

Has it been three years? That seems so short, yet also like a lifetime ago. We lost Erica Vallario three years ago to a tragic accident. Since that time neither Erica nor her parents have been out of our thoughts and prayers. There is always something about camp, or the people at camp, that reminds me of Erica. This summer there were numerous times I would think of Erica as I spoke to someone who knew her. Or even someone who didn't know her, and I'd think how much she/he would have liked Erica. And, of course, some of her campers are now staff assistants and some are starting college. And some of her camper contemporaries are counselors and have graduated from college. At camp this summer, I could see among the people who had known Erica that they each had their personal ways of remembering her, sometimes with humor, sometimes with a tear of sadness or a short pause, but never forgetting. I get angry when I think of the waste it is that such a giving, energetic and youthful person died so young. I start to think of what could have been and then I think of what actually was. Erica's life was too short as measured in years, but it was a very full life as measured by her energy and spirit and generosity and hope and the number of people she inspired. There are an awful lot of people this week who are remembering what Erica meant and still means in their lives. By that measure, she lived a very full life indeed. Thank you for that gift, Erica. May you rest in peace.

