

## Remembering Kimberly Ann Braid

We at *American Fastener Journal* offer our deepest condolences to Guy Avellon of GT Technical Consultants, Ltd., and his family, after the loss of his daughter, Kimberly.

After an extraordinary life of endurance, optimism, and selflessness, Kimberly Ann Braid passed away in February at the age of 51.

Guy told us that “Kimberly’s journey through life has provided a legacy of strength, determination, inspiration and love” to everyone she touched.

Kim, a Cleveland native, was an energetic teenager who played the flute in the marching band and who loved to ski. At the age of 16, she was diagnosed with a fast-spreading cancer on her leg that had spread to her lungs. Although Kim was given less than a 10% chance of survival, she and her medical care team fought hard, and she endured three years of chemotherapy and radiation treatments.

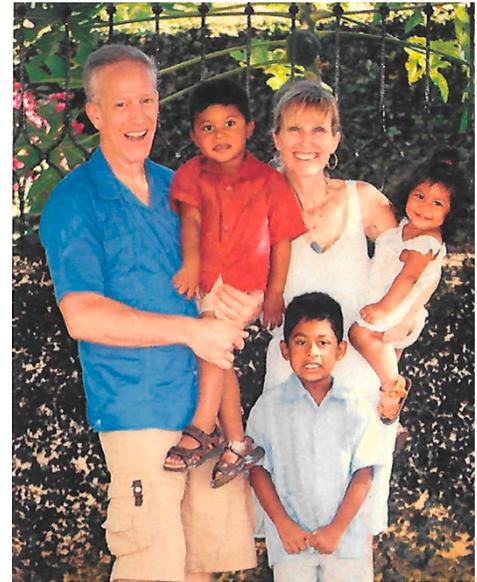
Not only did Kim beat the odds and survive, but she became an inspiration to other young cancer patients and was even featured in *The Plain Dealer* (Cleveland). This caught the attention of a wig maker, for whom she became a model.

Despite this cancer battle, Kim graduated high school with honors and graduated college with a degree in psychology. Upon moving to the Chicago area, she worked with disabled and troubled youth at Maryville Academy, as it was her desire to give back and help others.

Kim was married to Pete in 1997, but they could not have any children as a result of her cancer treatments. In the early 2000s, the latent effects of the radiation led to her first breast cancer diagnosis, and Kim endured even more radiation. All of this caused the deterioration of her lower heart muscle and lungs. On the third reoccurrence of breast cancer, Kim had a double mastectomy.

Kim’s desire for children led to the adoption of their sweet baby boy, Mason, from a ministry in Nicaragua in 2010. In 2017, Kim and Pete received a call from the orphanage asking if they wanted two more children, Brody, age two, and his sister Marielle, age two months. This time the adoption process lasted 14 months, at the end of which Kim was hospitalized with heart failure and a serious cough.

Pneumonia placed Kim on oxygen, and she needed a double lung transplant. She was admitted to Loyola University Medical Hospital in May of 2021. Amid the tubes, pumps and monitoring devices, Kim kept a cheerful outlook and made quick friends with the hospital staff. Her caregivers found Kim to be a model patient who rarely complained. When a tracheotomy took away her ability to speak, she used an eraser board to communicate.



Many months passed before Kim finally received a pair of lungs on December 31, 2021. She appeared to be doing well until she had a massive brain hemorrhage on January 31, 2022. On February 1, she made her final journey into the arms of our Lord. Dozens of Kim's nurses and doctors were with her to pay their final respects as she crossed over. This was a testament to the lives Kim touched with her strength and kindness.

The hospital chaplain who ministered to Kim presided over her funeral, but with so many caregivers unable to attend due to schedules or distance, the hospital held a memorial service in their own chapel. This was the first service of its kind for a patient. As part of the ceremony that included prayer and reflections by Kim's caregivers, it was stated: "So long as we live, Kim too shall live, for she is now a part of us. That's why Kim will always be with us."

As Guy told us, "No one could have wished for a better legacy."

In addition to her loving parents, Linda and Guy Avellon, Kim is survived by her beloved husband of 24 years, Peter Braid; her cherished children, Mason, Brody, and Marielle; her siblings, Kelley (Andrew) Bevington-Burch and Guy (fiancée Amanda Baker) Avellon, Jr.; and her Aunt Diane Buck.

In lieu of flowers, the family has asked that memorial contributions be made towards a college fund for Mason, Brody, and Marielle. A GoFundMe account has been established and can be found at <https://gofund.me/00484257>.