



Richard Michael Holding

January 23, 1983 ~ September 2, 2013

Richard Michael (Rich) Holding II, our beloved forest-fighting hero who put his life on the front lines to save others, lost his valiant fight to

Ewing's Sarcoma cancer on September 2, 2013. He passed from this life in the arms of his loving wife, Mercedes, with family at his side.

Rich, a free spirit who lived his 30 years to the fullest always in the service of others, was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, Jan. 23, 1983, the son of Richard M. (Rick) Holding and Tamera Lee Holding. He married Mercedes Diehl on Aug. 17, 2006.

Rich attended Brighton and Jordan High Schools. He discovered his dream job with the Unified Fire Authority Wildland Bureau. He fought fires all over the Intermountain West and was always proud of putting out that last troublesome ember on a hillside. His buddies on the front lines meant the world to him. He wore courage on his sleeve with bravery in his heart. Who knows how many lives he helped save or property he protected. His work ethic was unquestioned. Rich and Mercedes traveled to faraway places, arm-in-arm and deeply in love, whether it was to a beach in San Diego, or a mountaintop in Utah, especially the hallowed ground of Camp Steiner in the Uintas, a special retreat where the fish had no chance vs. Rich. It was always, "Let's go camping." Mercedes would start packing and off they went. Besides devotion for his family, his passions were hiking, fishing, golfing, hunting, skiing and anything else outdoors, accompanied by his constant canine companions Dutch, Duke and Kingston, all of them romping over trails until darkness chased them home with Rich in tow. He enjoyed playing cards with his buddies. He loved the Utah Jazz and Ute football. You name it, Rich could do it, whether with carpentry on a redwood deck, or a tiller in a garden, or with a chain saw cutting firewood.

He was a loving, kind, caring, giving, thoughtful and compassionate gentle giant beloved by all, captured especially in the adoration shown by nephews Dallin and Luke and nieces Hailey and Grace Cardon.

The family extends a special thank-you to Steve Harward for his love and devotion to his best friend "Richie" in the last few months of his life.

He is survived by his wife, Mercedes; parents; sister Kim Cardon (Ben), Price, UT; brother Troy, SLC, UT; grandfather Ralph P. Holding, SLC, UT; aunt Susan Holding-Rosetta (Dick), Midvale, UT; father-in-law Terry Diehl, SLC, UT; mother-in-law Tracy Bybee, SLC, UT; sister-in-law Bobbie Jo Diehl, Dallas, Tex.; grandparents John and Eileen Orton, Auburn, Wyo.; grandfather Rod Harper, SLC, UT; great-grandmother Vivian Scott, Holladay, UT; nieces and nephews, and extended family. Preceded in death by niece Marielle Cardon and grandmother Pauline Holding, whom he was with in her final moments in October, 2008.

At Rich's request, he was cremated. He asked that his ashes be scattered over special family places.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, Sept. 7, at Granite Stake Center, 2535 E. Newcastle Dr. (9040 S.). Visitation will be from 10:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. with services at noon. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to the Unified Fire Authority Wildland Bureau, 3380 S. 900 West, SLC, UT, 84119, or the Huntsman Cancer Foundation, Ewing's Sarcoma Research, 500 Huntsman Way, SLC, UT, 84108. Online condolences at www.legacy.com.

Rich, you were our tower of strength. Until we meet again, we love you. You will always be in our hearts.