



In Memory of

**Lalan Ho**

Class of 2001

25 January 1983 - 22 January 1999

Lalan Ho, 15, 1921 Rudolph Road, Eau Claire, died Friday of injuries sustained in an automobile accident on Hwy. 37. She was born Jan. 25, 1983, in Winona, Minn. She was currently a student at Memorial High School. She worked weekends at the family restaurant, Peking Gardens in Eau Claire. She was known as a very warm and sociable young woman. She deeply loved her family and friends.

Survivors include her parents, Hung Ho and Luyen Nguyen; her brothers, Kim Ho, Jerry Ho and Nhan Ho, all of Eau Claire. She is further survived by her grandparents and other near relatives in Vietnam and by many friends in Eau Claire.

This is the time of year it's easy to look at life as a routine. The holidays are over and the next paid holiday for many is four months off. It's cold, often it's gray and the sun still goes down far too early. But life isn't a routine. It's a gift. A precious gift never to be taken for granted. It's painful to admit most of us have to be reminded of that through tragedy.

The community's thoughts and prayers continue to be with the families and friends of Kimberly Miller and Lalan Ho, two Memorial High School students who were killed in a traffic accident nine days ago shortly after being dismissed from school early because of bad weather. Words can't convey the grief whenever someone is taken suddenly in the prime of life.

Tragedy also reminds us that one of life's greatest gifts is our freedom: Freedom to share our lives with others, freedom to choose careers and hobbies, and freedom to play sports and drive cars. When tragedy strikes, we ask how it could happen. The answer is that for life to be truly free it also must be unpredictable. That may not make sense of tragedy; there isn't any way to do that. All we can do is appreciate and respect life. Don't fret the little things that seem so big in the daily routine but are insignificant when standing alongside tragedy.

Thousands of young people go off to school in Eau Claire every day. The No. 1 goal and wish of all adults in the community is to make sure those students get safely to class and safely home -- every single one of them. When they don't, part of each of us feels as if we failed, even as we acknowledge our inability to control every situation, including the weather.

Kimberly and Lalan may no longer be with us, but one thing their families and friends can cling to are memories of the good times. You can lose just about everything in this world, but memories last forever. Hold on to them. They'll help you carry on.