

The Origins of Close-Knit for Life!

It all began with the unexpected discovery of true, enduring, unconditional love by two very close friends.

Retired professor and nature center founder, Jack Wills, and founder of a 501-c-3 wildlife refuge and sanctuary for people in crisis, Wren Owens, loved and learned together beautifully, and despite their twenty-one-year age difference. With their shared love of nature, animals and all the living, they experienced a complex, tenacious, challenging, frustrating, exciting, even transformative eighteen years of what grew to be absolute, unconditional love. They clung together through the best and the worst of times, ultimately finding themselves individually transformed and made stronger, and softer at the same time.



Jack and Wren traveled from heaven to hell and back again, over and over it seemed. Their first adventure and great challenge together was Jack's liver failure with fortunate transplant in 2002, leading to its resultant chronic kidney disease. A miraculous healing occurred through that saga but over the ensuing years challenges they faced together included advanced cancers (2003 & 2018) and multiple strokes (beginning 2008), all in New York. Caregiving needs fluctuated for Jack. Sometimes he needed zero assistance, and other times it was a full-time situation, followed by part-time, intermittent caregiving assistance needs.

Later, when they moved and were within a week of landing in Pennsylvania, Jack twisted his knee on his way to taking himself to bed. This caused a hairline fracture which, believe it or not, lead to "double pneumonia" in a "rehab," ultimately taking Jack on a veritable rollercoaster ride - with Wren continuing at his side as his friend and advocate. They found themselves "guests" in a total of seven different hospitals between both Pennsylvania and Ohio; plus, three skilled nursing facilities along with three helicopter life-flights to ultimately end up on a ventilator with feeding tube, both by his request. He declared to doctor

after doctor that he wanted to avail himself of all life-sustaining resources available in order to live as long as possible, strengthen up and get back home. He wasn't ready to leave this world in January of 2019.


Unfortunately, because there hadn't been enough time after arriving in PA to obtain a primary physician during the holiday season of 2018, he was "stuck" in the system of hospitals and "healthcare rehabilitation" facilities. No physician would take him on if he was admitted anywhere already, and he wasn't able to go home.



Care in one of these "rehab" not only initiated the advanced pneumonia but horrifically lead to three hospital borne, deadly infections in some of the most prestigious hospitals in the world, including one highly contagious infection originally brought to the U.S. from Afghanistan (*Acinetobacter Baumannii*). This one would "rear its ugly head" several times during the summer of 2019, demanding Jack fight like he'd never fought before.

Jack and Wren faced many wonderful life events together, too, along-side the several near-death situations that arose over the years. There had to be a reason for so much...for all these poignant life-learning opportunities in the time they shared together. Most of all, Jack and Wren were grateful and inspired by the incredible, God-gifted miracles received. They knew God was with them in every moment and, further, that they always had each other's back, no matter what storm they found themselves facing. Always leaning-in, they took everything in stride hand-in-hand, all the way "down the rabbit hole" to the most sacred, intimate transition one can make.

Jack was finally ready to let go of this world to find peace and contentment, eternal Love and divine Spirit. There's no way to adequately describe the room, the air, the light, the heart and the energy surrounding Jack in that hour, but we know he was receiving all-encompassing love and the support of heavenly angels when his heart gently stopped at 10 a.m. EST on September 1st, 2019



For more details on the Close-Knit for Life Journey, including our ambitious Mission message with information on *where we go from here*, please go back to the Home page for that, more extensive article.

Thank you for your interest!

Aho!

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