

BC alum, bookstore employee dies unexpectedly at 46

By Amber Vance
Staff Writer

Bret Stewart, a BC alumnus and Kings Creek Bookstore assistant manager, died on Monday, Feb. 17. He was 46.

Stewart had worked at the campus bookstore for just over two years. "He was very dependable and enthusiastic," said Adam Crane, manager of Kings Creek Bookstore. "He had an uncanny ability to show up when I needed him."

It was because of Stewart's usual punctuality that Crane felt something was wrong. "I tried calling him several times," Crane recalled. When Stewart did not answer, Crane phoned the police to do a welfare check at his home where he was found. Stewart's passing is believed to be connected to diabetic complications.

Stewart was born Thursday, Aug. 30, 1973 in Transylvania County, where he lived for most of his life.

Stewart was a graduate of Brevard High School in the class of 1991. Stewart studied at Blue Ridge Community where he graduated with honors and an Associate of Arts degree in 2005. He enrolled at Brevard College in 2005 and

graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English.

During his time at BC, Stewart received several awards which included the Humanities Division Clara C. Gift Merit Scholarship, the Humanities Division Scholarship and the Humanities Division Award for Excellence in Environmental Literature, Language Studies and American Literature. Stewart was inducted into Alpha Chi National Honors Society and Omicron Delta Kappa National Leadership Honor Society in 2006.

He continued his education earning a Master's of Divinity from Tennessee Temple University Seminary in 2016. Stewart obtained a Master's degree in Theology from Liberty University and he was working on his Master's in Professional Writing.

"Bret was the type of student every teacher loves to have in class," Associate Professor of Teacher Education Betsy Burrows said, who taught him at both Brevard High School and here at the college. "He was one of the most intrinsically motivated students I have taught. He loved language, particularly reading British writers like Shakespeare and Chaucer. He re-read "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy every year just for the fun of it. He had a keen sense of humor and was an amazing Dungeons and Dragons role player. I will miss him. He was my student and my friend and it was an honor to know him."

Stewart was an avid reader and writer in several genres. He wrote poetry, fiction, plays and non-fiction reviews of trails and books. Stewart even wrote a few books of his own like "The Dragon's Lullaby" and "Tales of Transylvania."

Stewart's smaller works were published in several literary magazines and journals including BC's own, Chiaroscuro in 2006 and 2007. Stewart was also a member of the Chiaroscuro staff in 2007. The pieces published in the Chiaroscuro were "By the Creekside" in 2006 and "Deal Another Hand" in 2007, both of which were beautiful in how he used rhyme and repetition of phrases to create rhythm.

The funeral service for Stewart was Friday, Feb. 21, and was handled by Moody-Connolly Funeral Home. He is survived by his two sons and mother along with several other family members and friends. Those who wish to post memories or condolences should visit the Moody-Connolly website, www.moodyconnollyfuneralhome.com/.

Bret Stewart was a remarkable scholar and writer as well as a dependable friend and loving father. Stewart will be missed in the BC community.



Photo from www.facebook.com

Bret Stewart