



designer m. petrseim; photos by s. winnick, a. perryman, m. peterseim, f. dutton

Friends, faculty, and family remember late student who impacted lives

by Merritt Redden

Yellow.
A color that represents light, hope, and optimism.
A color that stands out in a crowd.
A color that, in the Wando community, symbolizes
Faith Dutton.

The sophomore was known among students and teachers as intelligent. Bubbly. Assertive and outgoing. But possibly more so for the impact she had on so many lives at Wando.

Which is why on May 19, 2017, when Faith lost her life in a head-on collision on Highway 41 after school, the tragedy resonated through the entire Warrior community.

In the coming days, through memorials and social media posts and words spoken by students and teachers, the unique impact Faith Dutton had on the Wando environment echoed through the school.

"At her memorial service, of the students that got up to speak about her, no two students were the same. No two students looked alike and no two students had the same story, but the one thing they all had in common was that [Faith] sought them out and really changed their life for the better,"

Olivia Thatcher, one of Faith's teachers, said.

For people who were close with Faith, as well as for people who only knew who she was, Faith's success in school and her passion for writing for the yearbook were apparent.

"She was such a good student. She put everything into her work. She worked so hard in school and a lot of people will look down on you for that, but she found a balance between school and friends and relationships, and I think that's really special," **Marguerite Peterseim**, 11, a close friend of Faith's since their freshman year, said. "The way she would write is different from everyone else's because it's so eloquent and beautiful and she spent time... you can tell it's from her heart and the heart of those who she interviewed."

In addition to being recognized as intelligent and talented by her peers, Faith also stood out to her teachers. Her academic prowess was an obvious distinction, but after being her AP World History teacher, Thatcher realized her character stood out above all else.

"It's rare to find a student, let alone a human being, that has such a positive impact on everyone around them, and that's how she was. She had a contagious personality and every cliché that you ever say about anybody was completely true about her. She lit up a room when she walked in it, whether that was because she had her different colored hair and her bright lipsticks or her personality. She just had a way of doing that," Thatcher said.

Faith's yearbook adviser last year and journalism teacher her freshman year, **Phillip Caston**, was also able to get to know Faith over the two years he had her as a student.

"She had so much spunk and attitude and the staff loved her. She was the kind of kid that she knew when it was time to give

someone a hug and she knew when it was time to tell someone to suck it up and get over it," Caston said. "Doing these 12 years [of teaching], every so often you get that one that... it's like you struck gold, that you were lucky enough that they landed on your path. I've had a very small few of those in my career and I'm... confident that she was one of them."

To her family, what showed her character most were her beliefs and views on the world, as well as her stubborn nature. The two often went hand in hand.

"She would stand for what she believed in, firm. I always felt that it was an admirable trait that she would stand firm, whether it was political views or gender views or whatever. Not that she said you were wrong, but... you could not sway her," **Shannon Dutton**, Faith's mother, said.

Faith came onto the *Legend* yearbook staff at the beginning of her sophomore year, and with her came the witty, confident, outspoken personality that her friends and family saw. She quickly made friends with the other staff members, like now-graduate **Anna Perryman**.

"In yearbook we would see each other all the time. We just became really, really close really fast," Perryman said. "She was just... the epitome of the best person ever. She was always a good friend to everyone and she loved everyone."

Faith told everyone that her favorite color was yellow, shown through her bright blonde hair and her sunshine-yellow Converse sneakers. Her love for yellow was a common theme throughout conversations and posts on social media in remembrance of the late sophomore.

"I hope that when people feel like giving up they'll think of her... and think 'what would she do?' Or they might spot the color yellow out of the corner of their eye and think 'everything will be okay,'" Shannon said.

Shannon's wish is already being carried on through Faith's friends less than a year after her passing.

"After she passed away, every time I would see yellow, I would think of her. That still happens now, and I don't think that will ever change for me," Peterseim said.

Besides being Faith's favorite color, yellow and the light that it represented was often used to describe her and the effect she had on everyone around her. **Sophie Winnick**, a Wando graduate, started as Faith's yearbook editor in chief, but later became her friend and mentor. Winnick remembers that light and special qualities that she saw in Faith.

"Faith had the type of personality that could make you smile, make you laugh harder than any other person I've ever met, make you cry, and could simultaneously make you mad all at the same time," Winnick said. "She was just one of those people that had such an enigmatic personality that she made you feel everything to the extreme and she radiated a light that I've never seen before. Whenever she walked into a room, she commanded it and her presence completely took over, and

there's not a lot of people like that."

Faith's prominence, as well as her drive, also stood out to **Sanaye Mazyck**, 12, who met Faith at the beginning of her own junior year when she saw Faith in the cafeteria wearing her bright yellow Converse and felt the need to go talk to her.

"She was so bold with everything she did. She knew she could do it and she did it," Mazyck said. "She could talk down a lion."

Mazyck chooses to focus on those qualities of Faith's and to remain positive in the face of losing one of her closest friends.

"There's always someone watching over me. There is always someone that I can talk to. Even though she's not here physically, I always have Faithy that I can talk to," Mazyck said.

Faith may not be here physically, but that has not stopped anyone, especially her family, from celebrating her and the life that she lived in the 16 years she was here.

"Her [two younger] brothers, they don't know any different. She was the spokesman of the group and they were all behind her," Shannon said. "I encouraged them afterwards that we were not going to keep it quiet. We were going to talk about her. She put forth so much effort in this family that for it to just be void would be unacceptable. Here, at home, she lives on daily."

Faith's friends, family, and the community of Mt Pleasant have taken this to heart.

"A person that had such a bright future and such an impact on the world already at 16, there's a spark inside a person like that. The fire was burning within her, and I don't think that just because she passed away it will extinguish," Winnick said. "Her passing impacted a whole community. I don't think Wando or Mount Pleasant will ever forget Faith. I don't think they can forget Faith Dutton."

Following her passing, students went back through Faith's old social media posts. One message she posted on Instagram shortly before she died resonated with those who knew her well, and it defined the young woman who impacted so many at Wando:

"As wonderful as it feels to be called beautiful or pretty or gorgeous or lovely, it is not what matters in the end. To be frank, I'd much prefer to be called brilliant, daring, fearless, clever, kind, or ambitious. I'd much rather my mind or my soul be called beautiful than my exterior. Yes, beauty is valued in our society. Yes, loving who you are on the outside is vital. There is nothing wrong with loving your body or your face. But do not forget your mind. Your soul. Your heart. Because beauty fades, but who you are on the inside, that is eternal."

Be brilliant. Be fearless. Be kind."

Customer is allowed to have objects outside of the margin.

TRIM LINE TRIM LINE

TRIM LINE TRIM LINE