



Matt "Chad" Chandler Harris

June 1, 1968 - February 4, 2018

The time between the unfortunate dash that should not yet be there totals 18,146 days of Chad living life in his own utterly extraordinary way.

Of those days, 7,296 were spent upright on his own two legs while 10,851 of them were on his various sets of wheels, usually going entirely too fast, with too many passengers - or both. His wheelchair was the result of diving into too-shallow water at the of age 19. His chill attitude was the result of never being worried about how things were going to turn out.

After his injury, if he was not on his wheels, you could perhaps find him boating on a lake. Or look up - he may have been parasailing. Or enjoying the ocean breeze from the open balcony on a cruise ship. Or he may have been out surfing. Or being hauled up the steps of the Acropolis in Greece thrown over his buddy's shoulder. Or riding in his father in law's red Corvette. Or floating around in the neighborhood swimming pool. Or any other myriad of things high quads generally don't do.

Chad is survived by Ami Claxton Harris, his fiercely devoted, quirky, mildly to moderately annoying to him because of her bad taste in music and propensity to talk an awful lot, wife. This is a wife who hit the ultimate jackpot of marriage when he put a ring on it in 2005 after meeting in 2003. Chad and Ami got hitched on April Fools Day after spontaneously larking off to the courthouse in

Raleigh NC that morning on a whim. How else would those two get married after all?

He also has left his legacy behind in Julian, Ami's son who was a tiny tot when Ami met Chad. Julian was never a stepson to Chad. Julian was always, and forever will be, Chad's son, his only child. Julian was the true shining light of Chad's life. Chad was so proud of his boy from when baby "Juju" gave up his pacifier, to when "JJ" hilariously croaked out his very first song on the recorder in elementary school, and right through to when "J" marched in the Apex Christmas parade just this past December. Chad was so excited to hear of Julian's college aspirations now.

Chad's parents, Marie Elaine Abbott Strople of Portsmouth VA and Hillie Everette Harris of Yorktown VA, will miss his easy wit, visits to the Langley Air show and visiting Adrian and Rocky, his mom's beloved dogs. Having grown up in Suffolk VA, he still has many friends and family in Virginia who will miss him there, and will hopefully not reveal his boyhood secrets like frog open heart surgery at age (eh-hem Frank Dozier). Chad has many other extended family members, too numerous to mention for fear of leaving people out, so only immediate family have been included here. But be assured that he loved you and he spoke of you all fondly often. Especially the "dock monster"!

Chad is preceded in death only 2 months ago by his beloved service dog, Stanley, his loyal, ever-present, faithful companion, and ferocious guardian against humans dressed up as sports mascots. Chad and Stanley's ashes will be mixed together so that they will be as they should be, together for all eternity. Just before Chad passed away, he asked for Stanley's ashes to be put into bed with him. Stanley opened many doors during life for Chad. That one last time, Chad needed Stanley to open the final door for him.

Chad died suddenly and unexpectedly from very recently diagnosed

frontotemporal lobe dementia (FTD), an extraordinarily rare form of dementia that strikes younger people and robs them of executive functioning rather than memory. It is completely unrelated to his quadriplegia and would have developed even had he not been injured. Chad truly hit the lottery twice. But not the lottery anyone wants to hit.

One can be comforted though that Chad died rapidly and exceptionally peacefully at home, without any pain and cradled in his wife's arms listening to Pink Floyd's Dark Side of the Moon. Duke Hospice staff were instrumental in easing not only his transition but in arresting his wife's tremendous fear so that she was able to provide true comfort, love and support to Chad during his final times.

So now, he and his buddy "Stan the Man" as Chad called him, are now well into their next great adventure. And if you know anything at all about Chad, you know that the next chapter will be ridiculously radically awesome. And undoubtedly somehow will involve a Shelby Cobra.

Mere hours before his death, Chad became completely 100% lucid, versus the full coma, he had been in for almost a week. He made two last wishes: what to call his memorial service and where he wanted donations to go in his honor.

Chad's "AFTERPARTY" will be on Saturday February 17, 2018 at 3:00pm at Crosspointe Church, 6911 Carpenter Firestation Rd, Cary, NC 27519.

Donations if desired should be directed to

Refurbished Canine Rescue
1163 John Sandling Road

Franklinton, NC 27525

Chad (and his wife) know this rescue and it's owner, Vivienne Graves, personally and well. Chad and Ami have adopted two dogs from Refurbished Canine Rescue, their beloved Blue and Vivi. Chad would love for donations in his honor to be sent there.

Chad and Ami's home address is:

100 Monument View Lane
Cary NC 27519

Should you wish to send flowers for the afterparty, Chad adored purple irises and lillies. He wasn't a typical guy (one has probably picked this up already) - he loves fresh flowers in the house, his wife did too and they usually had a fresh bouquet around weekly. She bought him irises as a pick me up when he was blue.

Chad will certainly not do something mundane like Rest In Peace. He will continue on as he did in life, breaking barriers, defying the odds and stereotypes, befriending all he came across, telling hilarious wry jokes, and kicking some serious ass in the online games he played with friends around the world. He likely will try to figure out how to keep that sassy wife-a-his mostly in line from the other side. She won't have him to play interference for her anymore!

The rest of you out there reading this? Lift a glass, smoke your tires (your cars, yes, but especially the wheelers in the crowd), play Pink Floyd and Led Zeppelin way too loud, and say or laugh at something horribly inappropriately funny now and then in honor of Chad.

Rock on Chad.

Here's a link to Chad's Facebook Afterparty Event.

https://www.facebook.com/events/1679445472113451/?acontext=%7B%22ref%22%3A%22108%22%2C%22action_history%22%3A%22null%22%7D

Previous Events

Chad Harris Epic Afterparty

FEB 17. 3:00 PM (ET)

Crosspointe Church
6911 Carpenter Firestation Road
Cary, NC 27519

Tribute Wall

EC

“ Emily Cox lit a candle in memory of Matt "Chad" Chandler Harris



Emily Cox - February 14, 2018 at 12:19 PM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Matt "Chad" Chandler Harris.



February 13, 2018 at 10:39 AM

PH

“ Pascual Hernandez lit a candle in memory of Matt "Chad" Chandler Harris



Pascual Hernandez - February 06, 2018 at 06:42 AM

PH

I know Mr Chad 15 years I really enjoyed when we ate Chinese food together that was awesome

Pascual Hernandez - February 06, 2018 at 06:45 AM

FD

“ Chad and I spent many days together growing up. Weather we were building tree forts as kids or exploring new music at his house or mine we always had a great time together. I remember how excited he was when he got the 1966 notch back mustang in midnight blue. It was only a six cylinder but he was already making plans to put a V-8 in it. Those days will always be some of my favorite. I'll miss you bro.

Frank Dozier - February 05, 2018 at 09:09 PM



“ I remember Chad as my 1st (understanding of what) a 2nd cousin was. I was at my Uncle Sonney's house when I first met Chad. I was 8 or 9. He was so cute and in diapers. Using the couch to steady himself to walk. Life went on as it has a way of doing. I remember many years later at least 19 driving on highway 98 here in Florida when I heard of his accident. My heart hurt and I was so sad for him. Chad took it on the chin and from what I heard through the family, with the stories and pictures I saw he lived life to the fullest and did not let any grass grow under his feet. My Prayers go up for Chad and his family. To my cousin Elaine who I always admired, may your angels hold you ever so tight as you remember the life Chad lived and the life he loved. Hugs and prayers. XOXO cuzzo Denise



Denise Abbott - February 05, 2018 at 06:13 PM

TA

“ *Ami and Julian,*

Tom and I are so saddened to hear of Chad's passing. He is an inspiration to all of us! I loved reading about all of the activities that Chad still took part in, despite any limitations his body put on him! And you are an amazing woman-your strength and selflessness served Chad well! May he keep on movin' on!

Love,

Theresa and Tom Anhut

Theresa Anhut - February 05, 2018 at 07:53 AM

AM

“ *To Chad, say hi to Stan from me and the Miltonator, Chez Talyn still stands! We already miss the **** out of you!*

To Ami and Julian, Chad was so proud to call you his family. Ami you truly and honourably earned this honour by your gentle care and fierce love and defence of Chad.

Love

Alfie

Amanda - February 05, 2018 at 07:23 AM

AW

“ *1 file added to the album Memories of Chad*



Ami Claxton, Chad's wife - February 04, 2018 at 07:16 PM