



# A heart to remember

A community mourns Zsolt Varga, a beloved husband, father and local hero.

**I**t was the second day of a four-day rotation shift when advanced care paramedic, Zsolt Varga, put on his uniform for the last time.

His wife Patricia (Patty) recalls the day vividly as she was the one who found him collapsed in their home. Patty immediately began giving CPR to Zsolt, who she later learned had suffered a cardiac arrest.

“In the days leading up to him passing, I knew he was fatigued from work and was tired from what they had to do COVID-wise. From the job and lack of sleep it was hard for him to get rest,” says Patty. “But I felt he was still himself.”

## ***A heartbroken community***

The sudden death of Zsolt was a devastating blow not only for his family but for the surrounding community of Coaldale, Alberta. Together they continue to grieve the loss of a devoted husband, father, friend, respected colleague and local hero to many.

“He was taken to the hospital in his own ambulance. These were his coworkers that came for the call and together they did everything that could be done.”

## ***A man of many talents remembered***

Zsolt took pride in his work, says Patty, fondly recalling that he would often mentor new recruits during his shifts. Outside of work he was an

avid fisherman, a musician, mechanic and recreational hockey player who loved life and bringing joy to everyone he met.

“He could keep himself busy. He had the ability to pick up the guitar and play it by ear. He also played piano and the drums and was really interested in music. He loved fishing. A day on the water was what he looked forward to most when he got off work.”

## ***Piecing together broken hearts***

Patty and her children try hard to hold on to the happy memories they had with Zsolt. From his jovial sense of humour to his ability to capture any audience with a story, he was a man who simply lit up any room he was in. “I see cool cars on the street and want to take a picture to show him later,”

says his daughter Jenna Varga, “I think about funny stories from work and wish I could tell him and make him laugh.”

For Patty, her husband of 23 years would not be forgotten as she began discussions with some of his colleagues on raising awareness in the field of paramedicine and the stressors that impact their job. She also hopes to plan a memorial service where the community could come together to honour Zsolt with music, laughter and all the things he loved.

“There will be no shortage of stories about Zsolt. His legacy will live on. He will be remembered in the quiet times around the campfire, around the dinner table, at the hood of a car, at the hockey rink, over a cup of coffee and in the back of an ambulance. These are just some examples that I hold dear,” says Patty.

