

Kooistra, Greg

Intelligencer, June 16, 1994



Photo submitted

Greg Kooistra on the pond last winter.

"He never came out and talked about it (dying)," says Donna Kooistra.

On Friday, April 22, the courage and determination were all that remained. And his family's love. Greg Kooistra died.

"We're thankful he didn't struggle," says Donna Kooistra. "He was very peaceful. He was there with us and then he wasn't. He laid down and closed his eyes.

"How can you ever be prepared? But we believe in the Lord and we believe he's in a better place. We miss him but we didn't want to see him suffer. It was nice that the whole family was home with him."

Donna, Dirk and the other Kooistra children — Trevor, 19, Anneke, 14, and John, 11 — now treasure the memories of a brave young man who didn't know how to quit.

In Greg's old room, they've arranged his prized Maple Leaf jersey on his bed. His artificial leg, signed by Geo-Adventure pals and summer camp buddies, leans against the bed with an athletic sock still covering the foot.

The night before Greg died, Minielly came over to visit. He told Greg about upcoming Geo-Adventure plans for a trip to Costa Rica.

"Greg said to sign him up," Donna Kooistra recalls with a smile. "That's the way he was."