## I'm gonna miss that smile

Written by Deb Egenberger Thursday, 11 February 2010 22:43 -



At least once a week—sometimes more often—I put an extra plate and fork on the table for supper.

Math homework was often better understood when hammered out with a friend on a full stomach.

I came to expect the extra face at mealtime and was often disappointed if he didn't show up.

Over the course of seven years, I watched as he grew along side my son from a scrawny little junior high punk to a handsome, muscle-bound young man.

As his voice became deeper, his hair evolved from unruly curls to short and well-groomed.

His boots—purple and polished—were a fitting symbol of his cowboy way: work hard, play harder.

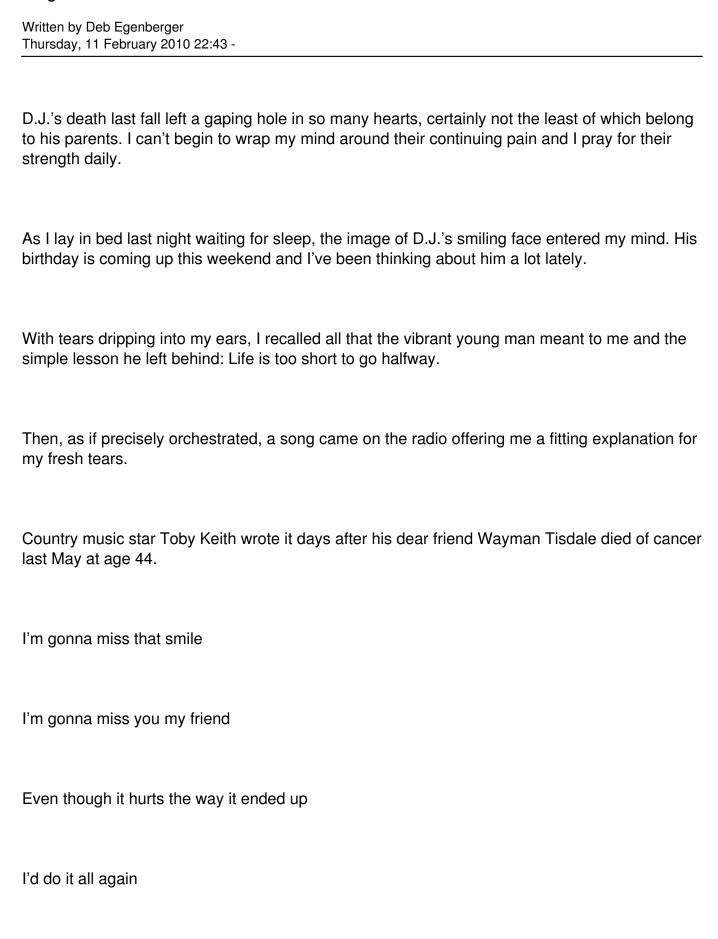
D.J. Pedersen was the kind of kid who could brighten any room just by walking into it. I don't recall a single time I saw him without a smile. Anyone who ever met him knows it's true.

He was also one of the hardest working young men I've ever known. Whether it was conditioning in the heat of the day before football season, learning to ride a bull in a dusty rodeo arena or figuring algebra problems at a friend's supper table, he gave his all.

He was a gentleman when he should be and a rowdy cowboy when he could be.

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So play it sweet in heaven



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