

## Dennis Clark Brown

No words can sum up a life, but these are a few thoughts that occur to me at this time...

I named my brother. I turned 6 years old 2 weeks and a day before Dennis Clark Brown was born that particularly blessed St. Patrick's Day in 1960. One evening before he was born, my parents came in my room, and my mother sat down in a chair next to my bed. Mom read off a list of boy's names and asked me what I liked. Somewhere in the process the names Dennis and Clark came up back to back. I was barely 6. Mom didn't know I wasn't really thinking about the names themselves; I just liked the rhythm of it. It had 2 syllables that formed a pickup to a strong, decisive downbeat, "Dennis Clark," and so I thought that should be a fitting name for my new brother. After we were grown, Dennis told me he never really cared for his name until he found out that "Dennis" is a derivative of "Dionysus," the Greek god of wine.

I remember one day sometime after he arrived, Mom said to me "would you like to hold your little brother?" She sat me down on the edge of her bed and placed him carefully in my arms giving me instructions to support his head. It's hard now to believe that Dennis was ever that little; he didn't stay little for long.

Many beliefs support the persistence of the soul or essence of a person after death, and I find I cannot think of Dennis only in the past tense. But it is important to me that Dennis is not the tormented person I saw on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February this year. That was a temporary condition; that is not who Dennis is.

It's true that Dennis is a cancer patient. He is a cancer patient with hope and optimism, who achieved full remission from an onslaught of brain tumors even after the doctor told him they were "no longer trying for a cure."

Dennis is a patient who once told me that a nurse had actually thanked him for being "such a good patient." He said "I didn't do anything. Those nurses must really take a lot of abuse for them to think I was that good of a patient." But Dennis is someone who is always fair-minded and considerate, and people who get close enough to see him naturally like him.

But Dennis is also a well and vital person with a keen and growing interest in the world, not only the world of technology, but also the world of culture and history. He is someone who has learned to sing songs such as “Sous le Ciel de Paris” and “Jardin d’Hiver” in French, and to accompany himself on the guitar.

Dennis is a computer programmer who has a tale of accomplishment from every place he ever worked, both in the United States Air Force and as a civilian.

Dennis is the proud father of a wonderful daughter, with whom he shares a unique and very special bond.

Dennis is a boy who has found his own special place and is sleeping cradled between branches high up in a magnolia tree in the neighbor’s yard on a lazy afternoon.

Dennis is a boy reading every book in the childrens’ section of the local library, and some of the ones in the grown-up section too.

Dennis is a boy playing games and getting into mischief with a cousin in Arkansas.

Dennis is a young boy learning to ride a bicycle while I run along side him, holding him steady for a bit, and then let him go on his own.

Dennis is all these things and so much more.

And me, I feel so very lucky – because Dennis Clark Brown is my brother!!!

Dennis, my brother, my friend, please take with you every good thing you’ve found in life: all the music, all your accomplishments, every happy moment, and most of all, all the love of those of us who care about you and have enjoyed your company.