**Categories:** Mom Groups

# I lost a dear friend to cancer

I have a good friend -Gina-of about 7 years who has been fighting cancer since October last year. She and I were both pregnant with our girls, back in 2003. She has an older boy, 8 years old, who is autistic.

We both belong to an online forum and have a big group of women who are mothers. We have a sistership and we all live in all corners of the country.

Last Friday, my friend, Nancy, called me and told me Gina's time on earth was ending soon. This came to a huge shock to me. Over a month ago Gina was so optimistic about her cancer treatment. She took a little time off from the treatment to get the pain management under control. What she didn't tell all of us was that the time off was really going into hospice care.... I don't think she wanted to worry any of us.

Anyway, the reality was our dear, sweet Gina was going to be joining the angels soon. She would be leaving behind her true loves - her daughter Andrea and Matthew as well as her hubby Matt.

When I got this news from Nancy, I just broke down. Why - why - why!! Gina is only 41 years old. She is her son, Matthew's rock and a huge advocate for his autism. How would this affect the kids? It just made my heart ache.

Then Sunday on the way to Hollywood Hills, I got a call from my friend Nancy. I didn't want to answer the phone because I knew what I was going to hear and I thought if I didn't hear it, it would not be true. But I had to face reality, face the truth and I answered the phone. Nancy told me that Gina had passed away 2 hours ago. I had a pit in my throat that I just couldn't swallow. It took my breath away. I couldn't lose it...I was driving. I prayed as I drove.

I miss my sweet Gina. God Bless you my dear friend. You have left behind a legacy of your children and your sisterhood of friends. You will never be forgotten and you have touched so many lives.

Here is a poem in dedication for Gina:

Gina,
I guess heaven was needing a hero
Somebody just like you
Brave enough to stand up
For what you believe
And follow it through
When I try to make it make sense in my mind
The only conclusion I come to
Is heaven was needing a hero

Like you

In memory of our sister

Here is the obituary of Gina:

Gina M. (Trucillo) Pintar, 41, passed away July 26, 2009, with her family and friends by her side at her home in Rockaway. Family and friends are invited to attend a Funeral Mass at St. Clement Pope and Martyr Church, 154 Mt. Pleasant Ave., Rockaway Township, (973)366-7095, on Thursday, July 30, 2009, at 10 a.m. Visitation will be at Tuttle Funeral Home, 272 State Rt. 10 West, Randolph, www.tuttlefh.com, during the hours of 4 to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, July 29, 2009. Interment services will be at the Gate of Heaven Cemetery in East Hanover. Born on May 25, 1968, to John and Carole Trucillo, Gina grew up in Harrison, and graduated Harrison High School as salutatorian in 1986. She then attended New Jersey Institute of Technology and graduated in 1991 with a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering. During her time there, she played collegiate volleyball and softball and was co-editor and editor of the school yearbook, "The Vector". She was also a member of Alpha Sigma Tau sorority and later became a founding member of the chapter at Seton Hall University and also National District President. After graduating college, she lived in Marlton, N.J., for a few years where she was employed by Flour Daniel as a project control engineer. Her most recent employment was with Kvaerner in 2003. Gina and Matt, married in 1993, lived the past 16 years in Rockaway Township. Together they have two children, Matthew, 8, and Andrea, 5. Gina was completely devoted to her children and spent much of her time and energy making sure that the best would be provided for them. Gina was a member of St. Clement Church in Rockaway Township. She was an active member of the PTA at Dennis B. O'Brien School, which her children attend. Her hobbies and passions include scrapbooking and family vacations. She was also the author of a children's book, "Meet my Brother! A Sister's Story of Love and Autism" which she wrote for her children with the hopes of bringing autism awareness and acceptance to both parents and children. Gina was a strong voice to countless people dealing with autism and infertility, offering endless support and advice in many on-line forums. She has touched the lives of many people and will truly be missed by all. She is survived by her parents, John and Carole Trucillo of Harrison; her brother, John, his wife, Dawn, niece Ava, and nephew John Jr., all of South Carolina, and her brother, Mario of Harrison. She is also survived by her in-laws, Matthew and Barbara Pintar of Succasunna, and brothers-in-law Kevin, his wife Joanna, and nephew Michael, and Jason and his wife Rachel, and Jonathan. There are also several uncles, aunts, and cousins who will truly miss her. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the National Autism Society, in Gina's memory, at www.Autism-Society.org.

**Date:** 28-07-2009