

# Remembering Taylur

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## A community celebrates the life of a vibrant and faithful Sandy teen, Taylur DeWolf



photos courtesy of CARMEN MORRISON DAFFRO

Taylur DeWolf, the 17-year-old Sandy teen who died in a snowboarding accident Friday, is described by loved ones as a rare gem.

By Lisa K. Anderson  
staff writer

Taylur DeWolf had a New Year's resolution to take a photo each day this year.

Each picture would represent a little something that made her happy that day.

She started with a picture of her new red hairdo.

As January progressed, she photographed an application for her dream internship, and the Big Band concert at Sandy High School on Jan. 1.

She captured her spinning class,

worship with Sandy Assembly of God, rock climbing and her reorganized bedroom.

Friday night, the 17-year-old Sandy teen and her two friends prayed for safety and protection before snowboarding at Mt. Hood Skibowl.

When her friends didn't see her at the bottom of the hill after Taylur had passed by at a fast speed, they assumed she'd gone back up the lift.

They reached bottom again without seeing her and notified Skibowl patrol. They also called Taylur's father, who drove up from Sandy and called authorities around 10:30 p.m.

According to a Clackamas County

Sheriff's Office report, Taylur was found just after 11 p.m. about 10 feet from a groomed, downhill route. She died after striking a tree and suffering severe trauma to her head and chest.

"There's just an emptiness in the world because she's not here," said Chris Cauch, Taylur's uncle. "She was a rare gem."

Taylur had big sparkly eyes and a smile for everyone. She loved the color purple and involved herself in everything she could. She was faithful, vibrant, intelligent and mature. Funny, kind, beautiful and self-assured.

"You never had to worry about her making you proud," Cauch said. "She

did it without thinking.

"I couldn't figure out how she balanced all the things she did, but she made them flow together."

Taylur was born Dec. 3, 1994, in Portland and lived in several locations before her dad retired from the Navy and the family settled in Sandy.

Hattie Scobert, a junior at Sandy High School, remembers selling Girl Scout cookies with Taylur when the two were little girls.

"I don't think she saw the bad in anyone," Hattie said.

She also recalls Taylur's affinity for dressing up and being silly. Once, the

# Taylor: 'She made everything brighter, happier'

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friends dressed up in fancy old clothes and took pictures in front of a Marilyn Monroe cutout before watching "Hairspray."

Taylor had received her Silver Award in Girl Scouts and was working toward her Gold Award, something fewer than 6 percent of Girl Scouts earn.

In 2007, Taylor was crowned as the fourth Sandy Mountain Festival Princess, accompanied by her very proud father, Harry, or "Navy Blue Bear."

"She just glowed," said Jennifer Collins, an older cousin. And of course, she wore a purple dress and gloves.

As she grew up, Taylor continued to light up a room and make people smile. Her father remembered when Taylor placed 11th in a national writing contest and won \$3,500 in eighth grade. The first thing she did was put the money into a savings account for college.

When the opportunity to buy

her uncle's car came up her eighth-grade year, Taylor told her uncle, "Give me an estimate!" And when he did, she bought the car.

Last spring, Taylor won a scholarship through Fujifilm for a fundraising and photojournalism contest in which she had chronicled the construction of retired Army Specialist Kevin Pannell's new home in Sandy.

In an earlier interview, Pannell said his family had hung Taylor's photographs in their home.

Taylor dreamed of pursuing medical research, and hoped to find a cure for diabetes, which her grandfather had died from. She was already working toward an associates degree at Mt. Hood Community College, through the Estacada Web Academy and Early College program.

"She was so excited for her future," said her aunt, Deborah Kennedy. "She had visited colleges and was always wanting to learn about different subjects."

Most recently, Taylor had taken interest in the documentary "Food, Inc." and the sustainable food movement, Kennedy said.

Loved ones speak of Taylor's deep faith, which was central to her life. An active member of

Sandy Assembly of God, Taylor was involved in her church worship team and last summer traveled to Morelia, Mexico, on a mission trip, where she served in an orphanage for 10 days.

Kyle Ball, the pastor for young adults, remembers once praying his infant daughter would grow up to be like Taylor, and love God like Taylor did.

"Love poured out of her," Ball said.

Crystal Kitchen, who met Taylor at Mt. Hood Community College, said every conversation led back to faith. "She pushed you to go out of your box and never shied away from an adventure."

Amanda Snodgrass, a longtime friend, also remembers how Taylor's conversations led back to God.

"She was one of those people who could change many lives," Snodgrass said. "She was like a footprint in concrete, and she's placed feet prints on my heart. I don't think anyone will forget her."

Once when Nadia Kennedy was visiting family in Oregon and taking a family portrait, her cousin Taylor suggested the photo would look better with yellow daisies in front. The photographer took this

suggestion, and the portrait was beautiful. "She was always able to make something brighter or happier," Kennedy said.

For another cousin, Joel Brache, Taylor was like a little sister. He once took her to "Swan Lake" at the Oregon Ballet Theatre when she was little.

When he received a call that Taylor was missing Friday, Brache headed up to Skibowl to support his family and brought his skiing gear in hopes that he could help find her.

He said Taylor was a very good snowboarder and wasn't known for going too fast. She was wearing a helmet when the accident occurred.

This was the first death at Mt. Hood Skibowl since 1996, said John Vermaas, mountain department manager, and the staff was deeply saddened by the loss.

Amid her grief, Taylor's aunt, Esther Cauch, said she finds comfort in coming across the many gifts Taylor made for her, including a strawberry pin cushion and an apron.

"I feel her all around me, and she brings me peace and happiness," Cauch said.

Taylor's loved ones have estab-

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...Taylor's youth pastor. I pray that people would take hold of what happened and realize how short life is — how valuable it is.”

Taylor DeWolf is survived by her father, Harry; mother, Gretel; brother, Luke; two grandmothers; and numerous aunts, uncles, cousins and friends.

A memorial service is scheduled for 1 p.m. Friday, Feb. 3, at Sandy Assembly of God, 39800 Highway 26, Sandy.