



SUBMITTED PHOTO

York Regional Police Const. Michael Pegg died Nov. 29. Here, he enjoys time with his nieces, Hannah (left), 7, and Sarah Botting, 10.

York police Const. Pegg a 'stand-up' guy: sister

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The sister of the York Regional Police officer, who died in hospital Nov. 29 after breaking his leg while training, has paid tribute to her "stand-up" brother.

Karen Botting, 39, said although her family was devastated by Const. Michael Pegg's sudden death, they are trying to pick up the pieces by recalling memories of just how great a man he was.

"He was an all-around good guy," she said. "He didn't care who you were, whether you were the underdog or the popular person, he would be your friend. He refused to judge people, so you could be yourself around him."

Her words come days after Const. Pegg died following surgery on the leg he broke while training at York police's Rutherford Road facility in Vaughan.

His former supervising officer said he died of pneumonia while in hospital, however, results of an autopsy have not yet been released.

Insp. Gary Milner said Const. Pegg, 36, went into hospital Nov. 12, had surgery Nov. 15 and died last Friday after coming down with an infection.

DIED OF PNEUMONIA

"He was in isolation and physically fatigued with what was going on and he succumbed," Insp. Milner said.

Const. Pegg grew up with his sister in Everett, about 10 minutes north of Alliston.

Ms Botting and Const. Pegg's family still live there.

She said one of the last times she saw him outside of hospital was on a double date for both couples' wedding anniversaries.

"We went out for dinner and played cards after," she said. "He loved games. Sometimes, he would come out of left field with a trivia answer no one expected him to get. Now, when we sit down to play cards, there'll be one person missing."

She also told a little known story of her brother the "miracle baby".

"My mother was diabetic and he wasn't supposed to be born until April, but she went into labour at the end of February," she said. "He was born with fluid on his lungs and the doctors said they could lose him at any time, so he spent his first week in the intensive care unit."

'MIRACLE BABY'

Although she misses him dearly, she said this story reminds her that in one sense her family was just lucky to have spent so many years with her brother.

"The 36 years were phenomenal when, really, we could have had none."

Although Mr. Pegg had many passions, including his job at York police's air support unit, one of his most loved hobbies was playing baseball. Ms Botting said.

Another was his relationship with his nieces and nephews, she added.

"He was an awesome uncle," she said. "If he wasn't working, he would be at birthday parties, recitals, baseball diamonds or over here playing video games or hide and seek. He was always involved in their lives."

The hardest part about losing him has been how suddenly it occurred, Ms Botting said.

"It hasn't really sunk in yet. It feels like a dream you're hoping to wake up from," she said. "I've found myself pretending that he's at work. It's the little things. You see something and think, 'Oh, I can text Michael', but then you realize, you can't. It's hard because it wasn't like he was sick for very long and we were preparing for it."

Another difficult aspect has been the time of year, not only in the lead-up to Christmas, but also a week shy of his niece's birthday Sunday.

Since his death, Ms Botting said the York police have been fantastic with their support.

"I may have lost one brother, but I gained another 2,000," she said.

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