

November 19, 2011

My beautiful wife Eadie, and I were married.

We both had been married before, so this was what we had been waiting for; someone that we could share the rest of our lives with.

We did everything right. We saved all of our money, paid for our home, and had made sound investment decisions. We were ready to spend our retirement years enjoying what we had worked all of our lives for.

Eadie was always a very dynamic person, who had lots of friends.

She played tennis, and loved to cook and decorate homes. That was her passion; making things beautiful. Eadie attended art class and loved to help me build guitars in our home studio/shop.

About six months after we were married, some very drastic changes began to occur. First, I noticed that Eadie didn't smile anymore. Her smile could light up a room, so this change alone cause me to have great concern.

I also noticed that Eadie was no longer able to do the things that she loved so much. Her ability to play Tennis had withered away, and Eadie no longer had the desire to spend time in the kitchen. When she did, her attempts at cooking were complete failures.

Eadie started to forget everything. Names, directions to places that she knew like the back of her hand.

One day the Plantation Police called me and said that Eadie had stopped the car, and had a conversation with a resident that caused concern. The lady that Eadie had stopped was worried because Eadie wasn't making much sense. That's when I knew that something horrible was going on.

After a couple of incidents running into mailboxes and hitting curbs, I had to make the heartbreaking decision to take away Eadie's driving privileges.

The next few months were all downhill. Eadie began to lose her balance and became a fall risk. She burned herself really bad with a heating pad.

Eadie would get up in the middle of the night and wonder, so I wasn't able to sleep, but I still had to go to work.

On October 22, 2013

I took Eadie to the Medical University of South Carolina for Neuro Psych Testing. The results were positive for Frontal Temporal Dementia.

This was the most devastating blow that I have ever received.

I was now faced with some pretty steep challenges. At first I thought that I could handle the load all on my own. We hired a care giver to stay with Eadie during the day while I was at work. I would make the 60 mile drive to and from Hilton Head South Carolina and Savannah daily. This worked for a while, but as Eadie got worse, the task became unbearable.

At first, during the evenings and on the weekends I could take Eadie with me to run errands.

But soon this became impossible. So, I was home bound with her, never able to leave for fear that Eadie would fall or wonder off into the marsh.

There were times when I would melt down. This behavior was not like me, and people didn't quite know how to take it. I was beginning to come undone. Friends and family weren't familiar enough with what we were going through to have a full understanding of why I was starting to act differently.

During Christmas of 2013, Eadie flew to Buffalo NY to spend Christmas with family and friends. By the time that trip was over, "everyone" knew the extent of the illness.

After Eadie had a week stay in the hospital, I moved her to a Nursing Home for a month. This was the worst experience that I have ever seen my darling Eadie go through. She was lost and scared. After the first two days, she packed up her belongings in a laundry bag and refused to unpack them. Eadie made it clear that she felt caged and unloved.

During that stay, we had a family meeting and decided that we would all work together to save Eadie from being put away in a nursing home. It was our opinion that the only place for her was with loved ones surrounded by her things.

We decided to liquidate. We sold our house, and cashed in our investments to create a Health Trust Fund to take care of Eadie. Eadie's son Casey was made the Executor of the Trust Fund, and also took on the responsibility of becoming Eadie's guardian.

This was the most difficult decision that I personally had ever had to make. But, anything else would have been selfish of me. If I was to do the right thing, I had to move my beautiful Eadie to live next to her son, and in a place where she could be cared for around the clock by people who loved her.

The most important lesson that I learned from this experience is that Eadie needed to be surrounded by love. As her ability to comprehend began to disappear, her ability to feel love in her surroundings remained very keen.

Eadie now lives in an apartment that is only a couple of blocks away from her son Casey, his beautiful wife Kelly and our granddaughter Eloise. Someone is with Eadie every day. She is taken out doors, to restaurants, and is constantly bombarded with love and affection. Eadie has also been taken off some very very powerful medication that was turning her into something that I wouldn't wish on anyone. Considering Eadie's condition, her mind is much clearer now, and I'm positive that she is doing as well as anyone could ever hope for. I call her three times a day, and visit every month.

If there is a moral to this story, it's this. When dementia strikes, it is a killer. It not only takes the life of the victim, it consumes the lives of everyone who is close to them.

I know for a fact that this experience, and all of the stress that it brings shortens the life of the care giver(s). You must band together as a family and completely "think outside the box".

There is no recourse for someone who is too young for assistance. You are basically told to come back when you are broke. There is no one to help you with the decisions or guide you in making devastating financial decisions. You are on your own.

God Bless Eadie's Son's and family.

Sincerely,

Mike Davis - The proud husband of Eadie Wetzel Davis.