

I'm sure you know that I would give absolutely anything to just be sitting in the audience today as a proud parent watching my son graduate from law school. For some reason, that was not to be. Instead, I must come and say "thank you" to the Class of 2001. You cannot imagine how this class gift has touched my heart. For as tragic as JJ's death was for me - it could have been worse. It would have been worse if you had forgotten him - if you'd left him behind. You chose not to. Now, as JJ's Mom, I have to believe that says something about the character of my son. But it also says something about you, your character, who you are and what you care about. You could have chosen a variety of special gifts to leave this University but you chose to honor a classmate, a human being.

As you've been in Boulder studying law these past years, I've been at home in Englewood learning a lot too. I've been learning about myself, about life, of course, missing JJ tremendously, and shedding quite a few tears. I thank you for bringing some value to those tears. And JJ thanks you, as well. He can no longer distinguish himself as a member of this class in a law career but this scholarship enables him to contribute in another way for many years to come.

I've thought so long about what JJ might say to you today -given his new and different perspective. And this is not necessarily so earth shattering as it is a reminder. Let's call it a JJ reminder. I think he might say something like this. . .

I never got to marry my Emily, or hold my child or teach my son or daughter how to ski. I never got to go to the new Bronco stadium with my good friends Matt and Chad. I never got to take the bar and I never got my day in court. But, my dear friends, you have the chance, you have the opportunity for these life experiences - so embrace it, rejoice in it and above all enjoy it - and in the case of the bar, study for it. Where your attention goes - you go. And always remember, my intellectual classmates, what good is a great mind if you don't have a good heart.

I think that's what he might have said.

So today this chapter of your life is complete, it's finished. The Witt family and JJ congratulates you and celebrates with you. The next exciting chapter is about to unfold. The Witt family and JJ wishes you all the very, very best.

And if you would, please continue to take a little of JJ's spirit along with you. . . Take him when you go to the mountains - he loved the mountains and under the starry nights - he loved the stars. And take a bit of his spirit into your daily life- he loved life. Let him grow old with you.

To:

Kelly.Foglio@Colorado.EDU, Matthew.Pluss@Colorado.EDU, Chad.Perlov@Colorado.EDU, Matthew.Ralston@Colorado.EDU

From: Joy Plummer <plummer@spot.colorado.edu>

Subject: JJ Witt's Memorial Service

Cc:

Bcc:

The Admissions Office ^{was} ~~were~~ impressed and touched by your comments and anecdotes at JJ's memorial service & wondered if it was possible to have a copy of them. In the future, if there is a scholarship on behalf of JJ we would like to use them as part of a profile for recipients of the scholarship.

Thank you,
Joy

Phone - matt Pluss -247-1622
Chad 449-8370
matt Ralston 494-8471
Kelly - N/A



MEMORIAL SERVICE

John Jeffrey "JJ" Witt, II
1975 - 1999

Wednesday, September 8

3:00 p.m.

**Lindsley Memorial Courtroom
University of Colorado School of Law
Boulder, Colorado**

**Dean Harold H. Bruff
Mrs. Mary Witt
Matt Pluss '01
Chad Perlov '00
Kelly Foglio '01
Matt Ralston '01
Professor Allison Eid**

*Please join Dean Bruff and the Witt Family for
a tree planting on the
west lawn immediately following the service.*

*A reception will follow in the
Moorhead-Rutledge Lounge.
We invite you to sign the guestbook
on the reception table.*



When you lose someone you care deeply for there is a pain that is realized that is so intense it cannot even be described. I have lost that person and I have realized that pain.

Sitting down to write this was not easy. Putting JJ Witt into mere words, I have found, is not an easy task. I think if I had the vocabulary he had, then maybe this would have been a bit easier.

Parents today watch their children turn to celebrities (on television, in the movies, on the playing field), as role models. If just *one* of those children chose to turn his head from the television set and find a person like JJ Witt to be his role model they would be light years ahead of the rest. I would teach them how to appreciate life each and every day, how to look into the sky and see more than just the stars, and how to never stop realizing that there *is* more to life than just what is going on in *your* immediate surroundings.

Essentially, I would teach them to be the kind of person that their parents' dream, every night, their children will mature to become. When parents are expecting children, it seems to me, they always hope that they will have a child that other children will admire and a child that other parents' hope their own children aspire to emulate. JJ Witt was that person. He was kind, compassionate, generous ... and altogether, quite simply, an extraordinary human being.

What's more, J might have been the brightest person I have ever met ... he just knew so much. I learned a great deal from JJ and even while he may be gone, he continues to teach me lessons. Most importantly, J taught me that there is a difference between affect with an "a" and effect with an "e"; affect is a noun and effect is a verb ... or is it the other way around?

Just to have known JJ Witt, to have spent endless hours talking, laughing, hiking, studying, and just being with him was, and is, an honor – I just wish that that honor could have been bestowed upon more people. J touched people in a way like no other. I feel so lucky to have known him... even if for only a short time. Though J's time with all of us was brief, his impact on each and every one of us will be felt for eternity.

JJ Witt cannot be imitated, will never be duplicated and most importantly will never be forgotten for he lives on in our thoughts and our prayers.

JJ – may the road rise up to meet you, may the wind be always at your back, may the sun shine warm upon your face, and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand.

JJ will
say Matt Kalton

I miss him, because now I have to look up for myself what the capital of Zimbabwe is...

I miss him, because now I won't have anyone to make fun of if the Bengals almost beat the Broncos again this year...

I miss him, because I can't for the life of me find the constellation Orion in the night sky...

I miss him, because he made Fridays JJ Fridays, because of his ridiculous, conversation stopping pearls of wisdom...

I miss him, because now nobody bitches about how much their legs hurt after weekly Thursday racquetball matches...

I miss him, because he knows what Jefferson's biggest mistake was...

I miss him, because when asked a question to which he didn't know the answer, his reply was never the boring "I don't know" but was instead, "wow, I have absolutely no response to that question whatsoever..."

I miss him, because he may have been the last fan to believe that the Donkeys can three-peat...

I miss him, because if I would have known that he was a high school football player, I never would have let him live it down...

I miss him, because I think with a little work, I could have talked him into a tattoo...

I miss him, because nobody could rip through moguls riding only on the back 15 centimeters of their skis like he could...

I miss him, because he would have made a great lawyer, or writer, or fighter pilot, or anything...

I miss him, because he had an insatiable desire to know the esoteric and useless facts that seem to begin every good conversation...

I miss him, because of the look on *his* face when a question came up in conversation that was theoretical to everyone but him, and I miss the look on everyone else's faces when he came up with the answer...

I miss him, because losing him is the most conclusive proof that I have ever witnessed that there is a heaven, for such a place could not not exist with someone like him waiting for admission...

I miss him, because my year with him, and the world's 24, were not enough...

Every one of these jumbles is only the first line of a story, and if we were all to sit around for the next year we wouldn't come up with anything close to a complete history of JJ.

So ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, because there are so many memories, we should not mourn for JJ Witt. For if any of us can manage to touch, to change and to brighten as many lives as he did, in twice as many years as he was given, then we have succeeded more fully and purely than our wildest plans and expectations. The sorrow in our minds, in our hearts, and in our souls, must be reserved for the fact that our time with him was so quick, but never for an instant because it was anything but absolutely unforgettable, and so absolutely JJ.

No food or drink allowed in the courtroom, but tonight, or tomorrow, and for as often as you all have the memory of JJ in your hearts, raise a glass to the stars, and thank God for the glimpse that we were all fortunate enough to catch.