

Linda Doyle

Just as many of you probably feel about your own... my mother was my greatest hero, confidant, and cheerleader. She was one of the strongest, liveliest, loving, and devoted people I have ever known. Her love and kindness knew no boundaries and anyone who ever met her was truly a better person because of it. She lived every moment for her family, specifically her children and grandchildren, and gave her time voluntarily to her most loved charitable organizations, including her favorite project, being one of the most dedicated TNR volunteers for the Central Oklahoma Humane Society's feral cat populations. My mother never missed a day of feeding, rescuing, and caring for the hundreds of cats that lived in the Oklahoma City area. Nothing kept her from her beloved kitties who had no one else to care for them, not rain, snow, sleet or cold. She was there 365 days a year. She had finally found her calling and her happiness in helping others.

My mother and father divorced while I was in elementary school, it was 1984. She showed such strength and courage over those years and she raised her 2 daughters as a single mom, working full time. In 1998, my mother met "the love of her life", John. In 1999 they were married. She said that was one of the happiest days of her life. My mother had worked so hard for so long to provide a great life to my sister and I and now she finally had the missing piece, a long-awaited, happy marriage to a wonderful man who truly loved her. Over the years since her marriage my mother finally had a chance to enjoy her life. She started discovering her passions and dreams and made the time to accomplish them.

She built and enjoyed koi ponds and made her backyard the beautiful oasis she had always envisioned it as. She began to experience the thrill of hunting for and restoring antiques and other intriguing items. She discovered her interests in antique clocks and became a knowledgeable collector. Her talents and passion for her interests made her an invaluable asset to those around her in business and personal relationships. She began to hold many positions in many groups and associations. She even traveled out of the country for the first time finally getting the opportunity to see the world. She had finally found her place in the world and she was enjoying it.

Also over these years she was blessed to have 2 sweet granddaughters who meant the entire world to her. Her dreams for them were limitless and she couldn't wait to see all the great things these beautiful girls would achieve. The girls are now 13 and 1 ½.

On Sept. 3, 2008 my mother had got a phone call from a man who had some cat food he was donating to the Oklahoma Humane Society. She was going to go pick it up for the cats since she had some extra time before John, her husband would be home so she was just going to pick it up and get back home soon. She hung up the phone, went straight to her car and left the house. At 4:43 pm the stop light at the entrance to her neighborhood turned green and she began to proceed through the intersection. At this same time, a 20 year old man was getting into his car at the Goodwill Store preparing to go home. Next, he picked up his phone and began to have a phone conversation and then he pulled out of

the parking lot onto the road. Less than ¼ mile from this point the truck the man was in ran that same red light and hit my mother's car and T-boned it at an estimated 45-50 miles per hour (the posted speed limit was 50). The impact resulted in my mother's car being spun around and striking another vehicle who was simply sitting at the red light also.

The driver of the truck got out and admitted he was on the cell phone and never saw the light or my mother's car. The newspapers stated, "he was engrossed in a cellular telephone conversation at the time of the crash". To further evidence his not seeing anything, there were no skid marks and witnesses stated he never even tried to stop. There were also no other factors involved, no alcohol, no drugs, he wasn't speeding and it was a clear day. Emergency crews and witnesses did everything they could to save my mother. When I was finally able to speak with the doctor at the hospital he told me they were able to bring her back once but the injuries were just too extensive and my mother was pronounced dead at 7:05pm. The medical examiner listed the cause of death as blunt force trauma to the head, neck, and chest. I call it death by cell phone. That phone call could not have been more important than my mother's life. And not only my mother's life and my families life were affected by this senseless act but I do also think about the driver and his family, they now have to live with the fact that his poor decision to talk on that phone while driving resulting in an innocent woman's death and they must now live with that everyday.

I had to go and get the rest of my mother's personal belongings from her car at the wrecking service which gave me the opportunity to see the damage for myself. I had prepared myself for it mentally and was expecting to see the severe damage to the driver's side door. But I wasn't prepared to see the damage that was caused to the seat my mother was strapped in. The seat had been twisted and smashed to such a severe degree, it is unimaginable the pain and injuries caused by this damage. Also, the side of the door had actually come apart and been pushed into the side of her head. It was so unnecessary for my mother to have been killed in such a violent manner, she was such a beautiful person. Put yourself, your mother, or your wife/husband or child in that seat and tell me if that cell phone call is worth the risk. No one else should have to experience what my family or thousands of other families have that share this same story.

My mother, Linda Doyle had 40 more years left in her, she was only 61. She had so many more plans. She never got the chance to see her granddaughters grow up. She only had 9 years with her husband to experience what true happiness was like. Her daughters never got a chance to show her their true appreciation for all she had done. We all thought we had more time. Please make the right choice to hang up and save a life! It's not worth the price you may have to pay. I will never get my mother back. Hang up and Drive!