

## In Memoriam - Connor Coutts

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on behalf of

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### In Memoriam - Connor Coutts

Facilities Management is mourning the loss of Connor Coutts, a custodian in the Dalhousie Arts Centre. His obituary can be found below.



*Coutts, Connor Thomas (29)*. It is with heavy hearts we announce the passing of our beloved son, grandson, brother, nephew, cousin, lover and friend of many in a tragic car accident Monday Nov 28, 2022, on his way to a new job and re-start in life at Dalhousie University. He was full of hope.

Connor's first 12 years were magical. As a young boy he loved grocery shopping with Nana and Poppa DeSilva, jumping on and off the edge of the cart pretending to be a garbage man. He would often look out the window in the morning, waiting to see the garbage truck drive by and had to be dragged to school if it didn't come in time. He liked to go camping with his dad, mom, and sister Lauren, and mine for stones at Blomidon. He was tied to the hip with Lauren and cousin Jenny. They were a force to be reckoned with at Auntie Kathy's home visits, Southfork, Hirtle's Beach and Milford House. All three were very strong willed and would often pair up in different combinations to gang up on the 3rd if one tried to boss or go sideways. But he was always fiercely protective over his little sister. They all engaged in many water gun fights with Uncle Joe when he visited home from Vancouver. It was great entertainment watching them settle without intervention and watching a big adult be a kid with them. He was fascinated by Uncle John's shed and the many tools, deer heads and photos.

Connor had an infectious smile and a presence that lit up the room. He was so, so kind. He loved people and animals, and he deeply impacted the lives of many family members, friends, and anyone who got to know him. From an early age he exhibited a larger-than-life imagination and intelligence. However, his struggle with ADD precluded him from excelling in the confines of a standard educational system...it was not for him. Heather would attempt to coach him in long division, but he saw no sense in doing long hand math when the obvious answer was 9.

His eclectic interests were reflected in the countless books he devoured, from content starting with garbage trucks, dump trucks, and Stars Wars, eventually graduating to Papa Coutts' encyclopedias and a plethora of

history books. A favorite was the 3-inch thick History of the American Civil War. Only Connor could engage with Papa Coutts in discussions on world history and events going back millennia. His viewing pleasures included any type of documentary, and on the lighter side, Monty Python, Trailer Park Boys, and Rick and Morty which provided new vocabulary for which he excelled. He was the only one who would watch sci-fi and fantasy shows with his mom. Connor was Kerry's little boy and she loved and nurtured him, protected him fiercely. They shared many loving times hugging on the couch or reading in the trailer just being cozy and safe under the covers.

He was fascinated with the world and its many cultures, languages, religions, and foods. He loved food and the hotter the better. The fridge was always full of the hottest of hot sauce and we would send him to school with a tube of hot Wasabi and crackers that he would share with his mates. At age 5 he wrote a story called The Stick People that was submitted to the New Yorker Magazine by a Columbia University Professor. It won praise in the young people category. He enjoyed playing soccer, basketball and the piano and shared a special bond with his dad who passed his passion for music to Connor, taking him to see Pink Floyd and BB King. Much to the dismay of others in the house during his teen years, Connor experimented loudly with many types of mind-numbing music genres, like rap, dubstep and drum and bass. God it was awful, and his dad bought many pairs of headphones for him.

No matter the school, he always developed a pod of buddies. The Bedford pod became lifelong and Connor hosted them through the crazy teenage years in the garden shed that Peter and Heather built. We spied from the kitchen or upstairs window to ensure safety. We got to know them well as Jayson, JD, Rob, Dan, Alyssa, and others. We were often surprised in the morning to find couch surfers or teens living rough on the street sleeping in our shed. The shed was always to be unlocked. Many times, he would run into kids on the streets and dragged them home for a safe sleep, food, and shower and off they would go the next day. Our job as parents was to be gracious and non-judgmental. That was Connor and that was his expectation of our role in life. They were no different than his own family.

Unfortunately, in his early teens Connor developed mental health and addictions issues which would become a lifelong struggle, causing complete chaos and pain in his life. He received help from a great many and eventually found recovery at Ledgehill. Alas, over time he would have many slips and bad luck and never obtain the peace in his mind that he so wanted. But he was the strongest person we knew, and always fought with strength and courage. Beneath it all, he was a kind and loving Connor.

He enrolled in Culinary Arts at NSCC and loved cooking and the time he spent in restaurants. His specialty was cheesecakes for his sister Lauren. He returned to NSCC to complete Pipe Trades and Plumbing, graduating in 2021. More recently he has been building a home and relationship with girlfriend Courtney and their many cats and family dogs. There was lots of wonderful hiking in the woods, kayaking, bike-riding, ATVing, skating and hanging out around the fire at the Currie Family Compound. We thank you for embracing our Connor.

He was predeceased by his paternal grandparents Charles and Connie Coutts. He is survived by his loving mother Kerry DeSilva, sister Lauren (Trent), father Peter (Heather), maternal grandparents George and Sandra DeSilva, Uncle Joe (Leeme), cousins Graeme and Sarah, Uncle John (Marg) cousins Lynn and Anne, Aunt Kathy (Wayne), cousin Jenny, Uncle Carlos (Dawn), cousins Steve and Cory, Aunt Nikki (Harry), cousins Mikaela and Ryan, many extended family and friends and his beloved girlfriend Courtney Currie and the Currie family. A special thank you goes to his loving Aunt Kathy Coutts. Kathy and Connor shared a special bond of support, mentoring and knowledge and Kathy would always call him on his BS and then love him more. Connor also developed a deep connection with his cousin Michael Coutts as an adult engaging in stories, food and organic farming.

Our family shared a tough later life journey with Connor, all trying the best we could to support him and also learning what humility, empathy and love is all about. Our love for each other remained boundless, he taught us much and he was on the road to better for himself. His was happy and so looking forward to the future in his last week.

Connor had great empathy, respect and made friends with those living through hard times on the streets. To respect Connor, we request that instead of flowers, a donation in his name to the Souls Harbour Mission or the North End Community Health Clinic Mosh Unit would be greatly appreciated. He knew and experienced that those are the people in most need and he would be happy to know that is where your thoughts and donations would be placed. The family wants to thank the RCMP's Cpl Wagner, paramedics, LifeFlight, the QEII Trauma Unit Doctors and Social Worker Chris who were there comforting Connor to the other world...he was not alone. We thank all the prior others who helped him throughout his struggles and successes in life. You all mean a lot to us in trying to guide and help our son in his tough world. The family will honour you in other ways.

Connor has finally found the peace he so desired and is now safe in the arms of his Grandparents. There will be a celebration of Life TBD in early January 2023. [www.dartmouthfuneralhome.ca](http://www.dartmouthfuneralhome.ca)