alongside and following in Joan's footsteps, Jana and Jodi served as guardians. Most recently, Sheila resided in an adult foster care group home in Oakland County, Michigan, where she touched the hearts of many.

Sheila experienced life differently than most people, simple yet complex, and required around the clock care. She endured numerous surgeries throughout her life and was physically fragile, yet so very strong. Although always a baby, Sheila loved her life. She didn't change, and enjoyed the same interactions in adulthood as when she was young. Her favorite foods were spaghetti, applesauce jello salad, and ice cream.

Sheila was blind; her world was completely dark. She compensated with her ears and was acutely attuned to her surroundings. She frequently had music in her midst from the radio and enjoyed listening to cartoons on the television. Sheila created her own music, entertaining herself with baby rattles and

squeaky toys. She had the use of only her left hand and was able to turn her head from side to side. If a toy was within her reach, she found it and would bite or chew on it. There were two sounds that made her whimper, the fire whistle blowing, and John's table saw. We will never know if it was something that scared Sheila or the shrillness that bothered her keen sense of hearing.

Sheila loved the many discernible sensations she experienced outdoors, particularly in the summertime. Her happy place was at Evans Lake, where she visited often while she was living with the Robinson's. These visits to the lake continued throughout her life, with the help of the group home staff who would transport her to and from the lake cottage for her "vacation" to be with the family who loved her so dearly. She giggled when being pushed in her wheelchair down the bumpy dirt road. If she stopped to visit a neighbor, the warmth of the sun would often put her to sleep. Sheila will be remembered for the fun and relaxing rides on the Robinson's pontoon boat. When the lake water was sufficiently warm she enjoyed floating, experiencing the waves, and being splashed! She did not mind occasional raindrops gently sprinkling her skin, and loved feeling the breeze.

Sheila also connected to her world with human touch. Her gentle and loving caregivers quickly learned her verbal cues and how to read Sheila's facial expressions when interacting with her. Her expressive emotions were mostly pleasant, but she would let us know when she was angry or in pain. She rarely cried. Because Sheila didn't know day from night she made her own schedule, which proved to be challenging at times when others needed their sleep.

Sheila's caregivers at the group home appropriately and affectionately coined one of her sounds as "chirps." They loved her like family, and are sadly missing her presence. As Joan would often state about Sheila, "She is living on love."

Left to cherish Sheila's special memory are her three foster sisters, Jera (Cliff) Stratton, Jana (Randy) Porterfield, and Jodi (Tom) Waldvogel. She was preceded in death by her foster parents, John and Joan Robinson, and a long time roommate and friend from the adult foster care group home. Also preceding her in death was a very special Aunt, Mary Butchart, and her parents, Burton Wayne Ruple and Kay (Butchart) Ruple.

Sheila was known as John and Joan's fourth daughter, and will forever be ... our little sister.

A graveside service for Sheila will be held on Sunday, February 25, 2024 at 1:00 P.M. at the Franklin Township Cemetery in Tipton, MI. A Celebration of Life will take place in the Colosseum Room at Sal's Italian Restaurant in Tecumseh, MI from 2:00 5:00 P.M. Memorial contributions in Sheila's name are suggested to the non-profit organization who oversaw her care for the last 32 years of her life, Progressive Lifestyles, Inc., 1370 N. Oakland Blvd., Suite 150, Waterford, MI 48327.

Online condolences and memories may be shared at www.WagleyFuneralHome.com

Previous Events

Graveside Service

FEB **25**. 1:00 PM - 1:30 PM (ET)

Franklin Cemetery
Tipton Highway
Tipton, MI

Celebration of Life

FEB **25**. 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Sal's Italian Restaurant
1400 W. Chicago Blvd.
Tecumseh, MI 49286

Tribute Wall

JM

“ I remember her very well, as Jack and Joan were great friends to my mom and dad the Forresters, she was probably a month old when I meant her at the Robinson's home. As a little girl, my heart broke knowing what was done to this little girl and Joan and Jack loved her so much my condolence to the family and thank you for loving and caring for her all these years Joan Forrester Miller.

joan Forrester Miller - February 24, 2024 at 09:39 PM

JW

Thank you, Joanie.

Jodi Waldvogel - March 03, 2024 at 07:48 AM

SJ

“ We enjoyed Joan bringing Shelia to Hideaway Cove she always had a smile Sherry Johanson

sherry Johanson - February 23, 2024 at 02:27 PM

JW

Thank you Sherry. You were both very accommodative when we visited.

Jodi Waldvogel - February 23, 2024 at 05:41 PM