

Amanda Finch

Comments from the EMS staff

"Amanda was a special friend. Someone who I could joke with and "bug" like she was my little sister. We shared laughs together, and I only wish that time could be returned to get to know her more."

"This day has made us stronger...Amanda is watching over all of us, forever."

"Amanda was the most kind-hearted person that I have ever met, and she will be missed greatly. May the lord walk with her, in her..."

"My birthday is only two days before Finchy's. Realizing this, Amanda waited until we left on a call to work some magic. When we got back to the station, there was a homemade birthday card and two chocolate Hostess snack cakes sitting on the counter. Later that night she told me that that was the only thing she could find for a birthday cake because all the stores had closed. I can't remember what she made the card of, or even what it said, but I kept it on my dresser and have since lost it. Of course, I gobbled down the cakes not knowing that act of kindness would become so profound only four months later. Two days later of course, I forgot that it was her birthday and was only able to offer verbal greetings during the course of our shift."

"My heart sank when I viewed her scrapbook at the visitation... a mere 3 or 4 pages of what should have been many scrapbooks in her career."

"It was a brutal ice storm in which all of us found ourselves sprawled on our rear ends in the middle of the road on more than one occasion. Amanda and I laughed at the prospect of her getting her picture taken in such an unflattering pose. It turns out that the picture that made the paper was actually a great one and they even spelled her name correctly. She was easy to tease, so the next time I saw her I pretended to be star struck and asked for her autograph... she just turned more red and smiled even wider...What a shame."

"We wanted the most caring, sweet, sensitive and wonderful people working with us, so obviously God needed some pretty great angels up there too. He chose Amanda and now she can help people forever." "I'm sure that Amanda will be watching all of us and would want us all to carry on and be strong for each other."

by John Prno,
EMS Department

Early Monday morning, July 7th, our world was suddenly turned upside down. The absolutely horrific happened with Regional paramedics called upon to try and save the life of one of our own... Amanda Finch. Amanda was just 21 and recovering at home from minor surgery when something terrible and as yet unexplained happened. Despite the best efforts of her co-workers, firefighters, police officers and staff at Grand River Hospital, she could not be revived and passed away.

The remainder of the week was literally a blur, broken only by the images of street hardened paramedics in tears, the condolences from staff at the Region, across the province and beyond, and the close show of support of our paramedics for one another. Her paramedic co-workers volunteered to stand watch beside her casket as hundreds of her friends and family passed by.

Friday found almost six hundred mourners jamming Zion Lutheran Church in Waterloo for Amanda's funeral. So many were present that a closed circuit TV feed was established to accommodate the crowd in a nearby auditorium. Uniformed paramedics from as far as Sault Ste. Marie and Windsor joined 100 of our own staff in a sendoff that we know Amanda would have been extremely proud of. Neighbouring services provided ambulance coverage for the Region enabling staff to attend the funeral. As you can imagine it was an extremely emotional and beautiful service ending with a lone piper playing Amazing Grace as Amanda's casket was carried to her coach through a uniformed honour guard that stretched to the street and beyond.

Amanda was a very special young lady, mature beyond her years. It seemed to everyone that she'd been around forever. She fell in love with EMS during a Co-Op stint in high school, went on to spend two years here while a paramedic student at Conestoga College, and was a part-time paramedic with us since graduation in May of 2002. Only last month, had she accepted a long awaited full-time position.

In closing Amanda's eulogy, Paramedic Jim Topham summed up our feelings best:

"A good friend is hard to find, harder to lose, and impossible to forget. We love you and miss you Finchy. You will remain on our minds and in our hearts forever."

