



Glen (Elena) Hochkeppel

January 15, 1968 - May 1, 2020

Glen (Elena) Hochkeppel, 52, left us tragically and unexpectedly on May 1 at his home in Sterling, Virginia.

Glen spent the past 25 years imparting his passion and enthusiasm for the dramatic arts to hundreds of students at Broad Run and then Stone Bridge high schools in Northern Virginia.

After many years considering the move, Glen announced last summer that he would henceforth be living as a woman. This announcement came in a breezy post that ended "Those in the know, call me Elena". This was just before a huge reunion of extended family, so Elena debuted in style to people who embraced her lovingly and without reservation,

Glen was beautiful, brilliant, slyly hilarious, talented, loving and so very kind--all attributes he shared with Elena. We had hoped that the move would bring her peace and freedom after a lifetime spent hiding an essential part of her being.

Glen was born in Pequannock, New Jersey, on Jan. 15, 1968, the second of Joseph and Molly (Hicks) Hochkeppel's four sons. The family moved several times before settling in Massachusetts, where Glen's formative years were spent. He was a Cohasset High School grad, class of '86, giving the world's most creative salutatorian address on the way out. (Don't ask--it involved pulling a rubber chicken out of his sleeve, among other props.)

After getting degrees from Brandeis and Duquesne, Glen moved to northern Virginia to teach. He was a gifted actor, director, singer, musician, writer and artist, all of which informed his teaching style. He also performed in many area theaters, meeting his wife-to-be, Sarah Maxwell, during a production of the musical "Hair". Glen and Sarah were married for 11 years. As Sarah put it, the couple "parted amicably and with love after creating two incredible human beings", beloved children Eli and Miranda,

Many of Glen's students became his friends as adults as he was on his second generation of students when he died. For several enjoyable years, Glen played sax with M.H. and his Orchestra, a large local jazz group headed by a talented former student and composer. When his former students and colleagues were informed of his passing, social media lit up with tributes to the teacher they lovingly called "H". They credited him with giving drama "nerds" a safe place to flourish , encouraging and mentoring them during their high school years and, in many cases, inspiring them to take up careers in the arts. "H set my feet on the path I'm following," said one post..

Glen/Elena is survived by the following heartbroken people: mother Molly Pierson; children Eli and Miranda; brothers Kurt, Matt and Zach Hochkeppel and their wives Kelly, Kendra and Caitlin;step siblings Elizabeth, Morgan and Jack Pierson; dozens of aunt, uncles, nephews, nieces and cousins in the extended Hochkeppel and Hicks families.

We are sorry that the Covid 19 virus constraints keep us from the comfort of our friends and extended family at this time. We will hold a celebration of Glen/Elena's life in Massachusetts when we can. Meanwhile, interment will be private.

Comments



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Michael White - June 03, 2021 at 04:44 PM



“ Still sucks.

Michael White - June 03, 2021 at 04:45 PM



“ I can't imagine anyone will read this, as it has been a year since Glen/Elena passed away, but a random Google search just recently let me know of their passing.

Let me start by stating that I only knew Elena as Glen, and our friendship only lasted for a few years, though they were formative years. I mean no disrespect, but I want to refer to them as Glen for the rest of this posting, only because that's who they were to me.

I first met Glen shortly after he moved to Cohasset, MA, when he answered a for sale ad for my three-speed bike prior to, I think, the seventh or eighth grade? That's my first memory. All of the other seem unconnected, but here they are.

His short story "I, Nobody," which was undoubtedly a take on "I, Claudius," but one of an existential turn. I grasped neither, for Glen was both far smarter and far more sophisticated and cultured than I, but it didn't change the fact that the story impacted me so much that only a few years later (in a high school half across the country), I wrote a story called "Nobody".

Some kind of a talent show (I can't quite remember the context), in which Glen, John Kornet and I put together some kind of a spoken word/jazz story about Spot and Ralph (I think). I was Spot and Ralph was my dog. I have no idea what the story was about, nor who put it all together, but John and Glen played bass and alto sax. Looking back on that, it seems pretty Greenwich Village for some early 80s kids.

I remember a birthday card he made for me. It was shaped like a cloud and painted brownish-white. In black lettering, he wrote, "Someone suggested that I make your card in the shape of a heart." On the inside he wrote, "I thought they said 'fart'. Oh, well. Happy Birthday anyway!" Brilliant.

My final memory, and probably my last before I moved from Cohasset in the late summer of 1983, was venturing into the woods with my friends to experience a real-life Dungeons & Dragons adventure near his home on Forest Ave. I had an amazing night.

Glen was brilliant, erudite, insightful, nuanced, funny, and the fact that I lost touch makes me sad. I am also sad that because I lost touch I was unable to offer any support to Elena, as I am not unfamiliar with people who have discovered that they belong to the trans community.

I hope somebody gets to read this and, just for a moment, remembers Glen/Elena was how special they were.

With sadness,

John Koch



“ Well said John, I remember much later talking to Glen about how you had continued with writing, and we were both impressed. Keep the spirit alive... (M. White)

Michael White - June 03, 2021 at 09:21 PM



“ I was taught by one Mr. Glen Hochkeppel for four years of High school. I could say many things here; that his influence on my true self carries on to this day and will forever, and that he was the best mentor I've ever looked up to, and that he always started class with wanting us to say something new instead of “here” when taking attendance, but this list is long enough already.

Another mentor of mine had recently passed away last year, and I can only pray that they both rest peacefully.

D.J.H. - February 02, 2021 at 12:04 AM



“ I just heard about Elena's passing through a friend at Brandeis. I am so so sorry for your profound loss. I was friendly with Glen at Brandeis and thought he was such a wonderful, kind, fun, and talented human. May Elena rest peacefully. She will always be in my heart.

Beth Kaufman - November 17, 2020 at 09:25 PM



“ So, so sad. But how wonderful that Glen was able to inspire several generations of students, act, sing and perform. I went to Brandeis with Glen and remember him as funny, soulful and caring. We need more artists in the world and I am sure his creativity and wit will live on in his many students.

- Tom Linfield

Tom Linfield - June 23, 2020 at 01:43 PM



“ 8 files added to the album Hochkeppel Memories



Michael White - May 13, 2020 at 10:28 AM



“ I am heartbroken, and send my deepest sympathies. H has been in my heart every day since high school and now I see how big the hole is that his passing leaves. I am grateful for the time we had, over four decades, and I know he will always be with me, but I feel an era has ended. We met in person for the last time early this year. If I had known it was our last visit, there is so much more I would have said. H had the swiftest, most free mind I have ever encountered, and I will miss learning what he did next.

Michael White - May 13, 2020 at 08:25 AM



“ 2 files added to the album Hochkeppel Memories



Michael White - May 13, 2020 at 08:09 AM



“ I was so sorry to hear of Glen's death and consider myself fortunate to have been able to spend some time with Glen when I went to see the wonderful production of Pippin. I was impressed by the affection and dedication that the students in the cast and crew and the adults assisting felt toward Glen. We have lost a witty and intelligent director/teacher.

Ron Emmons - May 12, 2020 at 10:13 PM



“ Glen was a link to our son Tony and he was Tony’s mentor and inspiration at Stonebridge HS. Tony literally wanted to fashion his life after Glen’s. A kind, thoughtful, creative and nurturing spirit. Tony intended to graduate HS, and then get his college degree in drama and teaching, after which, as he told us and Mr. H, he would be joining him to pursue a teaching position in drama. That’s the kind of person Glen was. An intoxicatingly loving and sensitive soul, who empowered those around him. And gave them the ability to find themselves.

Love,
Bob, Sue and Katie Mason

Bob Mason - May 12, 2020 at 09:52 PM



“ Our hearts go out to you and all the family in this time of loss of such a powerfully magnificent family member. We have fond memories of him in theater.

Meg Young - May 12, 2020 at 02:28 PM



“ So very sorry for your loss. Love to you all.

lisa - May 12, 2020 at 12:28 PM