

Woman killed in climbing accident recalled as loving, determined

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Elizabeth Tyler Strandberg is remembered by her friends and family as a determined woman who loved the outdoors and lived life to the fullest.

Strandberg, who would have celebrated her 29th birthday Wednesday, and Catherine Nix, 28, of Jackson, Wyo. died Saturday morning in a climbing accident in Wyoming's Grand Teton National Park.

Terry Noble, Tyler's aunt, said that she was working to achieve a summer climbing goal she had set for herself to climb the Grand Teton, the tallest mountain in the Teton Range.

"She just started picking up this rock climbing. She actually had just showed her mom Saturday the week before that she had got to the top of one mountain, and sent Beth a picture of her on the top," Noble said.

Josie Strandberg, Tyler's sister, said Tyler's determination helped her through a particularly difficult hike.

"She wanted us to hike up this mountain, Snow King. To her, it was nothing because she does it all the time. But to me it was like I was dying. Halfway through, I said 'Tyler, I can't do this. My little body can't handle this.' But she just led us right to the top," Josie said.

Her family said that Tyler's determination extended to every part of her life, from working to qualify for the Boston Marathon to a recent family trip to Nags Head, when her brother-in-law pushed ahead on a paddleboard in rough water while she stayed behind.

"She got up, and said 'Nope, I'm going to do it,'" Josie said. "She got a second paddleboard and we watched her. She pushed out there. She just always knew. She was very determined and she knew what she wanted to do, and she always did it."

Tyler's work at the C-V Ranch in Jackson Hole, Wyo., with troubled and developmentally disabled boys required the kind of tenacity and strength she possessed.

"Children were her passion, and she loved what she did," Noble said. "She had got beaten up once. And Tyler just said she was going to make a difference in their lives."

Noble said that the day before Tyler died, she had taken one of the boys on an all-day fishing trip with her beloved dog, Millie.

"It took a really special person to do what she did. She loved those little boys," Tyler's mother, Beth Gardner Strandberg, said.

Beth Strandberg said her daughter was "a sweet soul" who was lovable and had a great laugh.

"She didn't have a mean bone in her body. She attracted people. She was full of life. Just always full of life," Beth said.

Noble said that one thing few people knew about Tyler was that she loved to knit. Last Christmas, she knitted hats for each of the boys on the ranch with their favorite superhero logo on it. Noble sold some of her items in Rocky Mount last winter.

"There was a little knitting store right on the main street, and she would just go sit in a rocking chair and watch women knit. She taught herself," Noble said.

Noble told her she wanted a few items for herself and received a package from Tyler about a month ago.

"She had knitted me wool socks for the winter, great gloves, a beautiful scarf. She was a very creative person," Noble said.

Beth Strandberg said she would not change anything about how Tyler lived.

"She persevered through some tough times personally and found herself out there. Going out there was the greatest thing," she said. "I'd let her do it all over again. Even losing her again, I would let her go back out there. There are lots and lots of wonderful memories, and we've had a great life with her. It was a great life."

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