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Friends, family, colleagues—thank you for being here today.

I’m Emily, Jon’s wife.
For fifteen years we were married, partners in everything from parenting to paddling.
He was my steady place—the quiet in the middle of whatever storm rolled in.

Jon was born on May 3, 1979, in Halifax, and even after he moved to Toronto to study paramedicine at Humber, a piece of the Atlantic stayed with him.
You could hear it in the way he said “weather,” in his love of rocky shorelines, and in that Maritime instinct to show up, no fuss, when someone needed help.

He passed on March 2, 2026, here in Toronto.
He was 46.
Numbers that still look wrong to me when I say them out loud.

Jon served this city as a paramedic for two decades, most recently as a field training officer.
I’ve heard so many stories these past days—rookies who became confident because he stood beside them, families who remember the way his calm voice slowed a room down.
Witty under pressure, endlessly patient, brave in all the ordinary ways that actually count.
He led without making it about him.
He listened like the whole outcome hinged on getting the facts right—and often, it did.

At home, he was Dad.
Noah, Grace—you already know your dad’s hug could melt worry like salt in warm water.

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He had a way of making even the living room feel safer.
He taught you to tie your skates by doing it twice—once slowly, once silly.
He coached minor hockey not to win every game, but to make sure every kid left the ice feeling like they mattered.
There were a lot of lopsided victories in the hot-chocolate-after department because of him.

Sundays were for pancakes.
He'd pretend it was a normal batch, then he'd turn around a plate of misshapen maple leaves, canoes, and, once, what he swore was Newfoundland.
We negotiated that one.
He strummed old folk songs on his dented guitar, the same three chords he claimed were "all you ever need."
And somehow it was enough—enough to fill a kitchen with harmony, enough to settle a house for the night.

He loved Algonquin, the long quiet of a portage, the honest ache of carrying more than your share because you can.
He would paddle the bow and keep our pace without a word, glancing back with that grin when loons called from the next lake.
On those trips he reminded me that stillness is not the same as absence.
It's a kind of attention.

He was also the first to speak up when it was hard.
Service before self was not a line to Jon—it was direction.
Kindness in action.
Fairness as habit.
The truth, even when it made the room tense for a minute, because dignity follows truth.
He believed first responders deserved the same care they gave everyone else.
He pushed for mental health supports, and he did it the way he did most things—steady, respectful, persuasive because he'd done the work.
To those who served alongside him: he was proud of you.
He carried you in his thoughts when he took off the uniform at night.

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My favourite memory sits on a shelf in my mind, polished by a thousand retellings.

Peggy’s Cove.

A day of wind and spray, one of those Atlantic storms that makes tourists sensible and locals restless.

We watched waves heave themselves at the rocks until, for one small breath of afternoon, the clouds split and light just poured down like someone had opened a door.

Jon started to laugh-cry.

Hands shaking, breath all tangled, he told me he didn’t want to spend another day wondering if I knew how sure he was.

He dropped to one knee on those sun-struck rocks and asked me to marry him.

I said yes, of course I said yes, and then we both laughed because he’d chosen the one patch of dry to kneel on, like he’d arranged it with the weather.

That was Jon.

Find the window of light.

Use it.

Invite someone into it with you.

To Martin and Linda—your boy grew into a man who made people feel safe, and he never forgot where he came from.

To Rebecca—you were his first teammate.

He said you made him brave before he knew the word for it.

To our kids—he loved you with his whole life.

To our friends and our big messy family—you were the bench he could sit on when the day had been too much.

Thank you for being here now.

There are a hundred small, ordinary things I will miss.

His dry one-liners when the smoke alarm screamed at the toast: “Breakfast is just enthusiastic today.”

The way he’d lay a hand on my shoulder as he passed, no announcement, just

warmth.

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How he would stand in a doorway at night and take one extra second to look at a room he loved, like he was tucking the whole house in.

And there are the larger things—his way of stepping into chaos and lowering the temperature by speaking gently; the example he set for Noah and Grace that courage doesn't always look loud; the proof he gave all of us that decency travels farther than noise.

Today hurts.
But we are not just saying goodbye.
We are carrying forward the best of what Jon practised every day.

So here is what I think he would ask of us:
Show up when someone needs you.
Tell the truth kindly.
Be fair, especially when no one is keeping score.
Ask for help when the night is heavy.
And hold each other—really hold each other—long enough to share the weight.

After the service, there's a reception with Jon's favourite butter tarts.
Please come.
Tell stories.
The good ones, the honest ones, the ones that end with a crooked smile.
If you feel moved to do something in his memory, donations to CAMH or to a first responder support charity would make sense to him.
And if you'd like a copy of what I've shared today, you can reach me at cto@kuchventures.com.

Jon, my love—thank you for every steady mile.
For the lakes and the late shifts, for the burned pancakes and the perfect ones, for the hard conversations that made us better, for choosing light whenever it cracked through.

We will keep paddling.Create your own personalized speech at eulogyai.ca

We will keep the pace you set.

And we will make the rooms we enter a little safer, because you taught us how.

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